

AN EVALUATION OF THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF  
NKHOMA SYNOD,  
CHURCH OF CENTRAL AFRICA PRESBYTERIAN



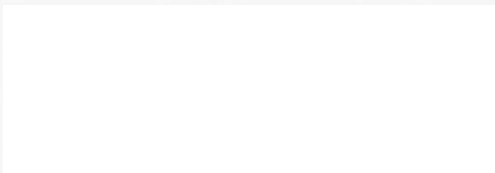
HELLEMAN ADSON KAMNKHWANI

Dissertation presented for the degree of  
Doctor of Theology  
at the  
University of Stellenbosch  
December 1990

PROMOTER: PROF E BROWN

## DECLARATION

I the undersigned hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and has not previously in its entirety or in part been submitted at any university for a degree.



..... 31.08.1990 .....

Date



## PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This thesis identifies problems and offers answers concerning the historiography of Nkhoma Synod of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian.

The motivation for the study originated from the realization that in the written word there is almost no reference to the role played by the indigenous people in Malawi. Besides, I am part of the historical awareness which has made itself felt in the CCAP! As a minister of this church I should like to interpret its history.

The Church has come to stay in Malawi. The European and South African missionaries who brought the message of Christ to my people ended up in a new phase. The mission they were to extend, has been taken over, or is shared, by indigenous ministers. At present, only a few missionaries (especially ministers) are fraternal workers in this indigenous young church. The work of the Lord is being done by indigenous ministers and members of the congregations. Since this is the case, the activities of congregations, "helpers" of the missionaries and indigenous ministers must be assessed and historically described. This thesis has been undertaken to facilitate this "ministry" in a reformed way.

The problems concerned with the availability of historical documents and sources is another reason for the dissertation. The documents are dispersed: most of them are indexed as "missionary work of the Dutch Reformed Church" and kept in its Archives in Cape Town, South Africa; others (only a few) are at the Malawi National Archives in Zomba; and still many others are in the congregations awaiting to be collected. In addition to this major technical problem is the fact that most of these important historical documents are written in Dutch/Afrikaans, a foreign language to the Malawian people.

To deal with the problems of the historiography of the CCAP is no easy task. The members of the Department of Ecclesiology of the Faculty of Theology, University of Stellenbosch, became my "fraternal workers" in studying them. They enlightened me and broadened my horizons of the field of study and the methodology required. Their focus on the problems of the historiography of the church agrees with my convictions, acquired as student and minister. In this connection the seminars with the professors and students of Ecclesiology, held every third week, provided me with great incentive, encouragement, and support during the whole period of my research and study.

Students take turns to present the outcome of their research and are criticized by all members. This was of great value in my research.

The writing of history from written sources is a new experience to most Africans. In a sense they are only equipped to utilize oral tradition historiographically. And, oral tradition must be used along with the written sources by missionaries to rewrite missionary history in terms of church history. This serves to emphasize the importance of academically trained reformed church historians in the younger churches. We Africans have a lot of history that is embedded in the minds of our elderly people, but we have to tap these sources and put the history down in writing. Our African people are part of the historical drama of our churches!

Emphasis on oral historiography does not imply that the written sources by missionaries can be ignored. They are the basis of our arguments for historical reconstruction. An attempt has been made to list, review and annotate them. It remains a question whether some of the important books should not be translated into English or Chichewa for Malawians to read and study.

In order to compile a list of books as secondary sources the University Libraries (J S Gericke and Theological Seminary library), were scoured. Some of the books were ordered for me from other libraries through the Inter Library Loan Service.

I was helped to annotate the books written in Dutch or Afrikaans. In this respect I would like to extend my thanks to the late Prof W J van der Merwe (died December 1989), formerly a missionary in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe, for his help in summarizing in English, and discussing the main points of the following books: *Elf Jahren in Midde Afrika* by the Rev T C B Vlok (1901); *Ons Nyasa-Akker* by the Rev A C Murray (1931); *Op Pad* by the Rev Dr William Murray (1940). It was of critical to my study to be informed of all the writings of the early and devoted missionaries of the DRC Mission in Malawi. This was done by drawing up a set of questions to assess the historiographical importance of the particular book. I also thank a colleague, the Rev R M Britz, for his informative summaries of the following books: *Louis Murray - die Leeuehart* by the Rev J W L Holseney; *Ronel vertel nog meer van Nyasaland* by Miss Pietjie de Beer (1947); *Verowerings vir Christus: die lewe van Dr W H Murray van Nyasaland* by Dr M W Retief (1948); *Na Nyasaland, maar nie met die ossewa* by the Rev A F Louw (1948). The available reviews on the various books helped me in my comments about them.

I used the minutes of Nkhoma Synod which are in the possession of Dr C M Pauw, as well as some of his research notes. I saved a lot of travelling time by not having to read them at the Dutch Reformed Church Archives.

In a few cases I received information by correspondence.

I had several interviews with people when I visited congregations in Malawi, especially those that had a longer history. I looked at their church records so as to ascertain what kind of records they have in their possession. Through these records I could judge our historical conscientiousness with regard to written sources. I found that some congregations keep their records very safely, and others not. This was a challenge to me!

I sent a questionnaire to all congregations of Nkhoma Synod through which I was able to screen information on the historical sources which they have.

I also visited the Malawi National Archives at Zomba and the Dutch Reformed Church Archives in Cape Town, South Africa, where I looked at their inventories and some of their documents to get an idea of the type of historical documents of Nkhoma Synod they have in their possession. But I was unable to visit the archives in Edinburgh Scotland, for lack of funds.

My visits to Blantyre Synod Offices where I had discussions with the Rev Chitsulo, Deputy General Secretary of the Synod and also to Livingstonia Synod Offices where I met the General Secretary of the Synod and former colleague at Nkhoma Theological College, the Rev A M Mfune, made me even more aware of the problems of church historiography and the need for the preservation of the Church's historical documents. The museum at Livingstonia Mission illustrates the importance of the preservation of the Church's heritage.

In the first place, I thank my supervisor, Prof E Brown, who guided me in my research throughout my period of study as a full-time student. He was open and patient with me at all times. He actually inspired and encouraged me to study the historiography of the church in general and the CCAP in particular. He emphasized that the historical documents of the Church must be put in order if an objective history of the Church was to be written. Meeting him in 1975 at Chongoni (Namoni Katengeza) Church Lay Training Centre during the Refresher's Course, where he taught Church History to the ministers of Nkhoma Synod, led me to consider studying under his guidance in this field. This work is the fruit of the seed he sowed.

I thank Prof S Ridge of the University of the Western Cape and a Christian friend for reading the manuscript of this thesis and correcting my English. I am most indebted to them if this thesis is understood and conveys the message I have intended it to do.

Much appreciation goes to Mrs W J Kuyler who untiringly typed everything into the computer. I thank her very much for her patience in making all the necessary corrections and changes, from the first draft-copy to the final one.



The research study was graciously financed by bursaries which I obtained from various sources: World Vision International (Pasadena, USA); the Theological Seminary of the Dutch Reformed Church, Stellenbosch; Stellenbosch 2000 of the University of Stellenbosch; the Department of Education and Culture in South Africa. Some of these bursaries were offered once; others were repeated on request. The Presbyterian Church (USA) was largely financially responsible for my studies. For all these bursaries so kindly given, I am deeply grateful. You have done it not only to me, but also to Nkhoma Synod which is ultimately to benefit from this work through my service to the Lord in the Church.

I also received support from friends both within the country and abroad during times of great need. Some were old missionary friends who had worked in Malawi; others were Christian friends from all walks of life who gave their support. I thank you all and may God bless you! Space does not allow me to mention the names of all the persons who gave support, but all of them are in my family's memory. They have become part of my "oral tradition"!

I thank the Mission Secretary the Rev J D Thom for organising accommodation so that my wife and daughter could accompany me; for introducing me to a bursary from the Department of Education; and for being the custodian of my bursaries.

I also thank the Stellenbosch Presbyterian Church for giving me the necessary financial assistance I desperately needed to pay for my accommodation in my final year.

My gratitude is due to the Synod of Nkhoma which urged me to take up this study. It allowed me to leave the strategic position as General Secretary of the Synod to study at Stellenbosch. I had to leave when the Synod meeting was at hand! The Synod also supported my children with allowances during all the years of my study. Thank you very much.

I also thank my wife and children for their prayers. They encountered difficulties owing to my absence, but they did not despair. They often looked upon the consolation of God and His mighty hand. I studied at peace, because they had their faith and trust in God and His providence.

Finally I thank God for calling me to be His servant and for giving me the opportunity to serve Him and further my theological studies. He was in control of everything. Without His guidance all would have been a failure. Glory be to God!

H A KAMNKHWANI

STELLENBOSCH  
DECEMBER, 1990.

## ABSTRACT

## AN EVALUATION OF THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF NKHOMA SYNOD, CHURCH OF CENTRAL AFRICA PRESBYTERIAN.

Nkhoma Synod of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), represents a church initiated by missionaries of the Dutch Reformed Church of the Cape in 1889. The church was started at Mvera on the advice and with the guidance of the missionaries of the Free Church of Scotland who started mission work in Malawi in 1875.

The Church spread rapidly, not least because of the assistance of indigenous members, teacher-evangelists, who spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ among their own people.

The missionaries documented their ministry in written form as well as writing reports and narratives about their work. The reports and even official documents were sent to their home boards to inform them about the progress of the work and also to encourage members to support them with prayers and funds. Thus, a written tradition was initiated in a country where people had an oral tradition. This was the beginning of written sources on the mission of a "foreign" church and the beginning of an indigenous church.

This led to technical problems, however. The missionary reports and books were written in one or even two of three languages: Dutch/Afrikaans, the language of the missionaries; English, the language of the colonial rulers and other related missionaries and Chichewa, the language of the indigenous people among whom the missionaries worked. Valuable documents in Afrikaans cannot be read by the indigenous people. To compound the problem, these documents are housed in various places: South Africa, the country from where the missionaries came; Scotland, the mother country of the missionaries of the Free Church of Scotland with whom the missionaries of the DRCC worked and Malawi, the country of the Achewa people who were christianized. The language used and the fact that the documents are far removed from their origins mean that they are not always accessible for research on the history of the CCAP (Nkhoma).

Another problem is the methodology of African church history. The European missionaries' reporting and documentation is one-sided and subjective. They wrote about their own activities and were not without ulterior motives and bias. Indigenous African participants were simply ignored in mission historiography, probably due to misconceptions or an unconscious feeling of superiority on the part of the missionaries or even other reasons such as that of colonialism.

Because Africans were accustomed to oral tradition, their experiences are not available in written sources. Although evaluating and using oral tradition in this regard is not so easy, it is the only means of reconstructing the history of the Church in Malawi since the role played by the indigenous people will be taken into account. In a sense this can only be done in a proper and critical way by indigenous church historians. There is indeed an urgent need to record oral tradition in written form.

The reformed church calls for the academically trained who understand its confessional tenets and ministry. They must study the history of the church in a scriptural sense. Therefore a reformed method of interpretation of church history is argued and recommended. This method emphasizes the supreme control of God in history, and the use of scientific methodology.

The different problems of a theoretical and theological as well as a practical and technical nature have been discussed and suggestions made to overcome them.

The researcher must be helped to gain access to the documents relating to the history of Nkhoma Synod CCAP. Accordingly, documents in the two main archives, in Cape Town and Zomba, are listed and accompanied by comments.

## CONTENTS

Preface and Acknowledgement .....	i
Abstract.....	v
Contents.....	vii
Introduction.....	xii
Abbreviations.....	xviii
<b>PART ONE</b>	
<b>HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS AND SOURCES: ASSESSMENT AND PROBLEMS.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1</b>	
<b>RECORDS AND SOURCE MATERIAL RELATED TO THE NKHOMA SYNOD, CCAP, AN HISTORICAL REVIEW .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Introduction.....	2
1. Making History and Relating Church History in Malawi.....	2
2. Distinctive phases of development in the historical consciousness of what was to become the Nkhoma Synod. ....	4
2.1 The Pioneering Missionary Period: 1889-1903.....	4
2.2 The Missionary Establishment Period: 1903-1925.....	5
2.3 The Period of United Missionary Effort: 1926-1956 .....	8
2.4 The Period of Indigenization of the Church: 1956-1989.....	10
3. Historical Commemoration and Historiography .....	15
<b>CHAPTER 2</b>	
<b>PUBLISHED SOURCES RELEVANT TO NKHOMA SYNOD, A SURVEY AND ANALYSIS.....</b>	<b>17</b>
Introduction.....	17
1. The Pre-scientific Period and its Publications .....	18
2. The Scientific Period and its Publications .....	36
3. Assessing the Historiographical Significance and Value of the Published Sources.....	47
<b>CHAPTER 3</b>	
<b>HISTORIOGRAPHICAL AND TECHNICAL PROBLEMS RELATED TO THE CCAP .....</b>	<b>49</b>
Introduction.....	49
1. Historiographical Problems Identified and Enumerated.....	49
1.1 Missionary Motivations Underlying the Accounts of Missionary Work.....	49
1.2 Misconceptions Concerning the Missionary Sense And Work of the DRC.....	52
1.3 Missionary Work and the Cultural and Sociological Orientation .....	53



1.4	The Colonial Bias of Missionaries and Missionary Writings .....	55
1.5	The Unilateral Way of Writing History .....	56
1.6	The Personal Aspect in the Recording of Missionary Work .....	57
2.	Technical Problems Concerning the Writing of the Church History of the CCAP (Nkhoma Synod).....	59
2.1	Documents Written in Afrikaans .....	59
2.2	Reference to Sources Related to the History of Nkhoma Synod .....	60
2.3	The Housing of the Documents Related to the CCAP In Different Foreign Archives .....	60
3.	The Need for Considering the History of the CCAP In Terms of a Full-fledged Indigenous Church.....	60

#### CHAPTER 4

THE DEVELOPMENT AND DAWN OF AN HISTORICAL AWARENESS IN AFRICA AND MALAWI .....		61
Introduction.....		61
1.	Attempts at Written Church Historiography by Malawians (In the Pre-scientific Period) .....	61
2.	Factors That Have Influenced the Contemporary Historical Awareness.....	64
3.	Motives for Questioning Missionary Writings .....	66
4.	The Emergence of Writings on Church History in the Scientific Period.....	68
5.	The Historiographic Sense of the Nkhoma Synod.....	71

#### PART TWO

THE REFORMED CHURCH HISTORIOGRAPHY DISCUSSED. ....	73
--	----

#### CHAPTER 5

THE REFORMED ASSUMPTIONS TO DESCRIBE CHURCH HISTORY.....		74
Introduction .....		74
1.	Church History Writing in the Early Years of Christianity to 1200 .....	74
2.	Church History Writing in the Middle Ages .....	75
3.	Post-reformation Period: 1500-1700.....	76
4.	Church History Writing in the 18th, 19th and 20th Centuries .....	77



## CHAPTER 6

## THE PRIMARY SOURCES OF A PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.....

Introduction.....	81
1. Historical Sources in the Congregations.....	81
1.1 The Minutes of Church Councils.....	81
1.2 Roll-Books/Registers.....	83
1.3 Index Books.....	83
1.4 Financial Books.....	83
1.5 Duplicates of Marriage Certificates.....	84
1.6 Christian Initiation Certificates.....	84
2. Historical Sources in Presbyteries.....	84
3. Historical Sources of the Synod.....	86
3.1 Synod Minutes.....	86
3.2 Synod Reports.....	86
3.3 Synodical Committee Minutes.....	87
3.4 The Minutes of the Moderamen.....	88
4. Historical Sources of General Synod.....	89
4.1 Minutes of the General Synod.....	89
4.2 Reports of Synods.....	89
4.3 Minutes of the Standing Committee of General Synod.....	89

## CHAPTER 7

USING ORAL TRADITION TO RECONSTRUCT THE HISTORY  
OF NKHOMA SYNOD.....

Introduction.....	91
1. The Importance of Oral Speech/tradition.....	91
2. Oral Historiography in Western Perspective.....	92
3. Oral History in Western Europe.....	92
4. Oral Sources in Biblical Times.....	93
5. Oral Historiography as a Source of Historical Study in Modern Africa.....	93
6. Problems of Oral Historiography.....	94
6.1 The Area or Field for Investigation.....	94
6.2 The Historian's Health.....	95
6.3 The Language.....	95
6.4 The Problem of Chronology.....	97
6.5 The People to be Interviewed (informants).....	99
7. Coverage of Oral Historiography.....	100

	x
8.	The Critical Evaluation of Oral Tradition ..... 101
8.1	Use All the Available Records or Sources ..... 101
8.2	Study these Records Critically..... 101
8.3	Ask Searching Questions..... 102
8.4	The Past of the People And their Institutions ..... 102
8.5	The sources must be quoted ..... 102
9.	A Systematic Collection of Oral Historiographical Sources ..... 102
9.1	Find All the Relevant Testimonies..... 102
9.2	Area of historical study and informants must be recorded..... 102
9.3	Write down or record the oral history given ..... 103
9.4	Ascertain information by revisiting informants ..... 104
10.	Field Behaviour in Oral Historiographical Methodology..... 104
11.	The Aid of Other Disciplines in the Study of Sources and Writing of Church History..... 106
11.1	Church History and Archaeology..... 106
11.2	Church History and Environmental Studies ..... 107
11.3	Church History and Linguistics ..... 108
11.4	Church History and the Social and Physical Sciences ..... 109

## CHAPTER 8

### GUIDING THE CCAP (NKHOMA SYNOD) TO RECORD ITS HISTORY AND SENSE ITS THEOLOGICAL VALUE

Introduction.....	111
1. Composition of a Centenary Committee.....	111
2. Financial Obligations.....	112
3. Historical Commemoration.....	112
3.1 Stones gathered from congregations.....	113
3.2 The Museum.....	113
3.3 Centenary Bibles/ Hymn books.....	114
3.4 Centenary Sunday - 27 August 1989.....	114
4. Witten surveys of the history of the CCAP (Nkhoma Synod) for the Centenary.....	115
4.1 Nkhoma Synod Historical Brochure.....	115
4.2 Special Centenary <b>Kuunika</b> Edition.....	116
5. Centenary Dramas.....	117
6. Visitors and Invited Guests at the Centenary.....	118

7.	Speeches of the Most Honourable Guests of the Centenary: 26 August 1989.....	120
7.1	Church Representatives .....	120
7.2	Old Missionaries .....	122
7.3	Old Malawian Christians/Ministers.....	123

CHAPTER 9

	HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS RELATED TO THE CCAP (NKHOMA SYNOD) IN THE ARCHIVES OF CAPE TOWN AND ZOMBA.....	128
--	--	-----

	Introduction.....	128
1.	Transfer of Historical Documents to Malawi National Archives.....	128
2.	Transfer of Historical Documents to the DRC Archives.....	129
3.	A Guide to the Archival Sources in Cape Town and Zomba .....	130
4.	General Remarks on Archival Sources.....	156

	SUMMARY OF THESIS.....	158
	ABSTRACT IN AFRIKAANS.....	163
	BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	165

## INTRODUCTION

This thesis is concerned with the historiography of Nkhoma Synod representing the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) in Malawi. (Malawi was, until 1964, called Nyasaland.) The Church of Central Africa Presbyterian is a union of the Reformed-Presbyterian Mission Churches in Malawi: initially the Free Church of Scotland (Livingstonia Mission), the Church of Scotland (Blantyre Mission), and the Dutch Reformed Church (Nkhoma Mission).

Christianity entered Malawi more than a century ago through the missionary efforts of the various mission societies of the Christian churches of Western Europe. They evangelized Malawi and other African countries and thereby played a great role in converting many African people to the Christian faith.

In the process of their missionary efforts, they recorded aspects of their work as well as some of their experiences and their encounters with the indigenous people. It is therefore true to say that the coming of Christian Europeans to Africa and to Malawi in particular was the beginning of the written sources of church historiography. The various missionary societies were obliged to submit reports of their activities to their home churches, and, in so doing, they recorded events pertaining to the history of their African Missions. The earliest historiography of the church in sub-Saharan Africa is largely of this kind.

Of the history of the Church in Malawi, this is certainly true. The early documents of the Church were recorded by the missionaries, first in their own language, and later in the indigenous language, and in English, the language of the colonial government. A study of these early documents is important for the researcher who is attempting to write a disciplined history of the Church in Malawi.

In chapter one an indication of the historical awareness of Nkhoma Synod CCAP and its historical development has been given. Phases that have shaped this awareness can be distinguished. With reference to its history, historical sources and the various influences that have had an impact on Nkhoma Synod historiography have been discussed with particular reference to indigenous participation in the government of the church. The relationship of the church with other Christian churches and organisations, and its adaptation to new environments have doubtlessly shaped the Church's historiography. A church historical researcher can read about Nkhoma Synod in a wide spectrum of sources both locally and internationally.



In addition to the primary sources, a number of books have also been written on the history of the Church in Malawi. These were written for various purposes, and have to be used with care. A full survey of them is undertaken in chapter 2.

In modern times, the indigenous people are looking back on the past of their "mission" churches in an attempt to appreciate what has been done by the missionaries. In addition, they want to discover what part their people have played along with the missionaries in evangelization. No doubt, they believe that they have also been used by the Holy Spirit to spread the gospel and establish the indigenous church. They refer to books written by missionaries because of their close association with them. In fact, most of the indigenous people received their early education in mission schools. Their educational environment was missionary-orientated. The books they read in school were all written by missionaries. These embrace a wide spectrum of life, including the missionaries' own cultural life, apart from Christianity itself. Some of the missionaries wrote on adventures and their travels in Africa in their journals, while many other Europeans commented on what they read about those missionaries in Christian magazines and books. A close study of these books reveals that not enough attention is given to the Christian life and activities of indigenous people. As a result there is a vacuum in the history of the missionary work and Church in Malawi. This is a major problem for the modern historian.

In order to understand clearly the written sources regarding Nkhoma Synod CCAP, three categories or phases of development must be distinguished:

- i) The pre-scientific period, in which historical writings are inspired by missionary zeal;
- ii) The scientific period, in which attempts are made to write the history "objectively";
- iii) The rewriting of the Church's history by indigenous authors, marking an historical awareness in the Malawian Church itself.

**i) The pre-scientific period or works inspired by a missionary zeal**

During this period books were written by missionaries on the various fields. According to their interest or motives aspects of the life of the Church, pastoral, medical, theological, liturgical, historical, or with reference to youth, family life, ethics, and sometimes traditional religion are dealt with.

In writing the history of the Church, there was little attempt at disciplined historiography such as is represented by the critical historical and theological method. The writers had a specific theological or ideological motivation, mainly to stimulate and arouse the interest of

the readers in mission work. They wrote in all sincerity to challenge people to come forward as missionaries and to support the work undertaken.<sup>1</sup>

In most cases, such books have no bibliography to indicate the sources used. The memories of the missionaries played a major role. Today such a method of writing is unacceptable. Sources must be identified so that the evidence can be assessed. In fact, one could say that an accurate account of the sources is basic to sound historical description.

However, these secondary sources are most important. They preserve and express the memories of the people who were involved.

#### (ii) The scientific period or approach

The scientific approach or method requires the historian to write with reference to well-documented sources of information: both primary and secondary sources. In this way it is possible to control the authenticity of the facts argued and used.

Scientifically written histories are a recent development in Malawian historiography. For a variety of reasons, it was not until the late nineteen-fifties that the more disciplined approach was insisted on.

In **chapter two** of this thesis, a survey and analysis of books on the history of Nkhoma Synod is given. Some of the books were written in Dutch or Afrikaans - the languages of the missionaries of the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa, who came to evangelize the people in the Central Region of Malawi. Others were written in English or Chichewa (the official languages of Malawi, Chichewa being the language of the people among whom the DRG did mission work).

For the purpose of this study, an evaluation of the specific books written on Nkhoma Synod as well as a few on the related churches in Malawi and outside, i.e. Livingstonia Synod, Blantyre Synod, Harare Synod, and the Reformed Church in Zambia, has been made. Nkhoma Synod has an historical connection with these churches.

#### (iii) The period of indigenous recording, marking an historical awareness of the indigenous church itself

In the past, literally nothing was written by a Malawian in Nkhoma Synod which can be considered historically disciplined. All historical writing was the result of missionary motivations. Consequently, these writings have missionary biases without the voice of the people who were converted to the Christian faith. What is required is an impartial history

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Nyasaland en mijne ondervindingen aldaar*, by A C Murray and others.

of the church in which both the missionary and the people converted are consulted as sources of information.

For this reason, an assessment is made in **chapter three** of the main historiographical problems. In some cases, the motivations of individual writers are stated in the introductions of their books. But the motivations of the majority of writers must be read between the lines of the text. Chapter three of this thesis indicates some of the motivations which have been conducive to missionaries neglecting the role played by African participants in African church history. The motivations observed in this case are those that were in contradiction to "the main motivation" of the spread of the Kingdom of God among the "heathen" peoples of Africa. Evidently, this main motivation developed other "environmental" motivations which some of the missionary writers pursued in their writings. As a result, biased attitudinal approaches emerged and obscured a concern with the spread of the Kingdom of God. These biases caused the missionaries' writings to be more obsessed with sociological, anthropological, and political (colonial) concerns. Hence, when one looks for information relating to and related by the indigenous Christian people, it is hardly available, and, if found, it is of little historical importance. The question is, did God not use the indigenous people through the inspiration of the same "Holy Spirit" who sent the missionaries to Africa to evangelize? When they believed in Jesus Christ, were they just idle, useless believers? These and related questions are asked when one reads some of the books written by the missionaries. The truth is, God used the missionaries to evangelize the Africans, and their early converts participated in the spread of the Gospel. However, the part played by these early African helpers was not recorded.

Another problem is of a technical nature viz. the language used in both the primary and secondary sources of Nkhoma Synod. Dutch and Afrikaans were used by DRC missionaries. They spoke these languages and used them in their writings: in reports, books, and correspondence. The essential sources are written in languages which the Malawians cannot read.

Alongside the problem of language is the problem of the location of the primary sources. Most of the sources are not available in Malawi, but in archives in Cape Town, South Africa.

In **chapter four** a survey of the church history of Nkhoma Synod and the CCAP written by Malawians has been made. Only a few have attempted treatises. Various reasons account for the fact why Malawian writers have not written much on Church history. Foremost are the problems of language and the lack of historical documents.



In order to write an objective, scientific, historical treatise, the church historian must have sources from which he can gather his information. Lack of these sources results in a subjective, exaggerated or speculative description of church history.

Some reflection on a theological and critical method of writing church history is of crucial importance. **Chapter five** gives a brief survey of church historiography which is essential. It is revealing that early Christian writers confined themselves to writing on events related exclusively to the church. This mode changed when both church history and secular (state) history were obviously interrelated. In time, no distinction was made between the two, and state history tended to submerge church history. The Reformation of the 16th century, however, gave a new impetus to historical study - the use of historical documents in historical investigation. Church history writing received priority. This chapter suggests that the best method of writing church history is to follow the early church, treating the church as a special historical entity. It is argued that a theological critical method can only be used by Christian believers committed to Christ. They look at all things through the eyes of Christ acknowledging his rule and power in this world.

Apart from personal letters and diaries, the earliest primary sources for the history of Nkhoma Synod are **congregational records**. There are numerous historical documents in congregations which must be collected for future reference before they are lost or destroyed. In chapter six problems about the keeping of these documents in congregations have been pointed out. In 1889 we are at the grassroots of the mission. Later, congregations, the Presbytery and the Synod are founded, and then the General Synod of the CCAP. The records become more and more complex as the church grows.

In chapter seven another source to be used in obtaining information about Malawians is treated, viz. the oral tradition. This mode of historical information was previously not acceptable to European historians, who had come (over many years) to rely upon written sources. In recent years it has been accepted that the oral tradition can be used as a resource in scientific historical research. However, there are problems with this method as many old people who knew much of the church from its early beginnings have passed away. Accordingly, memories are carried on by parents relating to their children what happened in the history of the church in Malawi and in particular, Nkhoma Synod.

In **chapter seven** it is argued that this oral tradition of the indigenous people is of prime importance. It originates from the people who know their church and what God has done for them to accomplish his purpose, i.e. his Kingdom. It is part of their witness to Christ. These remembrances must be collected and transcribed in written form. As yet, not much has been done in this field. Suggestions are made in this regard. In the process of



collection and evaluation of oral tradition the utilization of other scientific disciplines such as archaeology, environmental studies, linguistics and physical sciences is essential. If this source and method can be explored with discretion by Malawian writers, there will be great contributions to the historiography of the church.

Chapter eight gives a general outline of the centenary of Nkhoma Synod which took place from 24th to 27th August, 1989. It facilitates as an example of the Church's historical consciousness.

The last chapter addresses the problem of the primary historical sources of Nkhoma Synod being housed in two different countries. The one, the National Archives of Malawi, Zomba; the other, the Dutch Reformed Church Archives in Cape Town, South Africa. The aim of this chapter is to bring to the notice of church historians what volume of historical documents are available in both archives for research. In order to facilitate this problem an attempt has been made to integrate the archival sources found in these two places with their inventories. Some documents are available in both archives while most sources are only to be found in the Dutch Reformed Church Archives in Cape Town.

## ABBREVIATIONS

CCAP .....	Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian.
DRCA .....	Dutch Reformed Church Archives.
DRC .....	Dutch Reformed Church.
DRCM.....	Dutch Reformed Church Mission.
DRC (Cape Synod).....	Dutch Reformed Church Synod of the Cape.
DRC (OFS).....	Dutch Reformed Church Synod of the Orange Free State.
KS.....	Kabungwe Ka Sinodi (Synodical Committee). Kabungwe Kotsogolera ka Sinodi (Synodical Executive Committee/Moderamen).
M.....	Moderamen (Synodical Executive Committee) (Bungwe Lotsogolera).
MNA.....	Malawi National Archives.
NKHS.....	Nkhoma Synod (Papers in the Malawi National Archives.)
NSATA .....	Nkhoma Synod African Teachers' Association.
RCZ.....	Reformed Church in Zambia.
S.....	Synod.
SC.....	Synodical Committee (Bungwe la Sinodi)

PART ONE

HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS AND SOURCES: ASSESSMENT AND PROBLEMS

## CHAPTER 1

RECORDS AND SOURCE MATERIAL RELATED TO THE NKHOMA SYNOD, CCAP,  
AN HISTORICAL REVIEW

## INTRODUCTION

A survey and analysis of the written sources relevant to the history of the church in Malawi, and the Nkhoma Synod, CCAP in particular, is most revealing. These sources reveal the problems of the missionary work and the developing indigenous church. They also raise historiographical issues of considerable importance.

Discussing them in chronological order, one comes to sense the historical and historiographical developments concerned. In methodological terms historiography must be understood historically.<sup>1</sup>

## 1. MAKING HISTORY AND RELATING CHURCH HISTORY IN MALAWI

Dr David Livingstone "discovered" Lake Malawi in 1859, and on his return to Britain appealed for missionaries to work in the territory. Missionary agencies were stimulated by his appeal and before long the Gospel was preached in this part of Southern Africa known for its evil trade in human lives.<sup>2</sup>

The first missionaries were sent by the Universities' Missions to Central Africa in 1861 under Bishop Mackenzie.<sup>3</sup> In due course Scottish missionaries arrived in 1875 and 1876,<sup>4</sup> followed by the missionaries of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) in 1889.<sup>5</sup> The DRC started work in the Central Region of Malawi, ruled by Chief Chiwere. The Mvera Congregation was the first to be established.<sup>6</sup> The pioneer missionaries were the Revs A C Murray and T C B Vlok. They had been sent by the Ministers' Missionary Society organized within the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa. This society was formed in 1885. It was the result of the revivals which took place in 1860 and 1884-1886 at several places in the Cape<sup>7</sup>. Initially, it was planned to send missionaries to India, but on the

1 Breisach: *Historiography, ancient, medieval and modern*, p xi.

2 Ransford: *Livingstone's Lake* pp 285f.

3 Pachai: *Malawi: The History of the Nation*, p 85. See A G Blood: *The History of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa* 3 vols.

4 *Ibid.*, p 88

5 Cronjé: *Aan God die dank*, pp 7 ff

6 Du Plessis: *The Evangelisation of Pagan Africa*, pp 306 ff. For an overall academically written history of the Church vide C M Pauw: *Mission and Church in Malawi. The history of the Nkhoma Synod of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian 1889-1962*, w p, 1980.

7 Murray, A C: *Ons Nyasa Akker*, p 9.

advice of Dr James Stewart, who had worked in Malawi for two years, the group turned their attention to Malawi<sup>8</sup>.

In the beginning, A C Murray and T C B Vlok worked in close cooperation with the Livingstonia Mission, of which Dr Robert Laws was a missionary.<sup>9</sup> In 1903 the Cape Synod of the DRC assumed responsibility for the mission work and missionaries of the Ministers' Missionary Society, continuing the work independent of the Livingstonia Mission. In the same year, the Council of Congregations in Malawi was formed bringing together all the congregations of the DRMC to discuss matters of common interest. The Council of Congregations became the steering ecclesiastical "court".<sup>10</sup>

In 1926 the DRC (Nkhoma Synod) joined the union of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian. Subsequently, it functioned as a Presbytery of the newly formed Synod.<sup>11</sup>

In 1939 Nkhoma Mission celebrated its Jubilee of 50 years. Several early converts, among them Mrs Sara Nabanda and Mr Chimchere, were present to commemorate what the Lord had done in their lives.<sup>12</sup>

In 1956 the Presbytery of Nkhoma constituted the Nkhoma Synod when the General Synod of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian was formed.<sup>13</sup> It was a very important step taken by the union, because it brought together all the mission churches of reformed-presbyterian faith in Malawi.

In 1962 Nkhoma Synod "obtained" autonomy from the DRMC. The latter ceased to have authority over the synod. The previous years are referred to as the period of missionary enterprise and training of the indigenous Christians. The reverends Josofati S Mwale (Moderator), L N Mataka (Vice-Moderator), Killion J Mgawi (Synod Clerk) and P R Smit, a missionary (Junior Clerk) were elected to the moderamen. Thus after 65 years of missionary work the first African ministers were called to lead the indigenous Church.<sup>14</sup>

The Church was a hundred years old in 1989. It had grown from a small group of Christians into a large group of over 180,000 communicant members, excluding the catechumens and Sunday School children. To be more specific, the baptism of the first few

8 Murray, W H: *Mbiri ya Misyoni ya DRC m'dziko la Nyasa*, p 15; also Pauw: *Mission and Church in Malawi*, p 56; J du Plessis: *A History of Christian Missions in S.A.*, pp 448 ff.

9 Pauw: *op. cit.*, pp 60, 61 ff, 80.

10 *Ibid.*, pp 82, 293 ff.

11 *Ibid.*, p 276.

12 Kamnkhwani: *A Brief History of Mvera Congregation*, (unpublished B D thesis, University of the North, 1981) p 59

13 Pauw: *op. cit.* pp 360, 361.

14 *Zolamulira Sinode wa Nkhoma*, p 230.



converts in 1897 was the beginning of the ninety-six congregations presently linked together as a body forming Nkhoma Synod.

The missionary work of the Dutch Reformed Church started in 1889. The first converts were received into full membership in 1897. And Malawians were to participate in the mission as missionaries in 1903. In a sense one can speak of a centenary in 1989, 1997 and in 2003!

The history of over a century has been documented and presented at various stages. Whether this work has been done in a trustworthy way, is another question.

## 2. DISTINCTIVE PHASES OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF WHAT WAS TO BECOME THE NKHOMA SYNOD.

### 2.1 The pioneering missionary period: 1889-1903

The first documented phase of historical development is recounted in the **diaries** and **journals** of the Revs A C Murray and T C B Vlok. These documents are important for information on the earliest years. The missionaries observed their surroundings and made encounters which can relate to us the real environment in those days of the spread of the Gospel.

They also had a **log book** in which they entered a record of the fruits of their work. From 1889 to 1903 they were under the auspices of the Ministers' Mission Association of the **DRC**. **Reports** about the work were sent to this association. But since they worked in close cooperation with the missionaries of the Free Church of Scotland, they had to duplicate and send their reports to Dr Robert Laws also. This may probably explain the reason why some of the reports of the Rev A C Murray were actually written in both Dutch/Afrikaans and English, especially during the early years of mission work until October 1898, when the **DRC** took over responsibility for the mission work from the Ministers' Missionary Association. Most records were not recorded in Chicheva.

Much of what they wrote in the reports was devoted to describing their adventurous life. The book that A C Murray wrote in 1897<sup>15</sup> was mostly a recollection of his encounters in Malawi, drawn from his journals, letters, reports, diaries and memory.

15 Murray, A C: Nyasaland en mijne ondervindingen aldaar.

At that stage the Church was not developed. We read of the first two men to be baptized in 1891. These men were not the indigenous Mvera people, but from Bandawe.<sup>16</sup> The first real group of Mvera origin were baptized in 1895.<sup>17</sup>

The birth of the Church at Mvera has been documented by the missionaries. The indigenous people were unable to read the sources in Afrikaans/Dutch. For a true and honest historiography these sources are very important for research.

Unfortunately, most of the early sources have been removed from the mission Church, Nkhoma Synod, and are being housed in the DRC Archives in Cape Town in South Africa. This contributes a great deal to the problem of studying the history of the Church. However, some of them ended up in the National Archives of Malawi.

## 2.2 The missionary establishment period 1903-1925

The second phase of historical development was from 1903 to 1925 during which period the Council of Congregations was in operation. Outstanding in the Synod's historical development was the inclusion of indigenous people in the Church's decisive meetings. Names of participants in these meetings start to appear along with the missionaries' names.<sup>18</sup> Only first names, sometimes followed by clan names (e.g. Banda), were written. To identify the persons is quite a problem, because different people in the same geographical area or region had the same first names. No surnames or family names were used at that early stage. A full-fledged study is needed to identify one person's name from the other. Specific trained evangelists began to appear from 1911<sup>19</sup>. In the previous years they were taught as teacher-evangelists. The first trained evangelists included Davide, Isake, Justino, Samuel, Yoswa, Yesaya, Andreyu, Namon and Ashani.

Unfortunately their names do not appear in the minutes of the Council of Congregations. Only the book of D. W. M Murray, *Mbiri ya Misyoni* contains them<sup>20</sup>. Perhaps the names were written in the reports of the Mission Council, since the missionaries selected the students to be trained as evangelists<sup>21</sup>. The training of evangelists was an important step taken in the establishment of the Church. They helped to bring the message of Christ to thousands of people in distant places. They lived in those areas with the people and helped

16 Kamukhwani: Op. cit., p 50; cf *Mvera Log Book Reports*, 29/3/1891, p25, DRC Archives Cape Town Ref. 15/6/11/4.

17 Ibid., pp 51, 52.

18 See minutes of Council of Congregations from 1903 ff.

19 That was the year when the decision was made by the Council of Congregations, but the actual training started in 1913. Cf. W H Murray, *Mbiri ya Misyoni*, p 92

20 See Council of Congregations 1911 no. 3; W M Murray, p 92.

21 All matters regarding the training of Evangelists and Ministers in the early years were always entrusted to the Mission Council, who decided when to train them.

to organise congregations and prepare them for confirmation and baptism by the missionary ministers. The records of many of the congregations were written by them: Roll books for Christians, catechumen members, indexes, children's baptisms, adult baptisms, etc. The missionaries had trained these evangelists to keep their records safe, neat and readable. As a result of their work, most congregations have preserved church records. Safekeeping was not easy and many of the records have been eaten by termites or destroyed by rains.

Another important event during this phase is the decision by the Council of Congregations to train indigenous people as ministers of the Divine Word and Sacraments. At a meeting held at Nkhoma from 12-15 September, 1923, the Council resolved as follows:

"This meeting discussed and realized that it is indeed necessary to allow some of the evangelists to continue with studies (theological studies - H A K) and ordain them so that they become ministers. As a result, after the meeting had prayed and carefully consulted each other, they selected two: Andreyia Namkumba and Namon Katengeza to enter this ministry." (My own translation of minute from Chichewa)<sup>22</sup>.

It was indeed a milestone during this period when theological training for the ministers of Malawian origin in the DRMC was initiated. Evangelists Andreyia Namkumba and Namon Katengeza were the first to be selected in 1923 for theological training as ministers<sup>23</sup>. They started their training in 1924 and completed it in 1925. The Rev Andreyia Namkumba was the first to be ordained on 8 November 1925, at Malembo<sup>24</sup>, while the Rev Namon Katengeza was the second to be ordained, on 15 November 1925 at Mvera<sup>25</sup>. At the CCAP Synod meeting in October 1926 the Rev Namkumba was to be the first African delegate representing Nkhoma Presbytery, along with five missionaries, at a synodical meeting. The Nkhoma Presbytery had joined the CCAP in the same year. The decision to join the CCAP had already been taken in 1925 and the delegation was appointed at the same time<sup>26</sup>.

Throughout this period the Mission Church documented her activities. There are minutes in Chichewa from 1903 to 1923 which were handwritten by missionaries and preserved. Details of church life and work are found in them. The missionaries played a great role

<sup>22</sup> Council of Congregations, 12-15 September 1923.

<sup>23</sup> Minutes Council of Congregations, 1923 under "Zira" (Miscellaneous) 3.

<sup>24</sup> Kamukhwani: op. cit. p 68 cf. J W L Hofmeyr, "Louis Murray", p63ff.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. p 68. It is strange that the ordination dates of these Ministers are not found in the minutes of the Council of Congregations, but in other recordings.

<sup>26</sup> Council of Congregations minutes, Nkhoma 26-29 May, 1925, pp 2-3.



during those days when the indigenous people were not intellectually developed. But there is no doubt that the Lord used the available talents of indigenous people to help the missionaries in making decisions on the Christian way of living, family life, social-cultural life and the like. Many of the rules and regulations of the Synod of Nkhoma, which was later constituted, have a bearing on the influence of the missionaries on the cultural life of the people, as they were understood from the early evangelists and ministers. The "Rules and Regulations" have been compiled over the years in a book in Chichewa titled *Zolamulira ndi Zopangana*. True to Reformed theology, only three characteristics are held to determine whether a Church is true or not. The true Church is firstly where the Word of God is proclaimed in truth; secondly where the two sacraments, i.e. baptism and holy communion, are dispensed properly as commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ, and thirdly where discipline is spiritually enforced on its members<sup>27</sup>.

The first two signs received attention, but the third, that of discipline, received the most challenging attention. The rules pertaining to Christian living and lifestyle are still revised each year and added to the text. Another dimension of the penetrative influence of the Gospel of salvation on the people can be read in this book, viz. how the Christians discerned critically between Christian character and pagan character. They tried as much as possible to distance themselves from the traditional dance called Gulewamkuru ("The Great Dance") and its pagan evil practices. They codified the pagan practices which should not be practised by believers, such as witchcraft, sorcery, superstition, the poison-cup and all sorts of such practices as are not in agreement with the Gospel.

As the number of believers increased, some sort of organisation became necessary. The indigenous ministers knew the causes of many of the problems that the growing church faced. Accordingly on the basis of their explanations, the book was written as a **guide to all church councils** when they enforced discipline and when they administered the Church in all its life and work. The cases of unfaithfulness in marriage, unlawful marriage according to Christian rites, and beer-drinking were of the greatest concern to the church councils and the Presbytery as a whole.

The years 1914-1918 were the period of World War I. This historical event affected the Church. The Malawian men were recruited as soldiers in the war. This recruitment disappointed many indigenous leaders who were aware of the political implications of the war. As a result of this, in 1915 the Rev John Chilembwe of the Providence Industrial Mission organized a resistance against the colonial rulers. John Chilembwe and most of his men were killed. Those who were caught, were shot or hanged<sup>28</sup>. This incident

<sup>27</sup> Wendel: Calvin, p 297; cf. Institutes IV.1.9.

<sup>28</sup> George Simeon Mwase: *Strike a Blow and Die*, pp 33 ff.

weakened the missionary cause of the Church. The numbers of converts dwindled, but after the war the Church began to grow again. The leadership of the Church changed.

By 1923 the translation of the Bible into Chichewa was completed and made available to the Christians. The Rev W M Murray did the work of translation full-time from 1903 to 1918. Until today this translation of the Bible is used and loved by the people. The translation of the Bible into today's Chichewa, a joint venture of the Protestants and the Catholics, is not often read in public in the CCAP.

### 2.3 The period of united missionary effort: 1926-1956

The third phase of Nkhoma Synod's historical development, 1926 to 1956, began when the Council of Congregations became Nkhoma Presbytery under the newly formed Synod of the CCAP.

In this period the indigenous people became actively involved in Church work along with Missionaries. They participated in the committees of the Presbytery of Nkhoma not only as onlookers or as assisting members, but as official leaders of the Church. Of course, all along they had played their rightful role as members, but from that point on they were also officially recognized.

The Rev Andreyo Namkumba was the first African Minister to be elected by Nkhoma Presbytery to the CCAP Standing Committee in 1925<sup>29</sup>. He was also one of the seven African delegates (the others were elders) who accompanied Missionary Ministers to a CCAP Synod meeting in Blantyre in 1926.<sup>30</sup>

In December 1934, the Nkhoma Presbytery elected the Rev Namon Katengeza as the first African Moderator, while the Rev Ashan Malenga, who had completed theological training in 1929, became the Junior Clerk (or Deputy Clerk)<sup>31</sup>. African leadership and active participation in the executive meetings of Nkhoma Presbytery helped the Church to reflect something of the African way of Church life.

The Africans never recorded their own history up to these years. But it is possible that they shared their experience with the white missionaries recording the history of the mission. A good example is that of the Rev Namon Katengeza who related to the missionaries the past

<sup>29</sup> Council of Congregations, Kasungu, September 1925, p 6.

<sup>30</sup> Council of Congregations, Nkhoma, May 1926, p 2.

<sup>31</sup> Council of Congregations, Kasungu, September 1934, p 3.

of the people who had come to receive the Gospel. He said the African chiefs were murderers and blood-thirsty. They killed whomever they wanted dead. He also spoke of the poison-cup called Mwabvi and of the slave-trade, wars and the cruel punishments inflicted upon wrong-doers. All these were a result of paganism which was cruel to people and especially to missionaries who could not proceed to proclaim the Gospel with ease<sup>32</sup>. Such oral relating of experience is very important to the Church which has not written much of its own history, but was learning the technique.

This phase also brings Nkhoma Synod into another historical association joining with the Scottish mission churches to become the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian. It took years before members of the Synods of Livingstonia, Blantyre and Nkhoma could really get to grips with this new identification. From the time the missionaries started, converts were known as members of the Free Church of Scotland, the Church of Scotland, or the Dutch Reformed Church. Today the name CCAP is mostly preferred by members. Sometimes the name is followed by the designation of the Synod to which the person belongs.

When the synods started to meet together, they influenced each other in many ways. The problem of language was one of the factors that influenced Nkhoma Synod and initiated new priorities in education. Most of the African ministers of Nkhoma Synod did not know English. They only spoke Chichewa, their own language. When they came to the meetings of the CCAP Synod, the members/delegates had to speak English in order to be understood by all others in the deliberations. It is noteworthy that the other two mission churches, those of Livingstonia and Blantyre, had already begun to teach the English language to some of their converts who had become ministers, and they spoke English fairly well.<sup>33</sup> For that reason they were able to participate in the discussions of the meetings. Thus, the Synod of Nkhoma was influenced to teach English or to recruit candidates for theological training who had some knowledge of the English language, although the language of instruction was Chichewa.

The greatest difference between the Synods of the CCAP was in the area of theological ethics, the practical application of the Gospel in the daily lives of Christians, and the liturgy. As early as 1926 Nkhoma Synod had complained about the use of liquor by Christians from Blantyre Synod. They said Christians from Nkhoma Synod were tempted to drink intoxicating drinks when they were in their mission area, while the Synod of Nkhoma agreed on total abstinence<sup>34</sup>. It is said that from the beginning of the mission at

<sup>32</sup> Retief: *op. cit.*, pp 3-5.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. The contributions of the Rev Stephen Kundecha of Blantyre Synod and the Rev Patrick Mwamlima of Livingstonia Synod at the meeting of the Missionary Council held at Livingstonia, from September 12th-18th, 1924, pp 63-75.

<sup>34</sup> Nkhoma Presbytery Minutes, Nkhoma, May 1926, p 5. resolution no. 2.



Mvera Christians were not to drink alcohol (beer). The ruling was only codified in December 1912 at the Council of Congregations held at Kongwe, and phrased as follows:

"Talamulira kuti Akristu ndi Am'klas a Misyoni yathu asamwe chiri chonse chakulodzeretsa munthu."<sup>35</sup> ["We have come to rule that Christians and catechumen members should not drink any intoxicating drinks". - My translation.]

Total abstinence is the highest ethical standard by which a Christian member from Nkhoma Synod must be identified. Members who are found drunk, are censured from membership and can only be restored on repentance of this sin. Today Blantyre Synod discourages Christians from drinking alcohol and they make a public vow not to be intoxicated.

#### 2.4 The period of indigenization of the church: 1956-1989

The three Synods of the CCAP had previously been identified as the Presbyteries of Livingstonia, Blantyre and Nkhoma. From 1956 they each became a Synod. Indigenous pastors multiplied and became the leaders of the Church. The need for indigenous leadership had been decided upon in International Missionary Councils<sup>36</sup> and also by the Missionary Council of Nyasaland<sup>37</sup>.

##### Autonomy in Nkhoma Synod

Full indigenous leadership was granted to Blantyre Synod and Livingstonia Synod in 1958 by the Scottish Missions. Nkhoma Synod became independent of the Dutch Reformed Church only in 1962 after the necessary ecclesiastical arrangements had been made between the concerned churches. From this point on African leadership developed more rapidly. The first Synod Clerk and General Secretary of Nkhoma Synod after autonomy was the Rev Killion J Mgawi, and the first Moderator the Rev Josofati S Mwale. However, from the early years of the autonomy the recording of minutes was done by the Synod Clerk assisted by the Junior Clerk, who was one of the missionary ministers. The Rev P R Smit served in this capacity for two years (after he had been Clerk of Synod for

<sup>35</sup> See page 41 of handwritten Minutes, no 9. It was very strange that the DRC Missionaries had agreed to have this ruling in the Nkhoma Synod while their home Church in South Africa is not against drinking alcohol as was the case with the Scottish Missionaries of Blantyre Synod in Malawi. It is possible that total abstinence was introduced in Malawi because the DRC Mission arose from revivalism and the pietistic tradition.

<sup>36</sup> Read the Tambaram International Missionary Council report, 1938.

<sup>37</sup> Read the Report of the Missionary Council in Nyasaland 12th-18th September 1924, Livingstonia.



many years) i.e. from 1962 to 1964, while the Rev A C Human served in the same capacity<sup>38</sup> for more than twelve years. From 1903 onwards until 1962, the missionaries recorded the minutes as clerks of councils of congregations, of presbyteries, or synods, and wrote the minutes in standard Chichewa. Because Chichewa is their second or third language, these minutes abound with uncertainties and mistakes, orthographically and grammatically. Nevertheless, they contain the central ideas that were discussed by the different bodies. One needs to read them carefully to grasp the gist of the resolutions. An exception is the Rev A C Human, who is especially remembered for his usage of the Chichewa language. He wrote it fairly well and spoke it fluently. He kept the records of the Synod from 1964 until 1979 when the Rev J G Maseko was elected Assistant General Secretary (He was already the Educational Secretary for Nkhoma Synod). Thus, it was possible for Human to take full time responsibility as Liaison Officer, a post which he had already assumed in 1975<sup>39</sup>. The Rev J G M Maseko received his theological training at Nkhoma Theological College from 1967 to 1969. He was ordained in 1970 after one year of probation. In 1971 he accepted a call to be a tutor at Nkhoma Theological College. In 1973 he was sent to Queen's College in Belfast, Northern Ireland for further studies. He returned after two years and resumed his work as tutor until 1978 when the Synod called him to be Education Secretary of Nkhoma Synod. As Assistant General Secretary the minutes of the Synod written by him, as well as those written by the Synod Clerks, were the beginning of the written sources in good Chichewa by Malawians.

### The making of a new political dispensation

The movement for indigenization entered into a period of **political resistance**, which affected the whole country including churches. The Church was confronted by a society which became uneasy and demanding its right of self-determination.

38 See 6th Meeting of Nkhoma Synod, 1964, S.1 p 5 and the 15th Meeting 1977, s. 1163 p 7.

39 See: The Constitution of Nkhoma Synod in Zolamulira 1970 pp 218 f.; also the minutes of the 15th meeting of Nkhoma Synod, 1977 S. 1163, and the 20th meeting of 1985 S. 1828. While previously the Moderature was composed of two ministers from the congregations as Moderators and Vice-moderators, the General Secretaries and their Assistants were not from congregations; but they were still part of the Moderature. The present setup is different. As from 1985, all members of the Moderature are ministers from congregations, with Clerks of Synod and Junior Clerks as recorders of minutes. All of them serve in their different capacities for two years, assuming office from the day they are elected at the Synod meeting by the Synod and returning at the next biannual Synod meeting immediately before elections are conducted. The General Secretary's office is administrative, and along with the Liaison Officer, he attends all meetings as an ex-officio member. All correspondence is in the administration of the General Secretary.

The teachers serving in the Nkhoma Synod were closely associated with the activities of the Church, such as teaching Sunday school children, catechumen members, leading the Church in singing and also preaching (as was the original practice with the teacher-evangelists of old). They resisted the Synod and stopped practising these activities in 1962<sup>40</sup>. The revolt was undoubtedly politically motivated as they were dissatisfied with many of the rules of the Synod concerning administration and the constitution. Such attitudes were unheard of before. Their behaviour was also a signal of an historical awakening. Teachers were paid by the mission being subsidised by the Government. Their participation in the work of the Church was not a personal commitment and considered as a calling. Today religious teaching is not compulsory for teachers. Therefore teachers who get involved in the Church's activities do it as committed Christians. Thus, from the evil of the revolt resulted the eventual wider involvement of members of the Church for the good of its growth.

The political unrest reached a stage when in 1964 the **Rev Chimombo**, one of the Ministers of Nkhoma Synod caused a **schism** at Mlanda CCAP because of his disobedience to Synod rules. When the Synod disciplined him, he did not want to submit. As a result the congregation was torn into two groups: one group following him, and another group obedient to the Synod. In the end the matter was settled, not in court as was originally intended, but at a discussion where political leaders and government officials were present. The Synod retained ownership of the congregation while the Rev Chimombo took leave of it in August the same year<sup>41</sup>.

Earlier in 1964, the **politicians around Nkhoma Mission Station** were dissatisfied with many things politically. As a result they brought the forbidden traditional masked dancers called **Gulewamkuru**<sup>42</sup> into the mission. This dance is paganistic and heathenish in its activities. The members swear and are usually evil-doers. They also dance to appease the spirits of dead men and ancestors. Hence the Church from the very early years disapproved of its activities and would not allow its members to join the Church. Church members who insisted associating with the masked dancers were censured (disciplined) and only restored to the Church after repentance.

When the masked dancers infiltrated the mission, the Government took a strong opposition to the practices of Gulewamkuru, because it was detrimental to the missionary work. Ngwazi Dr H Kamuzu Banda, the Life President, took a personal initiative to quell

40 The revolt was organised by the Nkhoma Synod African Teacher's Association. See minutes of their conference 10th-11th August, 1962, p 1.

41 See: Nkhoma Synod minutes, 1964 S. 117 p 23, KS. 2 p 42-43 and KS. 15 pp 46-47; KS. 258.

42 See: Nkhoma Synod Minutes KS. 241 of 21 April 1965 pp 102-103.

the strife by calling upon leaders of the Church and some individual missionaries, advising them how to live in peace and harmony<sup>43</sup>. This confrontation of the Church and political Government was an event with a new meaning to the Church's socio-political position. The Church received the support of Government in their concern and discipline.

It should be noted though that in 1974 and 1975 some of the missionaries were deported from Malawi<sup>44</sup> by the Malawi Government for various reasons. After a few years they were reinstated. The deportation of missionaries was a strong and unexpected blow to the Church by Government.

The period is important because the Government and the Church were both involved in difficult issues. Sometimes they consulted each other. In certain cases the Church just listened to what the Government did, for example in the case of the deportation of the missionaries. This illustrates the fact that the history of Nkhoma Synod is inter-related to social and political movements. Thus, secular documents are also important to describe the history of the Church and to understand its historiography.

In 1966 it was intimated that **sports and games** had been organised to take place **on a Sunday**. The Synod did not approve of it and called on its members to decide personally against participation<sup>45</sup>. Previously sports and games were activities that took place from Monday to Saturday in Nkhoma Synod, but never on Sundays. In spite of the stand taken by the Church and some of its members games are played on Sundays nowadays. The climate has changed regarding the sanctity of the Sunday, especially in the cities. Even political meetings are held on Sundays, but usually after church services.

#### **The joint theological training in the CCAP**

Another important historical dimension during the period was the establishment of the Joint Theological College of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian at Nkhoma in 1963. It was the fruit of the long search for unity in the General Synod CCAP<sup>46</sup>. All the Ministers of the CCAP were trained together. This brought in an inlet of influencing and strengthening one another spiritually, academically and intellectually. It is tragic to note that in 1974, just a decade later, the joint training crumbled with Livingstonia Synod and Biantyre Synod students withdrawing to form their own college at Kapeni, in Biantyre. However, in 1976 the General Synod moved to reestablish the Joint College near the University of Malawi, at Zomba.

43 See: Nkhoma Synod Minutes KS. 249 and 250.

44 See: Nkhoma Synod Minutes KS. 5081, KS. 2001, KS. 5704, KS. 5727(b).

45 See: Nkhoma Synod Minutes KS. 326.

46 See: Minutes of Standing Committee General Synod CCAP, Livingstonia, 26-27 May, 1961 par. 1-9.



In a further development the Anglican Council in Malawi became full members of the Zomba Theological Board. The College actually started in 1977 with students from all synods of the CCAP and the Anglican Council in Malawi.

The members of the Zomba Theological Board are drawn from the participating synods. Tutors are approved and employed by the Board on the recommendation of their synods. In terms of the training of the ministers Nkhoma Synod has entered yet another period in its history. Ministers trained in the Zomba Theological College are more in contact with other denominations which are not necessarily more acceptable to its theological approach.

The custom of sending ministers abroad for further professional training started in this period. The Reverends K Mgawi, Y Chienda, A Mndala, M Chinkhadze and G Kachaje enrolled in Great Britain for various professional training courses. In addition to that, groups of ministers were sent to South Africa for not less than six months to further their theological studies. In this way their theological horizons were widened. In the late sixties the Church resolved to send young ministers to the universities in South Africa and elsewhere so as to prepare them academically for theological degrees. The first was a teacher, Skeva Zamba. The Rev L Kamtambe was the pioneer minister followed by the Rev H Kamnkhwani and many others in later years. Some studied in other countries. The Rev J G M Kaseko opened the door, studying at Queen's College in Belfast. He was followed by the Rev Y A Chienda who studied at Fuller Theological Seminary, School of World Mission, Pasadena, USA. The Rev Duncan P Gareta (who died in 1984) opened the door to study in Kenya at Daystar Communications and the Rev J J Kamwana followed him in Kenya by studying at St. Paul's Theological Seminary, Limuru. These are only a few of the many ministers who have undertaken some kind of professional or academic study outside Malawi. It should be noted that ministers-in-training at Zomba Theological College have the opportunity of obtaining a Diploma in Theology. Many have taken advantage of this and have qualified themselves for admission by universities of their choice. Plans are under way to open a Faculty of Theology at the University of Malawi so that degrees can be conferred.

The theological education of indigenous ministers of the Church has been academically much improved. It has been a tremendous help to the Church because missionaries are phasing out. At present, Nkhoma Synod has only four ministers of the DRC serving as fraternal workers. Of these, two are in congregations, one in administration and the other a tutor at the Theological College, Zomba.

The number of ministers of Nkhoma Synod outnumbers that of the other Synods of the CCAP as a whole or perhaps of all the Protestant Churches in Malawi. It contradicts the



shame that was imputed to the missionaries of the DRC that they never concentrated on academic education in their schools, but only on the reading of the Bible. Today the Synod of Nkhoma has both a strong religious tradition of the Christian faith and also a sound academic education. It is a fact that the spiritual emphasis of Nkhoma Synod is noted among all her members in all walks of life.

### 3. HISTORICAL COMMEMORATION AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

Nkhoma Synod commemorated its past several times.

In 1959 it remembered the fact that seventy years had passed since its establishment. The occasion was celebrated at Mvera<sup>47</sup>.

In 1964 the Synod recalled seventy-five years of existence, with a festival at Nkhoma on 28 November. In the same year the Synod planned to build a small monument on Kaso mountain at Mvera where the Bible was translated into Chichewa, but nothing was done until 1973. Spiritual gatherings were arranged in all congregations<sup>48</sup>, commemorating the occasion.

In 1973 on Kaso mountain Nkhoma Synod commemorated the fifty years of the translation of the Bible into Chichewa by W H Murray.

In 1989 Nkhoma Synod celebrated her centenary from 24 August to 27 August<sup>49</sup>. This momentous occasion was witnessed by many churches, both from within Malawi and abroad.

The mere fact that the Synod celebrated all the historical occasions is very significant. It is a sure sign of historical consciousness - and it provides the future church historian with valuable source material!

But it is historiographically indicative.

One must distinguish four periods of historical development, viz. 1889-1903, 1903-1925, 1926-1956, 1956-1989.

One must differentiate two historiographical periods, viz. a period with the missionaries as leaders and a period with indigenous leaders. The official documentation and sources of the succeeding stages of development differ methodologically, theologically and contextually. The one recorded history as missionaries and wrote about their work in a

47 Mvera Station Report by P R Smit, 1960.

48 See: Nkhoma Synod minutes, KS.79, 4th September, 1964, p 58.

49 Read Chapter 8 for more information on the Centenary of Nkhoma Synod and its activities.

foreign country for home consumption. The other documented the work of an indigenous church and started to commemorate the history of the church which gave birth to them.

Thus, in writing the history of the CCAP (Nkhoma Synod) one must differentiate and study the primary sources of the official church.

## CHAPTER 2

### PUBLISHED SOURCES RELEVANT TO NKHOMA SYNOD, A SURVEY AND ANALYSIS

#### INTRODUCTION

The best known of the written sources on Malawi in general and Nkhoma Synod in particular are the books about the missionaries and their work. These books were written in a particular historical context for specific purposes.

The titles are carefully phrased and reveal the particular context and purpose in each case. When they are taken in sequence, certain patterns of development become clear.

To come to know the theological and other assumptions basic to the missionary work and history of the Church, one must study and analyse these publications.

In the process one also gains some insight into the historiographical problems of the DRC and Nkhoma Synod.

In all the books which were included in the survey, reference is made to Nkhoma Synod in one way or another.

Also included in the survey are books written on the general church history of Africa which includes material on Nkhoma Synod and the CCAP.

To systematize the evaluation, the books have been analysed chronologically, according to the date of publication.

The evaluation was done in terms of questions regarding:

a) **The identification of the writer**

It is essential to know something of the writer's background as it plays an important role in his interpretation of facts. Was he a minister or a "layman", interested in or biased towards Christian missions? Was he a liberal, a conservative Christian, a missionary or a politician? His personality can also tell us something about his handling and understanding of sources.

b) **The intention or motivation of the writer**

There is a conscious or unconscious motivation underlying these publications. The method the writer uses as well as assumptions adopted are related to his purpose or motive.

c) **The method and time of writing**

The method the writer used to gather his material has been studied to decide whether he was historically and theologically critical. The time of writing is also important for it reflects the period of historiographical development.

d) **Recognition of the book**

An attempt has been made to find out if the book has been reviewed, and by whom. These reviews, where applicable, have been analysed briefly. It goes without saying that an own opinion has been given for every book.

e) **Historiographical value**

Where necessary, the importance and historical status of the book for Nkhoma Synod has been given.

At least two periods can be distinguished within the published sources: the pre-scientific and the scientific period.

## 1. THE PRE-SCIENTIFIC PERIOD AND ITS PUBLICATIONS

**NYASALAND EN MIJNE ONDERVINDINGEN ALDAAR** by A C Murray, Amsterdam - Cape Town, 1897.<sup>1</sup>

This book was probably the first comprehensive description and narrative written in Dutch by the Rev A C Murray (1862-1935). While he was a student at the Theological Seminary of Stellenbosch, he was first a member and then secretary of the Student Missionary Association. During his final year the Lord called him to be a missionary. In 1888 he was sent out by the Ministers' Missionary Association in close cooperation with the Free Church of Scotland Mission. He became the pioneer missionary of the DRC, starting work in the North of Malawi at Kararamuka.

When the work proved unsuccessful at Kararamuka, partly because of the Rev Murray's illness and partly because of constant wars, Dr Robert Laws, a missionary of the Free

<sup>1</sup> The Rev R M Britz gave me the gist of the book.



Church of Scotland, advised him to go to the central region of Malawi in the kingdom of Chief Chiwere to do mission work among the Achewa or Achipeta or Anyanja people. Soon the Rev T C B Vlok joined him and both of them set out to establish the first permanent mission of the DRC in Malawi at Mvera in 1889. The Rev Murray retired from his Malawian missionary services in 1904 when he returned to South Africa.

Andrew Charles Murray wrote this book from a distinctly missiological point of view. He had the burning missionary zeal of one being sent to lead the heathens to salvation in Jesus Christ. He realized the great need among the Achewa people and addresses the members of his church, urging them to serve the Lord as missionaries, to offer financial support, and to pray for the work to be done. This approach and address were characteristic of the evangelical missionary writers.

The book contains the earliest information on the coming of the missionaries and the establishment of the DRC Mission at Mvera, in the central region of Malawi. It has no bibliography indicating the sources he used. The title, *NYASALAND AND MY EXPERIENCE THERE*, suggests that he relied on his personal memories and experiences. He may also have used his correspondence and journals.

The book, written in South Africa in 1897 while Murray was recuperating from an attack by a leopard at Mvera, is an invaluable source for the historiography of Nkhoma Synod.

Since it is written in Dutch/Afrikaans, it would be very useful from a historiographical point of view if it were translated into English and Chichewa.

#### **AMONG THE WILD ANGONI** by W A Elmslie, Edinburgh and London, 1899.

Dr W A Elmslie was a missionary doctor of the Livingstonia Mission who worked with Dr Laws. The book is an account of the early beginnings of the missionary work among the Angoni peoples. Their history is made up of war and bloodshed. Originally from South Africa, they were dispersed in various directions by Chaka.<sup>2</sup> Some of the Ngoni groups migrated to Malawi, fought the tribes there and settled in the northern region. As they were a warlike people, it was not easy to educate and preach the Gospel to them. Elmslie relates the difficulties faced and successes accomplished.

The people to be Christianized are described at length in sociological and anthropological terms. The readers are also "entertained" with accounts of the many activities of the converts and the Mission Church. There must be no doubt that the mission bears fruit and that God must be thanked.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. M Read: *The Angoni of Nyasaland*.

There is no bibliography to indicate the sources which he used. The information about the Ngoni migrations appears to be the result of interviews with leading figures of these people, some of whom had actually led a hard life. Is this an example of how oral tradition was used by the early missionaries? There is reason to believe that Elmslie also used some written sources such as letters and books.

The book was widely read and quoted from in Malawi, and elsewhere, and is listed in the *Bibliography of Religion in Malawi*.<sup>3</sup> It provides information on the general history of Malawi and also supplies much material for a history of the Livingstonia Synod of the CCAP. A comprehensive account of William Koyi's contribution is given in chapter nine.

The missionary motive of the author is quite clear. It is the story of a missionary; and a description of missionaries and the indigenous people they were sent to convert. It is particularly interesting that the history of the Ngoni is well pieced together from the narratives of the people themselves, but when it comes to the missionary experience of the Malawian people the missionaries speak for them! The missionary work started in 1875. Were there by 1899 when this book was written no recognizable, faithful Christian helpers who could speak for themselves?

**DAYBREAK IN LIVINGSTONIA** by James W Jack, Edinburgh and London, 1901.

Often the history of missionary work is written around the figure of a leading missionary. This book is a good example. The main purpose of the narrative is to appraise the work of Dr Robert Laws, who was a pioneer missionary of the Livingstonia Mission in Malawi.

The writer was not a missionary in Central Africa, nor a traveller. He was a Scot who was interested in the travels of the "missionary explorers", their lives and their activities. The book consists of historical sketches about the Livingstonia Mission. As a writer Jack had access to the letters and documents, both private and official, of the Mission Committee in Glasgow and Edinburgh.

He caters for the Scots Christians who admired Dr Livingstone and who were touched both by his reports of the poor conditions among the people of Malawi - slave trade and war raids, poverty, illness, disease - and by the need for missionary work. His description of local conditions and contacts with the chiefs when the missionaries arrived is important. He attempts to inform the Scots Christians of what the Livingstonia Mission was already doing in the field. In this way he wanted to inspire them.

<sup>3</sup> The book was reviewed by the *Journal of Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain* in 1899, Vol XXIX, pp 191-192.

The writer also gives a brief account of the missionary work of the DRC at Mvera in Chief Chiwere's country, undertaken in 1889 by the Rev A C Murray (pp 176-179). This serves as a reminder that the DRC and the Scots missionaries had close contact during the early years.

The book tells of African helpers, particularly Zulus, who came to help with the missionary undertaking. But again, they, and the helpers the missionaries trained, do not speak for themselves.

Typical of the pre-scientific period, the writer has used written sources but has provided neither footnotes nor a bibliography.

The book is known and has been listed in the *World Bibliographical Series (Religion)* in Malawi by the University of Malawi.<sup>4</sup> Quite a few writers have referred to it, especially during the recent awakening of church historiography.

#### **ELF JAREN IN MIDDEN AFRIKA** by T C B Vlok, Cape Town, 1901.<sup>5</sup>

In English the title would be "Eleven Years in Central Africa".

T C B Vlok was one of A C Murray's co-workers who started mission work at Mvera in 1889.

He studied at the Wellington Missionary Institute. At the urging of A C Murray, he joined him as a missionary in spite of his father's opposition. He died in 1936 after forty years and more of missionary work.

Vlok writes about the missions of the Ministers' Missionary Society in Malawi. In South Africa the Anglo-Boer war was still raging. During the war the DRC was accused, especially by English and Scots people, of being hostile to missionary work.<sup>6</sup>

In the introduction the Rev A C Murray points out that **the book was written to spread knowledge concerning the missions of the DRC and to urge its members to support missions with greater fervour.** It was also a reminder of Christians' responsibility towards the many people who still lived in darkness. He called on the readers to pray for those who had been saved through Jesus Christ, those who were still in darkness so that they might accept Him as Saviour, and the missionaries who were giving their lives to preach Christ.

4 Boeder: *World Bibliographical Series*, Malawi.

5 An English summary of this book was made for me by Prof W J van der Merwe in 1988.

6 Cf. The observations of the Rev J du Plessis, secretary of the DRC, at the end of the book.

He asked members of the home churches to pray for more labourers in the mission field, especially for Malawi.

The author himself states that he wrote the book to share his experience as a missionary called by God to work in Malawi.

He starts by giving an account of how the Lord called him to be a missionary in Malawi; how the work was initiated at Mvera, and his transfer to and work at Livilizi and Nkhoma. Vlok elaborates on how the DRC missionaries go about fulfilling their calling. He recounts the development of the missionary work in all the mission stations, including outposts, and pays attention to the evangelists, youth, printing, education<sup>7</sup> and industries.

The detailed description is based on his own experience and observations. There is no evidence that he used other sources. Thus, Vlok's personality and views of the missionary work in Malawi come through.

The book was written in Afrikaans as early as 1901. Like many others, it is not known in Malawi and therefore not used as reference by Malawian writers.

Some of the important details provided by Vlok include the information that Livilizi Mission Station was started by Scots missionaries but was later passed on to the DRC mission.<sup>8</sup>

He mentions that fifty evangelists received financial support from America and that reports of their work were sent to the donors. There were also evangelists supported by people in South Africa.

He calls attention to the dropping-out of some of the early Christians. From the early years, the Rev Vlok noted the advance of Islam, sectarian churches and also the Roman Catholic Church. He discusses the contacts of indigenous people with some of the non-committed Christian whites.

His description of the social and cultural life of the people is generally based on careful observation and investigation. However, there are inaccuracies. According to him the children were mainly occupied with hunting. In addition to that he points out that people lived only by hunting and gathering wild fruit. This is not entirely true. Although people

<sup>7</sup> Cf. J L Pretorius: "The story of Education in Malawi, 1875-1941 in *Malawi, Past and Present*, edited by W Smith et al.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Murray: *Mbiri ya Misyoni ya DRC m'dziko la Nyasa*, p 42.



still hunted, by Vlok's time they also had gardens in which they grew maize, peas and other crops.<sup>9</sup>

Sometimes Vlok emphasizes one aspect while neglecting another. He writes about the British government in establishing Nyasaland as a colony, and the confrontations of the British officials with the local people on hut tax.<sup>10</sup> Yet he makes no reference to the Malawian participants in mission work. Although he does name his fellow-workers at Livali and Nkhoma, he omits to mention the indigenous helpers.

On the whole, the impression gained of Vlok is that of a spiritual man, given to prayer, and relating all mission work to the Lord. His is the first comprehensive record of the DRC Mission and its early work.

It would be useful if this book were translated into English and Chichewa.

**A THOUSAND MILES IN THE HEART OF AFRICA** by J du Plessis, Edinburgh and London, 1905.

The Rev J du Plessis served as General Mission Secretary of the DRC Missionary Work (1903-1910). In 1916 he was appointed professor at the Theological Seminary of Stellenbosch. In 1930 he was removed from his chair after being tried for unconfessional views.<sup>11</sup> He dedicated himself to missionary work and wrote several books on the evangelization of Africa, among them *A Thousand Miles in the Heart of Africa* (1905); *Gaat dan henen. Handleiding tot de studie der zending* (1909); *A history of Christian missions in South Africa* (1911); *Thrice Through the Dark Continent during the years 1913-1916* (1917); *The Evangelisation of Pagan Africa* (1929).

The writer's intention was to inform people, especially English Christians, about the mission work done by the DRC in South Africa. The DRC was accused of being negative towards mission work, because its activities were unknown. He writes of the vigorous foreign mission work of the DRC and draws attention to its desire to extend "Christ's Kingdom among the uncivilized in this colony and the heathen both within and without the colony ..." (p 18).

In the following chapter I will deal with this statement and its implications.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Kamnkhwani, p 6; also A C Murray : *Reisjoernaal*, report July - August, 1889, 3 2/1 DRC Archives, Cape Town.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. J McCracken: *Politics and Christianity in Malawi, 1875-1940*.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Erasmus: *Die bediening van Johannes du Plessis, (1863-'935)*

Prof J du Plessis based this book on his own experiences and observations as a traveller. He personally interviewed missionary friends and kept his information in letters and journals while in Central Africa.

Although he used and referred to written sources, there is no bibliography. Nevertheless, since it is based on documentary evidence, this book contains the beginnings of a scientific approach to historiography.

The book contains a mass of early historical information on Malawi and Nkhoma Synod. Its great value lies in the description of the situation in which the missionaries found themselves and the problems they coped with. The book was acclaimed by *The Journal of Royal Commonwealth Society*.<sup>12</sup>

**LAWS OF LIVINGSTONIA: A NARRATIVE OF MISSIONARY ADVENTURE AND ACHIEVEMENT** by W P Livingstone, London, 1921.

The writer was an editor of the *Monthly Record*, a church magazine of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland.<sup>13</sup>

He was commissioned by the Foreign Mission Committee of the United Free Church of Scotland to write this book commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the Livingstonia Mission, founded in 1874. It focuses on Dr Robert Laws, the man who worked in Malawi as a missionary for many years and inspired many church members.

Livingstone used the written documents of Dr Laws, letters which he received from elsewhere, and his own letters. "For half a century", it is said, "he has methodically filed every letter he has received and a copy of every one he has written, and since he entered Africa has kept every document bearing on the work of the mission". The writer read over 13 000 pages of letters (less than half of the total quantity).

Since this is a biography the focus is not on the history of the Church. However, some references to the early beginnings of the Church are important for the CCAP, such as the description of the contact which Dr Laws had with the local chiefs in those early years.

For all he did in Malawi, Dr Laws gave all honour to the Lord who sent him. In these pages one meets a missionary who lived up to his religious beliefs.

<sup>12</sup> Vol 36 (1904-1905) p 36.

<sup>13</sup> Johnston: *Robert Laws of Livingstonia*, p 173.

**ATTIE HOFMEYR VAN NYASALAND** by J W L Hofmeyr, Stellenbosch, 1921.<sup>14</sup>

In English the title would be "Attie Hofmeyr of Nyasaland".

The title of the book is self-explanatory: it is a biography of the Rev A L Hofmeyr, a minister of the DRC who worked in Malawi as a missionary from 1901-1919. The writer, the nephew of the Rev Attie Hofmeyr, apparently used some written sources to compile this biography, which naturally is more concerned with the man than with the church history of his time. The Rev Hofmeyr served at various mission stations in Malawi, and was involved in education, the translation of the Bible, and also helped in the writing of books in Chichewa. He also wrote *Het land langs het meer*, which means, "The Land next to the Lake".

Of special interest in the biography are the details of the complex interrelationship between the Murray, Louw and Hofmeyr families, most of whom were and are still involved in DRC mission work, especially in Malawi.

The writer paints a rather sombre picture of missionary work in Malawi, because the book was written in 1921 just after World War I (1914-1918), which also affected Malawi, a British Protectorate. He notes that not many people were willing to dedicate themselves or give financial support to mission work.

The statistics given of the Mission Church in Malawi (Nkhoma Synod) (pp 147 ff) and the reference to Islam as a problem in missionary advance (pp 62 ff) are typical of the missionary motive. As Islam was opposed to Christianity, the missionaries were hampered in evangelizing people in the areas where this religion was practiced.<sup>15</sup>

The book was written to give readers an insight into the experience of a missionary. It urges them to dedicate themselves to missionary work through prayer and self-giving. The theological assumptions typical of the evangelicals are obvious: the Holy Spirit, prayer, missionary activity in the spreading of the Word of God.

**EVANGELISATION OF PAGAN AFRICA, A HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONS TO THE PAGAN TRIBES OF CENTRAL AFRICA** by J du Plessis, Cape Town and Johannesburg, 1929.

This volume consists of "four books" each discussing a different phase in the history of Christianity in Africa. It begins with a general survey of the African continent, its peoples, and the early history of the coming of the Europeans and their attempts to evangelize the

<sup>14</sup> The Rev R M Britz gave me the gist of this Afrikaans book in 1989.  
<sup>15</sup> Cf. Beidelman: *Colonial Evangelism*, pp 83-87.



Africans. The countries south of the equator receive the most attention. The writer feels that the coming of Christianity by missionaries has brought into Africa a "controlling force" (p 7) and that Christianity can return to Africans what civilization can take away, namely moral behaviour and religion.

Book IV discusses the coming of Christianity to East Africa and Malawi is discussed in this section. The pioneering journeys of Dr David Livingstone and the coming of the Universities Missions to Central Africa are dealt with in detail. Much attention is paid to the Free Church of Scotland and her activities in the eastern region of Malawi in places along the lake shore: Cape Maclear, Bandawe and Livingstonia.

The Church of Scotland missions (pp 283-289) and the DRC missions (pp 290-300) are considered as belonging to the western region of Malawi since the places where they started mission work were not along the lake shore. The Church of Scotland (Blantyre Synod) is mentioned (pp 301-306), but not in the same context as the Free Church of Scotland (Livingstonia Synod). The civil administration of the missionaries of Blantyre Mission, which included flogging indigenous evildoers and sometimes executing sentences of capital punishment is openly discussed (p 303). The DRC (Nkhoma Synod) is considered very briefly (pp 306-308). The mission fields started by the other DRC synods of South Africa - in Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) by the Orange Free State Synod in 1899 (p 308) and in Portuguese East Africa (Mozambique) by the Transvaal Synod - also receive attention. Historically this is important, because the other DRC missions in Zambia and Mozambique were initiated or inspired by the missionaries from Malawi.

Written in 1929, this book is a milestone in the development of the scientific approach to historical writing. The writer uses written sources and makes use of footnotes to indicate sources and page references. This is very different from other writings of the same period which only mention the sources without exact reference to pages.

The book is well known and much referred to. It is a good example of church historical writing.

**THE ROMANCE OF BLANTYRE** by the Rev Alexander Hetherwick, London, 1930.

Dr Alexander Hetherwick was a missionary of the Church of Scotland in Malawi from 1883 to 1929. He was chairman of the Chichewa Bible Translation Board in 1900. He also served as a senior and unofficial member of the Nyasaland Legislative Council from 1908 to 1913 and 1922 to 1925. His publications include an *Introductory Handbook to the Yao language*, a *Manual of the Nyanja Language*, and a treatise on *The Gospel and the African*.



This book is a compilation of lectures delivered to Divinity students at Scottish Universities and was aimed at providing the students with information about the Blantyre Mission in Southern Malawi and how it was founded.<sup>16</sup> The focus is on the initiative of Dr David Livingstone, urging his countrymen to do mission work and establish a colonial settlement among the people of Malawi<sup>17</sup>. It was hoped that some of the students might themselves feel called to this cause of the Church of Scotland.

Much secular history is woven together with church history in these lectures. Missionary work is seen as an attempt to civilize a people. Hetherwick points out the role of the missionaries in the founding of the church in a country which initially did not have a (European) government, railways, medical care, education and the like. A typical British ideological and theological world view can be sensed!<sup>18</sup>

The last chapter of this book refers to the DRC Mission and the establishment of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian Synod, 1924. The DRC Mission only joined the CCAP in 1926, when Blantyre Synod was celebrating its jubilee.

The writer does not mention the documents he used. The book is familiar to modern writers although not very widely referred to or quoted from and is listed in the *Bibliography of Religion in Malawi*.

*ONS NYASA AKKER* by A C Murray, Stellenbosch, 1931<sup>19</sup>.

In English the title would be "Our Field Nyasa".

The writer sets out to give an historical account of the mission work of the DRC from when it was first being considered in South Africa up to the establishment of the DRC Mission in Nyasaland. According to him, mission work is directly related to revivalism. He relates the revival of 1860 and 1884-1886 in South Africa to the mission work undertaken by the DRC and sees it as a record of the wonderful deeds which the Lord has done. All along he expounds the Biblical and theological reasons for missionary work. He acclaims the greatness of God in all missionary activities.

Following on a background description of the beginnings at Mvera until the establishment and extension of the work in 1930, a history of the Mission is given. Problems and successes as well as developments that took place are pointed out. The writer also shows

16 Cf. A C Ross: *The origins and development of the Church of Scotland Mission, Blantyre, Nyasaland, 1875-1926*. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Edinburgh, 1968.

17 Cf. McCracken: *op. cit.*, pp 157 ff.

18 Cf. McCracken: *op. cit.*, pp 173 ff.

19 An English summary of this book highlighting the main points, was made for me by Prof W J van der Merwe in 1988.

how events in South Africa affected the DRC mission work in Malawi. Thus, reference is made to the Anglo-Boer war, which caused problems in mission work.

The account is also steeped in a theological sense of history. The power of God is recognised in the course of history. But the writer keeps to historical facts as much as possible. Because of the early connections between the DRC Mission and the Livingstonia Mission, it was possible to construct the unity of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian.

Among the mass of historical material, he tells of the Women's Association of Transvaal which supported the Rev A G Murray in starting mission work in Mozambique.

The book is written in Afrikaans. As such it is only quoted by South African scholars. It has no bibliography. The author uses material which he himself wrote as a pioneer missionary and relies on his memory.

**LOUIS MURRAY - DIE LEEUEHART** by J W L Hofmeyr. Cape Town, Stellenbosch, Bloemfontein [Undated]<sup>20</sup>.

The book is written in Afrikaans by the Rev Hofmeyr. In English the title would be "Louis Murray the lionheart".

It is a biographical sketch of the Rev Louis Murray who was a missionary of the DRC in Malawi at Malembo from 1907 to 1925. He was one of the main pillars during the second phase of the DRC missionary enterprise in Malawi.

The aim of the writer was to inspire missionary zeal amongst the youth. Thus Louis Murray is presented as a hero with whom they could identify.

This book is not a scientific record. However, the writer mentions that the Rev W H Murray, while working in Malawi, ordained the first Malawian minister of Nkhoma Synod, the Rev Andreyo Namkumba on 8 November, 1925, at Malembo (p 63). This was indeed an important event in the church history of the indigenous people.

**DONALD FRASER OF LIVINGSTONIA** by Agnes R Fraser, London, 1934.

After the death of the energetic spiritual leader, Dr Donald Fraser, in August 1933, the Church of Scotland asked his wife Agnes R Fraser to write his biography. In this way "an outstanding" missionary was to be remembered.

<sup>20</sup> An English summary was made for me by the Rev R M Britz in 1989.

Agnes Fraser was a medical doctor who had worked alongside her husband. She has also written a book titled **Teaching Healthcraft to African Women**.

The book relates the life of Donald Fraser from his birth to the end of his life.<sup>21</sup> While a student he became one of the pioneers of the Students Volunteer Missionary Union and was appointed its travelling secretary. He served as Moderator of the United Free Church of Scotland from 1922 to 1923. In 1925 he was recalled to Scotland to be one of its Foreign Mission Secretaries.

Sources used are not tabulated in a bibliography. The writer depends mostly on "memories" and quotes from Dr Donald Fraser's "letters and reminiscences". She also admits to having left out "many facts and numerous friends" to allow space for the less familiar tale of the years they spent in Africa. No church records are used. The book is known and used as reference by some Malawian writers.

**ROBERT LAWS OF LIVINGSTONIA** by James Johnston, London, Glasgow, Edinburgh, 1935.

This second book on Dr Laws' life was written after his death on August 6, 1934. Dr Laws' death and the stories told about him at his funeral moved Johnson to write the book. He also wanted to supply information to future missionaries.

The writer does not identify the sources from which he gained his information.

Reference is made to the book by other writers. It is important for the history of Nkhoma Synod because of its references to Dr Laws' missionary colleagues. But once again no mention is made of the part played by the indigenous people who helped Dr Laws in his mission work. Nothing is said of how he experienced the help rendered by the indigenous people while he was compiling a Chichewa dictionary and translating the Bible (New Testament) into Chichewa or Tumbuka. Not even their names are given.

**OP PAD** by William Murray, Cape Town, 1940.<sup>22</sup>

In English the title would be "On the way".

Dr William Murray, a missionary in Malawi from 1892 to 1937, wrote this book at the request of his colleagues and others. The aim was to have a record of early missionary work in Malawi from its inception in 1889.

<sup>21</sup> Taken from the Dictionary of National Bibliography, 1931-1940.

<sup>22</sup> "The Reminiscences of the Pioneer Years by a Former Missionary in Nyasaland" An English summary of this book was made for me by Prof W J van der Merwe in 1988.

Livlezi was the first mission station he was sent to. Before long, however, he was called to take the place of the Rev A C Murray at Mvera, because the pioneer missionary was very ill.

He gives many factual details of his work among the people. He tells of his encounter with slave raiders and the proclamation of Nyasaland as a British Protectorate when he was a go-between for Chief Chivere with the British government.

The development of mission work at Mvera is described, as well as the problems encountered, such as the problem of Mwabvi (the poison cup). It is interesting to note that the first Christians decided in favour of total abstinence. Even today total abstinence is an official rule for members of Nkhoma Synod.

He also mentions the fact that the evangelists who went out to evangelize for a fortnight at a time, often in pairs, had to submit written reports of their work. This was a very important undertaking by the indigenous people. The problem is that nothing is known about these reports. Have they been destroyed?

He also tells of the translation of the Bible into Chichewa (previously called Chinyanja). In 1900 the Livingstoria Mission, Blantyre Mission, the DRC Mission and the Zambezi Industrial Mission decided at Fort Johnston (Now Mangochi) to translate the Bible into Chichewa. It is significant that Murray mentions a list of Biblical terms which was drawn up to serve as guidelines for the translators. The Gospel of Matthew was translated by the Rev A C Murray and Dr A Hetherwick. William Murray gives a systematic account of how the translation of the Bible progressed until he was called as full-time translator. He worked from 1915 to 1918 on Kaso Mountain. The complete Bible was finally published in 1923. Murray lauds the fact that the different missions worked so closely together in translating the Bible.

The writer does not mention the sources from which he drew the facts for his book. As one of the early pioneer missionaries to Malawi, it is quite possible that he used his journals or the journals of A C Murray for his survey. Since he had been serving in Malawi for a long time, he had the advantage of being able to use previous records.

This book again reveals the theological conceptions typical of the DRC. Missionary work is considered as an act of God. References to Biblical texts abound as an indication of the authority of the Bible.

William Murray writes in a detailed factual and systematic way. He elaborates on the slave trade and his attempts to rescue some of the people sold to slavery by the local chiefs. It



shows that he cooperated with the local people and that they trusted him. He reports that at times the lives of the missionaries were threatened. Typical of the DRC missionaries he was ecumenically minded, visiting other missions, such as the Moravian Mission and Scottish Missions to learn from them. Malawian Christians still remember him as "A Msiti Marre". He did not regard himself as better than the people among whom he worked.

In the first five chapters he concentrates on those events which are essential to an understanding of the history and theology of the indigenous church. One must understand the situation in which the missionaries found themselves. They were always identified with the colonists. In a sense, this both helped and hindered them. They were naturally forced to be the intermediaries between the two strong powers - the chiefs in whose areas they resided and the colonial government in whose country they had come to preach. When they sided with the colonists against the chiefs, it led to trouble.

William Murray played an important role in the formation of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian. Strangely enough, no mention is made of this. He mentions that the first Malawian ministers of the DRC were the Revs Namon Katangeza and Andreyo Namkumba, but the development of the training of local ministers is not given enough attention.

The book is not known by Malawians since it is written in Afrikaans, but South African writers know and refer to it.

On the whole this book can be a great help to the historical investigations into the history of Nkhoma Synod. It would be worthwhile if the book were made available in English and Chichewa.

**RONÉL VERTEL NOG MEER VAN NIASSALAND** by Miss Pietjie de Beer, Stellenbosch, 1947.<sup>23</sup>

The title can be translated as "Ronél tells more about Nyasaland"

The book was published and distributed in 1947 by "Die Christen Studentevereniging van Suid-Afrika" (Students' Christian Association of South Africa) in Stellenbosch.

It was the second book on Malawi by the same author. Her first book was *Ronél, 'n VSB-werkster in ons Niassa-sendingveld* (Ronél, a WMA worker in our Nyasaland mission field). The "Vroue Sendingbond" (VSB) was a DRC women's society which promoted and

<sup>23</sup> The main points of this book were translated for me from Afrikaans into English by the Rev R M Britz in 1989.

supported missionary work. They supported Miss Pietjie de Beer, a life-long missionary worker in Malawi.

Miss de Beer wrote this book during her retirement with the purpose of encouraging DRC youth to become missionary workers.

Distribution of the book among members of the VSB (Women's Missionary Association) and CSV (Students' Christian Association) is encouraged in the preface.

The significance of the book is that it gives an account of missionary work by women amongst Malawian women and children in the field of education and health care.

There are reflections on the country, its fauna and flora, the indigenous people and their culture and rituals. Dr W H Murray's translation of the Bible into Chichewa (the other translators are not mentioned) which he completed in 1922 is also reflected upon (p 26ff).

The mission work of the Roman Catholic Church and that of the DRC in Mozambique as well as the way in which the DRC was ill-treated is mentioned (pp 26 ff).

The book is written in a romantic style. It belongs to the second phase of missionary enterprise when everything, including the country, was much more developed.

**VEROWERINGS VIR CHRISTUS: die lewe van dr W H Murray van Nyasaland by Dr M V Petief, Stellenbosch, 1948<sup>24</sup>.**

In English the title would be "Victories for Christ".

The book was written after the death of Dr W H Murray, the missionary in Malawi, who worked there from 1894 to 1937.

All but chapter one was translated from Afrikaans into English to inform English readers about the great mission work done by the DRC in Nyasaland (Malawi). The title of the English edition, which was published in 1958, is **William Henry Murray of Nyasaland**. It was translated by M H le Roux and M M Oberholster-le Roux, and has been included in the survey of books in this thesis. The reason why chapter one is not translated is not stated.

Chapter one gives a short historical survey of the DRC mission work in Southern Africa from 1652 when Jan van Riebeeck established a settlement, up to about 1945. Special

<sup>24</sup> An English summary was made for me by the Rev R M Britz in 1989.

reference is made to Malawi, embracing the early pioneering phase of missionary work (pp 20 ff).

This historical survey in chapter one follows the pattern of a book by Prof J du Plessis, **History of Christian Missions**<sup>25</sup> in which he tells of the early attempts at missionary work among the Hottentots by the Dutch colonists and the Moravian missionary Georg Schmidt from 1737 (pp 15 ff), as well as missionary work in Malawi.

**NA NYASSALAND MAAR NIE MET DIE OSSEWA** by the Rev A F Louw, Cape Town, Somerset West, 1948.<sup>26</sup>

The title could be translated into English as: "To Nyasaland, but not by ox wagon."

The writer, the Rev A F Louw (Sr) was a DRC minister in Stellenbosch and was also the secretary of the Foreign Mission Commission of the DRC in South Africa, Cape Synod. Although he was not a missionary he was interested in publishing a book about the missionary work done by the church of which he was secretary. He used the information gained from letters written by missionary travellers from South Africa who visited Malawi, which were published in the journal **Die Kerkbode** in 1947 and 1948.

Much of the contents tell about the travellers' adventures. They expected to travel to and in Malawi by wagon as in the olden days but found that things had changed. The country had developed beyond recognition. The machila which were used in the olden days for carrying Europeans in places without roads were no longer used (p 15).

Although this is not a historical record, there are some historical references. Two accounts of the life and work of Dr William H Murray, who died in May, 1947, are included, one by the Rev J G Olivier (pp 77-79), the other by the Rev J A Retief (pp 79 f). These accounts are in the form of eulogies.

The book belongs to a third phase of missionary enterprise starting after World War I (1919) up to the period after World War II (1948).

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Du Plessis: **A history of Christian Missions in South Africa**, chapters I-VII.  
<sup>26</sup> An English summary was made for me by the Rev R M Britz in 1989.

**MBIRI YA MISYONI YA DRCM M'DZIKO LA NYASA** by William H Murray, Nkhoma, 1948.

In English the title would be "The history of the DRC Mission in Nyasaland".

This is the first book dealing with the history of the DRC Mission to be written in Chichewa. It is a collection of articles published in the church magazine **Kuunika** formerly called **Mthenga**. They were written by Dr W H Murray between the years 1935 to 1939. They were collected and edited (with minor additions) to describe the period 1889-1948.

The anonymous compiler of the book does not give any reasons for compiling the articles. But on reading the foreword and the first chapter, one gains the impression that Dr W H Murray's death in 1947 might have been an incentive. The foreword gives an account of the work that W H Murray and his uncle A C Murray, the pioneer missionary of the DRC, did in Malawi over a period of fifty years. The compiler explains why the DRC began its mission work in Malawi, how it started in Mvera and why it grew so extensively.

The book contains names of almost all the important figures, including names of Malawians.

The book is written in Chichewa and as such is not known by critical reviewers. It is not referred to by historians in Malawi and is not listed in the **Bibliography of Religion in Malawi**. However, this book is very important for the history of the Nkhoma Synod, since it has been written for Malawians.

**KWAYERA: MBIRI YA MISYONI YA DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH M'NORTHERN RHODESIA** by Dr J M Cronjé, Fort. Jameson (Now Chipata, Zambia), 1952.

In English the title of this book would be "Light: A history of the DRC Mission in Northern Rhodesia". "Kwayera" has a biblical meaning taken from Gen. 1:3 :-

'And God said, "Let there be light", and there was light.'

The writer, Dr J M Cronjé, a DRC minister was ordained at Madzimoyo in the Reformed Church in Zambia in 1937. He served the Lord at Malherbe from 1938, returning to Madzimoyo in 1941 and going on to Chipata in 1944. In 1945 he was appointed lecturer at Madzimoyo Theological School, a post which he held until he returned to South Africa in 1960. In South Africa he was called to minister to the Oberholzer congregation (DRCA) and later became organizing Mission Secretary in the DRC, OFS. In 1971 he was appointed the second General Mission Secretary of the General Synod of the DRC in South Africa in Pretoria, a post which he held until 1979 when he retired. In 1980 he was



offered the post of Director of Missiological Research Council of the University of Pretoria,<sup>27</sup> and in 1983 he became its Senior Researcher. Dr Cronjé has written a number of historical books in Afrikaans. He also wrote one in English with the title **Born to Witness**.<sup>28</sup> It gives a brief historical survey of the churches resulting from the missionary work of the DRC.

The author refers to Gen. 1:3 because he feels it is an apt description of the DRC Mission in Zambia. He starts with a review of the historical background of the DRC in South Africa. In 1652 Jan van Riebeeck came from Holland to settle in Cape Town. DRC congregations were established from that time on. He tells of the mission work of this church among the people in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Botswana, the Sudan and Malawi. He gives more detailed information about the DRC mission in Malawi at Mvera as it forms the basis of the mission work of the DRC in Zambia at Mpezeni.

In 1897 the Rev A C Murray intended to do mission work at Mpezeni in Zambia. His attempt failed because of the war between the Angoni and the Europeans. But "the Lord had opened up the way" for him when in 1898 he sent two evangelists to investigate the possibility of starting a DRC mission. It was at the request of Chief Mpezeni who was in prison at the time. The evangelists returned and assured him that the Angoni were willing to receive missionaries.

A C Murray consulted the DRC Mission Council (Cape Synod). Because the Cape Synod was already involved in Malawi it was decided to invite the Synod of the OFS to send missionaries to Northern Rhodesia (Zambia).

The first missionaries of this church were the Rev P J Smit and the Rev J M Hofmeyr. They started off from Mvera and arrived at Magwero in July, 1899.

The mission work of the DRC in Zambia is therefore often associated with that of Malawi.

Dr J Cronjé wrote the book at the request of the DRC Mission Council (OFS) to celebrate fifty years of its work in Zambia in 1949.

The book is of historical importance to Nkhoma Synod because the Malawian evangelists were the first to contact the people of the area of Chief Mpezeni, where the mission work was started. It notes that the Lord also used indigenous people, the two Malawian evangelists, for the extension of his Kingdom in this world.

<sup>27</sup> Jaarboek van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerke 1989 p 140.

<sup>28</sup> Dr J M Cronjé, **Born to Witness: A concise history of the churches born out of the mission work of the Dutch Reformed Church (Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk) of South Africa** (This book is discussed later in this chapter)

It is also of historical importance to the Reformed Church in Zambia because it tells of the good relationship between the two mission churches which came about through the missionary zeal of the two DRC Synods in South Africa.

In chapter four the writer describes how the indigenous people of the Reformed Church became involved in mission work in response to the same "Great Commission". This writer does not neglect to mention the role played by indigenous people. It serves as a corrective, for historians writing missionary history often ignore or underplay the role of indigenous people.

The sources of his historical investigation have not been tabled. It is evident, however, that the writer used documentary sources such as reports, minutes of the mission councils, books, and perhaps also relied on oral sources.

## 2. THE SCIENTIFIC PERIOD AND ITS PUBLICATIONS

One could say that the late 1950s marked the beginning of a scientific period in mission historiography, although not all publications since then can be classified as scientific.

**THE PLANTING OF CHRISTIANITY IN AFRICA** by C P Groves, London, 1954, 1955, 1958.<sup>29</sup>

The writer was professor of missions in the Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham.

Volume II of this well known survey covers the period 1840-1878 and deals with the missionary journals of Dr David Livingstone in Central Africa. His reports on Africa helped to open up the way for Europeans to enter Africa, especially Central Africa. He desired to put a stop to the evil slave trade. At the same time he wanted to pave the way for commerce and for the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Scottish missions of the Free Church of Scotland and the Church of Scotland started in Malawi after Livingstone's death in 1873. Chapter nine describes the establishment in 1875 and 1876 of two Scottish missions in Malawi, (resulting in Livingstonia Synod and Blantyre Synod respectively).

During the period 1878-1914 Europeans came to Africa both as missionaries and colonists.

Information on the mission agencies is very scanty. Little information is given concerning the Presbyterian Churches and the DRC and their missionary work in Malawi.<sup>30</sup> (pp 233-

<sup>29</sup> Vols II (1840-1878) III (1878-1914), IV (1914-1954)

234). However, in the reports on education more detailed reference to their work is made (p 236).

Although the sources of his historical investigation have not been tabulated in a systematic bibliography, the writer has shown them in footnotes. He used books, reports and annals.

In Volume IV the writer simply gives a concise historical record of some of the mission churches in Malawi. The formation of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian by the Scottish missions and the DRC Mission is covered in two pages (p 199-200).

Particular attention is given to the effects of World War I (1914-1918) and the uprisings, such as John Chilembwe's in 1915, as well as the formation of new independent churches in Malawi and in other countries of Africa. The development of the churches and their attempts at unification are also discussed.

Groves helps one to become familiar with the context within which the missionary work in Africa and Malawi was initiated and developed. His historical characterization is most enlightening. One realizes just how much of missionary work is interrelated geographically and politically.

In my opinion, his motive in writing this book is to depict the spread of Western Christian civilization in the world. He surveys the planting of the church always with reference to the development of Western colonialism. Accordingly, there is little distinction between the church and the government, especially the British government.

**THE STORY OF THE DRC Mission by J L Pretorius, Nyasaland Journal, Vol 10, No 1, 1957.**

JOHAN LOUW PRETORIUS (Sr) was a DRC missionary (Cape Synod). He worked in Malawi from 1929 to 1967 and briefly in Zambia.

When his first wife died in 1941, he married Dr Pauline Murray, daughter of Dr William Murray. He was head of the Teachers' Training School and Education Secretary of the mission from 1939. During 1948-1949 he was a visiting lecturer at the University of London. Offered a Carnegie grant, he went to America on a study session of four months in 1949. When he returned to Malawi, he assumed his responsibilities as full time principal from 1950 to 1959. During 1954-1956 he was a member of the Legislative Council of the Nyasaland Protectorate. In 1959 he was elected as representative of Nyasaland in the Federal Parliament of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, a post which he held until 1961 when Malawi obtained internal self-government. In 1962 he went to work as a missionary teacher in Zambia under the auspices of the DRC of the OFS where he was appointed



principal of the large Teachers' Training School of the Christian Council in Zambia at Serenje. Thereafter, he returned to Malawi in 1964 and started a mission literacy programme for adult education called Ukani. Soon he was appointed censor by the Censorship Board of Malawi, a post which he held until he died in 1967. He is buried at Nkhoma.<sup>30</sup>

Pretorius writes as a missionary appraising the activities of the DRC Mission in Malawi. He wrote in English so that the English-speaking people of Malawi could read it. Most of the literature concerning the DRC Mission in Malawi is written in Afrikaans.

It seems likely that he obtained his information from books and reports written on Nkhoma Mission.

He also began to translate into English some of the most important chapters of the book *Op Pad* by Dr W H Murray. His wife, Dr Pauline Pretorius, gave me the two chapters (9 & 10) which her husband completed before his death.

**WILLIAM MURRAY OF NYASALAND** by Dr M W Retief, Lovedale, 1958.

Dr M W Retief was a missionary of the DRC Mission in Zambia from 1934 to 1942.

This book is a translation of the Afrikaans book *Verowerings vir Christus*, published in 1948. It was translated into English by Mary H le Roux and M M Oberholster-Le Roux in 1958. The writer wanted to clear up the misconceptions prevalent in the English-speaking world on the DRC's attitude towards Africans and missionary work as such. At the same time, he intended to make the church's mission work better known.

The English translation makes it possible for more researchers to acquaint themselves with the speeches given by the Rev Namon Katengeza, one of the first ordained Malawian ministers of the Nkhoma Synod Church.

However, even the English translation is not very well known in Malawi and the historians of Malawi do not refer to it. It is not included in the *Bibliography of Religion in Malawi* and it has never been reviewed in English journals.

**THE STORY OF THE RHODESIAS AND NYASALAND** by A J Hanna, London, 1960.

The writer of this book is not a missionary, although he may have been a Christian. He writes about the history of colonialism in the Rhodesias, i.e. the later Zimbabwe and Zambia, and Nyasaland (Malawi).

<sup>30</sup> Nuusbrief uit Malawi, December 1967, No 15, Vol 4, p 3.



Chapter three deals with Christianity and commerce (pp 41-71) in these countries in Central Africa. Hanna gives a very systematic account of the coming of the missionaries to Malawi, beginning with the Universities Missions to Central Africa in 1861, followed by the Scottish missions, i.e. Livingstonia Mission in 1875 (pp 57-59) and Blantyre Mission in 1876 (pp 59-60). Although his information regarding the historical development of the missions in the country includes the period beyond 1890, he does not mention the existence of the Nkhoma Mission of the DRC started at Mvera in 1889. The only reference to this church is as a part of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian in 1926 (p 237). Perhaps the reason for the writer's omission of this church is because it was not one of the British missions, for he says: "Thus, by the late 1880s there was a chain of British missions stretching from Blantyre in the Shire Highlands by way of Livingstonia and the Universities' Mission (on Likoma Island near the eastern shore of Lake Nyasa) to the south end of Lake Tanganyika" (p 61). It may also be that he considered the Nkhoma Mission as part of the Livingstonia Mission.

The author used written sources which appear in a bibliography at the end of the book.

**TOWARDS CHURCH UNION IN ZAMBIA: A study in missionary cooperation and church-union efforts in Central Africa by Peter Bolink, Franeker, 1967.**

The main objective of Peter Bolink's dissertation (at the Free University of Amsterdam) is to give an account of attempts to achieve church union in Central Africa.

Peter Bolink was a DRC missionary in Zambia from 1954 to 1968. Besides being a pastor in congregations, he also taught at the Theological Seminary at the University of the North in Pietersburg.

Because this is a dissertation, secondary and primary sources have been investigated. As a Dutch-South African scholar he was able to use the Afrikaans documents in the archives of the DRC.

The book was reviewed by Rene Tiercy of Geneva.<sup>31</sup> He commended the author for coordinating the work of the mission societies in the country (Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi) from its primitive past to the present. He noted that the first move towards church unity in Malawi came with the formation of the CCAP in 1924. The Nkhoma Presbytery of the DRC joined this unity in 1926. He also mentions that there were other united church movements in Zambia in 1939. He pointed out that the difficulties which led to the formation of the CCAP and the United Church in Zambia were caused by the DRC in South Africa and the Congregationalists. In spite of this he says: "It helps to understand

<sup>31</sup> International Review of Missions, Vol 57, 1968, pp 472-475.

the historical data, the persons, the organizations involved, and useful questions that arise when Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Methodists and French Reformed traditions meet to draft a doctrinal basis and a church constitution.'

**AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY OF THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH MISSION IN MALAWI, 1889-1914** by Johan Louw Pretorius in **THE EARLY HISTORY OF MALAWI** by B Pachai (Editor), London, 1971.

Johan Louw Pretorius (Jr) was the son of Johan Louw Pretorius (Sr), the missionary teacher who worked in Malawi from 1929 until he died in 1967. Johan Louw Pretorius (Jr) also worked as a missionary in Malawi. He was literature secretary of Nkhoma Synod, editor of the church magazine **Kuunika** and also manager of Nkhoma Synod bookshop which later amalgamated with the Christian Literature Association in Malawi (CLAIM). He returned to South Africa after serving in the church in Malawi for a few years as a missionary of the DRC Mission.

Pretorius's purpose in writing this article was to give a general historical overview of the DRC mission work in Malawi from 1889, when A C Murray and T C B Vlok started working at Mvera, until 1914. He wanted to make the missionary work of the DRC known internationally. Hence it was included as an article in the book **The Early History of Malawi**, edited by B Pachai.

The book was written after Malawi became independent (1964) and Nkhoma Synod autonomous (1962).

The footnotes indicate that Pretorius consulted documents in preparing this eighteen-page article.

His approach is that of a missionary who appraises the DRC Mission and its work in Malawi. He relates the initiation of the mission to the religious awakening in the Cape Colony in 1884 and 1885.

It is interesting that Malawian historians refer to this article as the only formulation of the history of the DRC Mission in Malawi. It is a fact that the history of Nkhoma Synod has been greatly ignored. It is said the missionaries of the church who came from the DRC in South Africa practised apartheid and were very conservative.<sup>32</sup> This is the typical bias of most historians in Malawi. They do not recognize the development of Nkhoma Synod from the work of the DRC Mission as a significant event in the history of Malawi. The apartheid ideology and the use of Afrikaans in most documents have had an effect on the history of

32 Boeder, p 58.

this Church. But the Lord has blessed its work. Its contribution to both education and spirituality cannot be ignored historically.

**THE LONELY WARRIOR** by George H Campbell, Blantyre, 1975.

This book is by a missionary minister of the Free Church of Scotland in Malawi. It is a biography of William Koyi, a Xhosa missionary of the Free Church of Scotland from Lovedale Institute in South Africa, who came to Malawi with Dr James Stewart and other missionaries in 1876. He worked in the Livingstonia mission field among the Ngoni peoples. Since he also spoke Zulu, he was able to communicate with the Ngoni people and performed valuable work.

Born in 1846, William Koyi was converted to Christianity and educated at Lovedale Institute in the Cape Province in South Africa. He died in Malawi in 1886 and was buried at Njuyu in the northern region of Malawi.

The book proves that Africans were involved in the early stages of mission work in Malawi. Why has this book appeared only after eighty-nine years? Biographies of some of the white missionaries who worked with him were published during their lifetime or shortly after their deaths. This exposes the biased approach underlying historical writing and the distortion of the word "missionary", which has often been used to refer only to "white" missionaries. In existing works reference is made to Koyi as being the key figure in preparing the Ngoni to receive the Gospel. He was doing what no white missionary could do.<sup>33</sup> Only at the commemoration of the centenary of the Livingstonia Mission of the Free Church of Scotland in Malawi in 1975 was it realized that a biography of William Koyi was essential.

The book makes no reference to the DRC Mission at Mvera. William Koyi died in 1886 at Mvera, three years before the arrival of the Rev A C Murray in July 1888.

**THE GROWTH OF THE CHURCH IN AFRICA** by P Falck, Grand Rapids, 1979.

The author is an American and longtime missionary pastor in Zaire. He studied at Princeton for an M. Th. and at Fuller for a D. Missiology, and taught at the Theological Seminary in Zaire. His intention is to give a broad view of how Christianity was brought into Africa by the dedication of Euro-American Christian missionaries. In spite of the many mistakes which they made, glorious victories were won for Christ by God's grace. Through it all, God planted His Church, the bearer of the Gospel light, in African villages, towns and cities.

<sup>33</sup> W A Elmslie, *Among the wild Angoni*, p 193.



The book also shows how the Africans, the people who once fell prey to exploitation, mistreatment and enslavement by Euro-Americans, were able to hear and receive the Gospel. The Africans responded to the message which Euro-Americans proclaimed to them with great enthusiasm.

A few pages have been allotted to the account of the coming of the Church to Malawi. Basically, the account embraces the contribution of Dr David Livingstone, through whose efforts and influence the missionaries found their way into Malawi. A brief outline is given of how the different mission agencies worked from 1861 when the Universities Missions to Central Africa began its work in Malawi.

Reference is made to the Free Church of Scotland and the Church of Scotland missions which followed in 1875 and 1876, and to the DRC Mission which began in 1888. The formation of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian in 1924, which the DRC officially joined in 1926 is also mentioned (pp 208-212).

A brief general survey is given of the beginnings of the mission agencies of almost all the churches. Names of people who played more important roles in mission work have not all been mentioned. Among the Africans who played a part in Malawi only the name of William Koyi is mentioned (p 210).

The writer used books and unpublished sources in compiling his historical survey. This is evident from the footnotes and the bibliography.

The book jacket recommends the book to any reader who wants to know about the coming of the Kingdom of God to Africa and for use in classrooms.

It is written by an experienced missionary and it must be gratifying to the mission churches that their money was not wasted<sup>34</sup>. He hoped also to encourage any would-be missionaries to dedicate themselves to mission work fearlessly.

**MISSION AND CHURCH IN MALAWI, The history of the Nkhoma Synod of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, 1889-1962 by C M Pauw, Lusaka, Zambia, 1980.**

The writer is a son of the Rev J C C Pauw who worked as a missionary of the DRC (OFS Synod) in Zambia from 1936 to 1954.

He was born at Madzimoyo in Chipata Zambia in 1940. He grew up in a mission environment among the Chinyanja (Chichewa) speaking people, whose language he mastered as a child.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. C W Cook: *South African Historical Journal*, No 2, November, 1970, p 110.



His primary education was acquired at school in Chipata and his secondary and university education in South Africa. He studied at the University of Pretoria for a BA degree and went to the University of Stellenbosch for theological studies, which he completed in 1964.

He accepted a call to Malawi as a missionary, and was ordained at Kongwe CCAP in 1965. He taught Religious Instruction at Robert Blake Secondary School (also called Kongwe Secondary School) from 1965 to 1966. In 1966 he was transferred to Lilongwe to assume responsibility as Chaplain of the Youth among secondary school pupils.

In 1967 he was appointed lecturer at the Joint Theological College of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian at Nkhoma, a post which he held until 1973, when he returned to South Africa for further studies.

The book was submitted as a dissertation to the University of Stellenbosch in 1980.

In 1975 Dr Pauw accepted a call to be a missionary in Zambia under the auspices of the DRC (OFS). He lectured at the Justo Mwale Theological College of the Reformed Church in Zambia. Later on he became its principal, and served in that capacity until 1983.

He returned to South Africa in 1983 to take up an appointment as senior lecturer in the Department of Missiology in the Faculty of Theology, University of Stellenbosch.

He wrote his dissertation in response to a long-felt need for "a systematic and comprehensive" history of Nkhoma Synod which has grown as a result of the mission work of the DRC of South Africa in Malawi.

He also wanted to provide Malawian historians with an English version of the history of the CCAP (Nkhoma Synod) because most books on the subject are written in Afrikaans. He is aware that many documentary sources of the history of Nkhoma Synod are written in Afrikaans, and also that most of them have been transferred from the various mission stations to the archives of the DRC in South Africa. Dr Pauw is the first to write a history of this Church, using the full collection of original documents which are housed in Cape Town and outside Malawi. He could do so because of his ability to read and understand Dutch, Afrikaans, English and Chichewa.

The writer used not only the archival documents for his historical investigations, but also books, periodicals, reports of church commissions and minutes of church councils and synods, most of which are in Afrikaans. To do so, he had to do extensive research in the Cape Town DRC Archives and the Malawi National Archives.

He also held interviews with missionaries and Malawians.

The period covered is from 1889, when the mission began, until 1962 when Church autonomy was granted to the indigenous people by the DRC.

He has written mainly on the policy of the DRC Mission regarding its evangelization and education of the indigenous people. He refers to the involvement of some of the indigenous people in the spreading of the Gospel. The development of the organisational structure and the unification of Nkhoma with Blantyre and Livingstonia Missions are covered, and detailed information on Mvera and other stations, and Malawi in general are given. The aspect of context with reference to the socio-political-colonial setting during the very early years of colonial penetration into Malawi is considered, as is the role of the DRC missionaries up until 1961 when Malawi obtained self government.

The expository comments on how Reformed theology understands the issues concerning missions is important. The rationale behind missionary work is argued in theological-historical terms.

The author addresses critical issues and deals with them honestly. One of the issues addressed is the DRC missionaries who were appointed to serve in the Legislative Assembly of the Nyasaland Protectorate: Dr W H Murray (1925+), the Rev J J D Stegman (1940+) and J L Pretorius (1954+). Another issue is DRC missionaries being members of Nkhoma Synod. First it was suggested that they should not be full members, but later they became full members of the Church. The writer pays attention to the problem of the Malawian people not being educated well enough by the missionaries to prepare them for leadership. The issue of office of Mission Superintendent which was replaced by the office of General Secretary<sup>35</sup> is argued as not being according to Reformed faith and practice (p 393).

The book has a confessional approach. Pauw writes as a Christian who is faithful and committed to the teachings of the church of his membership.

The eight years the writer spent working in Malawi were a great advantage to him. His experience is evident in most of what he explores.

The book is unique as a scientific historical description of the CCAP (Nkhoma Synod) from a Reformed perspective.

The author published the book himself. It was printed by the Baptist Mission Press in Zambia at a low cost and in this way made available to many readers, especially in Malawi.

<sup>35</sup> It should be noted that the **place** of the General Secretary has changed since 1985. He is an administrative officer in the Synod and attends all meetings of the Synod ex-officio.

The following remarks can be made about the book:

The title of the book should rather have been "The History of the DRC Mission in Malawi, 1889-1962" since the book is concerned mainly with the activities of the missionaries. It is only in passing that it deals with the Church in Malawi (Nkhoma Synod) of which he speaks as the "Church in embryo" (pp 233 f), and the "emerging Church" (pp 283 ff). These are missiological concepts which cannot be applied to the church as a historical event. Dr Pauw uses these concepts when referring to Nkhoma Synod because according to him, it was "not yet" the Church. The DRC was "the Church" in Malawi. The Church as an historical event assumes its name "Church" when the believers continue to hear the Word, receive the sacraments and also exercise discipline among themselves. I think it can be argued that Nkhoma Synod was a Church from the time people believed and were baptised.

**FROM DUTCH MISSION TO REFORMED CHURCH IN ZAMBIA** by Gerdien Verstraelé-Gilhuis, Franeker, 1982.

The writer is an outsider, a Dutch scholar who was a research assistant to Prof J van den Berg, the church historian in Leiden from 1965 to 1969.

The purpose of this dissertation is to provide research workers with an African view. It was to stimulate the leadership of the "Reformed Church in Zambia", which resulted from the missionary work of the DRC of the Orange Free State (1898-1966).

The book is not directly concerned with the history of the Church in Malawi. Nevertheless, it is important for it deals with a DRC related to the DRC in the Cape which initiated the Church in Malawi.

The writer used church records, books and oral tradition. She has tabulated all sources of information as well as the informants. Thus a critical historical-theological method is attempted.

Her presentation in the introduction is somewhat militant and negative. It reveals her misgivings about the missionary work of the DRC which she found to be disappointing.

The book has been published and reviewed in different journals. In *Missiology* Vol 12, 1984, (pp 125-126), it is reviewed by Charles W. Foreman and John Mbiti, and in *The Scottish Journal of Theology* Vol 37, 1984, (pp 415-417), it is reviewed by Alistair J Morton of Edinburgh. The book is hailed for its scientific approach and its attempt to use the oral tradition of the indigenous people.



The writer criticises the missionaries for their reluctance to advance higher education among the Africans. She does, however, point out that the DRC missionaries were the first missionaries to ordain an indigenous minister. They also handed over responsibility to the Reformed Church in Zambia in 1966, before any other mission handed over to the indigenous church.

The use of oral tradition in writing the history of the Church is welcome and appreciated. However, one is not sure if the method she applied to assess the oral tradition is trustworthy. The questionnaire she set is not free of preconceived assumptions and sometimes invites the answers she desires.

**BORN TO WITNESS** by Dr J M Cronjé, Pretoria, 1982.

Dr J M Cronjé<sup>36</sup> wrote this book to introduce the "thirteen churches" that originated through the missionary work of the DRC in Africa and Asia. Among the churches in Central Africa the Nkhoma Synod receives much attention (pp 83-108).

He gives a short historical background of the coming of the missions to Malawi through the missionary travels of Dr David Livingstone. He refers to the Universities Missions to Central Africa, Livingstonia Mission and Blantyre Mission before dealing with Nkhoma Mission. He emphasizes the close ties between the DRC and the Free Church of Scotland.

The theological assumptions are again quite evident. Though the DRC sent the missionaries such as the Reverends A C Murray and T C B Vlok to start the mission churches which today are self-supporting, self-ruling and self-propagating, it was not their mission nor that of the DRC, but God's. The Lord God, through His grace, mercy and wisdom used the DRC missionaries as His instruments to bring the Gospel of Salvation to the "Malawians" who in turn also became witnesses.

Footnotes indicate that the writer used references.

It is significant that the Reformed Church in Zambia, the Igreja Reformada em Mocambique and the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Harare Synod have a direct relationship with Nkhoma Synod. The DRC in Malawi played a major role in their establishment and in shaping their identity.

---

36 Also author of *Kwayera*. For his life story see above.



**A HUNDRED YEARS OF GRACE: A brief survey of the history of Nkhoma Synod CCAP, 1889-1989, Nkhoma, 1989.**

Nkhoma Synod published this twenty-two page brochure specifically for the centenary celebrations.

The guiding text is Psalm 103:2: "Praise the Lord, o my soul, and forget not all his benefits." Actually this is considered as a reminder of God's amazing grace in the history of Nkhoma Synod.

This history has been briefly surveyed and outlined from the time when the Reverends A C Murray and T C B Vlok came to do missionary work at Mvera to the present. Judging by the sequence of the topics and subheadings of the brochure, the compilers may have followed Dr C M Pauw's example. Such missiological topics as "The embryo Church", "The emerging Church", "The autonomous Church", and the like, are typical of Dr Pauw's approach in the book **Mission and Church in Malawi**. However, some of the information is very new because it includes the very recent developments in the Synod of Nkhoma such as the establishment of Mlanda Girls' Secondary School (1987) and William Murray Secondary School (1979). Education and health care as such make up a substantial part of the brochure.

The approach presented in the brochure is very theological but not scientific. The references used in compiling the brochure have not been tabled. However, for general information on the history of Nkhoma Synod, the brochure is quite useful.

### **3. ASSESSING THE HISTORIOGRAPHICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND VALUE OF THE PUBLISHED SOURCES**

In what sense **can** and **should** publications relating or referring to Nkhoma Synod be used historiographically?

To start with, one must distinguish between publications of the **pre-scientific** and the **scientific** period. It is only of late that books on the history of the Church in Malawi have been written in terms of a reasoned methodology.

Consequently one must first of all determine if the writer studied the sources used.

It is equally important to come to know the **author's identity and intention**. Intention as such is not out of place. The question is whether the intention has been followed by thorough research.

All or most of the publications in the review have a **missionary concern**. Most of them present the history from a missionary perspective, which may well result in bias.

It is also important to determine the **genre** of the publication. Many of those reviewed are biographies. In a sense, church history as missionary history is indeed the story of missionaries, but there are many more aspects.

In this respect, **political or social factors** are too often overemphasized. Church history is a theological discipline. The church historian must be alert to **theological assumptions and reasoning**. In these publications, besides their factual information, the context in which the history is described is also important. Perhaps it is better to say that one comes to know the missionaries in their particular situation, and what they thought about it.

All the books dealing with the history of the CCAP do so in the sense of missionary history. Even the dissertation of Pauw, who intended to describe the CCAP. The history of the CCAP in ecclesiological terms must still be written!

**Livingstone** served as an inspiration to most missionaries, even to those of the DRC Mission. He was a Scot and the pioneer of Scottish missionary work in Malawi.

The DRC missionaries associated themselves with the missionaries of the **Scottish churches**. They were kinsmen. The pioneer missionary A C Murray was a descendant of Andrew Murray who came from Scotland<sup>37</sup>.

Both Scots "groups" thought of themselves in terms of an evangelical theology.

In studying the primary and secondary sources one becomes intensely aware of historiographical and technical problems related to the CCAP.

---

<sup>37</sup> Du Plessis: *A history of Christian Missions in South Africa* p 253-254.

## CHAPTER 3

## HISTORIOGRAPHICAL AND TECHNICAL PROBLEMS RELATED TO THE CCAP

## INTRODUCTION

In surveying its history and sources it is obvious that the student of the history of Nkhoma Synod faces a range of historiographical problems. Most of the available sources have an unconscious or a conscious bias. This is especially true for those sources written during the pre-scientific period.

There are also many technical problems. The official documents and secondary sources and written in different languages and stocked in different archives.

## 1. HISTORIOGRAPHICAL PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED AND ENUMERATED

## 1.1 Missionary motivations underlying the accounts of missionary work

The missionaries were sent by their home churches and missionary societies to proclaim and spread the Gospel in foreign and heathen countries. Since they depended on the grants provided by their home church and supporters, they always felt the need to report on their activities to their authorities and friends. They were expected to stimulate the missionary cause.

The missionary motive had an overall effect on the historiography of the young churches. To start with, the missionary writers concentrated on the contribution of the missionaries without paying enough attention to the indigenous people who were their helpers. Biographies of missionaries abound! In these biographies reference to the activities of the indigenous helpers is made only occasionally. In addition, the writers did not attempt to write biographies of important indigenous helpers. This is rather strange for the people at "home" were much interested in the converts.

Memoirs of the missionaries had great appeal. The first book to be written on the history of Nkhoma Synod *Elf Jaren in Midde Afrika*, by T C B Vlok, published in 1901 is actually a memoir (the English title of the book would be "Eleven Years in Central Africa.")<sup>1</sup> As one of the pioneer missionaries of the DRC in Malawi, his aim was to share his experience with readers to encourage them to support missions with greater fervour. He calls on them to pray for those who had been saved through Jesus Christ and for those who were still in the darkness, so that they might accept Him as Saviour and Lord. He also requests prayer for the acceptance of the missionaries by the indigenous people.

<sup>1</sup> Vlok: *Elf Jaren in Midden-Afrika*, 1901.



To maintain their interest and support, much was written about the missionaries. In these publications the focus is on their personal experiences and activities.<sup>2</sup> Concerning Malawi, the life and work of Dr Robert Laws of Livingstonia, and the story of Dr William Murray of Nyasaland received much attention. Their biographies also inspired the young members of their home churches to offer themselves as missionaries.

The two books on Dr Robert Laws, a missionary minister of the Free Church of Scotland from 1875 to 1927, have an outspoken missionary approach.<sup>3</sup> The first book was written to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of Livingstonia Mission in 1874 by Dr Laws of the Free Church of Scotland. It was written in 1921 before he had actually retired from the mission field and three years before the anniversary itself. The second book was written in 1935 after his death. It reminded people and friends of his inspiring "life and work".

The books contain invaluable information on the history of Livingstonia Synod and the country in general. But there is no recognisable reference to the part played by indigenous helpers in the book written by James Johnstone. There are some references to the indigenous helpers in the book of W P Livingstone.

**Daybreak in Livingstonia** by James W Jack sets out to appraise the work of Robert Laws. The approach is typically that of a missionary. The people in Scotland had heard about the bad conditions among the people in Malawi: the slave trade, war raids, and poverty. The book intended to give them an accurate picture of the situation and of what Livingstonia Mission was already doing to relieve the situation.

Much historical information on Nkhoma Synod is to be found in the biography by the Rev M W Retief, **William Murray of Nyasaland**. It describes the life and work of Dr William H Murray, a DRC missionary from 1892 to 1937. The book highlights the missionaries and the contribution made by the Murray family to mission work in Malawi. It does not give much attention to the contribution of indigenous helpers. His overriding motive is to stimulate the interest of supporters in his home country.

**Donald Fraser of Livingstonia**, written in 1934 by his wife Agnes Fraser<sup>4</sup>, falls into the same category of a missionary-motivated presentation of the history.

<sup>2</sup> Cook: **The Writing of South African Church History**, in *South African Historical Journal* No 2, November, 1970. p 110.

<sup>3</sup> Livingstone: **Laws of Livingstonia**, and Johnstone: **Robert Laws of Livingstonia**.

<sup>4</sup> Fraser: **Donald Fraser of Livingstonia**.



W A Elmslie's *Among the Wild Angoni*<sup>5</sup> is perhaps one of the best examples of this missionary approach. He tells how difficult it was for the missionaries to bring the Gospel to the warlike Angoni people. The tribe had migrated from South Africa, conquering the peaceful tribes in Malawi and settling in the north. It took the missionaries many years of hard work and prayer to harvest the fruit of their calling.

Why did the missionary writers not record the part played by the indigenous people in the missionary work and church? It was certainly not done intentionally or on account of ignorance.

Was it because of the identity of these helpers? The missionaries came to Africa, and to Malawi in particular, at a time when slave trade was practiced. The Arabs bought people and sold them at slave markets along the east coast of Africa: Sofala, Malindi and Zanzibar.<sup>6</sup> There were tribal wars and slave raids in many parts of Malawi. The missionaries went out of their way to stop this evil trade. They rescued some indigenous people from slave raiders and kept them in their camps. It is a fact that the early Christian communities consisted mainly of rescued slaves and slave refugees. The missionaries taught these people the Word of God and helped towards their conversion. In later years some of them were trained as teacher-evangelists to assist the missionaries, but the missionaries considered them as slaves with no identity. Is this perhaps a reason why the missionaries did not have the urge to write about them?

Another factor accounting for this biased neglect could be **culture**. There was a vast difference between the cultural background of the missionaries and that of the indigenous people. The Western culture of the missionaries required that they should keep a written record of **their** history. But the culture of the indigenous people had not yet invented any form of writing which could be used for keeping their records. All the African, and for that matter the Malawian, had was a good memory so he was able to remember events and narrate them to relatives or descendants. While the history of the missionaries was conspicuous in its written form that of the indigenous people lay hidden in their memories. The problem of the oral tradition is that as time goes by, some of the details or facts fade away. It becomes difficult to determine the truth. Besides, in our day modern Africa is westernized and documentation of its oral tradition has become a priority.

5 Elmslie: *Among the Wild Angoni*.

6 Retief: *op. cit.*, 1958, p 4.

## 1.2 Misconceptions concerning the missionary sense and work of the DRC

The missionaries had to watch their relationships both in real life and in their writings. Sometimes their relationships were not good. They were not free from prejudice, were often contemptuous of each other and reported ill of one another. Rivalry made for much ill-feeling.<sup>7</sup>

There were also misconceptions concerning the work of the DRC in Malawi. The Rev M W Retief aimed to correct the misconceptions which had been spread about the missionary work of the DRC among Africans in his book *Verowerings vir Christus* published in 1948. (An English translation: **William Murray of Nyasaland** was only published in 1958.)<sup>8</sup> What exactly these misconceptions were, however, the writer does not say. The study **Development of Missionary Attitudes in the DRC in South Africa** by W J van der Merwe indicates what they were all about.<sup>9</sup> They might well have been the conflict between the Europeans and the Africans which blot the history of South Africa and the problem of racial discrimination in South Africa. Was the treatment which the Africans received from the Dutch more cruel than that meted out to primitive peoples by other European nations? Much has been written on the fact that gradually the Dutch-Cape colonists spoke out against intermarriage and preferred a lifestyle of cultural differentiation.<sup>10</sup> Another misconception may have been the missionary approach which the Dutch inherited from early Protestantism. Until the end of the 18th century missionary work was considered as a duty of the "Christian" state. Only gradually was missionary work organised by individuals and sponsored by societies. The public church at the Cape insisted that missionary work was a concern of the church. These were conflicting views. In spite of this, missionaries of other denominations were allowed to do mission work, but their converts were expected to be baptised in the DRC.<sup>11</sup>

The impression ever since was that the DRC was against missionary work. The fact of the matter is that members of the DRC Church could not agree with the philanthropic way in which the London Missionary Society conducted its work. During the Anglo-Boer War the English accused the "boer people" of cruelty to the coloured people and an aversion to missionary work. It was to remove these misconceptions that the English translation **William Murray of Nyasaland** was published. By reading this book the critics would know the honesty of the missionary work of the DRC.

7 Westermann: *Africa and Christianity*, pp 174-176.

8 Retief: *op. cit.*, 1958, p v.

9 Van der Merwe: **The Development of Missionary Attitudes in the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa.**

10 *Ibid.* p 69.

11 *Ibid.* p 69.

Another attempt to refute the unfair rumours about the DRC and to inspire its members is the book of J Du Plessis *A Thousand miles in the Heart of Africa*, published in 1905. He wrote the book to teach or educate people, especially English-speaking Christians, who had little knowledge of the mission work done by the DRC. He calls attention to the several endeavours of the DRC to extend "Christ's Kingdom among the uncivilized, both within and without the Colony. ..." <sup>12</sup> His focus is on the Church's mission work which was being done in Central Africa, that is, in Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi. He had actually travelled to these countries and kept a day-to-day record of his encounters with the missionaries of the DRC at the different missionary stations.

So often ignored, the missionaries of the DRC greatly contributed to the planting of the Church in Central Africa. In his dissertation Peter Bolink stresses this fact. The main objective of his study *Towards Church Union in Zambia* <sup>13</sup> is to give a critical account of attempts at church union in Zambia. The emphasis is on the involvement of the missionary work of the DRC in Central Africa. Much attention is paid to Nkhoma Synod, which was the first daughter church of the DRC to enter such a union in 1926, with the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian which had been formed by the Free Church of Scotland and the Church of Scotland two years previously. In a way he wanted people to know that the DRC had as much missionary vision as other churches. He wanted them to realize that the DRC was committed to the great commission and was serious about visible unity.

Suspicion about the DRC and its missionary outreach prevails. In our time it is said that the DRC practises racial discrimination and has lost its social calling.

### 1.3 Missionary work and the cultural and sociological orientation

To further missionary work an understanding of the culture of the people concerned, including their language, religion, leisure, social life, marriage, occupations and the like are of prime importance. This fact is evident in the writings of the missionaries. They often described the people among whom they worked. Mostly these descriptions are based on their own observations and personal contact. It is noticeable that their judgement on several aspects differs. Some have written very negatively about the cultural background of the people of Malawi, while others are much more positive.

The first three chapters of Elmslie's book *Among the Wild Angoni* are on the history of the Angoni people, their country, customs and beliefs. He tried to understand the people sociologically and anthropologically to enable him to do missionary work among them. His main aim was to bring into historical perspective the Angoni people among whom the

<sup>12</sup> Du Plessis: *A Thousand Miles in the Heart of Africa*, p 13ff

<sup>13</sup> Bolink: *Towards Church Union in Zambia*.



missionaries had come to fulfil their calling. Since he emphasizes the sociological aspect of the people, the reviewers of the book<sup>14</sup> commented that he should have given more detail of the customs and beliefs and medical practices of the Angoni people.

The same approach has been used by Alexander Hetherwick in his book *The Gospel and the African*, published in 1934. He devoted the first three chapters to the way the Africans think, believe and live. The book was compiled from lectures given to divinity students in Edinburgh during 1930-1931.<sup>15</sup>

Their presentations and descriptions are historically significant when trying to trace the development of the people from the first encounter with the missionaries to the present. However, contemporary African historians and sociologists are critical when reviewing the books written by missionaries about the indigenous people. According to them the missionaries were biased and misrepresented the culture and religion of the people. The historian must study the missionary mind as well as the modern criticism to assess the truth.

In this regard language usage and development are most enlightening. For instance, in what way did missionaries help to develop the language of the people, and what words were chosen to proclaim the Gospel and translate Holy Scriptures? In what sense and way are the translation of the Bible, the proclaiming of the Gospel, the ministry of the indigenous church and the interpretation of the history of the church revealing the theological and sociological concepts of the translators? Interesting is the fact that the first translation of the Bible was done by protestant, predominantly DRC missionaries. Later on the Bible Society in Malawi translated the New Testament into modern Chichewa. The translation was a united effort by the Protestant Churches and the Roman Catholic Church. In this venture Nkhoma Synod played a very important role. Three of its ministers helped in the translation: the Rev Dr J D H Steytler, the Rev G A Kachaje and the Rev E E Katsilukwa. The translation of the New Testament was published in 1972 by the Bible Society of Malawi and is used by all churches without exception. A study of each translation and a comparison of both can be historically, theologically and sociologically most helpful!

14 *The Journal of Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain*, 1899, Vol XXIX pp 191-192.

15 The book was reviewed by T Cullen Young in the magazine, *Africa*, Vol 7, 1934, pp 248-249.



#### 1.4 The colonial bias of missionaries and missionary writings

A conscious motivation and (political) bias in the writings of the great missionary traveller, Dr David Livingstone is well known. Writing a letter to Prof Sedgewick who acted as chairman at one of the meetings of the Senate in Cambridge he expressed this bias as follows:

"That you may have a clear idea of my objects, I may state that they have more in them than meets the eye. They are not merely exploratory, for I go with the intention of benefiting both the African and my own countrymen ... All this machinery has for its ostensible object the development of African trade and the promotion of civilization; but what I can tell to none, but such as you, in whom I have confidence is this: **I hope it may result in an English Colony** in the healthy highlands of Central Africa."<sup>16</sup>

Without this missionary-imperialistic perspective, Malawi would probably not have received the Gospel! But his was not the only colonial motive to serve the Christian Church. The same motive was primary to the coming of the missionaries of the Universities Missions to Central Africa in 1861.

The Scriptural specifications for missionary work were not adhered to. Malawi was ruled by the British government in consulting the missionaries. Some of the missionaries were appointed as members of the Nyasaland Legislative Council in which they discussed issues concerning the running of the government.<sup>17</sup> J L Pretorius, a DRC missionary, was asked by the Nyasaland Governor to serve in the Legislative Council in 1954. In a way the missionaries were representatives of the indigenous people.<sup>18</sup> Under these circumstances it was inevitable that their reports on the Church in Malawi would show a colonial bias.

The "missionary" church was indeed one with the Christian government of England. It is sad to note that soon after Malawi became an independent sovereign state within the Commonwealth in 1964, many missionaries (of all agencies) left the country.

A prime example of colonial bias can be found in the historical writings of Alexander Hetherwick, a missionary minister of the Church of Scotland in Malawi from 1883 to 1929. He served as a senior member of the Nyasaland Legislative Council from 1908 to 1913 and as unofficial member from 1922 to 1925. In his book, *The Romance of Blantyre*,

<sup>16</sup> Moorhouse: *The Missionaries*, p 135.

<sup>17</sup> Pachai: *op. cit.*, p 84.

<sup>18</sup> Pauw: *op. cit.*, p 366.

Hetherwick writes not only about the Church, but also about the activities of the Government.<sup>19</sup> He presents the Government hand in hand with the church.

This is a bias which was perhaps unavoidable, thus in his book *Op Pad* William Murray met with Chief Chiwere and the colonial representative and acted as a go-between urging the Chief to accept British rule.<sup>20</sup> But in this way he made the success of missionary work dependent on the rule of the British government.

Nevertheless, one should not forget the precarious situation in which the missionaries found themselves. They were "obliged" to be the intermediaries of the two foreign, and often estranged, powers - the chiefs on the one hand, and on the other the colonial government under whose sovereignty they had come to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As such, they could not favour one above the other. Some missionaries were threatened with death by the local chiefs because of their association with the colonialists and the annexation to the British government in 1891. To a greater degree, the protection of the missionaries from attack and extermination by the indigenous people was provided by the colonial government.<sup>21</sup> They also stopped slave trade and in this way brought peace to the country. The missionaries enjoyed the peace and used it to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the people.

### 1.5 The unilateral way of writing history

The fundamental problem is the fact that the writing of the history of the Church in Malawi was unilateral. The important figures were the missionaries or their supporters. The African helpers were not included or referred to. If attention is called to an African, it was done for the sake of the missionaries or the missionary cause.

When it comes to the extension of the church among their own people, the work of the helpers who were trained by the missionaries cannot be underestimated.<sup>22</sup>

William Murray mentioned in *Op Pad* that the evangelists who were sent out to evangelize two by two, sometimes for a fortnight before they returned to the mission station, were obliged to hand in written reports of their activities.<sup>23</sup> Unfortunately for the historian these reports have been lost.

19 Hetherwick: *The Romance of Blantyre*.

20 Murray, W: *Op Pad*, pp 75-83.

21 Pachai (Ed.): *The Early History of Malawi*, p 203.

22 Ajayi and Ayendele: *Writing African Church History*, in Peter Beyerhaus and Carl F Hallencreutz (Editors): *The Church Crossing Frontiers*, p 91.

23 Murray, W: *Op Pad*, pp 172-175.

In his book *Ons Nyasa Akker*, published in 1931, A C Murray mentions that when he received an invitation from Chief Mpezeni in 1898 to send a missionary to teach his people, he sent two evangelists<sup>24</sup> with a gift for the chief and a letter to the government official, Captain Margesson. In his letter he requested that the two evangelists should pave the way for "the coming of the white missionaries."<sup>25</sup> The interesting point is that the two evangelists were not considered "missionaries" at all! The name "missionary" was only used (and still is today) for white Christians sent out to work for the Lord. This connotation is not according to Scripture and is evidence of an unilateral concept of missionary work.

The Malawian helpers did not keep a written record of their activities with the missionaries. They only remembered some of the activities and related them to their friends or relatives. There is an oral tradition in this regard but it is fading.

#### 1.6 The personal aspect in the recording of missionary work

The fact that the (missionary) writers related history mostly not by referring to **official documents of the church**, but in terms of their experience and observations, is important. It supplies the (church) historian with more material. But it must be watched and checked.

Official sources can be checked, but journals and diaries are of a personal nature.

The writing of T C B Vlok<sup>26</sup>, who was the first to tell the story of Nkhoma Synod, clearly indicates that he used mainly his memory, some of it written down in journals and diaries kept by A C Murray and himself.

The same is true of J du Plessis's *A Thousand Miles in the Heart of Africa*. He made much use of interviews with missionaries in the field. He also used letters written about his missionary travels. These were used to compile his book. His sources are therefore real situations and people but recorded in a subjective way.

Writing his book *Ons Nyasa Akker* in 1931 after the mission field in Malawi had been in existence for forty-two years, A C Murray,<sup>27</sup> like Vlok, also uses some written sources. But as the foremost pioneer missionary he used, to a large extent, his personal reports, experiences and observations which may have been recorded in his journals and diaries. His early reports on mission activities are a mine of information, but must be critically studied.

<sup>24</sup> The name of one evangelist was Lukas Chingondo, but the other is not known.

<sup>25</sup> Murray, A C: *op. cit.*, p 165.

<sup>26</sup> In his book *Elf Jaren in Midden-Afrika* which was published in 1901.

<sup>27</sup> Murray, A C: *Ons Nyasa Akker*.



As in his book *Op Pad*<sup>28</sup>, William Murray in *Mbiri ya Misyoni ya DRC m'dziko la Nyasa*<sup>29</sup> also records his own personal experiences and observations. He undoubtedly used written sources but these are still his own personal journals and A C Murray's personal journals. The books, especially the one written in Chichewa, contain names of all the most important persons who played a recognizable role in the mission church, both missionaries and indigenous people, and also names of important places. The African names could not have been easily remembered unless they were recorded in his diaries or journals.

When attempting to reconstruct history, it can be extremely misleading to rely only on one's memory, even if it is in written form. All available sources must be gathered and critically evaluated. This has been done lately, for example by Peter Bolink. In *Towards Church Union in Zambia*,<sup>30</sup> he refers to church records as well as oral tradition. The same is true of Gerdien Verstraelen-Gilhuis who used church sources and many interviews as well as informants to gather information for her book *From Dutch Mission to Reformed Church in Zambia*.<sup>31</sup>

C M Pauw also uses a documentary approach in his work.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

It would be incorrect to create the impression that every book written by missionaries is misleading because of its approach and pre-conceptions. However, in general one must keep in mind the concepts of a certain age and context. While most books up to World War II focus primarily on missionary work, the reader is also provided with information on culture, politics, and religion.

The purpose of introducing the particular field and its people to the reader was to stimulate interest in and encourage prayer for missionary work. It was done in all sincerity because of a Scriptural understanding of the missionary command, viz. to challenge people in the home churches to come forward as missionaries and to support the work undertaken.

Not only did missionary writings challenge many people to make themselves available for missionary work, they also persuaded people to donate large sums of money to pay the missionaries and to establish the missionary cause, especially to build churches, parsonages, schools, training colleges and hospitals.

28 Murray, W: *Op Pad*.

29 Murray, W: *Mbiri ya Misyoni ya DRC m'dziko la Nyasa*.

30 Bolink: *Towards Church Union in Zambia*.

31 Verstraelen-Gilhuis: *From Dutch Mission to Reformed Church in Zambia*.



## 2. TECHNICAL PROBLEMS CONCERNING THE WRITING OF THE CHURCH HISTORY OF THE CCAP (NKHOMA SYNOD)

Besides the historiographical problems related to the study of the history of the CCAP (Nkhoma Synod) there are technical handicaps. These are the result of history, the fact that the church has a missionary background. This church is the extension of the reformed DRC in South Africa and in a sense the Scottish Reformed Church.

### 2.1 Documents written in Afrikaans

Most of the historical sources of Nkhoma Synod are written in either Dutch or Afrikaans, because the missionaries were sent out by the DRC. A few of the sources are in English, because many of the ministers and missionaries had a Scottish background. The Rev A C Murray actually translated some of his reports and journals into English.

All official correspondence from the Mission Superintendent at Nkhoma in Malawi to the Foreign Mission Secretary in Cape Town, South Africa, was written in Dutch and later in Afrikaans. The same is true for the minutes of the Missionary Council and the annual reports, from the initiation of the work in 1889 until 1962, when autonomy was granted to the Synod of Nkhoma.<sup>32</sup> For almost eighty of its hundred years of existence, most of the official documents on Nkhoma Synod were written in Dutch and Afrikaans.

Even today, a *Newsletter* from Malawi is written in Afrikaans. Since these newsletters report the most important events, enterprises and experiences, they contain very valuable information on the history of Nkhoma Synod.

Most books on the history of Nkhoma Synod have been written in Afrikaans by missionaries. Only two are in English and one in Chichewa.

The problem is that these important sources and books written in Afrikaans cannot be read by Malawian church historians since they do not know the language. And while there are a few books in English and Chichewa which provide some historical information on Nkhoma Synod, their focus is not specifically on Nkhoma Synod.<sup>33</sup> They have been written for the Reformed Church in Zambia and the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Harare Synod. Nevertheless, because of their direct relationship with Nkhoma Synod, they do contain some historical information on this Synod.

<sup>32</sup> Pauw: op. cit., p viii.

<sup>33</sup> These books are: *Towards Church Union in Zambia* by Peter Bolink; *From Mission Church to Reformed Church in Zambia* by Gerdien Verstraelen-Gilhuis; *Mbiri ya CCAP Sinodi ya Harare* by Mbusa M S Daneel; *Kwayera (A history of the DRC in Zambia)* by J M Cronjé.

## 2.2 Reference to sources related to the history of Nkhoma Synod

When the missionaries wrote their books on the history of Nkhoma Synod, they used both documentary sources and secondary sources. Most of them do not tabulate their sources in footnotes or a bibliography. The sources used were only sporadically mentioned in the text.

The readers of these books were a specific group of interested and missionary-minded people. Many of the books have not been reviewed. This is an indication that the books were written in the pre-scientific period of church historical research. Yet for historical research and the writing of the church history of Malawi, these sources are of prime importance.

## 2.3 The Housing of the Documents Related to the CCAP in Different Foreign Archives

For a Malawian (church) historian another major problem is the fact that most of the documents of the church are kept "abroad". Attention will have to be given to how to enable him to gain information from sources far away, especially in South Africa.

## 3. THE NEED FOR CONSIDERING THE HISTORY OF THE CCAP IN TERMS OF A FULL-FLEDGED INDIGENOUS CHURCH

The realization of the historiographical problems concerning the CCAP marks an historical awareness by the indigenous members of the church. Amongst the Malawian ministers of the Church in particular there is a typical desire to have the history of the Church interpreted in full recognition of a church in its own right. The time is past to treat its history as part of the missionary history of a foreign church outside its boundaries.

## CHAPTER 4

THE DEVELOPMENT AND DAWN OF AN HISTORICAL AWARENESS IN AFRICA  
AND MALAWI

## INTRODUCTION

The motives for writing and rewriting African church history are many and varied. At the same time, they are not far removed from the missionary motive discussed in chapter three. African historians' motive for writing their own church history is to set the record straight - to square the missionaries' historiography.

It is only lately that church historians from younger churches are emerging. Accordingly their contribution is very small compared to what the missionaries have already done. But they consider themselves called by God to be the stewards of the church of which they are ministers and of this theological discipline. After all, God has bestowed the spirit of historical consciousness on African historians in the same way as He has done throughout the history of the Western church. If this is accepted, then there is no question of doubting the calling of African church historians to write history.

And if the training by missionaries has really proved worthwhile after a century or so, then it is indeed very necessary that the indigenous people write their own church history.

Of course it entails a process of moving from oral to written history. The contemporary historical awareness is the outcome of a development and a growing (political) dissatisfaction with a missionary and Western interpretation of African history and culture.

1. ATTEMPTS AT WRITTEN CHURCH HISTORIOGRAPHY BY MALAWIANS (IN  
THE PRE-SCIENTIFIC PERIOD)

The contemporary awareness to rewrite the history of African and Malawian history is not without historical antecedence. In this connection one must also distinguish between a pre-scientific and scientific period. Examples of indigenous attempts to write history can be found from 1915 onwards, immediately after the uprising of the Rev John Chilembwe of the Providence Industrial Mission in Chiradzulu district.<sup>1</sup> Five Malawians distinguished themselves in history writing, viz. Robertson Namate, a civil servant of the colonial government and an elder of the Church of Scotland Mission in Zomba; the Rev Stephen Kundera, one of the first ordained African (Malawian) ministers of the Church of Scotland Mission at Zomba; M M Chisuse, a senior printer of Blantyre Mission; Eliot

<sup>1</sup> For detailed information on this uprising of John Chilembwe read *The Independent African* by George S. Peterson and Thomas Price.



Kamwana, a member of the Watch Tower Society; and the Rev Harry Matecheta Kambwiri, minister of Blantyre Mission and colleague of the Rev Stephen Kundecha. Shepperson says these men wrote essays on the rising of the Rev John Chilembwe within six months of its occurrence. These essays were used by the commission of inquiry which was appointed by the colonial government in the same year to investigate the causes of the uprising. The essays have a political perspective and motivation. But they were written by Christians, mostly members of the Blantyre Synod. Their historical thinking had been developed through the teaching of the missionaries, and were therefore the first recorded historiography by Malawians in the early twentieth century.<sup>2</sup>

It is striking to note that the Rev Harry Kambwiri Matecheta (died 1964), one of the original seven candidates for the deaconship and the first minister to be ordained by Blantyre Mission in 1911, supplied a comprehensive written essay on the **Uprising of the Rev John Chilembwe of 1915** for the commission of inquiry<sup>3</sup>. After many years his interest in history showed up again in 1951 with his book **Blantyre Mission, Nkhani za Chiyambi cace**. Of course one wonders why it took him so long before he wrote on the history of Blantyre Synod. Presumably much had been forgotten. It is quite obvious that he tried to correct omissions of the writings by missionaries who were missionary minded.

He confined himself to discussing the Church of Scotland Mission (Blantyre) and the support that the missionaries rendered to rescued slaves.

He tried to remember as many names as possible of Malawians who were rescued from slave raiders and who were later taught by the missionaries to serve at the Blantyre Mission, such as Joseph Bismark and Kasago Sazuze.

His autobiography is also of great interest. He mentions that after being a teacher for many years, he and his colleague Stephen Kundecha were appointed by the missionaries to study to become "ministers of the Word and Sacraments"! They were taught by the Rev Dr Alexander Hetherwick and the Rev R H Napier for two years. After they had completed their studies, they were ordained on 9 March 1911. They were actually the "first Malawian ministers" of Blantyre Synod after almost thirty-five years of missionary work of the Church of Scotland!

Right at the end of the book he mentions the unification of the presbyteries of Livingstonia, Blantyre and Nkhoma to form the CCAP. Was this unification of missionary work by divided Western churches the first sign of an historical and Malawian awareness?

<sup>2</sup> George Shepperson: The place of John Chilembwe in Malawian historiography, in B Pachai (Ed), *The Early History of Malawi* pp 408 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p 412.



To him it was a development from God, for "Umodzi ndi mphamvu", (which means "unity is strength").

Although Harry Kambwiri's book is not structured in a systematic, chronological and scientific way, he shows great interest in church history. He was the first African to attempt writing about the CCAP. He used oral tradition and probably also written sources, although the latter are not shown in footnotes or a bibliography.

A number of autobiographical manuscripts were later published by his son Clement using the name "The Missionary".<sup>4</sup> This was a recorded attempt at historiography by one of the earliest Christian leaders of the CCAF.

In 1949 Samuel Yosiya Nthara wrote the book *Msyamboza* in Chichewa. It was translated into English by T Cullen Young under the title **Headman's enterprise: an unexpected page in Central African history**. Chief Msyamboza of Chibanzi in Dowa district Malawi was an intelligent man. Born in (1830 ??) he lived to see the coming of the Angoni people, the colonial British people and also missionaries of the Dutch Reformed Church for whom Mr Nthara worked as a teacher at Kongwe mission station<sup>5</sup>. At that stage it was a significant step taken by a Malawian in Nkhoma Synod to express his opinion on a theme emphasized in missionary writings. Although not specifically concerned with the Church, it refers to some aspects of the history of the Church, because the chief and people of Msyamboza village had early Christian connections with the missionaries.

Malawian authors started to write about Malawian factors and leaders helping to make and develop the Church in Malawi. In 1964 Nthara also wrote a biography of the Rev Namon Katengeza titled *Mbusa Namon Katengeza*. In this book he describes the life of this Malawian minister. He calls attention to how he was called by God as evangelist and a minister of great standing in the church. In this book references are made to the mission work of the DRC. He used both oral sources and written sources to compile his story.

Another attempt at church historiography was made in the early 1950's by Andrew G Mkulichi who wrote a forty-page account *Maziko a Providence Industrial Mission. Chiradzulo, Nyasaland, 1900 AD* ("The Founding of the Providence Industrial Mission"). Andrew G Mkulichi was a brother of Stephen Mkulichi, the head-teacher at Chilembwe's school who was killed in the rising of John Chilembwe.<sup>6</sup> The important point of the account is the rising of John Chilembwe. Thomas Price needed the information for

4 Ibid., p 414.

5 Boeder: World Bibliographical Series, No 151 p 36. The more accepted date of the entry of the Angoni into Malawi is after 1835, cf. Pauw op. cit. p 6-10.

6 Op. cit., p 418.

compiling the book *The Independent African*<sup>7</sup>. The account is not in published form<sup>8</sup>. The Providence Industrial Mission is the church that was established by the Rev John Chilembwe and is still in operation today.

Telling is the fact that during the pre-scientific period those Malawians who tried their hand at writing history were Christians. Many of them were largely motivated by the political uprising of John Chilembwe.

Aspects neglected in the writings of missionaries received their attention. It was only when a historical awareness dawned that Malawians and Africans resolved to study their own history.

## 2. FACTORS THAT HAVE INFLUENCED THE CONTEMPORARY HISTORICAL AWARENESS

There are different factors that have influenced the dawn of an historical awareness in the CCAP and the desire to rewrite its history.

The first factor is **the decline of Western missions in third world countries**. The Western missionary enterprise in Africa and in particular Malawi has almost ended. Missionary agencies have come to realize that their leadership in mission churches is no longer in great demand. Sent as missionaries by a foreign church they led a development in which they are eliminating themselves. This notion is compatible with the three-selves formula of self-support, self-governing and self-propagation of the Christian message.<sup>9</sup> It is believed that the missionaries have trained the indigenous people not only in the spreading of the Gospel, which is the heart of the Christian witness, but also in acceptance of financial and constitutional obligations. Churches have come to appreciate their mutual dependence.

Another factor is the granting of ecclesiastical autonomy to younger churches. Since Tambaram in 1938, the International Missionary Councils have been discussing the question of granting ecclesiastical autonomy to the mission churches and the relationship of the Western missionaries to those mission churches. Many proposals were made to advise the various mission agencies on the crucial issues concerning the process of granting autonomy.<sup>10</sup> Some heeded these proposals almost instantly, others gradually.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas Price is the co-author of the book *The Independent African*, which is the biography of the Rev John Chilembwe.

<sup>8</sup> Shepperson in Pachai op. cit., footnote 42, p 427

<sup>9</sup> Devadutt: "From Missions to Younger Churches", in *History's Lessons For Tomorrow's Missions* pp 210-214.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid; pp 210 ff.

Yet another factor is the granting of political autonomy to the national leadership by the colonial governments.<sup>11</sup> In Malawi most mission agencies only began to think of granting autonomy to the mission churches from 1958 to 1964 when the country became an independent sovereign state.<sup>12</sup> The autonomy granted to indigenous people created self-confidence in them and they became inquisitive about their existence and their surroundings which had been looked at from a foreign perspective for a long time. The government officials and the indigenous people started to decolonise Malawi.

They questioned the names of places and the adoption of foreign identification. They actually questioned the customs and cultural heritage of the people and compared the present with the past. This kind of inquiry resulted in the change of names of places, and in many cases in the change of attitudes towards indigenous customs. The name of Nkhoma Synod can be mentioned as an example. When the DRC missionaries established their mission station at Nkhoma in 1896 they named it after the nearby mountain Nkhoma, but for a long time the missionaries wrote it as Mkhoma (note the M) in all records. When the indigenous government discovered this misspelling, they corrected it.<sup>13</sup> Similar changes affected many places in the country. The members of the church shared as citizens of Malawi the self-realization, and the movement to return to their "own" past. Thus, Malawians are keen to discover and describe their particular influence in the country and the church. They are convinced that their people played a part in the missionary history of their country and consider it a duty to write on the history of independent churches (and traditional religions).

Besides, the influence of missionaries by way of (Christian) education can be mentioned. African historians want to investigate for themselves the activities of the missionaries and the church. For example in 1977 K N Mufuka, a Malawian lecturer in the history department of Lander College in Greenwood, South California, U S A, wrote the book *Missions and Politics in Malawi*. Broeder says the book tends to generalize about the Scots missionaries and their work in Malawi and makes a broad comparison with the mission history in other African countries. His book has considerable reference to the CC/P. The missionaries of the various agencies have contributed a great deal in the field of education and medical work. They built many schools and hospitals. It is therefore quite impossible for the historians to write about education and medical work without

11 Hendrik Kraemer; "The Missionary Implications of the End of Western Colonialism and the Collapse of Western Christendom", in *History's Lessons for Tomorrow's Missions*, p 195, 196, 205, 206.

12 The Presbyterian Churches in Malawi became autonomous in these years: Nkhoma Synod 1962, Blantyre Synod 1958, Livingstonia Synod 1958.

13 See Nkhoma Synod minutes KS 295, 1965; see also Malawi Gazette Supplement of 26 Feb 1965 of Government Notice No 57 of 19 Feb 1965.

reference to the ministry of the church and the activities of the missionaries. The Western missionaries educated the people so that they would be able to read the Bible and to understand it according to a particular Christian conception. At the same time they prepared them for wider service in their communities.

The missionaries of the DRC (Nkhoma Synod) in Malawi played a great role in the development of village schools. In the early years they taught the children the Bible more than arithmetic and other subjects. Their initial aim was to prepare people for church leadership in the villages. In due course some of the children taught in these village schools continued their education and followed up great opportunities in public life. Several of them were financially assisted by missionaries to attain a higher education. Hence, their lives have been influenced by missionaries in one way or another and their achievements can be directly related to the education established in their villages by the missionaries. The majority of these people were the children of evangelists, ministers, elders and chiefs. Schools were under the proprietorship of churches and, because there were so few schools, it was mostly the children of prominent churchmen who were given the opportunity of further education before any others. A child from one church could not easily be accepted for education in the school of another church, unless he became a member of the church which ran the school. But the situation changed when Malawi became independent and the state took over control of all schools, in spite of the fact that proprietors still have the right to appoint the headmasters of their schools and have a say on the moral conduct of the teachers.

The above-mentioned emphasizes the impact missionaries had on the people. This explains the reason why most recent African history, not only church history, is intertwined with the lives of the missionaries.

### 3. MOTIVES FOR QUESTIONING MISSIONARY WRITINGS

The missionaries wrote the history of the mission churches, and also about the culture of the people, their religion, customs, family life, constitutional affairs and the like. An image resulted of the African lifestyle, which is generally speaking negative and in many ways misconstrued.



Dennis M'Passou, a recent Malawian church historian, quotes David B Barrett as having said:

"The missionaries' attitude in many areas has been, in the eyes of many Africans, one of total hostility to traditional culture and religion. Countless customs and institutions could be listed against which one or other mission in one or more tribes has at some time or other directed its assault."<sup>14</sup>

It is historically true that many African cultural and customary practices have been discouraged by the missionaries. African writers raise the question whether they really understand these practices in a religious sense. Were the attitudes and writings of the missionaries fair? Have they not discredited certain aspects of the African cultural heritage which were not quite in conflict with the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

According to many African authors the Christian understanding brought to Africa by Europeans in the 18th century is simply an expression of the European Christian civilization, empire and culture. All that was practiced by African people was simply considered evil and heathen by the missionaries, without proper scrutiny of the practices. Adaptation of the European practices was enforced because they were considered Christian, although in reality some of them were a blend of Christianity and heathenism. For example, some of the traditional African music and the dancing that goes with it was considered and rejected as "heathenish", and only hymns imported from Western countries were sung in churches, and for that matter, poorly sung by indigenous people. The historical theological emphases through which the hymns came about were alien to African peoples' Christian experience. It would have been more profitable and enriching if the people had been trained to compose hymns which were meaningful to their own Christian life and experience, than singing hymns with a background and context unknown to them.

To Africanize the church in a Scriptural sense is not so simple. One must be careful not to contextualize the Christian faith to the detriment of a reformed concept of the Gospel. But the Western version of the Christian Gospel and Church led to an African reaction which calls for attention and historical study.

14 Denis M'Passou, *The Rise and Decline of Missionary Influence in Africa South of the Sahara* (unpublished D.D. Thesis, American Bible Institute, 1975) p 33 as quoted from David B Barrett, *Schism and Renewal in Africa*, p 85.

#### 4. THE EMERGENCE OF WRITINGS ON CHURCH HISTORY IN THE SCIENTIFIC PERIOD

In recent years, quite a few Malawians have shown interest in church history. They write short notes and articles on historical events. Scientific research is done by those who go abroad for further study as well as those studying within the country. David S Bone<sup>15</sup> has compiled a list of these pieces of research entitled *Sources for the Study of Religion in Malawi*, in the series, *Religion in Malawi: Current Research, March 1983*.<sup>16</sup> It is interesting to note that of the fifty-eight researchers involved in the study of the history of both the mainstream and independent churches, including Malawian traditional religions, twenty-five were Malawian.

The themes they have done research on include hymn tunes and their development, marriage, Christianity and other religions such as Islam, ecumenism, witchcraft, and the history of the Church as such. Among these studies only the following two are specifically related to the history of the CCAP:<sup>17</sup>

1. **A Brief History of Mvera Congregation** by the Rev H A Kamukhwani. The research emphasizes the role played by Malawians in founding this mission church. The research was completed in 1981 at the University of the North, Pietersburg.

15 David S Bone is a lecturer in the School of Religious Studies at the University of Malawi.

16 Bone: *Sources for the Study of Religion in Malawi* in *Religion in Malawi*, No 6

17 Other researches by missionaries related to the CCAP are as follows:

1. **Traditional and church music** by Clara E Henderson. She was to write specifically on the development of indigenous hymnology within the CCAP churches of Blantyre Synod. No specific date of completion of research is given, but it was possibly completed after 1983.
2. **Growth of Christianity among Northern Angoni** by T J Thompson. This is a study of the growth of Christianity among the Ngoni of Northern Malawi 1878-1933, with special reference to the work of Donald Fraser, a missionary in the CCAP Livingstonia Synod from 1878. No specific date of completion of research is given.
3. **Hetherwick and Fraser** by T J Thompson. This is a study on missionary attitudes to various social and churchly issues and the beginnings of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian. No specific date of completion of research is given.
4. **History of Nkhoma Synod** by C M Pauw. The research traces the history and beginnings of Nkhoma Synod seen as a Dutch Reformed Church mission field from 1889 to 1962. The research was completed in 1980, at the University of Stellenbosch, and is printed in book form.
5. **History of the Church in Malawi from 1861 to 1891** by Jack Selfridge. His research embraces the coming of Christianity to Malawi since Dr D Livingstone's visit. He has largely embraced the mainstream churches, but also writes very extensively about the churches that form the CCAP.

2. **The Educational Policies of the DRCM** by Isaac C Lamba. The project evaluates the relationship between the DRC missionaries and the government and local people (village education). This project was completed in 1984 and was published in the *History of Education Quarterly*.<sup>18</sup>

In addition only three studies pertaining to the history of Malawi in general have been written:

**Independent Churches in Malawi** by J Chipchadzika Chakanza. The study was confined to independent churches in the lower Shire valley of Malawi. The emphasis is on their origins, cultural roots, continuity and change. This study was completed in 1980. A revised edition was issued in 1983.

**The African Methodist Episcopal Church (AMEC) in Malawi** by Dr King, M G Phiri. The research was done on the growth of the church since 1924. Much attention is given to the impact of the church on the socio-economic life of the peoples of Kasungu district where it was established and the contributions of its founder the Rev Hancock Msokera Phiri in its various activities. The specific date of the study is not mentioned.

**A Historical Study of Education in Colonial Malawi 1945-1961** by Isaac C Lamba. The research investigated the question whether the colonial government or missionary policies operated to limit African education. The study was done between October 1981 and July 1982.

Quite a few Malawians have written on the **traditional religions** in Malawi. The reason is presumably that the sources for this subject are readily available. Besides, it is a theme much discussed in Africa. In a sense these studies are correcting the misconceptions of missionaries. It is striking how much oral tradition is used in these research projects.

The following are a few Malawian authors who did research on African traditional religions:

One of these is the famous tutor of church history at the Nkhoma Theological College of the CCAP, the Rev Stephen Kauta Msiska.<sup>19</sup> He wrote an article on **Traditional Religion among the Tumbuka and other Tribes in Ministry**, Vol. 9, pt. 1 (January 1969).<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> *History of Education Quarterly*, 1984, pp 373-392.

<sup>19</sup> The Rev Stephen Kauta Msiska was the first CCAP African tutor to be appointed by Livingstonia Mission in 1948 and the first African principal of the CCAP Theological College at Nkhoma from 1969-1975.

<sup>20</sup> Boeder: Op. cit., 237 p 54.

**Geography of Religion: Spirit Possession and Demographic Characteristics** by Ezekiel Kalipeni. The study was meant to comprise Vimbuza (spirit possession) with Western psychiatry as a means of treating mental illness. In 1979 Kalipeni published an article titled *Traditional African Healing of Mental Illness as Compared with Western Psychiatry (clinical psychology)* in *Dansk Psykolog Nyt*, August, 1979.

**Chewa Traditional Customs and Beliefs** by Joseph B Kuthemba Mwale. The research was meant to give a correct picture of Chewa beliefs and to correct the current conception of the belief as proposed by some writers (missionaries and British officers). He conducted his research in Dedza, Michinji and Lilongwe where Nkhoma Synod operates. The specific date of the research is not mentioned.

**The Chewa Concept of God and its Relationship to the Christian faith** by Augustine C Musopole. His research was to compare and contrast the Chewa and the biblical concepts of God and to draw implications for Evangelism, church life and theological contextualization. The specific date of the research is not mentioned.

**Spirit Possession and Tumbuka Christians 1875-1950** by Silas Ncozana<sup>21</sup>. The research study was to examine the phenomena of Vimbuza and spirit possession amongst Tumbuka Christians, its significance in the traditional system of beliefs, its historical development and its implications in the Christian faith. The specific date of the research is not mentioned.

**Production, Distribution and Consumption of Religious Ideologies in Malawi** by H B K Msiska. The aim of this research was to examine patterns of production and consumption by religious ideologies in the twentieth century Malawi. The appearing of *Charichi cha Makolo* ("Church of the Forefathers") was to be seen as attempts at localizing the production of religious ideologies. The specific date of the research is not mentioned.

These titles are examples of the keen interest of Malawian researchers who have come to know their past and religious background<sup>22</sup>. These attempts are related to the historical awareness and political autonomy which Malawians experience. Malawian students came forward to prove themselves and help their people to come to grips with the past.

<sup>21</sup> The Rev Silas Ncozana is the current General Secretary of Blantyre Synod CCAP.  
<sup>22</sup> It should be mentioned that these were the only available researches on church history and related subjects by indigenous Malawians at the time of my research. I presume that many more have been written on this subject, but are to be unveiled yet and will definitely be part of the development of the church historical awareness of the indigenous people of Malawi.



## 5. THE HISTORIOGRAPHIC SENSE OF THE NKHOMA SYNOD

The historiographic sense in the Nkhoma Synod has grown particularly since the CCAP has been governed by indigenous people.

In the church magazine **KUUNIKA** which began publication in 1909 as **Mthenga**, articles are written periodically on the activities of the Church<sup>23</sup>. To a large extent the articles are of a very spiritual nature. They are about sermons preached during certain significant occasions, events and celebrations of the Church, such as communion services, inductions of ministers, baptismal services and the like. Articles on disputes, history of congregations, or church buildings are rarely included. Only rarely do autobiographies or biographies appear. In most cases biographies are published in this church magazine only after the death of certain prominent personalities, especially ministers. It is noteworthy that the magazine was started by missionaries and continues to be published today.

The **keeping and writing of the minutes** of church council, presbytery and synod meetings is in itself a sign of the historical awareness of the importance of written records which they may refer to in future. In Malawi oral tradition has become written tradition!

In the meetings the written word initiates oral discussion. The **reports** of the different committees are in writing. Synod no longer receives a verbal report, unless it is demanded in that form.

The **Moderamen** and the **Synod** have also become conscious of written history by requesting that the book entitled **Mbiri ya Misyoni ya DRC m'dziko la Nyasa** by William Murray in Chichewa, be revised and updated. They felt that some events concerning the Church needed to be recorded before too long.

The Church operates with an historic sense. In 1981 the Synod decided to commemorate some of the important Malawian Christians by naming institutions and places of interest after them<sup>24</sup>. As a result Changoni Lay Training Centre was named Namoni Katangeza Lay Training Centre in honour of the Rev Katangeza who died in 1956.<sup>25</sup>

At the same synod meeting of 1981 the centenary of the Church, due in a few years, was discussed and it was decided that a committee should be formed to start planning for the celebrations of 1989.<sup>26</sup>

23 Murray, W H: **Mbiri ya Misyoni m'dziko la Nyasa**, p 69; Pauw: **Mission and church in Malawi**, pp 210 f

24 See Nkhoma Synod Minutes, April 1981, S.1600,p 19.

25 See Nkhoma Synod Minutes, April 1981, S.1554,p 12.

26 See Nkhoma Synod Minutes, April 1981, S.1575,p 16.

Historical recording is attempted by the Zomba Theological College where all CCAP ministers are trained. When they go for their yearly practicals, they are required to write an historical account on some of the great church men of Malawi and the congregations they served. Another requirement is that they attempt a project as part of their diploma examinations at the University of Malawi. In this way some of the records of the CCAP congregations are being preserved for future research. These requirements were discussed and resolved by the Board of Diploma in Theology for inclusion in the syllabus of theological training.<sup>27</sup>

In 1982 the Moderamen discussed and emphasized the importance of writing the biographies of the retired ministers of Nkhoma Synod. They were all asked to write their own biographies for editing and publishing<sup>28</sup>.

Although no history book has been written by a Malawian, the Rev Helleman Adson Kamnkhwani's B.D. dissertation **A Brief History of Mvera Congregation** is the first academic study by a Malawian on an aspect of the history of Nkhoma Synod CCAP.

In the contemporary writings on history and historical themes by indigenous Malawians the pre-scientific approach is still followed by some. Oral tradition as a method of gathering information has received much attention.

<sup>27</sup> Read the minutes of the Sub-committee of the Provisional Board of the Diploma in Theology, University of Malawi, held at Nkhoma Theological College, 29 July 1975 No 23/75(4); I also shared the experience of being a tutor at Zomba Theological College in 1981 when the staff insisted that a questionnaire about congregations be completed.

<sup>28</sup> See Nkhoma Synod Minutes M 256, 25 Feb 1982, p 38.

## PART TWO

### THE REFORMED CHURCH HISTORIOGRAPHY DISCUSSED

Having dealt with the official documents and secondary sources of the CCAP (Nkhoma Synod) and indicating historiographical problems, consideration is given to a reformed method to write (or rewrite) its history.

In a sense this means a discussion of yet another problem or related problems!

In this section an attempt is made to state a reformed church historiography. To start with, the reformed assumptions or principles fundamental to the understanding of the history of the church in order to describe the same are indicated.

One of these assumptions is related to the government of the church. In a real sense the making of church history is determined by the assumption governing the church. A research worker must know how a reformed church is ordered in order to be used by God.

A chapter on how to utilize oral tradition to describe the history of the Reformed Church in Malawi is deemed important. The CCAP is a reformed church with an oral and written tradition. Oral tradition must and can help to recall the past of a church in a reformed and academic sense.

## CHAPTER 5

## THE REFORMED ASSUMPTIONS TO DESCRIBE CHURCH HISTORY

## INTRODUCTION

The gospel was brought to Malawi with its oral tradition by a church and missionaries with a written tradition. The missionaries had a written references to work with and put in writing what they did and experienced. the Malawian Christians (and heathens) remembered the missionaries and their experiences with them orally. Gradually Malawians have come to work with written reports and description.

The history of the Church was from its inception put in writing and conceptualized.

In this chapter the Reformed method of church history is outlined in short. Its historical development is indicated. This is done to point out how it has been used by church historians, including the missionaries of the DRC in Malawi, and how it must be used in an African Malawian context.

The Reformed historiography approach recognizes that history has a true cause and course related to the redemption of man and creation by Jesus Christ. This goes for history in general, but for church history in particular.

### 1. CHURCH HISTORY WRITING IN THE EARLY YEARS OF CHRISTIANITY TO 1200

Between the years 800 and 1200 AD, writers of church history confined themselves to the Church as an institution. They described, or reported on, facts and development concerning the official Church. The main task of the church historians was to show how the will of God, which was understood according to the Christian truth and the presuppositions of the writer, is done in history. The past was considered and described to further the faith. Church history was identified with the will of God, which governs all human events. Consequently every event happened according to a divine plan and was not simply the outcome or effect of human activity. This is evident in the Church and its history.

In looking at history in this way, the historians followed an historiographical tradition based on the Scriptures, the teaching of the Church and the chronicles.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Breisach: *Historiography*, pp 126-129.



This tradition originated with the reasoning of apologists, Church fathers and the monks, and was accepted in the Western Church and culture. According to Thompson:

"Pagan historiography disappeared in the fifth century. After this century opened, most historical writing in the West for eight hundred years thereafter was written by Christian writers, almost every one of whom was a cleric - either a bishop, or a deacon, canon, simple priest, or monk. Lay-written historiography almost completely disappeared until the thirteenth century."<sup>2</sup>

In the course of time scriptures telling of the origin of the Church in normative sense lost its focal position. Church men and historians venerated the martyrs and the saints and described their acts and lives. Sometimes the martyrs themselves wrote about their experience up to the point of their death.<sup>3</sup> Church history was identified with martyrs and saints.

From the fifth century ecclesiastical history took over. The history of the Church was written in terms of its official leadership and councils. In this way church historiography concentrated on official positions adopted or acquired.

## 2. CHURCH HISTORY WRITING IN THE MIDDLE AGES, 1300-1500

A little before 1400 AD new philosophies entered the Church and began to influence the writing of church history. The history of the Church was related to secular or state history. The establishment of the Holy Roman Empire under Charlemagne led to a concept of the kingdom of God in which the Church and State held hands.<sup>4</sup> This assumption is expressed in the blessing of the Pope crowning Charlemagne as king: "Life and victory to Charles Augustus, crowned of God, the great and peace-bringing emperor".<sup>5</sup> Charlemagne saw his crowning at the hands of the Pope as a great theocratic ideal which he was called upon to realize.<sup>6</sup> This was the start of the struggle for supreme power. Who ruled the world in the name of God: the Pope who crowned the king or emperor, or the emperor who was crowned by the Pope?<sup>7</sup> In order to increase the claims of the papacy after Charlemagne's death, some legal and historical basis for the right of power were needed. This was found in the documents known as the "Forged Decretals", and especially the "Donation of Constantine". They were accepted as genuine in an uncritical age and remained

<sup>2</sup> Thompson: *A History of Historical Writing*, Vol I, p 122

<sup>3</sup> Ibid p 131-132.

<sup>4</sup> Simpson: *The Church and State*, pp 60 ff.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid p 61.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid p 62.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid p 68.

unquestioned until the fifteenth century.<sup>8</sup> Thus, (pseudo) historical evidence was quoted to support the ambitions of papal supremacy and autocracy.

The decline in the political and spiritual power of the popes started in 1303 when King Philip of France, one of the then powerful independent nations asserting themselves in Europe, seized Pope Boniface VIII at Anagni, some fifty miles from Rome, and imprisoned him. For about seventy years the seat of the papacy was moved from Rome to Avignon and remained under French domination.<sup>9</sup>

The story of the long and often bitter struggle between the State and the Church in the Middle Ages - from the ninth to the fourteenth century - is disillusioning. The writing of church history was distorted. A critical or scriptural re-consideration of the history and historiography became necessary.

### 3. POST-REFORMATION PERIOD: 1500-1700

The Reformation of the sixteenth century was a much needed development and could not be stopped. Church history was again written according to scriptural guidelines, telling the story of the entire Church of Christ. Secular history was also related in terms of Scripture saying that the state is appointed by God for the sake of political affairs.<sup>10</sup>

The Reformation was generated by a Scriptural and historical awareness. The history of the Church was studied anew. Written source material came to the attention of reformed and minded scholars. Because of the politics and wars of the Reformation,<sup>11</sup> documents and manuscripts written by monks and hidden in monasteries were uncovered. Thompson says

"The politics and wars of the Reformation era curiously promoted and facilitated this new interest in history by throwing into the light thousands of documents and other manuscript materials hitherto inaccessible and unknown. The dissolution of the monasteries in England under Henry VIII, the Peasants' War and the War of Schmalkaldic League in Germany, the Huguenot wars in France, which were accompanied by the pillage of monastic and cathedral libraries, had thrown upon the market vast quantities of manuscripts and other documents which often could be bought for a song. Scholars and book collectors soon awakened to the opportunity and began to salvage these

<sup>8</sup> Simpson: p 69, 70; Bettenson, *Documents of the Christian Church*, pp 98 ff.

<sup>9</sup> Simpson: Op. cit. p 82.

<sup>10</sup> Breisch: Op. cit. p 167.

<sup>11</sup> Thompson: Op. cit. Vol II., p 3

treasures. The libraries of New Protestant universities in Germany in the sixteenth century were almost wholly formed out of the lost of the monasteries."<sup>12</sup>

Works on the history of various aspects of the Church began to be written by scholars on the basis of these documents.

This development was most important to historical research. It encouraged the preservation of documents and manuscripts of the Church. In this way it helped the search for the real and the true course of the Church. Church history was freed of a Roman or papal tradition and speculation.

A confessional interpretation of the history of the Church was again steered. A critical acumen was gained. The falsifications of the Roman Church with regard to authority were exposed by research.

Theologically church history showed itself to be of prime importance. It had a cleansing and catechetical function.

#### 4. CHURCH HISTORY WRITING IN THE 18TH, 19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, two trends of church historiography developed which greatly transformed the character of the discipline. First, the development of a scholarly and scientific approach or methodology. The study of history was distinguished from philosophy, theology, literature and law. The writing of history was not to be given to holy biography, moral tale, memoir, chronicle, and polemic. It was to be founded on disciplined analysis, archival and documentary research.<sup>13</sup>

Second, the secularization of scholarship in terms of scientific study had methodological effect. There was a gradual cessation of ecclesiastical or theological control over historical study. This was to be a positive development, was it not for the adoption of secular assumptions to interpret the church and its history.<sup>14</sup>

It was to become apparent that church history cannot be understood and interpreted without assumptions. But it is also important to be critical, self-critical. Writers of missionary history were to a large extent not scholarly and critical (scientific). They wrote without research and formal reference to the sources used. They wrote about their

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. p 3,4.

<sup>13</sup> McIntire: "The Ongoing Task of Christian Historiography", in George Marsden and Frank Roberts(Editors) *A Christian View of History?* p 60.

<sup>14</sup> Ditto.

activities and experiences, without references for the reader to check the interpretation for trustworthiness.

Because the Church is an institution understood in a theological sense, its history must be written accordingly. A reformed conception of the Church determines the reformed historiography. Accordingly a reformed church historian conceives the church as the doing of the Triune God, the Father and Creator, the Son and Saviour and the Holy Spirit and Teacher. Thus, it has a divine nature. The Church has been initiated by God in this world for Jesus Christ to redeem this world by the teaching and guiding of the Holy Spirit. Men are called to faith in the Son of God through the preaching of the divine Word and the enlightening of the Spirit. Believers form the Church, the Christian community in this world. In this way it also has a human character. Hence, the Church has a divine-human character.<sup>15</sup> As such it shares the past with history in general.<sup>16</sup>

The church historian has before him a mass of disorganised and sometimes confusing and contradictory texts. He must start by critically evaluating these documents one after the other. To do so he uses the same methods as the historian of general history, with the same academic discipline. The Church as a divine human society made of men and women, with all their human failures, lives on in history. It is the Church of Jesus Christ the Son of God; but also the Son of a carpenter. It is the Church of the risen glorious Lord, but also the Suffering Servant of the cross. As a human reality, the Church has therefore to be studied, like all human realities, with the best methods which the science of history has devised,<sup>17</sup> provided the church historian does not lose sight of its unique character as a divine institution, in which God, not man, is to be glorified.

Church history calls for a theological and redeemed understanding and cannot properly be written by a person who does not belong to the Church. A church historian in the true sense must accept that the writing of church history is a calling from the Lord in the service of His Church. Brown says, "The church historian is a minister of the Church of Christ. He is called to write and teach the history of the Church in honesty to God and the readers or students."<sup>18</sup> By honesty is meant being responsible to God and his Word in describing and ministering the history of the Church.<sup>19</sup> The Holy Scriptures must at all times be the historian's guide and must not be influenced by his own theological standpoints or that of his particular church.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>15</sup> E Brown: *A Discussion of the Theological Method of Church History*, p 7.

<sup>16</sup> Ditto.

<sup>17</sup> Phillippe Maury: "What is the value of Church History?" in [Abrecht, Audrey], *History's Lessons for Tomorrow's Mission*, pp 8-9.

<sup>18</sup> Ditto.

<sup>19</sup> Ditto.

<sup>20</sup> Ditto.



Elaborating on church historiography, Dr C T McIntire stresses three aspects:

"Christian historiography refers not simply to history written by Christians, nor to historical studies of the Church and theology, but to an historiography which **examines the history** of peoples, societal structures and institutions, ideas, morals, and patterns of life, according to the sorts of insights and values provided by a Christian view of people, society, norms, history, the world and the whole of the created reality. Christian historiography means **to enter into the study of history** in such a way that it may lead to an analysis and account of the historical process that is true, insightful, and revealing of the human condition and historical reality. Put still another way, Christian historiography **involves self-conscious reflection** on foundational things in order that the vocation of Christian historians may more readily be transformed by the motivation of the gospel and that the product of their labors may carry implicitly the marks of the Gospel."<sup>21</sup>

According to McIntire Christian historiography embraces the entire historical existence of a Christian society. A society in which the Gospel of Jesus Christ has been spread with its historical existence in the norms of Scripture which are reflected in every sphere of life and are in contrast to a sinful past. Writing a church history for such a society means that all activities and developments must be interpreted in the light of the Scriptures.

One more observation: The missionaries conceived of the history of the CCAP (Nkhoma Synod) in a different sense compared to the indigenous minister. The sources of the very same historical course is differently understood. Perhaps the historians of the younger reformed churches are in the best position to study and understand the historical records of the churches of which they are members. They have come into another relationship with these documents. The missionaries conceived of them in terms of a mission of a foreign church. The minister and church historian of the younger church conceive of them in terms of a church documenting itself and their own past.

Like the missionaries the ministers and church historians of the younger churches are part of the very same reformed confession. They share a history of God's doing. But to the one it means history of a mission, to the other history of a church. What has been written as history of a mission must be written as history of a church.

To write the history of a church, one does not start with a missionary, a minister or an office bearer of the church. A reformed church comes to the fore when the Word of God

21 McIntire, *Op. cit.*, pp 53-54.

is preached, the sacraments served and discipline is exercised. Church history describes the past of the Christian community.

This community of believers is governed in terms of an order understood in terms of Scripture. The church historian must know where and when the church comes to expression in a reformed sense. This means one must know the system of government of a reformed church.

## CHAPTER 6

### THE PRIMARY SOURCES OF A PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

#### INTRODUCTION

The primary sources related to Nkhoma Synod must be understood and used in terms of the government of the church. It is therefore very necessary that they be identified in their various categories and placed in historical context. Nkhoma uses a presbyterian system.

#### 1. HISTORICAL SOURCES IN THE CONGREGATIONS

The first two congregations were Mvera, established in 1889, and Kongwe, established in 1894. At the time of the centenary, one hundred congregations had been formed. Each congregation has a church council.

##### 1.1 The minutes of church councils

When writing the history of a reformed church one must start with source material of the community of believers, the congregation. The church council comprise all active church elders elected for the wards of the particular congregation.

The council meets on a scheduled basis. Retired elders and deacons can attend meetings called to discuss the current matters of the congregation. Active elders convene when discipline is to be discussed. The minister of the congregation usually acts as the moderator of the church council. Where the agenda concerns the minister personally, or if the congregation does not have its own minister, another minister from a nearby congregation, appointed by the presbytery, becomes the moderator of the church council and takes responsibility for all the issues discussed.

Church councils also discuss matters relating to the election of elders, overtures to the Synod, evangelism statistics, stewardship and finances. Usually the church council appoints smaller committees to look into matters of youth, women activities, building, evangelism and the like. These committees submit reports to the church council. The minister is a member and sometimes chairman of these committees.

The majority of the minutes of the church council are related to **disciplinary cases**, most of which are concerned with social matters such as marriage outside the church, adultery, polygamy and beer drinking. Usually these cases are not fully described in the minutes. The name of the person concerned, his transgression and the judgement of the church council on the transgression are the only information that appears.

The minute books are of primary importance to understand a reformed church and to describe its history. The beliefs and life of the congregation is recorded and reflected in them.

It must be mentioned that some congregations do have records of **church events and issues** especially from the time when indigenous ministers took charge. For example, the congregation had to pay their stipends from their own local resources. They had to build manses for the ministers. These events and issues began to change the context of the minutes of the church council and are helpful in historical reconstruction.

Some congregations keep a **separate minute book** for the church council and disciplinary cases and another for meetings attended by retired elders, deacons and other leaders of the church. In the latter, events pertaining to the growth of the church, its youth, evangelism, and so forth are recorded.

The church council appoints a scribe or a session clerk to record all the decisions of the council in a well-bound, strong minute book. The minutes of the church council are usually **hand written**. The minute book remains the property of the congregation and must be kept in the offices of the church.

It is important to note that all congregations of Nkhoma Synod have church councils and minute books.

However, in a recent survey of these congregations the following was discovered:

- a) Some of the congregations have not kept their minute books intact.
- b) Others have lost some of their old minute books which were full.
- c) In some cases where the books have been kept intact, a number of the pages have been torn out. It appears that pages were torn out intentionally. Sometimes people who were members of the church council and who had access to the church records destroyed pages containing information of a shameful nature about themselves or their relatives.
- d) Minute books of church councils have also been stolen, thrown into the bush (when discovered to be useless) and burnt by fire or destroyed by rain (e.g. Khola CCAP).

For instance, not all the church council's minute books of the oldest congregation Mvera are available, only those from 1955 to 1971; from 1971 to 1977 and from 1977 to the present. All the earlier minute books are missing. Mlanda congregation, officially



established in 1902, has minute books available only from August 1943 to August 1960. The earliest minute books are missing as well as those of the period after 1960. Chilanga congregation was established by Livingstonia Mission in 1897. There are minute books for each of the following four periods: 26 June 1913 to 28 January 1931; 13 May 1931 to 26 October 1954; 6 August 1985 to 1987; 1987 to 1989. Again, the minutes of the earliest period are missing, as are those between 1955 to 1985.

It is important that the minute books be looked after properly. The Synod should call for all old books to be kept in the central archives. At the same time each of the congregations should have its own archives to keep records.

### 1.2 Roll-Books/registers

When a new congregation comes into being, all the names of **communicant members** are written in the roll-book or register. The register has information on the name of the person, his clan name, surname or family name, the name of his village, when he was baptized or in the case of those baptized while infants, the date of their confirmation, and the name of the minister who baptized them. The roll-book points out the oldest Christians in the area, dates the beginning of the congregation and indicates its growth.

There are also roll-books for the **catechumen members** whose names are transferred to the roll-books of communicant members when they are baptized.

The **infant baptismal registers** are also available in congregations. They help to establish the continuity of the Christian community in a particular area. Many people are born, baptized, confirmed and married in the same church.

### 1.3 Index books

In these books a record is kept of each member's pledged contributions. Each year the minister goes around in the various wards to visit the members. The index is used for identifying members and their contributions to the church. Index books help the historian to assess the spiritual depth of membership and to verify the financial growth of the congregation from its early years to the present.

### 1.4 Financial books

These books give a write-up of the income and expenditure of the congregation. Each year the financial books are checked by a Synod representative and the report is sent to the Presbytery for discussion. These reports reveal the financial history of the congregation. For the purpose of historical investigations these books are important.

### 1.5 Duplicates of marriage certificates

According to Christian rites in Malawi all the ordained ministers of registered denominations can officiate at Christian marriages and issue marriage certificates to the couples. Marriages may only be concluded in the church building. From the time the congregation assumes its status as a congregation, it must keep duplicates of the marriage certificates issued. Historically, these duplicates can be used as source material for researching the history of Christian marriages in that particular congregation. In addition, the ministers who served in the congregation can be identified by their signatures.

### 1.6 Christian initiation certificates

Every believer who wants to become a member of Nkhoma Synod must undergo an initiation course which is organised by the council of the church in his own area. Both males and females must be given certificates to the effect that they have undergone such training. Trained instructors from within every congregation train these people. The majority of the candidates are young boys and girls who have reached puberty.

The names of all these believers are written in registers.

These records are found in most congregations although many are not well preserved.

## 2. HISTORICAL SOURCES IN PRESBYTERIES

As mentioned, Nkhoma Synod started as "The Mission of the DRC Mvera" in 1889, and changed to "The Council of Congregations" in 1903, "The Nkhoma Presbytery" in 1926 when it joined the CCAP Synod and "Nkhoma Synod" when it became a synod associated with the General Synod CCAP.

Basically, only the minutes of the Council of Congregations and Nkhoma Presbytery are classified as the minutes of Nkhoma Synod, that is, those from 1903 to 1956 and to the present.

It should be noted that from 1952 the Presbytery of Nkhoma was divided into two sections: north and south.<sup>1</sup> A full presbytery only met after three years. This arrangement was disapproved of by the CCAP Synod as it was not in accordance with Presbyterianism because presbyteries must meet every year. However, these sections existed together until 1956 when Nkhoma Synod was formed. At the time four presbyteries were formed: Nkhoma Presbytery, Mvera Presbytery, Malembo Presbytery and Salisbury (Harare)

<sup>1</sup> Nkhoma Presbytery minutes, Kongwe, August 1952. No 17, p 14.

Presbytery.<sup>2</sup> Today the Synod of Nkhoma has eleven presbyteries including Nkhoma Presbytery. Hence, when one is looking for the minutes of Nkhoma Presbytery, one must be aware of this development. Before 1956 Nkhoma Presbytery had the same status as that of the present Nkhoma Synod, because it discussed matters affecting the policy of the whole church.

From 1956 onwards the "Nkhoma Presbytery" minutes record matters pertaining to only the local congregations in the region of Nkhoma.

The presbyteries **meet every year** at a place agreed upon the previous year. Usually the venue is a congregation and a rotating order is followed. The presbytery is constituted by an elder and minister(s) of the constituting church council. A letter of **authorization** to attend the presbytery signed by the church council and the minister(s) must be submitted by the delegates.

In the presbytery meeting, **reports on the life and work of the local congregations** within the constituency are discussed. They also deal with problems related to the concerned congregations. The presbytery supervises office-bearers. It carries decisions in accordance with overall Synod policy. However, all complex and doubtful issues are referred to Synod.

The minutes of the presbytery are very useful historical sources on the congregations.

As the presbytery only constitutes annually, affairs affecting the congregations are attended to by a "**presbytery committee**" which meets from time to time as matters arise. It is composed of three ministers and two elders who are elected by the presbytery to serve for one year. **The minutes of the presbytery committee** are equally valuable because they contain the day-to-day affairs of the congregations of a region, such as induction and demission of ministers, the establishment of new congregations, or setting of boundaries of new congregations. These matters are usually of great historical importance.

All the minutes of the presbyteries and of the presbytery committees are first hand-written by the secretary, but later typed by the Synod administration and made available for all ministers and congregations to read. That means that all the minutes of all the presbyteries are in possession of all ministers and congregations. This circulation is important because ministers can be called by congregations or any presbytery, and must be informed about the existing presbytery and the congregation.

<sup>2</sup> Nkhoma Presbytery minutes, Nkhoma, August 1956. No 7, p 12.



The formation of new presbyteries since 1956 has meant that some congregations have fallen under different presbyteries. Since 1957 minutes of the four presbyteries began to appear separately.

### 3. HISTORICAL SOURCES OF THE SYNOD

#### 3.1 Synod minutes

The minutes of the Nkhoma Synod run from 1903 to the present, variously identified as minutes of the Council of Congregations, of the Nkhoma Presbytery (1926), and of Nkhoma Synod (1956).

The minutes of the Nkhoma Synod contain overtures of congregations made directly or through the presbyteries. They contain decisions on social, ethical, doctrinal and administrative issues. The Synod's decisions are to state the policy of the church and is to be taken with reference to Scripture. The decision of the Synod is considered the overall ruling which all congregations must put into practice and adhere to. In this way the decisions of the Synod are also the decisions of the congregations.

The delegates to Synod comprise one elder from each congregation and the minister(s) of the congregations.

The minutes of Synod are very important for historical research, because they express a general view of all the congregations.

#### 3.2 Synod reports

The various standing committees appointed by Synod have to draw up reports. These documents are compiled well before the Synod meeting is constituted. Committees can also be appointed by Synod to investigate a particular matter. The recommendations of these committees are either adopted by Synod or rejected. Usually the members of these committees serve for two years i.e. from the one meeting of Synod to the next.

The more or less permanent committees of Synod are related to departments. The members of these committees must be acquainted with the running of the particular departments and be able to enlighten Synod on the progress made and their future plans. The heads of departments, who are usually managers, and Synod's General Secretary usually have full information on the activities of the departments because of their long service and association with the work.



Here it is important to note that the standing committees contribute much to the synod's policy and administration by way of recommendations in their reports.

### 3.3 Synodical committee minutes

The minutes of the Synodical Committee of Nkhoma are regarded as part of the Synod minutes. The Synodical Committee is composed of two members from each presbytery. The four members of the Moderamen and the General Secretary as well as the Liaison Officer are ex-officio members.

This Committee meets twice a year for it serves as an interim committee to look after the affairs of Synod. As such, it decides on various issues which are referred to it and related to available Synod policy. If an issue has not been discussed by Synod it has to wait for the next Synod meeting.

The Synodical Committee must discuss the reports from the Standing Committees of Synod at least once before the next Synod meeting. All reports and questions from presbyteries which come before it in the year when the Synod does not convene can be dealt with by the Synodical Committee.

The historical researcher will find the minutes of the Synodical Committee to be more administrative, suggestive, and reflective than the Synod minutes. They are really informative since the Committee meets more often than the Synod. Usually its recommendations are adopted by Synod with few or no changes.

In the past, before Nkhoma Synod was constituted, the Presbytery Committee of five members acted as the Synodical Committee. The number of representations to this Committee increased in 1952, when the Presbytery of Nkhoma was split into two regions, north and south. Each region was represented by four representatives to make eight. It worked in the interim before the triennial meeting of the Presbytery.

The minutes of these two sections which met in their own regions became part of Nkhoma Presbytery and Malembo Presbytery minutes respectively when this arrangement was ceased on the recommendation of CCAP Synod. This should be noted when doing historical research.

The minutes of Nkhoma Presbytery Executive were incorporated word for word into the minutes of the Presbytery itself.

But the minutes of the Synodical Committee are only commented on by Synod before the new agenda of the biannual Synod meeting. They are actually separate minutes although

they may be bound together with that of the Synod just to follow the sequence. The same is true of the minutes of the Moderamen. These minutes must be read in chronological order. The Synodical Committees comment on the Moderamen's minutes, and the Synod on both of them.

### 3.4 The minutes of the Moderamen

The Moderator, the vice-Moderator, the clerk of Synod and Junior clerk are elected from among the ministers of congregations at every biannual Synod meeting. Their main duty is to implement decisions made by the Synod or the Synodical Committee. The Moderamen deals with the daily routine as it is brought to their attention by the administrators through the office of the General Secretary. Various matters are discussed in keeping with the policy already laid down by Synod. The Moderamen has no authority to make new policy but must refer dubious matters to the Synodical Committee or to Synod depending on the nature of the same. As such, the Moderamen meets more often than the Synodical Committee as it acts as an Executive of Synod. The minutes of Moderamen are also considered part of the minutes of Synod but subject to the adoption by Synod or Synodical Committee.

When a historical researcher reads the different source materials, he should be aware that different designations have been used for the minutes of the Synodical Committee and the Moderamen over the years.

Different designations have been used for the minutes of the Synodical Committee over the years. First, they were simply written with an indication of the date of the meeting, the members present and the items of the agenda. Later the letters "KS", which is the abbreviation for the Chichewa "Kabungwe Ka Sinodi", meaning "Synodical Committee" were used. Since these letters were also used for the Moderamen minutes this caused great confusion.

Hence in April 1981, Synod decided to use "SC" for the minutes of the Synodical Committee and "M" for the Moderamen<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> See Nkhoma Synod minutes. SC8 April, 1981 pp 1, 2.

## 4. HISTORICAL SOURCES OF GENERAL SYNOD

### 4.1 Minutes of the General Synod

The minutes of General Synod date back to 1924 when the CCAP Synod was formed. The General Synod itself only came into being in 1956, when the presbyteries of Blantyre, Nkhoma and Livingstonia became synods.

General Synod meets every fourth year, and delegates are drawn from all synods. Representation is determined by the number of communicants in each synod.

The matters discussed in General Synod are drawn from synods and as such the decisions arrived at are a fair representation of all synods of the CCAP. Therefore, the minutes of the General Synod can also help the researcher on the historical aspects of Nkhoma Synod.

### 4.2 Reports of synods

The general secretaries (or clerks) of all synods are obliged to give a written report to General Synod on the life and work of their particular synods. The reports contain matters such as boundary disputes between synods, theological training of ministers, formation of new synods in the CCAP, cases of reponement of ministers, deceased ministers, statistics, development taking place in the synods, etc. The reports are discussed by General Synod and commented on, and as such they provide a great deal of information on the historical aspects of the individual synods. A researcher on Nkhoma Synod will find them very useful.

The reports of Synod are usually appended to the minutes of General Synod in their original form.

### 4.3 Minutes of the Standing Committee of General Synod

The composition of the Standing Committee is as follows: The Moderator, the Vice-Moderator, the Senior Clerk, the Junior Clerk/Treasurer, the Deputy Clerk (these are *ex-officio*); an addition of two representatives from each synod, namely a minister and an elder.

The Committee normally meets annually but may sit at any time when important matters require immediate decision to be taken for the good of the church. The Committee is answerable to General Synod in all issues.

The minutes of this Committee are also part of the minutes of General Synod. They reflect decisions taken on matters of the synods in the interim before General Synod meets in four

years. Therefore the minutes of this Committee are important documents for the historical researcher on Nkhoma Synod, but also on the other CCAP Synods.

Before General Synod was formed in 1956, the Standing Committee was the Synodical Committee of the CCAP Synod formed in 1924. It was in 1925 that the Rev Andreyo Namkumba was the first delegate from Nkhoma Presbytery to be appointed a member of the Synodical Committee of the CCAP Synod before the formal joining in the following year.



## CHAPTER 7

USING ORAL TRADITION TO RECONSTRUCT THE HISTORY OF NKHOMA  
SYNOD

## INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter problems concerning the historiography of Nkhoma Synod have been identified. In this chapter the writing and studying of the history of the CCAP (Nkhoma Synod) in a scientific manner and by using oral tradition is considered. It has been pointed out that not many African converts to the Christian faith could read or write. Consequently, there are almost no written sources by Malawian Christians of Nkhoma Synod. The books by Samuel Y Nthara, a Christian teacher of Nkhoma Synod, **Namoni Katangeza**<sup>1</sup>, **Mbiri ya Achewa**<sup>2</sup>, **Msyamboza**<sup>3</sup> and **Nthondo**<sup>4</sup> are the only exceptions. Except **Mbusa Namon Katengeza**, which is a biography of the Rev Namon Katengeza, these writings are not church-historical. They do supply important facts about the history of the Chewa people and their cultural heritage. Another Malawian book, Makumbi's **Miyambo ndi Maliro ya Achewa**<sup>5</sup> tries to advance the missionary cause.

However, many people have been told orally of the Malawians' experiences and encounters with the missionaries. Using oral tradition is one possibility of coming to know the history of the CCAP in a more indigenous and objective way.

## 1. THE IMPORTANCE OF ORAL SPEECH/TRADITION

Historians have paid much attention to the scientific assessment of oral tradition. In African culture oral speech is a recognised means of everyday communication. Oral speech is used in societal organisational administration. Through oral speech or oral tradition we have preserved the wisdom of our ancestors. We have used it in marriage contracts and festivals as well as in enthroning kings or chiefs. Although not written down, elderly people know their tribal relationships, clan ties and how their families are connected<sup>6</sup>. It is for this reason that modern African historians insist that oral historiography must be developed in reconstructing the foreign written historiography<sup>7</sup>. The same applies to the reconstruction missionary history in terms of church history by indigenous church historians.

1 Nthara: **Mbusa Namon Katengeza**.

2 Nthara: **Mbiri ya Achewa**.

3 Nthara: **Msyamboza**.

4 Nthara: **Nthondo**.

5 Makumbi: **Maliro ndi Miyambo ya Achewa**.

6 Fage (Ed.): **Africa discovers Her Past**, p 2

7 Ki-Zerbo: **General History of Africa I**, p 11

## 2. ORAL HISTORIOGRAPHY IN WESTERN PERSPECTIVE

In our time oral historical research has been accepted as an important feature of historical study. In the past, this method was not accepted by Western historians as a research method because it was regarded as unreliable. They only accepted written records as trustworthy and of historical significance.

Since Africa had no written records of her own history, Western historians even argued that the continent was without history and historically "dead". In their view, Africa began to have a history from the time it was colonized by the Europeans, that is, in the eighteenth century. A distinguished British professor, A P Newton, is said to have stated, "History only begins when men take to writing".<sup>8</sup>

While it is true that the people of Africa never had a written history, it certainly does not mean that they had no history. They had it in their memories and they passed it on to their descendants from generation to generation. In doing so they maintained their cultural mores and traditions. It was through oral tradition that the African nations lived in their identical groups in spite of the many tribal groups. The recollection of the past was a very important aspect of their life.

## 3. ORAL HISTORY IN WESTERN EUROPE

An ancient example of the use of oral historical evidence in Europe is in **Homer**, the Greek philosopher who recounted the fall of Troy in the *Iliad*. He is said to have been the first known oral historian. The same is true of **Herodotus** and **Thucydides**, both of whom made use of the spoken tales collected personally from informants<sup>9</sup>.

The Western historians who today maintain that only written sources are history have forgotten the fact that before reading and writing came into being, oral tradition of the West was also used in the construction of their written history. For instance, during the Celtic period poets reconstructed the past in spoken or sung poems. Some families paid these poets to invent great deeds about their ancestors. In this way they wanted to elevate their ancestors or create a sense of their own political or social importance<sup>10</sup>. Thus they successfully invented their past history, to such a degree that some families were elevated to paramount status. This is only another example to illustrate that oral tradition has made a great contribution to the history and historiography of Western Europe.

<sup>8</sup> Fage (Ed.): Op. cit., pp 1-2

<sup>9</sup> Henige: *Oral Historiography*, p 7-8

<sup>10</sup> Henige: Op. cit., p 9

In the Middle Ages the monks of the Christian church busied themselves recording church history and the greater part of their accounts was drawn from the oral tradition of older men who remembered the past. Their counterparts, the Muslim historians, did the same. According to Muslim legal procedure for example, it was a cardinal principle that eyewitness evidence was to be valued more than any form of written documentation! In both instances personal testimony was preferred to written records<sup>11</sup>. In African tradition an eyewitness is also much more respected than any written record, especially among the typical village people. The majority of marriage bonds are confirmed only by the agreement of eyewitnesses from both family parties without written proof.

#### 4. ORAL SOURCES IN BIBLICAL TIMES

In utilizing oral historiography in church history, we are not introducing an entirely new method strange to the faith and the church. The importance of oral evidence has been recognized in the understanding of both the Old and the New Testaments. Thus, the books of the New Testament were collected and compiled, not at the time of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, but only in the second and third centuries. The written texts we now possess of the canon of the New Testament were collected and compiled from oral recollections.<sup>12</sup>

#### 5. ORAL HISTORIOGRAPHY AS A SOURCE OF HISTORICAL STUDY IN MODERN AFRICA

African historians are convinced that oral historiography must be used, not only as a secondary source to written sources, but as an original or primary source. It is just as important to the writing and study of the history of Africa as written sources<sup>13</sup>.

Two types of oral historiography must be distinguished, "oral history" and "oral tradition". One is a current activity, the other is a genre of source, although sometimes these terms are used interchangeably. "Oral history" is the term used in the study of the recent past. It is the personal recollections of people.<sup>14</sup>

11 Henige: *Ibid*, p 11-12

12 Henige: *Ibid*, p 8; also J H Roberts and A B du Toit: in their book **Guide to the New Testament** Vol. I p 7 paragraph 19 it is said: "Some of the older portions of the Bible, such as the early histories we find in its first books, were undoubtedly for a long time transmitted orally from generation to generation. Because of the memory of the techniques in antiquity this oral tradition was accurately preserved for posterity, though not without variation, until it was eventually edited and written down. ... It is important to remember that the material recorded in the Gospels also had an oral history before it was adapted and published by the evangelists a few decades later."

13 Ki-Zerbo: *Op. cit.*, p 11

14 Henige: *Op. cit.*, pp 2, 106ff



"Oral tradition" is a method or a "way of life" which has been widely practised. It is the collective memory of a people in society, handed down for at least a few generations. Oral traditions are not just anyone's representations to suit his wishes. They are those recollections of the past that are commonly or "officially" known in a given culture<sup>15</sup>.

But as with written sources, oral tradition may not always tell the truth. The historian seeks to assess the truth by verification, analysis and comparison of the sources which are at his disposal<sup>16</sup>. To do so with oral tradition calls for an identification of the problems concerned and a reliable method.

## 6. PROBLEMS OF ORAL HISTORIOGRAPHY

Both technical and methodological steps must be taken when ordering and assessing oral tradition.

### 6.1 The area or field for investigation

To record oral tradition requires field-work. Oral tradition is connected to a geographical and cultural "unit". It is the tradition of a specific people of a particular region. If the field of his research is near or in his environment the field-worker will probably know most of the people and he will be able to contact them and conduct his historical investigations with ease, depending on the topic which he has chosen. But if the investigation has to be done far from his home, country or even continent, he needs to familiarize himself with the place and culture, the history and the people concerned with his research.

To start with, prior arrangements must be made to obtain research clearance in the host country. This is extremely important to enable an open and friendly atmosphere and relationship with the people. Locally, arrangements need to be made ahead of time with the local leadership or the chief. Unless this is properly done according to the customs of the people, it is unlikely that the historian will succeed in his undertaking. David Henige has drawn up points to consider in regard to this issue<sup>17</sup>.

For research on the history of Nkhoma Synod the best areas for field-work are the local congregations. In the rural areas they are far apart but in the city of Lilongwe there are several congregations. In order to do research in these congregations permission must be obtained from the local church council and the synod office.

15 Fage (Ed.): *Op. cit.*, p 6

16 Henige: *Op. cit.*, pp 23-28

17 *Ibid.*, p 29



If allowed to do research, it is obligatory for the field-worker to travel with an assistant who knows the situation and customs of the congregation. The field-worker should also get one of the locals to introduce him to the community whose oral tradition is being investigated and to help with the interviews.

### 6.2 The historian's health

The research worker should take adequate health precautions. It is best to contact the health department of the host country before departing to find out exactly what must be done to ensure good health<sup>18</sup>. In Malawi hospitals are few and far between. The most common illness suffered by foreigners coming from outside this geographical region is malaria. Nkhoma Synod is situated in the area where mosquitoes are common, especially along Lake Malawi where the climate is very humid. According to statistics the average temperature in Malawi in September, when the temperature starts rising, is 27°C, while the daily temperature in winter, which lasts from May to October, is about 20°C.

The main precaution which every field-worker needs to take, concerns food and drinking water. Although he must be polite when it comes to eating and drinking food or water offered by locals, it is advisable to be selective because conditions are not as hygienic as they could be. At the same time he must be careful not to offend the people and their goodwill. To avoid diarrhoea and dysentery it is advisable to drink water from a fountain or borehole or else to boil the water first.

### 6.3 The language

African countries have many languages and dialects. It is almost impossible for a research worker to investigate a people's oral tradition if he does not know their language. It would be even better if the researcher were a member of the people whose culture he is concerned with. His chances of recording and assessing the oral tradition of his people and church would be greater.<sup>19</sup>

Although many languages are spoken in Malawi, English and Chichewa are the official languages. A person coming from abroad can speak English to modern young men, some of whom know it fairly well. But some of the elderly people who form the core of oral church historiography cannot speak English at all. It is a great advantage if the field-worker knows Chichewa, because it is the language in which his historical investigations will be done. He should not undertake research without first learning the language from a Malawian whose mother tongue is Chichewa. Learning the language will obviously also

18 *The New African Year Book*, p 195

19 Henige: *Op. cit.*, pp 28,29

involve an understanding of the culture and how ideas in that language change during communication or how similar words have different meanings.

Understanding the language in a cultural context is of prime importance, especially if the oral tradition is translated into another language. The problem is that African languages have scant and peculiar lexical materials often foreign to most researchers. Many African languages have no explanatory guides or dictionaries and most African languages have regional and dialectical variations. It is therefore very difficult to acquire a real grip on the language<sup>20</sup>.

The CCAP in Malawi also extends into Zambia and Zimbabwe, and membership is drawn from all language groups. The language that is dominant in a particular area of the synod is spoken by all members from all over the country and outside it. In the big cities, for example, Lilongwe, Blantyre, Zomba and Mzuzu, congregations have two or more services, one of which is in English. In this way expatriates are catered for. In the whole region under Nkhoma Synod, the central region of Malawi, Chichewa is used in all services, except where English is catered for. In the northern region under Livingstonia Synod Chitumbuka is used except in a few areas such as in Nkhata Bay and Chitipa districts where local languages such as Chitonga or Chilambya are used respectively. Otherwise Chitumbuka is the main language of the church. Blantyre Synod, which comprises the whole southern region, uses Chichewa, although Chiyawo and Chilomwe may be used in local situations. But the official transcriptions of Blantyre Synod are in Chichewa as its membership is drawn mostly from Christians from Malawi.

Today most people in Malawi know Chichewa, although the local language is used in church services. Malawi has about twelve languages used by churches<sup>21</sup>. It is for language reasons that churches in the cities have at least one service on Sunday in English.

Communication with these people could be a problem to a foreign interviewer or researcher. It is advisable to use interpreters to help him to interpret from and into English. Although most young people today know English, the majority of people who keep the oral tradition of the church do not know English. English is an official language along with Chichewa. Almost all the people in Malawi know Chichewa because it is taught in all schools. It is the medium of the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation. It is therefore easier to investigate oral tradition in Malawi if one knows Chichewa.

20 Henige: *Op. cit.*, pp 68-70

21 Patrick Johnstone: *Operation World*, 1977, p 28.

#### 6.4 The problem of chronology

Since oral tradition has no written records it only relates facts and happenings, without special dates. It is difficult to determine exactly when particular events occurred.

But Africans are good at relating events to the seasons or times of catastrophe or prosperity. For example, they are able to place an event in time in terms of the number of rain seasons that have gone by after the event occurred or they will link the birth of a person to a particular place where there was a famine. It is therefore better to ask questions that will help to remind them about the period by referring to major events that have occurred. Some major events in Malawi are the Ngoni wars; slave trade; abolition of slave trade; the year when the mission headquarters were moved from Mvera to Nkhoma (1913); World War I (1914-1918); the Chilembwe uprising (1915); World War II (1939-1945); the year of famine (1949), the year of the coming of the Ngwazi Dr H Kamuzu Banda (1958); the year of independence from British rule (1964); the jubilee year of the translation of the Bible into Chichewa (1973). These events help to determine the approximate dates. Variations could be solved by way of comparison.<sup>22</sup>

Chronology is also distorted by the events. A later event could receive more attention than an earlier one, or vice versa. For example, the Mvera congregation was the first to be established and it was the headquarters of the whole mission field in Malawi for twenty-four years until 1913. But because of geographical problems, especially the lack of water, it became necessary to move the headquarters to Nkhoma. Now the name of the Synod is Nkhoma Synod and not Mvera Synod. In dealing with chronology care must be taken that the earlier events are not neglected in favour of more recent ones.<sup>23</sup>

Another example of distortion is that the first meeting of the missionaries with Chief Chiwere was on 10 August during the very first missionary travels of A C Murray and T C B Vlok to this area. It was also the time when Murray preached his first sermon to the people of this area. But 28 November, the date of the settlement, the day when they pitched their tents at Katawa, is remembered as the date when missionary work was initiated - not the day of their first sermon during their second visit to the settlement! The

22 In 1966 a national census was taken in Malawi from the month of July, and I was one of the field officers. In determining the ages of illiterate people, we asked them such questions as, "How old were you at the time of the famine or at the time of the Karonga warfare?" The events mentioned in the questions were quite familiar. We could then determine people's age. Sometimes a date of birth was calculated in reference to the year, "when uncle came back from Johannesburg", or "when we bought an ox-wagon" and so forth.

23 Stevens in *Tarikh*, p 27.



important date is pushed to the periphery in favour of a later date, that of the settlement and not of the sermon.

The same is true of the date for the establishment of mission work by the DRC Mission in the area of Chief Mpezeni in Zambia. Murray recorded that two evangelists had been sent there to pave the way for the missionaries. However, the Reformed Church in Zambia is not recognised as being born at the arrival of the Evangelists or the beginning of missionary work in the area, but only after the arrival of the two missionaries, namely J Hofmeyr and Smit in 1899<sup>24</sup>.

One more example is that of the birth of the mission church in Zimbabwe. According to the Rev Daneel the Malawian people working in Zimbabwe were already organised as a Christian church for years, except that they needed a minister to nurture them in the faith. They sent a delegation of four men, Messrs Yonamu from Makande, Joseph Mandovi from Livingstonia, Jeremiya Mwalo of the Zambezi Industrial Mission and another unidentified person to the Missionary Council which met at Mvera in 1910 to present their plea for a missionary to minister to them. The Council assigned the work to the DRC Mission and in 1912 the Rev T C B Vlok was sent to Zimbabwe for this purpose<sup>25</sup>. The date of the birth of the church is given as 1912, not when the people began to meet as a worshipping group. In this way chronology has been distorted, but also a reformed principle of church government.

David Henige suggests that chronology can be determined through the genealogies of rulers or the direct ancestors of a particular group of people which a historian wants to study<sup>26</sup>. In the church history of Europe this key can be used in the Roman Catholic Church with the Pontiff as its head, but not for the reformed churches who mostly do not have permanent leaders. The Reformed and Presbyterian churches change leadership from time to time. In certain cases elders of the church serve for a period of time and are replaced by others. The moderamen and ministers change from time to time. Hence the genealogy in the Protestant churches must be unlocked in another way. In the history of these churches events are more important. A list of office bearers can be determined in terms of certain events<sup>27</sup>. For example, the Rev Kuchona was murdered by political extremists a few yards from the manse at Dedza in 1965. The reasons for the murder have not been determined. In order to do research on the incident one could find out who the elders are, and then ask them for information concerning their predecessors and the event.

24 Murray: *Mbiri ya Misyoni ya DRC m'dziko la Nyasa*, p 71.

25 Daneel: *Mbiri ya CCAP Sinodi ya Harare*, pp 13,14.

26 Henige: *Op. cit.*, pp 97-101

27 *Ibid*, p 102



Only in this way office bearers will be able to assist in determining the date when the Rev Kuchona was murdered, what the causes were and what happened afterwards.

#### 6.5 The people to be interviewed (informants)

In the rural areas it is possible to undertake research work among people of the same tribe who speak the same language. But sometimes there is a mixture of tribes and languages, especially in areas with trading centres, schools, markets, health or agricultural centres. People are drawn from all over Malawi to these centres in order to offer such governmental and charitable services needed by the people. These areas become semi-urban although they are not towns. When doing research on oral tradition all the groups in these areas must be interviewed: men and women, elders, deacons, chiefs, teachers, indigenous people and foreigners. The question is which group should be questioned first. The best proposition is the elderly people, of course. Such an approach will help to give the historian extensive material from which to draw his historical conclusions.

Particular people among the elderly who can provide information must be mentioned. The first should be the elderly **Christians**, members of the local church. Those who have been **church elders or evangelists or ministers** could provide the best information about church events. Second, **the chiefs** (both believers and non-believers) who received the missionaries in their vicinities and offered them land to build mission stations. In the olden days most of the congregations were established in the villages of principal headmen and chiefs. The events of the church were usually attended by the chiefs. For instance in the congregation of Nyanja, CCAP, Chief Kalumbu often attended church services, although he was himself not a Christian, or if he was, he denounced his faith by committing polygamy. Chief Kalolo also attended Sunday services at Chileka. Chiefs were familiar with church activities and some of them, such as Chief Chadza (d. 1969), played an important role in the church at Msozi.

Oral tradition is rather difficult to verify, especially if nothing has been written down. Hence, it is essential to record the names of people who provide information, their age and location as well as the date when the interview was conducted. This was done by Gilhuis-Verstraelen. In her research she met people from all walks of life and recorded their names, titles, addresses and the dates when she met them. This approach gave her a wide range of information on the history of the Reformed Church in Zambia<sup>28</sup>.

The best way to preserve these oral sources is to tape the interviews with the people who supply the information, adding their age and locations and the date of the interviews. This

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Verstraelen-Gilhuis: *From Mission Church to RCZ*

will enable others to hear the oral transmission for themselves. J Vansima's suggestion is to the point: "... make a note of all the necessary subsidiary information which is best done by means of a questionnaire. This auxiliary documentation must supply the name, genealogy, social position and address of each informant and place and the date of the recording of the testimony on tape or in writing, and the method of transmission used; ..."<sup>29</sup>

## 7. COVERAGE OF ORAL HISTORIOGRAPHY

Writing history from oral sources is not an easy task. Problems abound. For example oral historiography sometimes changes original versions and replaces words with new ones. The same people who were interviewed about a specific event can quite possibly give different details of the event after a period of time. Sometimes facts fade into fantasies<sup>30</sup>.

Every historian is supposed to evaluate and interpret the sources he is dealing with by critical methods. Usually there is more than one possible interpretation of the facts before him, including perhaps his own bias. Therefore it is necessary that he disclose whatever sources he has used to enable the readers to check how he has used them<sup>31</sup>.

It can be a very tiresome undertaking for the historian to reconstruct people's past from uncountable tiny pieces of information sparsely given, gathered sometimes from a whole spectrum of people and investigators. In organising, evaluating and interpreting his data, the historian will constantly need to decide which to use, which to reject and which to keep provisionally for eventual inclusion in the text.

David Henige states that there is the temptation to include or accept oral testimonies because they are plausible, coherent and persuasive while rejecting others because they are implausible or shapeless or speak of the frankly impossible<sup>32</sup>.

As far as the history of the church is concerned, honesty and trustworthiness should be the main guideline in describing the past and evaluating oral sources. Like the nation of Israel, the church is a composition of people divinely called in terms of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But the oral tradition of Christians is not always trustworthy. Christians betray their covenantal relationship with God and fellow believers from time to time through estrangement (by corruption) and sin. They need to be called by God to repentance from time to time<sup>33</sup>. There is a tendency to cover up the sins or shortcomings of members of

<sup>29</sup> Vansima: *Oral Tradition*, p 202.

<sup>30</sup> Henige: *Op. cit.*, p 5

<sup>31</sup> Vansima: *Op. cit.*, p 184.

<sup>32</sup> Henige: *Op. cit.*, p 68

<sup>33</sup> Langdon Gilkey: *Scripture, History, and the Quest for Meaning*, pp 12-14.

the church. The problem is that oral and written sources remember and record the good done by the church and are often silent on its sins! Not only the good of the church and its successes should be recorded, but also its weaknesses and failures. The Bible is very explicit on the Christian witness and sin. The Old Testament tells us that the children of Israel were condemned by God if they did wrong. In the New Testament we read of the failures of Peter (Mat. 26:69-75; Mk. 14:66-70a; Lk. 22:55-58) the ambitions of John and James (Mat. 20:22) the betrayal of Jesus by Judas (John 13:21-30) the disagreement of Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15:36-41) and Paul's admonitions to the church in Corinth (1 Cor 5:1ff). All these are examples of weaknesses related to the church, which have not been kept secret. In the same way the historian should not conceal damaging historical facts for fear of criticism or to prevent negative judgements on beloved institutions<sup>34</sup>.

## 8. THE CRITICAL EVALUATION OF ORAL TRADITION

When working with oral tradition the basic problem is to get to the historical facts, since fiction is often presented as fact. Briefly, the guidelines for sorting out fact from fiction are the following:-

8.1 Use all the available records or sources related to the same tradition<sup>35</sup>. For example, if research is done on the life of the Rev Namon Katengeza, all facts, both oral and written, must be grouped together, and compared.

8.2 Study these records critically so as to determine which of them are the most important ones for insertion in the text. Since it entails the study of oral testimonies as well, it is essential to understand the context as well as the interests of both the interviewers and the elderly people who lived at the time of the Rev Namon Katengeza.

8.3 Ask searching questions on any piece of testimony or information so as to arrive at the truth. The historian's aim is to pursue the truth without prejudice. Questions such as "Why?", "How?", "How important?" must be asked about events and people to assess the truth<sup>36</sup>. But certitude in this ongoing operation of weighing and balancing, sifting and sifting again all depends upon one's discretion as a historian. The presentation of each issue should be accompanied by an explanation sufficient to allow readers to follow the line of thought<sup>37</sup>. Since "absolute historical truth" is not possible, one is left only with approximate truths in connection with the historical facts. One has to reason in terms of

34 Cochrane: *Servants of Power*, p 5.

35 Smith: in *Tarikh* p 4; Henige, *Op. cit.*, p 68.

36 Smith: *Op. cit.*, p 1.

37 Henige, *Op. cit.*, p 73.



calculations of probability by interpreting the facts and by evaluating them from the circumstances of the past<sup>38</sup>.

8.4 In oral tradition one has **the past of a people and their institutions** (in this case the church) versed in the present idiom and projecting the future. It helps the historian to understand the problems and expectations of the people. Oral tradition expresses generalisations<sup>39</sup>. In the oral tradition relating to the past of the CCAP (Nkhoma Synod) one finds an exposition of the problems and the expectations of the membership.

8.5 **The sources** used to compile notes or texts **must be quoted** for readers to check and assess for themselves. This is proof of the scientific method.

## 9. A SYSTEMATIC COLLECTION OF ORAL HISTORIOGRAPHICAL SOURCES

Techniques to collect and research oral tradition abound. Historians, however, differ as to the best way to obtain this particular source and how to evaluate it. Nevertheless, they do agree on some basic techniques.

9.1 **First**, try to find **all** the relevant testimonies that are available, i.e. all possible information about the history of the CCAP (Nkhoma) and all the different oral versions must be collected. The more complete the collection of material, the greater the chances are of arriving at an accurate reconstruction of the past<sup>40</sup>.

9.2 **Second**, the particular area of historical study and the informants must be recorded. If there is a large number of informants who are spread throughout the area of study, start by zoning the areas of investigation in terms of the places where historic events occurred<sup>41</sup>. Almost all mission stations in Nkhoma Synod are historically important because the establishment of the local congregations is the basis for the writing and study of reformed church history. Today Nkhoma Synod has 93 congregations with a total membership of over 180,000 communicant members. It is said to be the fastest growing church in Africa<sup>42</sup>. However, some stations could be regarded essential investigation zones.

Mvera Mission Station is historically important because the DRC started its mission work there in 1889. All that Nkhoma Synod is today, started there. The translation of the Bible into Chichewa was done there.

38 Vansima: Op. cit., pp 185-186

39 Smith: Op. cit., p 1.

40 Vansima: Op. cit., pp 195-195.

41 Ibid., p 196

42 Nkhoma Synod Statistics: 1987 December.



Nkhoma Mission Station was established in 1896 and became the headquarters of the DRC mission in Malawi in 1913. It has been the Synod's administrative and educational centre ever since.

Livlezi and Chilanga are also historically important for they are proof of the unity which existed among the two Scottish missions and the DRC Mission in Malawi. These two mission stations were handed over to the DRC in 1894 and 1923 respectively. Thus the unity of today had its beginnings in 1924, when the CCAP was formed by Scottish missions which the DRC Mission joined in 1926.

Matenje and Malembo congregations are equally historically significant because the first Malawian ministers were stationed here after ordination. They were Revs. Namon Katengeza and Andreyo Namkumba.

Mlanda Mission Station was the first congregation to be established near the Mozambican border. Here many Mozambicans heard the Gospel and became Christians. In the sixties the Rev Chimombo caused a schism in this congregation and was censured from his service.

After having zoned the historical places, visit them and contact the likely informants to make preliminary arrangements for conducting interviews. This will enable them to gather relevant material about the church. If the informants live wide apart contact them according to a programme arranged with them in advance. In Malawian villages the best time to meet informants is in the afternoon, because most of them work their fields during the morning. According to Jan Vansima, a preliminary investigation must be done during the very first visit to the area where one meets informants, especially if the area is very wide. Although this procedure may be time-consuming, the advantage is that the people have met you and know your intentions. Thus, a more objective assessment of the oral tradition and the informant can be made<sup>43</sup>.

9.3 **Third**, write down or record on tape the oral history given by the informants. The advantages of taped documentation are obvious:

1. It gives the exact wording used by the informant.
2. It allows the informant to speak his mind without constant interruptions by the interviewer.

<sup>43</sup> Vansima: Op. cit., p 198.

3. The tapes can easily be made available to others interested in first hand information about a particular testimony. There can be no doubt about the authenticity of the testimony.
4. The tapes can be listened to by a group of people at the same time. Accordingly, a critical evaluation and better understanding is possible.
5. The researcher has more time to record information by more informants. Afterwards he is free to use the testimonies repeatedly in his own time.

However, there are also disadvantages of recording on tapes:

1. After the recording on tape is done, the testimonies or texts have still to be written down.
2. The voices of some informants, especially the old people, are often inaudible on tape.
3. Playing back the tape repeatedly takes as much time as writing down the whole text.
4. The tapes need careful handling, otherwise the information may be wiped off before it has been written down.
5. It is expensive and increases the cost of the research.

In spite of the above disadvantages, it is preferable to record on tape as it provides an authentic source of the Christian tradition of the area of study. The tapes can also be played at local church festivals so the congregation will be able to hear their own people giving accounts of the historical events of their church.

9.4 Finally, it is advisable to visit the most important informants once again to ascertain that the information previously given is correct.<sup>44</sup>

## 10. FIELD BEHAVIOUR IN ORAL HISTORIOGRAPHICAL METHODOLOGY

The researcher of oral history must be aware that his research relies heavily on an interaction between himself and the informants. Unless there is a friendly and relaxed atmosphere, the information given may be distorted and then the results are bound to be poor.

A researcher should do everything possible to make the informant feel completely at ease. A "warm" greeting is important as it usually leads to common acknowledgement,

<sup>44</sup> Vansima: *Op. cit.*, p 201.

acquaintance and friendship. Oral research pertaining to church history is best served by a Christian talking to another Christian because they share a common faith. It serves a common purpose. The historian must make sure that the informant is **neither afraid nor over-confident when being interviewed**<sup>45</sup>. The majority of people to be interviewed on church events will be Christians. But one must not expect them to be unsuspecting, free and open-minded.

In Malawi men and women are friendly, polite, and respectful. The women are usually more polite and shy. As the majority of the men go to work in towns or in neighbouring states, they have more experience of being interviewed, but most of the women have lived in their home villages all their lives. As such women would most likely be the best informants on church events as they would have heard of and taken part in most of them. For example, they would have made bricks for church buildings and attended church conferences. They are the steady attendants of church services, active office-bearers of the women's guild, the Chigwilizano cha Amai. In spite of their immediate experience of the activities of the church, their cultural role requires that they stay in the background. It is therefore advisable to be patient with them and to encourage them politely to come forward and talk. The best is to prepare questions and request a female helper to ask them on your behalf, since, according to Malawian culture and custom, a certain distance should be kept between the sexes. (Men and women sit on separate sides of the church.) However, intercultural communication and relationships have caused the educated class in particular to move away from the old customs. In certain areas it is quite possible to encounter women who are open-minded and will talk freely. But the elderly women, especially in the villages, are still shy. It is important to keep one's distance according to the Malawian custom and culture.

The researcher must **show great interest** in what the informant is telling him. In this way he will gain the confidence and co-operation of the informant. The moment an informant discovers that the researcher is not interested in his information, he becomes discouraged and reluctant.

Questions should be asked on **the specific topics** investigated. If it is the life of a minister or an elder who played an important role in the church, all questions must be aimed at obtaining information about activities specifically concerned with him. Absolute care must be taken not to ask leading questions. If such questions are asked, the informant will not only be confused, but become sidetracked and tend to give information which may be irrelevant, and even misleading.

45 Vansima: Op. cit., p 200.



## 11. THE AID OF OTHER DISCIPLINES IN THE STUDY OF SOURCES AND WRITING OF CHURCH HISTORY

It is not easy to find and understand sources to describe the church history of Africa. Fortunately, historical, oral and written sources can be studied with reference to other disciplines which are not directly connected to history or an academic discipline. It is clear that all disciplines of study have a bearing on history in that they have their historical beginnings within an historical context. For African church historiography there are four disciplines of particular importance. They are archaeology, environmental sciences, linguistics<sup>46</sup> and social and physical sciences<sup>47</sup>.

### 11.1 Church history and archaeology

Archaeology is the study of the distant past by excavating to uncover and study cultural remnants, like houses, human skeletons and the like<sup>48</sup>. In this way many historical facts have been discovered on various aspects and bygone ways of life. The church historian can use archaeology to find answers to some questions about the past. For example, through archaeology we can discover old pieces of furniture, paper, cloth and pottery that were used by the church before the modern furniture and utensils. These may be found hidden in the earth of an old mud prayer house which collapsed and was never rebuilt. Some church buildings have been pulled down and new ones built on another site. Others were burnt down accidentally. These are the places from which to seek for information about church history<sup>49</sup>.

There is one major problem with archeology in Malawi. The country has much rain from October/November to April. Thus, many of the buried objects which would give meaning to the history of the church simply rot away. In addition, there are termites which eat and destroy buried material<sup>50</sup>. Even some of the church books and documents have been destroyed in this way because they were not well looked after and cared for. This is the case in most of the historically important mission stations of Nkhoma Synod<sup>51</sup>.

46 Vansima: *Op. cit.*, p 173.

47 E J Alagoa: "The Relationship Between History and Other Disciplines", in *Tarikh*, p 20.

48 *Ibid.*, p 17.

49 J Vansima, R Mauny and L V Thomas (Editors): *The Historian in Tropical Africa*, p 65.

50 *Ibid.*, p 65.

51 When I was doing research on Mvera Congregation in December 1979, I found that many old books had been torn while others had been eaten by termites leaving only a few readable pages. This is the case in most congregations.



But the biggest problem in the use of archaeological evidence is the difficulty of identifying the particular objects that have been dug out<sup>52</sup>. One may find a handmade cloth by indigenous people called "Nyanda" which may have been used by one of the earliest Christians. Nowadays it is easy to date the objects by radiocarbon<sup>53</sup>.

## 11.2 Church history and environmental studies

A study of the environment can explain people's occupation and why they live in a particular area<sup>54</sup>. For example, the drying up of the Sahara and Kalahari caused people to migrate to fertile places to the south and north, so avoiding starvation and poor economic conditions. In the central region of Malawi, large communities are found in the fertile soils of Lilongwe, Dowa, Dedza and Ntchisi. As a result, the church is very active in these places and most congregations are found in this region. In Salima, Nkhotakota, Mchinji, Kasungu and Ntcheu There are smaller communities because the soil is poor, and the congregations are not well developed<sup>55</sup>.

The study of geographical conditions might enable the church historian to discover why it was difficult for some areas to receive the gospel. From the time of the slave trade, when the Arabs sailed their dhows on the lake many Moslems settled along the shore of Lake Malawi<sup>56</sup>. The Universities Missions to Central Africa has been sorely affected by this Moslem settlement for the Moslems killed any of those converted to Christianity. As a result, the statistics of membership of the UMCA are much lower than that of Nkhoma Synod, although they were the first to do mission work in the country (1861)<sup>57</sup>. The environment has greatly influenced the history of the church in this area.

Another instance is that many missionaries lost their lives because of malaria. There are graves of missionaries at many places: Livlezi, Nkhoma, Mvera, Bandawe, Blantyre and Mangochi (Cape Maclear). From these graves we can establish how long

<sup>52</sup> Vansima: *Op. cit.*, p 174.

<sup>53</sup> Henige: *Op. cit.*, p 103. The radiocarbon test is only accurate for objects which are more than two hundred years old.

<sup>54</sup> Alagoa: *op. cit.*, pp 16, 17.

<sup>55</sup> Since Malawi became independent in 1964 most of these areas have become settlement areas for people from all parts of Malawi. The large forests have been turned into farms. Water, which was very scarce, has been supplied by the government. The use of fertilizer in these areas has helped the farmers to have high yields in cash crops, mainly tobacco and cotton and also groundnuts and maize. As a result, the areas have developed beyond recognition. Churches have also developed a viable economic base. Nkhoma Synod has in due course established many new congregations since independence (my own observation).

<sup>56</sup> Pachai (Editor): *Livingstone: Man of Africa*, pp 134-135f.

<sup>57</sup> Pachai: *Malawi: The History of the Nation*, pp 42-43, 46, 49.

Christianity has been in the country and what effect the geographical conditions had on the missionaries.

The incidence of Malaria also explains why the missionaries liked to establish mission stations at high altitudes. They wanted to live in colder places rather than in warmer places where mosquitoes abounded<sup>58</sup>. The missionaries were also drawn by large numbers of people in villages in a vicinity usually under one chief, who settled there because there was water and fertile soil. These good environmental conditions enable people to be industrious and to be active in church activities for they have food, clothing and perhaps a good home.

Poor soil makes for poor settlement and industry as well as poor congregations. In these poorer areas and congregations the research worker investigating the past will have to ask questions about the ministers and their ministry. The congregations often cannot afford a minister.

The environment is one of the factors which not only determines the state of the congregation, but also the behaviour of its members. Environmental factors can make them self-styled, selfish or uncooperative, in spite of the Gospel.

### 11.3 Church history and linguistics

Linguistics is the study of languages and their characteristics. It is a very useful means of learning about cultural change and contact in the past. We find that words have been borrowed from different languages and used in certain local languages. Through linguistic study we are able to identify how long the different groups have lived together in a particular geographical area<sup>59</sup>. It also provides information on the history of migrations and sometimes helps one to arrive at accurate results<sup>60</sup>.

The Chewa-speaking population in the central region, among whom Nkhoma Synod operates, has had linguistic contact with the Ngoni migrators since 1830<sup>61</sup>. Although these people spoke their own language<sup>62</sup>, it became submerged in the long run so that they only speak Chichewa today. In certain cases they speak a Chichewa dialect, which sounds different to Chichewa. For instance, the Chichewa speakers will say "zinthu zimenezi" to express "these things", while people in the Chichewa-Ngoni speaking areas will say "dzinthu dzimenedzi". The areas where Chichewa-Ngoni is spoken are Dedza and Ntcheu. The

58 Murray, A C: *Mbiri ya Misyoni ya DRC m'dziko la Nyasa*, p 42.

59 Alagoa: *Op. cit.*, p 19.

60 Vansima: *Op. cit.*, p 180.

61 Cf. Kamukhwani: *A Brief History of Mvera Congregation*.

62 Probably called Chiowazi.

language spoken in Chichewa areas also differs in certain respects. For instance, for the same "these things" they will say "vintha vimenevi", or "bzinthu bzimenebzi". These differences often exist in the same district, Lilongwe, Dowa, Ntchisi, Salima, Kasungu, Nchinji and Nkhota-kota, for instance. The one important historical fact is that the Bible is translated into the standard Chichewa of "zinthu zimenezi"<sup>63</sup>. Nowadays all accepted literature is written in standard Chichewa<sup>64</sup>.

Linguistic study enables the church historian to become familiar with the different groups of people found in the country, or in the congregations or synod. By studying their hymns, liturgies, and Bible translation he will come to understand their culture and history. For example, it was for linguistic purposes that Livingstonia Mission handed over the Kasungu (Chilanga) mission station and the Malembo and Livlezi mission stations to Nkhoma Mission in 1923 and 1892 respectively. The people in these areas spoke Chichewa while Livingstonia Mission was established in Tumbuka-speaking, Tonga-speaking or Nkhonde-speaking areas in the northern region of Malawi<sup>65</sup>.

The understanding of theological word-meanings has also led to schisms in some of the churches in Malawi and in the rest of Africa. A church historian will probe into the schisms caused by the theological understanding of the words in the Bible.

#### 11.4 Church history and the social and physical sciences

The contribution of the social sciences to the study of history concerns the operation and processes of change<sup>66</sup>. **Physical anthropology** determines the differences and affinities between the various peoples of the world<sup>67</sup>, and it either invalidates or confirms them on purely historical hypotheses<sup>68</sup>. The genetic differences that exist between two peoples living in the same area will be evident in the differences in their physique. The study of physical anthropology enables the historian to come to know and understand these differences.

The structure of local organizations can also influence church organizations, in the way they appoint elders and deacons and how disciplinary decisions in the church are made. For example, in some areas only elderly people are appointed to the church councils while others appoint both younger and older people.

63 Translated and published in 1923 by W H Murray.

64 This is to the best of my knowledge and experience. There is a Chichewa Board which checks all Chichewa publications before they are printed.

65 Murray *op. cit.*, pp 39, 72.

66 Alagoa: *op. cit.*, p 20.

67 Vansima: *op. cit.*, p 181.

68 Vansima, Mauny + Thomas: *Op. cit.*, p 75.



Another example is Christian initiation which has been practised in the church since the early days of mission work. The aim is to educate the young Christians in the faith in Christian values as opposed to pagan values. In this way Christianity has penetrated many homes. Christian families also influence the surrounding neighbours.

Through social studies the historian will be able to gauge in what way Christianity has come to change the way of life of the different communities.

The study of astronomy, the occurrence of the comets or sun eclipses helps the historians to date a past event which occurred at the time of such a physical appearance<sup>69</sup>. The physical phenomena that can still be remembered in Malawi are "Dzombe" (the locusts), the flood (along the Shire River) and epidemics. The famine of 1949<sup>70</sup> is in most cases associated with the locusts. Floods occur frequently along the Shire River. When rains have fallen upstream, the lower Shire often floods, which is disastrous to life and property<sup>71</sup>. People never forget such floods. In the same way epidemics such as black fever or influenza or cholera are never forgotten. In the years 1910-1912 the sleeping sickness epidemic struck along the lake shore and a quarantine camp was set up near Mvera<sup>72</sup>. In 1973 cases of cholera were reported in Malawi. A number of people died, especially in the Moslem areas<sup>73</sup> owing to the bowel-cleansing ritual performed on their dead before burial.

Unlike Western historians who record every physical happening, it is very unlikely that the local people will be able remember exactly when certain phenomena occurred. However, in historical research the church historian can make use of such aspects as social happenings and physical occurrences to find dates, to compare the different groups in their church activities or to verify a church event.

Oral tradition is a significant source for the understanding and the recording of the history of Malawi and its people as well as the history of the CCAP (Nkhoma Synod). It enables a more indigenous approach and the rewriting of missionary history as church history.

In our conviction it is crucial to write down the oral tradition of the CCAP (Nkhoma Synod) in Malawi. It is important to note that the church of the future will not base decisions on verbal evidence but on the written word, and these documents are important in this respect. This should be considered as a project by the official authorities of the churches in Malawi and South Africa.

69 Ditto.

70 T O Ranger + I N Kimambo: *The Historical Study of African Religion*, p 88.

71 E.G. Malawi Daily Times, passim.

72 Pauw: *Op. cit.*, p 185.

73 Traditionally every dead person's bowels are emptied by flushing them with water. When this was done to patients who had died of cholera, the disease was spread, causing many other deaths. Nkhoma hospital had this experience in that year.



## CHAPTER 8

GUIDING THE CCAP (NKHOMA SYNOD) TO RECORD ITS HISTORY AND SENSE  
ITS THEOLOGICAL VALUE

## INTRODUCTION

The CCAP (Nkhoma Synod) has come of age. This was evident with its centenary celebration in 1989. It has a history which must be understood and studied. Historical documentation and recording is an official responsibility.

While this dissertation was written, much was made of the fact that for a hundred years the Church has been in existence. It was decided to attend the celebrations and help with reporting of the event, to observe what must be recommended to the official church in order to foster the heritage of the Church and facilitate the study of its history.

The Church ministers to a people of an oral tradition who have come to appreciate its history. They must be taught to sense the theological value of history: Christian, Malawian history.

In this chapter a general outline of the centenary of Nkhoma Synod CCAP, from the beginning of the preparation for the centenary celebrations to the centenary itself is given.

The Synod had already begun to consider having a celebration for its centenary in 1981.<sup>1</sup> The idea was initiated by Synod through the Moderamen. The Moderamen were entrusted with all the preparations for the centenary. In the long run it proved to be very impractical to add yet another task to the full programme of the committee. Later on, the Liaison Officer and the General Secretary were empowered to submit some proposals. Again, their proposals could not be implemented except by appointing a separate committee to prepare for the centenary celebrations.

## 1. COMPOSITION OF A CENTENARY COMMITTEE

At the Synod meeting of 1987, a Committee of six people comprising the Revs K J Mgawi (Chairman), M U Siwinda, Y A Chienda, J L Sankhani, C J Burger and Mr W M Chimutu was appointed.

The Committee was responsible to the Moderamen in all matters. The Moderator, the Clerk of the Synod, the Liaison Officer and the General Secretary were co-opted. At a

<sup>1</sup> See Nkhoma Synod minutes April 1981, S.1575, p 16.

later stage, all heads of departments of the Nkhoma Synod and the members of Chigwirizano cha Amai (Women's Guild) were also represented on the Committee.

At their first meeting they appointed the Rev C L Chimkoka as Secretary, but from the third meeting Mr M J Nkhilambayausi took over this task.

The Committee began to discuss the repairs of church buildings and other buildings at mission stations, beginning with Nkhoma Mission Station, Kongwe and then the others. Since Nkhoma received priority in the preparations, the Memorial Hall was the first to be repaired, followed by the Theological School and the Synod Offices. The church building was repaired later on. The roof of the church was repaired and tiles replaced the iron sheets which had been on the roof for many years. Next, Mvera Church, the old manse and the new manse were renovated. Since it was not possible for the repairs to be done on every church building in the Synod, the Committee agreed to offer K2000,00 to each of the other congregations which they were to use at their discretion for church renovations.

It is striking that historical commemoration inspires and "renovates" the church.

## 2. FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

At the same time as preparations for the centenary were under discussion, it was decided to raise money for the various projects. All congregations were asked to contribute an amount of 7% of their annual Central Fund.

The Mission Secretary of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa, Western Cape, also intimated that for every one Kwacha donated locally by Nkhoma Synod, the DRC Mission Committee would give K5,00.

Letters of appeal were sent to individual members in and outside Malawi asking for contributions, especially those members who had received their education at Nkhoma or within the area of Nkhoma Synod. One of these, the Life President of the Republic of Malawi, Ngwazi Dr H Kamuzu Banda, contributed K300,000. Considerable amounts of money were also raised through jumble sales, coffee sales, special sales of cloth printed specially for the centenary as well as teacups, teapots, wall hangings and T-shirts. The cloth sold extremely well and brought in large amounts of money.

## 3. HISTORICAL COMMEMORATION

One more observation: history helps to unite people and gives evidence of a common calling. This is again evident in the preparations for the centenary festival.

### 3.1 Stones gathered from congregations

The Committee decided to ask each congregation of Nkhoma Synod to bring a stone from its premises to be incorporated in the memorial stone wall at Nkhoma. When Nkhoma celebrated its golden jubilee in 1939, the existing congregations had in fact sent their stones for the occasion and again in 1964 when Nkhoma celebrated its 75th anniversary. Now all congregations that had been established between 1964 and 1989 had to bring their stones to be incorporated in the memorial stone wall which is called "Ebenezer". This is of great historical significance because in future the Christians will remember what the Lord has done in the hundred years since the Church was established in Malawi.

### 3.2 The Museum

Another way in which the Committee has kept the historical consciousness of Nkhoma Synod alive is by starting a museum. They set up a committee to look into and investigate all the items that could shed light on the past both before and after the coming of the missionaries. A museum has been started in the memorial hall where various historical articles are on display.

A brochure has been compiled containing detailed information on all the items in the museum. Some of these include photos of missionaries, Malawian ministers, other important Malawian Christians, photos of the unveiling of the Ebenezer Stone by Mr Hall, a British government official in Nyasaland in 1939; the old trunk which the Rev A C Murray used; a bushcart used by missionaries for their transport; the first baptismal registers for adults and infants of Mvera; the typewriter used in translating the Bible into Chichewa; the first Chichewa Bible; old books; Nyanda cloth used in the past century; the communion set of Mvera, 1897; early hospital instruments, and many other items.

By studying these items one can reconstruct the past of Nkhoma Synod, and compare it with the period dating from the coming of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

But many things which might shed more light on the history of the Malawian people are missing. Only the photos taken by the missionaries on various occasions have been preserved. There is not a single item relating to Malawian Christians, evangelists or ministers in their proclamation of the Gospel. Did they not use Bibles? Did they not wear clothes when they preached? What about their clerical attire? These articles can be collected and kept in the museum to display the part Malawians played in the history of the Church<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> It will not be easy to find tangible evidence of their history. Articles that belonged to dead men were destroyed. However, an attempt should be made to obtain any such

### 3.3 Centenary Bibles/ Hymn books

The Synod asked the Bible Society to prepare a special edition of Centenary Bibles with the emblem of Nkhoma Synod CCAP on the cover. This was very well done. About 10,000 Bibles were printed for this purpose. The years 1889-1989 are shown very clearly on the emblem, with a brief historical outline inside. There are also pages to write up family relationships and memorial dates. Written tradition is replacing oral tradition.

A centenary Bible in large print was donated to the pulpit of each of the hundred congregations in Nkhoma Synod by a hundred congregations of the DRC (Western Cape). Presenting the Bibles, the Mission Secretary, the Rev J D Thom said, "These Bibles are donated as a sign of our on-going unity in the Word of God as partners in His service." He said this after he had read from Ephesians 3:16-19.

The Rev Moolman, Chairman of the Regional Board of the Bible Society in South Africa, congratulated the Synod on her centenary and presented a Centenary Bible to Mr B D Nakutho, General Secretary of the Bible Society in Malawi who was present at the celebration. Another Centenary Bible had already been presented to the Rev S P Chalera, Moderator of Nkhoma Synod on the eve of 24 August 1989 at the opening ceremony of the centenary celebrations by the Rev Moolman.

### 3.4 Centenary Sunday - 27 August 1989

On Sunday 27 August 1989, a special Centenary Bible was presented to His Excellency Life President Ngwazi Dr H Kamuzu Banda by the Rev S P Chalera, Moderator of Nkhoma Synod in the Nkhoma church after the centenary service which the President attended. It was a momentous occasion! Before the Life President entered the church, he unveiled the plaque inscribed with the dates 1889-1989 at the Ebenezer Stone. The English service was conducted by the Clerk of the Synod, the Rev J J Kamwana and the Chichewa service by the Rev S P Chalera, the Moderator of Nkhoma Synod.

These Bibles are a sign of the existence of the Nkhoma Synod and the authority of the Word of God in its confession and life. The guiding text for the centenary was "Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name". "Truly the Lord must be praised for the way in which He has dealt with the people in the centre of Malawi where Nkhoma Synod operates. The Bible is the true foundation of this church in all her educational undertakings. Even in the early days, education in the DRC mission schools meant the study of the Word of God and Biblical literature.

---

articles that have not been destroyed from the relatives of the Christian men and women who have passed away so that these can be housed in the museum.



To emphasise how seriously the DRC missionaries took their teaching of the Bible, the Rev Josofati Steven Mwale recalled how pupils as well as catechumen members were punished for not learning their Bible lessons properly! At that time it was thought essential that pupils should memorise Bible verses and catechumen members some catechism passages. The Bible and the catechism formed the basis of the curriculum. The students could remember all their lessons without difficulty. This anecdote is evidence once again of how practices are remembered.

It also illustrates how the Word of God is inscribed on the hearts of the believers. At the centenary celebrations this was symbolically depicted in the Bibles presented to the various parties.

The hymn book, *Nyimbo za Mulungu*, was printed specially for the centenary celebrations with a red cover and with the emblem of the centenary celebrations. The Christian Literature Association in Malawi (CLAIM) made this special edition available at the request of Nkhoma Synod.

#### 4. WRITTEN SURVEYS OF THE HISTORY OF THE CCAP (NKHOMA SYNOD) FOR THE CENTENARY

##### 4.1 Nkhoma Synod historical brochure

For the centenary celebrations Nkhoma Synod published a twenty-two page brochure entitled *A Hundred Years of Grace*.

The guiding text is Psalm 103:2: "Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits." Actually, this is considered to be a reminder of God's amazing grace in the history of Nkhoma Synod.

The brochure gives a brief survey of the history of Nkhoma Synod from the time when the Revs A C Murray and T C B Vlok came to do missionary work at Mvera to the present. Judging from the sequence of the topics and subheadings in the brochure, the compilers have followed Dr C M Pauw's approach. Such missiological topics as "The embryo Church", "The emerging Church", "The autonomous Church", and the like, are typical of Dr Pauw's approach in his book *Mission and Church in Malawi*. However, very recent developments in Nkhoma Synod such as the establishment of Mlanda Girls' Secondary School (1987) and William Murray Secondary School (1979) are also mentioned. Reports on education and health care take up a substantial part of the brochure.

The approach used to compile the brochure is very theological, but raises questions. As a source of general information on the history of Nkhoma Synod, the brochure is quite useful. But it is still an historical review of missionary work!

#### 4.2 Special centenary Kuunika edition

**Kuunika**, the church magazine published by Nkhoma Synod, issued a special edition in July/August, 1989 (Vol 71, No 4) to commemorate various aspects of the ministry of the Church in Malawi since 1889. Articles were written by heads of departments and those involved in the different departments of church work.

The editor of **Kuunika**, Mr M J Nkhalambayausi, wrote an article on the establishment of the magazine in 1909 and the way in which it has developed over the last eighty years.

The Liaison Officer, the Rev C J Burger, and the General Secretary, the Rev Y A Chienda, wrote on how the DRC Mission started in Malawi and has grown into a church that is at present served by Malawians.

The Rev M B Magunda, minister of the Nkhoma congregation and leader of hymnology in Nkhoma Synod, wrote on the growth of singing in the church and how certain Malawians have contributed their musical skill to Nkhoma Synod.

The Rev Dr H J van Deventer, (also minister of Nkhoma congregation) wrote an article on the work of the youth.

Miss A de Klerk (usually called Nachisale) described the beginning of the women's guild (Chigwirlzano) in an article.

Articles were written on William Murray Secondary School (Lexon J C Ndalama), Chilanga School for the Blind (R J Bemeani, headmaster) and Robert Blake Secondary School (J S Chalimba, headmaster) outlining the beginnings of these schools and giving an appraisal of their achievements in Nkhoma Synod. The Education Secretary, the Rev W R Kawale, wrote an article reflecting on education in Nkhoma Synod for the past hundred years.

Mr H Mtimaukadza surveyed the history of Nkhoma Press from 1907 to 1989.

Dr C J Blignaut pinpointed the work of the hospitals from 1889 to 1989.

Reading all these articles in this special edition, one feels how grateful the people of Malawi are to the Lord for bringing the Gospel to them through the DRC missionaries. In

these articles, many of them written by Malawians, the participation of Malawian people in the activities of the Synod has been recognised.

These articles will no doubt be stepping stones to historians specializing in particular aspects of the ministry of the Church.

The other departments of the Synod such as Works and Transport, Building Department, Namon Katengeza Church Lay Training Centre, Carpentry and Agriculture are still to be described.

## 5. CENTENARY DRAMAS

A few dramas were performed by teachers, ministers, youth groups and the residents of Nkhoma Station proper. The main thrust of the dramas was the coming of the early missionaries, A C Murray and T C B Vlok, to Mvera and the way Chief Chiwere received them.

The winners of the drama competition organized by the Rev M J Kafantenganji, the Youth Minister of Nkhoma Synod, were the youth groups from Malembo and Kakoma congregations. It is striking that their plays did not only the coming of the early missionaries and the baptism of the first Malawian Christian families, but also incorporated the participation of Malawians in proclaiming the Gospel to the surrounding peoples at Mvera. It is important to note that the youth from Kakoma and Malembo used the available historical sources to create their plays. They read Dr Pauw's book and the Rev Kamnkhwani's dissertation. This is a sign of the historical awareness of members and their desire make the past come alive for the sake of the present and the future.

The play of the **teachers of Nkhoma Synod** was very similar to that of the youth group. True to their professional nature, they used props. Some of the old teachers such as Mr Kaffere, Mr Mthangobe and others were dressed in the real Ngoni warrior attire which they had borrowed from Chief Gomani. They also constructed grass houses which resembled the houses of old. They showed how schools were started and how the teachers helped to spread the Gospel. Their play illustrated how the physically strong people of old were conquered by the Gospel<sup>3</sup>.

The **residents of Nkhoma proper** presented a play produced by the Rev Dr H van Deventer and Dr C J Blignaut (a medical doctor) together with the youth on Nkhoma Mission Station and the surrounding villages. Dr Blignaut acted the part of the Rev A C Murray, and Dr van Deventer that of the Rev T C B Vlok. They also constructed decor resembling

<sup>3</sup> The Lord prepared the way for the Gospel through the Ngoni dynasty.

the huts in which the chief and his people lived. In this drama, the chief was not autocratic, but consulted his men before making decisions. This is very characteristic of an African local administration. It is important to note that the missionaries came to a country where some form of government did exist! They found the people organised under Ngoni rule in a sort of democratic government in which decisions were taken after consultation. Only then could the chief decide what to do. This play was the most interesting, because the roles of the missionaries were played by white men (Blignaut and Van Deventer) who spoke Chichewa with the real white man's accent. Chief Chiwere was depicted as having protected the missionaries especially when his counsellors intended to get rid of "these white creatures" who were thought to be the cause of the drought. Chief Chiwere announced his protection of the missionaries since they had given him a shirt and a few other things. Another point of interest was that the Rev A C Murray and T C B Vlok took youths on their first journey to Bandawe as interpreters.

The **Chikuku** play was performed by ministers of Nkhoma Synod. It showed how A C Murray travelled from one place to another carried by his men in a wheel chair or in a "Machila", (hammock), as they sang, "Andrew Murray, iye iye Andrew Murray! Hee!! Ndani adapha a Yesu, Adapha Yesu ndi Ayuda Heee!!" The Rev I M Kainja played the role of A C Murray. He put on a helmet and read a book while being carried in the wheel chair. This was a true reconstruction of conditions during the early years.

## 6. VISITORS AND INVITED GUESTS AT THE CENTENARY

Most of the visitors and invited guests came from within Malawi. The member churches of the Christian Council of Malawi, the Anglican Council of Malawi and the Roman Catholic Church all sent their representatives. But mainly it was the sister churches of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian who were represented.

**Livingstonia Synod** was represented by the Revs A M Mfune (the General Secretary), F Chunga, and Dr Jere. The Rev A M Mfune spoke on behalf of the delegation as he wished Nkhoma Synod good luck and stressed the need for helping one another and for strengthening the unity of the Church in the whole CCAP. "We your elder sisters congratulate you on your centenary", he said.

**Blantyre Synod** was represented by the Deputy General Secretary of the Synod, the Rev Chitsulo, and its Moderator, the Rev Simuja. The Rev Chitsulo congratulated Nkhoma Synod on its centenary and also stressed the need for unity in the CCAP. Finally, he wished the Synod of Nkhoma God's blessings for the year 2000!<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The unity of the CCAP is vital to the life of the Church. The same need for unity had already been stressed by Nkhoma Presbytery in 1953 (see Presbytery Minutes August,



**Harare Synod CCAP** was represented by almost all the ministers of the Synod of Malawian origin except one - the Rev Isaac G M Banda - who could not leave his administrative duties in the Synod Office. The Moderator of the Synod, the Rev Kalema, spoke on behalf of the delegation. He expressed the fact that the Synod of Harare was a daughter of Nkhoma Synod and therefore an integral part of it. He recognised that Nkhoma Synod supplied ministers to Harare Synod. He wished the centenary of Nkhoma Synod God's blessings.

From the neighbouring countries, the **sister churches outside the CCAP** represented were the **Reformed Church in Zambia and the Igreja Refomada Em Mozambique**. The Rev F D Sakala congratulated the Synod on the centenary. He recognised the fact that the missionaries who evangelized Zambia towards the formation of the RCZ came from Mvera, Malawi. "For this reason, you are our elder brothers", he said, noting that their centenary would be in just a decade from now, in 1999.

The Rev Chikakuda (younger brother of the Rev W E Chikakuda, a minister of Nkhoma Synod) greeted the Synod and congratulated it on the centenary in the name of the Igreja Refomada Em Mozambique. "We are all part of Nkhoma Synod, because our church came from here", he said. He thanked the Synod for its cooperation and help while the Mozambicans were displaced from their country to Malawi.

The Rev Dr A M Hofmeyr, General Mission Secretary of the DRC in South Africa, greeted Nkhoma Synod on behalf of the Rev Keta, member of the Interim Committee of the Reformed Ecumenical Council of which the Synod is a member. He expressed the hope that the Synod would continue to remain faithful to the Word of God. Dr Hofmeyr also read greetings from the Federal Council of Dutch Reformed Churches and presented its cheque for R1000 towards the Synod's centenary expenses.

### **Christian organisations**

Some of the Christian organisations represented at the centenary were the Christian Service Committee, the Christian Council of Malawi, World Vision International (Malawi),

---

1953) when it was moved that they request the Synodical Committee of the CCAP Synod to consider and discuss the possibility of having one mode of theological training of ministers so as to foster unity in the areas of selection of candidates and the duration of the course. In addition to that, Nkhoma Synod acknowledged in 1962 that unity in the CCAP was growing from strength to strength as was evident from the United Theological School due to start in the following year (1963). "But the Synod craves that the unity in question should seek to find a way whereby the General Synod CCAP shall have authority (or centralized authority)." Nkhoma Synod wished there to be one strategy agreed upon by all synods so that the standing committees responsible for the proposals for this unity should work feverishly (Synod Minutes 1962 paragraph 74 p 12; also 1964 S.44 p 12)

the Bible Society of Malawi, Zomba Theological College, and the Christian Literature Association in Malawi.

### The General Synod CCAP

The General Synod CCAP is made up of five synods, namely Livingstonia Synod (1875) Blantyre Synod (1876) Nkhoma Synod (1889) Harare Synod (1912) and Zambia CCAP Synod (1984). At this centenary celebration the senior clerk of the General Synod, the Rev W P Chibambo, was present. Today the General Synod has a secretariat in Lilongwe where the senior clerk administers church affairs. It is a privilege that Nkhoma Synod CCAP can have such an office in its area.

It has been noted that all arrangements regarding the reception of the honourable churchmen who were present at the centenary of Nkhoma Synod were jointly made by the leaders of the CCAP synods within Malawi and government officials. This is really a sign of unity and Christian freedom in Malawi, under the rule of Life President Ngwazi Dr H Kamuzu Banda.

## 7. SPEECHES OF THE MOST HONOURABLE GUESTS OF THE CENTENARY: 26 August 1989

There was much speech-making!

7.1 The Synod had also invited **representatives** from the Church of Scotland, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa (Western Cape Synod). The Church of Scotland and the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa sent their moderators to represent them while the Presbyterian Church in Ireland sent a lady. These visitors were given a most warm welcome by the Republic of Malawi. They toured many places of interest and institutions in the country by government escort. They also had an audience with the Life President of the Republic of Malawi Ngwazi Dr H Kamuzu Banda at Sanjika palace in Blantyre. The Rev Dr S Ncozana and his wife, the Rev L K R Matanda and Mrs E M Khombe accompanied the Rev McDonald and his wife while the Rev Dr D J Hattingh and his wife were accompanied by the Rev W R Kawale, Mrs. E Y Chienda, and Mrs. Kagundu. The CCAP thanked the Malawi Government for this unreserved honour.

The Rev Dr McDonald, Moderator of the **Church of Scotland**, congratulated the Synod of Nkhoma on the centenary. He added that the Reformed family had the same root although it had developed into a big tree with branches in various countries. Having read

two texts from the Bible Dr McDonald stressed three things: remember your tradition, forget the past, and look forward.

The lady representative from the **Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI)** added her congratulations. She stressed the fact that each church has problems which needed prayer from fellow Christian churches. She asked Nkhoma Synod to remember the PCI in their search for peace and reconciliation, referring to denominational uprisings which had been and still continue, in both the Roman Catholic and Protestant communities.

Dr Hattingh, Moderator of the **Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa**, (Western Cape Synod) greeted Nkhoma Synod in the name of our common Lord. He said that the Western Cape Synod had strong ties with Nkhoma Synod since the DRC initiated mission work in Malawi at Mvera in 1889 and had continued to support Nkhoma Synod by providing personnel and finances until now. Dr Hattingh gave a brief historical background of the beginnings of mission work in Malawi and how the Reformed-Presbyterian missions formed a union, now the CCAP, in 1924. Dr Hattingh urged Nkhoma Synod to maintain the existing unity in the CCAP. He presented a Bible to the Synod which was accepted by the Very Rev J G M Maseko, the current Vice-Moderator of the Synod.

At the evening session of the same day, Dr Hattingh preached from Mat. 28:19. He said, "The commission of Jesus was to go to all nations and make disciples. The good news is for all nations, all languages, all cultures. Jesus wants our hearts so that He may remove sin from them. He wants to live in our lives. Our lives are temples of the Lord wherever we walk. We must tell others about Jesus whom we know." Further on in his sermon he assured members of the Church in Malawi that they were welcome in the DR churches in South Africa.

"Your students and teachers are most welcome to study in South Africa, You will be free to go anywhere," Dr Hattingh said.

Many people have expressed deep gratitude for the words of all these dignitaries from the historic churches, especially as Reformed-Presbyterian Christianity in Malawi has depended on them. It has been a gesture of true unity in the CCAP and has strengthened already existing relations.

There was considerable media coverage of the activities and addresses of the two moderators during their stay in Malawi. They will undoubtedly never forget what the Lord did to Malawi and to them during their short visit.



7.2 There were many missionaries who came to witness the centenary celebrations of Nkhoma Synod. Some were given the opportunity to speak.

Among the ministers the Rev M S Daneel who had been a missionary at Kasungu (Chilanga) Mvera, Kongwe and later went to Salisbury (now Harare) Synod in South Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) spoke about his calling by the Lord to be a pastor and a missionary in Malawi and Zimbabwe. The Rev Daneel read from Eph. 2:10. He expressed his joy and said: "God has a purpose for each one of us and that is to glorify and please Him." He had come to Malawi as a missionary in 1938. In 1939 he organised a jubilee and raised the Ebenezer Stone which stands at Nkhoma. He said he had been afraid to come to Malawi and had sometimes been discouraged by relatives. But bearing in mind that God had already prepared what should be done by him and by the other missionaries through his calling, he had to come to Malawi in spite of fears and discouragements. He praised God for the hundred years of the Church's existence. The Rev Daneel is especially remembered for his skill in building churches. He built the church at Kongwe as well as many others, also in Harare Synod. Apparently, he continues to use his skill even now while he is in retirement in South Africa, especially among the less privileged.

The Rev Dr J D H Steytler, a missionary in Malawi from 1949 until he returned to South Africa in 1975, spoke about his experiences. He said that on arriving in 1949 he had been allocated to Mlanda CCAP and in the ten years since then, he had been transferred to eleven places. He was appointed to the Theological School in 1958 and had taught with the Revs Josofati Steven Mwale, M Z Chinkhadze, Charles J F Watt, Stephen Kauta Msiska, Simon Faiti Phiri and others in the CCAP Joint Theological Seminary. After that he was part of the Bible Translation team, working with the Rev G A Kachaje, the Rev E E Katsulukuta (died 1988), Mr Gwaza, and the Rev Father Tenthani of the Roman Catholic Church. In 1975 he accepted a call to serve among mine workers in South Africa. He retired in 1988. Just before he began talking, he called upon all those ministers who he had taught to rise - and quite a number of ministers rose. Then those whom he had taught in the Joint Theological College were called upon to sing a hymn which the late Rev C J F Watt liked singing most to the tune of vulpius, "The strife is over, the battle done"<sup>5</sup>. It was indeed a very touching moment!

The Rev A S Labuschagne was a missionary in Malawi from 1949 to 1970 and then again from 1975 to 1983. He stated that he worked with the Rev Andreyana Namkumba, one of the first ministers to be ordained, and Mr Chimchere. These two men and many others taught him a lot about mission work among Malawians. He said his success depended upon the advice of those who knew better than he did.

<sup>5</sup> No 42 in Nyimbo za Mulungu may be sung to this tune; in Church Hymnary it is no. 331.



One of the other missionaries who spoke was **Mr P Blignaut**. He spoke about his calling to be a missionary when he came to Malawi in 1940. He sketched how the schools had been administered by the Church. He emphasised the importance of village schools which are the backbone of the Church.

**Mrs Louise Huger**, wife of the Rev Hugo and a daughter of one of the early missionaries, the Rev J A Retief, spoke of the beginning of Chigwilizano (the women's guild) among the women of Nkhoma Synod CCAP, midwifery and Chilangizo (Christian initiation instruction for the youth before confirmation).

**Mr Toerien** was a missionary school teacher in Nkhoma Synod for many years. He came to Malawi in 1945. He gave a brief account of how the Lord called him to be a missionary. He started at Mlanda, then moved to Malingunde, Kongwe and Nkhoma. He was headmaster of Kongwe Secondary School and also principal of William Murray Secondary School. He is remembered for his skill in teaching English as a second language.

### 7.3 Speeches were also made by old Malawian Christians

**Mr Mtisau** is one of the children of the early Christians. He recalled that he worked in the Rev Vlok's home at Nkhoma. When the Rev Vlok left for Zimbabwe (in 1912), the Rev Hofmeyr came in his place. In 1914 the Rev Hofmeyr was war chaplain at Karonga where he was bitten by a tsetse fly. One day he climbed to the top of Nkhoma mountain to rest and there he died. The Rev W H Murray said that Hofmeyr died on Mount Nkhoma like Moses on Mount Nebo.

In 1932 they planted trees which can still be seen at the station. He remembered that the Rev Retief planted mango trees all over the place. He urged people to eat mangoes and plant the seeds.

He was baptized along with Ruben Mbwaïra. In those days the baptized were given verses from Scripture. He was baptized by the Rev Vlok who gave him the text, 1 John 1 : 11, "The blood of the Lord Jesus Christ washes us and cleanses us from all evil." He found this verse very touching and had used it when testifying to his faith in the surrounding villages.

Mr Mtisau was very grateful to the Lord for the privilege of being present at the centenary and stressed, "The real thing in life is the Word of God which we have received." He thanked the Revs Vlok, Retief, Stegmann and Murray for their work.

**Mr Ruben Mbwaïra**, one of the earliest children to be baptized at Mvera in 1898, proclaimed that he abides in Christ and has done so since his parents brought him to the Lord. He acknowledges the power and protection of God in his life. He has four children

and all of them are alive. He is blessed with many grandchildren. He advised all to put their trust in the Lord and not in magic.

"No one can live in this world without the Word of God" he said.

**Mr Joswa Steven Mwale** was a carpenter at Nkhoma Mission Station for many years. He made pulpits and furniture for church buildings. His work was invaluable. He is 84 years old.

In his speech he said: "I came from Mvera in 1977 to stay here at Nkhoma. First, I worked as a kitchen boy and as a general worker in the houses of missionaries. But my father took me from my work and began to train me as a carpenter. At that time, I did not know the meaning of my training. But after many years, I realized that God wanted to use me in making pulpits for churches where his Word would be preached, and I have been doing the job up to now. When I made the pulpits, I also made boards hanging from the lecterns with the inscription "GOD IS LOVE" engraved in ivory. I concluded that no one goes to preach to other people unless he has love for them, or for his neighbours. If not, he is a liar! This then was my way of testifying."

Mr Joswa Mwale's speech emphasised the fact that the Spirit of God bestows to people different gifts for building up the Church which is the body of Christ (1 Cor.12:1ff). It also indicates that the missionaries taught the people industrial skills along with the Word of God.

**The Rev Josofati Steven Mwale** is a minister of Mvera congregation. After serving as a teacher in the mission, he, along with nine others, was elected to go to Nkhoma to study theology from 1944 to 1947. As pastor he served in many congregations, taught at Chongoni Bible School and also at Nkhoma Theological College. He was also Moderator of Nkhoma Synod from 1962 to 1973, and Vice-Moderator until 1979. He has written some books in Chichewa. He is now retired.

In his speech the Rev J S Mwale explained how the Word of God had been brought to the people through education in schools and catechumen classes in the church. He said the missionaries had concentrated on the teaching of the Word of God in schools. They had prepared Scripture lessons to be taught every day of the week for the whole year. The teachers who were to teach those lessons, had been trained each term in the best teaching method at the mission station. The same routine had been followed in teaching Sunday School children. The teachers had been taught their lessons before the next Sunday.

The Rev Mwale remembered what a certain missionary lady said when he was a teacher, "Teachers, if you don't prepare yourself, do not teach the Word of God, because if you do, you will bring shame upon the children and before God. Hence, no preparation, no teaching."

Referring to the catechumen members, he said the missionaries had also concentrated on teaching them the Word of God. Unless a member had had a fairly thorough knowledge of the catechism and of the Word of God, he could not be baptized. He recalled the days when he had been a catechumen member. He said he had been punished (by having to stand up for the whole period) when he had failed to remember the passage and text of the fourth commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy." After the classes had had their lesson with their class teachers, they would all gather in one class where the missionary would give an exposition of that Sunday's lesson. This was where the Rev Mwale had been punished for not remembering the fourth commandment. There and then he had made up his mind to study and memorize his lessons without mistake.

"I still remember the memory lessons of the catechism and can say them even today if I am asked to do so", he said.

The Rev Mwale emphasised the fact that the Christians of old had attended all the different catechumen classes until they had been baptized. It was only when they were well versed in the Scriptures that they became full members of the Church. Hence, they were very dedicated and strong Christians in the faith. He said all this to emphasise the point that the missionaries gave their lives to teach while always concentrating on the Word of God.

"The true foundation of the CCAP Nkhoma Synod is the Word of God which the missionaries concentrated on and gave us to the full", he said.

It was a great encouragement for the people of Nkhoma Synod to hear these words from the Rev Josofati S Mwale who is considered one of the most pious and dedicated ministers of Nkhoma Synod CCAP.

Mr Eli is an elder from Mvera. His father was a "Kapitao" (foreman) of the missionaries, especially when they travelled from place to place.

He thanked God for being able to celebrate the centenary.

He agreed with what had been said by the Rev Josofati Mwale about schools. He said the missionaries had begun schools because it had been difficult for them to preach the Word of God to uneducated people who had not known how to read or write.

"In order to facilitate education in the Word of God, they began to translate the Bible into Chichewa. This work was started at the mission station in the old manse, but because it was noisy at the station, they prepared a place on Mount Kaso where it was done to completion. The missionaries translated the Bible so that we and our ministers can read the Word of God and use it in preaching as it is done today. Without the missionaries' translation of the Bible we would not be able to read it at all. So we thank the missionaries and their work of translation for our salvation to God. They did it for the whole nation of Malawi. Not many of us would receive salvation if it were not for them. Today we read the Word of God in our own language", Mr Eli said.

His speech is important, because it focused on the translation of the Word of God into Chichewa, done not only for Nkhoma Synod, but for the whole Malawian nation.

**The Rev Damaseke Migochi Malembo** is a retired minister of Nkhoma Synod. He was trained as a minister at Nkhoma Theological College from 1942 to 1944. He served as a pastor at Kongwe congregation for many years and then at Chilanga congregation where he retired in 1980.

In his speech he praised the Lord for the missionaries who brought the Gospel to Malawi despite many difficulties. They lacked good communication, good food, and had even had trouble travelling from place to place. Sometimes the missionaries travelled in the "Machira" (hammock) carried by men. The Rev Malembo himself helped to carry a "Machira". He worked for a veterinary surgeon, carrying him from Kasungu to Nkhoma, Malingunde and other places.

Speaking about education in schools, the Rev Malembo said that the people in Kasungu did not want to be educated in the school. They ran away from the teachers who were to hunt for them. When they started school however, they were given pieces of chalk so that if they did not go to school, they would be easily identified and punished.

Teachers were clothed in a white cloth which they hung around their necks and a red one girded around their waists. In this way, they were easily identified and admired by people. They did not wear a tie, shirt, jacket and trousers. The teachers also worked very hard to bring the Word of God to the children in school, especially by learning Scriptural texts by heart.

School-fees were not paid in money, but in maize, which the teachers used for food.

The syllabus concentrated mainly on the teaching of the Word of God. The first class was the reading of the "Bolodi" (board) followed by "Mkeri" (baboon)<sup>6</sup>. After that came

<sup>6</sup> Mkhweri cf Pauw op. cit. p 150.



"Kalulu" (hare), "Fulu" (tortoise) and finally "Chipangano" (the Holy Bible). When one had completed reading all five books or stages of reading skill, one entered the Primary School for standards I, II and III where a little bit of English was taught. In those days, if a person had passed std III, he was considered very highly educated and able to do many things.

The Rev Malembo also pointed out the fact that some teachers of the Atonga tribe came to teach in Kasungu. These teachers told the children not to take fire from the fireplace where beer was being brewed by their mothers. The girls were also taught not to help their mothers in drawing water for beer-brewing. This point serves to emphasise that no beer was allowed among the CCAP Christians, although it took time for the members to get used to this rule<sup>7</sup>.

Once the people were exposed to school and particularly to the Word of God, other men were converted, entered the catechumen classes and were finally baptized.

The Rev Malembo praised the relaxed situation which we are experiencing, which is very different from the past. This had brought about an increase in church membership and congregations. He thanked God for all this and that we were now celebrating the centenary.

This centenary was mainly a commemoration of what the Lord has done through the missionaries of the DRC. The participation of Malawians in the propagation of the Gospel was not emphasised. But the time of the missionaries is gone. We now live in the time of the indigenous Christians and their witness. The question is, what will it be like at the next centenary? Will the people of Nkhoma Synod keep the faith? These penetrating questions need to arouse in us more dedication to the cause of the Christian faith. At the next centenary the past of the present Church will be discussed. As long as this Church adheres to the Word of God which the missionaries preached so faithfully our contribution will be historically noted and praised.

From now on the Church must record all the happenings, however small, so that future generations will have evidence of our activities which are done in the name of the Lord.

Interesting is the part played by memory and oral tradition at the celebrations. Striking are the details remembered, especially by Malawians. To record these oral speeches is most important for historical purposes.

Their theological value is especially striking. Time and again the teaching of the Scriptures as the Word of God by the missionaries is referred to.

<sup>7</sup> The coming of teachers from the Atonga tribe was an indication that they were the product of the missionaries of the Livingstonia Mission at Bandawe which was the area of the Tongas. It also meant that there was free interaction between the people of the northern part and the central part. The same Atonga people were with A C Murray and T C B Vlok at Mvera in the early years of mission work.

## CHAPTER 9

## HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS RELATED TO THE CCAP (NKHOMA SYNOD) IN THE ARCHIVES OF CAPE TOWN AND ZOMBA

## INTRODUCTION

It is noted (in chapter three) that one of the major "technical" problems of the historiography of Nkhoma Synod is the placement of its documents and sources in different archives and localities.

The Malawi National Archives has a considerable amount of historical documents dating from the early years of missionary work to the present. However, the documents have many omissions.

The DRC Archives in Cape Town, South Africa, has by far the most historical documents of Nkhoma Synod covering the earliest period of missionary enterprise to the recent past.

This chapter attempts to identify the documents and sources in both archives, pointing out which documents are found in one archive but not in the other.

It is hoped that this inventory is the beginning of a guide for research concerning Nkhoma Synod.

The main aim is to bring the omissions of historical documents to the official attention of the two related churches in Malawi and South Africa. Should representatives not come together to discuss their respective holdings and help each other to amplify their collections? Today there are techniques to duplicate sources. One is by making photocopies of all the important documents; the other is by microfilming them. In this way, the documents which are far away, will be made available to historical researchers. The DRC Archives in Cape Town has duplications of documents kept in the Netherlands, for instance.

## 1. TRANSFER OF HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS TO MALAWI NATIONAL ARCHIVES

The decision of Nkhoma Synod to loan its documents to the Malawi National Archives at Zomba was taken by the Synodical Committee in 1965 and 1967.

The resolution reads as follows:

- "(a) The Synod Clerk is authorized to organise and arrange all the documents in the archives (1965-KS.379).
- (b) Synod agrees with the request from the Government that all the documents which are in the archives at Nkhoma should be sent to Zomba for custody. The documents will remain the property of Nkhoma Synod, and all who would like to

read them at Zomba should first be granted permission from Nkhoma. Documents will be well-preserved at Zomba (1967-KS.794).

- (c) Although all archival documents have been transferred to the Government at Zomba, the Government will send an inventory of all the documents that they took to be in their possession to Nkhoma. Here at Nkhoma we should also keep copies of minutes of meetings of Synod, Presbyteries, General Administration Committee and other Committees (1967-KS.919).<sup>1</sup>

From the above it can be seen that the keeping of documents in the archives was a long-felt desire of the Church.

Permission to use the documents of Nkhoma Synod is given by the Moderamen but the General Secretary writes all letters concerning such requests to the Director of Archives and to the persons who requested permission. In this way the propriety of documents loaned to the Government is maintained. This is also in accordance with the laws of Malawi on National Archives.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. TRANSFER OF HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS TO THE DRC ARCHIVES

The missionaries transferred the Archival documents from Nkhoma to the DRC Archives in Cape Town, South Africa, at their own discretion. They did not consult the Synod because at that time they were still in authority of the Church and the documents they took were mostly concerned with mission work. Hence we find that most archival documents of the missionary period are in Cape Town while most related to the period after independence are in the Malawi National Archives.

But the granting of autonomy to the indigenous people of Nkhoma Synod by the DRC caused the missionaries to make sure that the documents of their missionary enterprise were available in South Africa.

The documents were probably transferred from Nkhoma, Malawi, to Cape Town in South Africa between 1962 and 1965.<sup>3</sup>

After autonomy was granted, a historical connection between the DRC and Nkhoma Synod was maintained. Even today current documents concern both churches.

1 Zolamulira, Z.315, p 73. I have done the translation from Chichewa into English.

2 Laws of Malawi: National Archives: Cap 28:01, pp 1-14.

3 No specific date is given about the transfer as documents came in bits at different times.

### 3. A GUIDE TO THE ARCHIVAL SOURCES IN CAPE TOWN AND ZOMBA

D R C ARCHIVES CAPE TOWN		MALAWI NATIONAL ARCHIVES, ZOMBA		
ALLOCATION	TITLE	PERIOD	ALLOCATION	TITLE PERIOD
55/15/6/1	MINUTES		NKHS 3.	MINUTES OF MEETINGS
<b>EXECUTIVE COUNCIL</b>				
55/15/6/1/1	MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL	1898-1962 (Printed)	NKHS 3/1	EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
55/15/6/1/2	MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL	1898-1962	NKHS 3/1/1	EXEC. COUNCIL 1898 OCT 24-1929 MAY 20
55/15/6/1/3	MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL	(Typed); (Duplicate of 1/1 1898-1960)		The minutes of the Executive Council from May 21, 1929 to December 1962 are not available in the Malawi National Archives, Zomba. Except for the minutes of 1898-1899 which are in English, the rest are in Dutch/Afrikaans.

#### PRESBYTERIES

Livingstonia and Blantyre Presbyteries' minutes 1910 to 1946 are not available in the D R C Archives.	NKHS 3/2	LIVINGSTONIA AND BLANTYRE PRESBYTERIES
	NKHS 3/2/1	LIVINGSTONIA AND BLANTYRE PRESBYTERIES: 1910 AUG 3-1946.

#### DIVERSE MINUTES

55/15/6/1/4 DIVERSE MINUTES: 1903-1968; PLACING COMMITTEE, COUNCIL-COMMISSIONS AND COUNCIL OF CONGREGATIONS MEETINGS.	THESE MINUTES OF MEETING PLACING COMMITTEES COUNCIL-COMMISSIONS AND COUNCIL OF CONGREGATIONS MEETINGS FROM 1903-1968 ARE NOT AVAILABLE IN THE THE MALAWI NATIONAL ARCHIVES.
	NKHS 3/3 MISCELLANEOUS MINUTES: NKHS 3/3/1 MISCELLANEOUS MINUTES 1910 MAY 28-1928 JUL 28
	NKHS 3/3/2 MISCELLANEOUS MINUTES 1918 MAY 2-1964 APR 10

#### CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

These Church Council minutes are not available in the D R C Archives.	NKHS 3/4 CHURCH COUNCIL NKHS 3/4/1 CHURCH COUNCIL: 1912-1932 NOV. NKHS 3/4/2 CHURCH COUNCIL: 1913 MAY 2-1922 MAY 13 (Kongwe)
---	---

#### APPENDIX TO MINUTES

55/15/6/1/5 APPENDIX TO MINUTES, AGENSAS, COMMENTARIES, POINTS FOR DISCUSSION: 1904-1969.	These are not available in the Malawi National Archives. Matters discussed by the mission committee DRC (Cape Synod) were concerned with mission work of the D R C in Malawi.
---	---

#### MINUTES OF MEETINGS

NKHS 3/5 NKHOMA MISSION COUNCIL
NKHS 3/5/1 NKHOMA MISSION COUNCIL: 1919 JUN 12 - 1946 SEP 20

#### GENERAL MISSION COMMITTEE

55/15/6/1/6 COMMENTS OF GENERAL MISSION COMMITTEE ON COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS: 1903-1969.	These comments are not available in the Malawi National Archives.
---	---



## FEDERATED BOARD OF MISSIONS

S5/10/6/1/7 FEDERATED BOARD OF MISSIONS IN  
 NYASALAND: 1927-1937 (ENGLISH)

These minutes of the federated board of missions  
 1927-1937 are not available in the Malawi National  
 Archives

These minutes of the consultative board 1938-1958  
 are not available in the D R C Archives

NKHS 3/11 CONSULTATIVE BOARD OF FEDERATED MISSIONS:  
 NKHS 3/11/1 CONSULTATIVE BOARD OF FEDERATED  
 MISSIONS: 1938 AUG 16-1958 DEC  
 NKHS 3/6 CHURCH LEADERS  
 NKHS 3/6/1 CHURCH LEADERS: 1920 DEC.

## SYNODICAL COMMITTEE C C A P

NKHS 3/7 SYNODICAL COMMITTEE:  
 NKHS 3/7/1 SYNODICAL COMMITTEE:  
 1925 AUG 31-1945 JAN 24  
 NKHS 3/7/2 SYNODICAL COMMITTEE: LIVINGSTONIA SYNOD:  
 1926 OCT 13-1958 AUG 30  
 This was the Synodical Committee of the C C A P  
 Synod in the D R C Archives see allocation  
 S5/15/6/1/12 below.  
 NKHS 3/8 Z I M, N M + S A G M MISSIONARIES HELD AT  
 MATSIDI BLANTYRE:  
 NKHS 3/8/1 Z I M, N M + S A G M MISSIONARIES HELD AT  
 MATSIDI BLANTYRE: 1933 MAY 6-1934 SEP 27  
 NKHS 3/9 CHURCH UNION:  
 NKHS 3/9/1 CHURCH UNION: 1936-1939 AUG 13.  
 NKHS 3/10 ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON AFRICAN EDUCATION  
 NKHS 3/10/1 ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON AFRICAN EDUCATION:  
 1937 FEB 17-1952 OCT 29  
 NKHS 3/12 NYASALAND CHRISTIAN COUNCIL (COPIES)  
 NKHS 3/12/1 NYASALAND CHRISTIAN COUNCIL:  
 1946 JUN 13-1960 FEB  
 NKHS 3/12/2 NYASALAND CHRISTIAN COUNCIL:  
 1952 MAY 13-1954 NOV 5  
 NKHS 3/13 NYASALAND NORTHERN PROVINCE ASSOCIATION  
 (COPIES)  
 NKHS 3/13/1 NYASALAND NORTHERN PROVINCE ASSOCIATION:  
 1949 MAR 25-1951 DEC 3  
 NKHS 3/14 DIAMOND JUBILEE  
 (COPIES)  
 NKHS 3/14/1 DIAMOND JUBILEE  
 1951 JAN 18-JUN 15  
 NKHS 3/15 HOME, CHURCH UNION + ADVISORY COMMITTEES  
 ON MEDICAL WORK  
 NKHS 3/15/1 HOME, CHURCH UNION + ADVISORY COMMITTEES  
 ON MEDICAL WORK: 1951 NOV 14-1960 DEC  
 NKHS 3/16 HOME COMMITTEE OF D R C AND SOME FEW  
 EUROPEANS OF THE THREE PRESBYTERIES OF CCAP  
 NKHS 3/16/1 HOME COMMITTEE OF D R C AND SOME FEW  
 EUROPEANS OF THE THREE PRESBYTERIES OF  
 CCAP: 1951 APR 12-NOV 14  
 ON MEDICAL WORK: 1951 NOV 14-1960 DEC  
 NKHS 3/17 NYASALAND AGRICULTURAL COMPANY LTD.  
 NKHS 3/17/1 NYASALAND AGRICULTURAL COMPANY LTD.:  
 1956 JUN 13  
 NKHS 3/17/2 NYASALAND AGRICULTURAL COMPANY LTD.  
 1958 JUL 17

NKHS 3/18 MINDOLO ECUMENICAL CENTRE  
 NKHS 3/18/1 MINDOLO ECUMENICAL CENTRE:  
 1961 JUN 17-1962 OCT 10

### NKHOMA SYNOD GENERAL ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

S5/15/6/1/8 GENERAL ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE (GAC)  
 1962-1971

NKHS 3/19 FIRST AND SECOND SESSIONS OF THE MEETING  
 OF THE GENERAL ADMINISTRATION (GAC) OF  
 NKHOMA SYNOD  
 NKHS 3/19/1 FIRST AND SECOND SESSIONS OF THE  
 MEETING OF THE GENERAL ADMINISTRATION  
 (GAC) OF NKHOMA SYNOD: 1963 APR 19-MAY 24  
 NKHS 3/20 THIRD SESSION OF THE GAC OF NKHOMA SYNOD  
 NKHS 3/20/1 THIRD SESSION OF THE GAC OF NKHOMA SYNOD  
 1964 APR 10-1965 APR 27  
 NKHS 3/21 THIRD AND FIFTH EXECUTIVE GAC NKHOMA SYNOD  
 NKHS 3/21/1 THIRD AND FIFTH EXECUTIVE GAC NKHOMA  
 SYNOD: 1964 APR 10-1965 APR 27  
 NKHS 3/22 SIXTH SESSION OF GAC NKHOMA SYNOD  
 NKHS 3/22/1 SIXTH SESSION OF GAC NKHOMA SYNOD:  
 1964 APR 24-1966 APR 21  
 NKHS 3/23 FOURTH (SPECIAL) MEETING OF GAC OF NKHOMA  
 SYNOD  
 NKHS 3/23/1 FOURTH (SPECIAL) MEETING OF GAC OF  
 NKHOMA SYNOD: 1964 MAY 30

### C C A P NKHOMA SYNOD

NKHS 3/24 EIGHTH SESSION OF NKHOMA SYNOD  
 NKHS 3/24/1 EIGHTH SESSION OF NKHOMA SYNOD:  
 1966 AUG 26-SEP 2

S5/15/6/1/10 MINUTES: SYNOD AND SYNODICAL  
 COMMITTEE 1966-1968  
 S5/15/6/1/11(A) MINUTES: INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE  
 (DIVERSE): 1967-1970  
 S5/15/6/1/12 MINUTES: PERSONNEL (STAFF)  
 COMMITTEE 1962-1963  
 CHURCH OF CENTRAL AFRICA:  
 1924-1972  
 SYNOD AND DIVERSE

### NKHOMA SYNOD

S5/15/6/1/13(A) NKHOMA SYNOD:  
 MINUTES: INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE  
 S. - SYNOD MINUTES: 1970-1979  
 KS. - SYNODICAL COMMITTEE: 1970-1980  
 G. - GAC 1971  
 J. - GAC 1972-1980  
 JE. - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, DIVERSE  
 1971-1976  
 S5/15/6/1/13(B) NKHOMA SYNOD CONSTITUTION:  
 S. - SYNOD MINUTES: 1964-1977  
 KS. - SYNODICAL COMMITTEE: 1969-1980  
 JE. - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: 1975-1979

REMARKS: The inventory of the D R C Archives reflects all the historical documents of the minutes of meetings held by Nkhoma Synod or about Nkhoma Synod from the initial years of the D R C M to 1980. Most

documents regarding the history of Nkhoma Synod as far as minutes are concerned are housed in the D R C Archives.

The minutes of Nkhoma Synod reflected in the inventory of the Malawi National Archives in Malawi ends with the year 1966.

The Malawi National Archives does not have all the minutes from the early years of the D R C missionary enterprise.

Both the D R C Archives and the Malawi National Archives are to update the Nkhoma Synod archival documents to the year 1989. According to Nkhoma Synod Zolamulira Z. 312n and Z. 320(b.4)(c.3)(f.2)(g.7)(h) it is ruled that a copy of the minutes of every meeting held shall be sent to the Malawi National Archives and the D R C Mission Secretary. This rule has been in force since 1961 to the present.<sup>1</sup>

## CORRESPONDENCE

## D R C ARCHIVES CAPE TOWN

## MALAWI NATIONAL ARCHIVES

## MISSIONARIES

S5/15/6/2      CORRESPONDENCE  
 S5/15/6/2/1 - ALHEIT - BLIGNAUT  
 S5/15/6/2/2 - BLOK - BUYS  
 S5/15/6/2/3 - CARSTENS - DE KOCK  
 S5/15/6/2/4 - DE VILLIERS - DU TOIT  
 S5/15/6/2/5 - E  
 S5/15/6/2/6 - F  
 S5/15/6/2/7 - G  
 S5/15/6/2/8 - H  
 S5/15/6/2/9 - HOFMEYR, REV A L (SUPERINTENDENT)  
 S5/15/6/2/10 - HUGO, G F (SUPERINTENDENT)  
 S5/15/6/2/11 - I-J  
 S5/15/6/2/12 - K  
 S5/15/6/2/13(A) - L  
 S5/15/6/2/13(B) - L  
 S5/15/6/2/14(A) - M  
 S5/15/6/2/14(B) - M  
 S5/15/6/2/15(A) - MURRAY (EXCEPT WH MURRAY)  
 S5/15/6/2/15(B) - MURRAY (EXCEPT WH MURRAY)  
 S5/15/6/2/16 - MURRAY DR W H 1895-1918  
 S5/15/6/2/17(A) - MURRAY DR W H 1919-1930  
 S5/15/6/2/17(B) - MURRAY DR W H 1931-1949  
 S5/15/6/2/17(B) - MURRAY MRS W H 1921-1949  
 S5/15/6/2/18 - N-P (EXCEPT PRETORIUS)  
 S5/15/6/2/19 - PRETORIUS  
 S5/15/6/2/20(A) - R  
 S5/15/6/2/20(B) - R  
 S5/15/6/2/21 - RETIEF  
 S5/15/6/2/22(A) - S (WORKERS-MALE AND FEMALE)  
 S5/15/6/2/22(B) - S (WORKERS-MALE AND FEMALE)  
 S5/15/6/2/23(A) - STEGMANN REV J J 1903-1946  
 S5/15/6/2/23(B) - STEGMANN REV J J  
 S5/15/6/2/24(A) - STEGMANN REV J J  
 S5/15/6/2/24(B) - STEGMANN REV J J  
 S5/15/6/2/25 - T-U  
 S5/15/6/2/26 - VAN DER BERG-VAN DER WATT  
 S5/15/6/2/27 - VAN DER WESTHUIZEN-VAN RE.  
 S5/15/6/2/28(A) - VAN HEERDEN-VAN VUURDEN

## MKHS 1.      CORRESPONDENCE

cf. 1/10 on C J L de Jong Papers

Letters written by these early missionaries of the D R C M are not available in the Malawi National Archives

1/8 Rev Pretorius's personal papers of correspondence from 1927 to 1935

1 See Zolamulira: Nkhoma Synod 7 283, 2, 312, and 2, 320.

S5/15/6/2/28(P) - VAN ZYL-VORSTER  
 S5/15/6/2/29(A) - VAN WYK  
 S5/15/6/2/29(B) - VAN WYK  
 S5/15/6/2/30(A) - VLOK, WEBB, WESSELS, YOUNG  
 S5/15/6/2/30(B) - A-V

### LIVLEZI AND NKHOMA

S5/15/6/3 BOOKS OF LETTERS:  
 S5/15/6/3/1(A) LIVLEZI - 1894-1895  
 S5/15/6/3/1(B) LIVLEZI + NKHOMA - 1895-1910  
 S5/15/6/3/2 NKHOMA - 1910-1912  
 S5/15/6/3/3 GENERAL - 1903-1905  
 COPIES - 1925-

The book of letters written by missionaries of the DRCM in the early years is not available in the Malawi National Archives.

### SALISBURY (HARARE)

S5/15/6/4 CORRESPONDENCE:  
 S5/15/6/4/1 SALISBURY-ISSUE (REV VLOK) 1912-1930  
 S5/15/6/4/2 SALISBURY-ISSUE (REV VLOK) 1931-1936  
 S5/15/6/4/3 SALISBURY-ISSUE (REV VLOK) 1934-1938  
 S5/15/6/4/4 SALISBURY-ISSUE (REV VLOK) 1938-1942  
 S5/15/6/4/5 SALISBURY-ISSUE (REV VLOK) 1943-1945  
 S5/15/6/4/6 SALISBURY-ISSUE (REV VLOK) 1946-1948  
 S5/15/6/4/7 SALISBURY-ISSUE (REV VLOK) 1949-1951  
 S5/15/6/4/8 SALISBURY-ISSUE (REV VLOK) 1952-1964  
 S5/15/6/4/9 SUMMARY 1910-1940

See 1/3/33 Correspondence with mission stations in Southern Rhodesia 1944-1961 also 1/3/35 and 1/3/38 for the period up to 1965.

### P E A (MOZAMBIQUE)

S5/15/6/5 CORRESPONDENCE  
 S5/15/6/5/1 PORTUGUESE EAST AFRICA - 1907-1963  
 S5/15/6/5/2 PORTUGUESE EAST AFRICA - 1907-1916  
 BOOKS OF LETTERS A G MURRAY

### KASUNGU AND OTHER MISSIONARY SOCIETIES

S5/15/6/6+7 CORRESPONDENCE  
 S5/15/6/6/1 KASUNGU - 1902-1947  
 S5/15/6/7/1(A) OTHER CHURCHES AND MISSIONARY SOCIETIES: 1899-1948  
 S5/15/6/7/1(B) OTHER CHURCHES AND MISSIONARY SOCIETIES: 1891-1950

Not available in Malawi National Archives

Not available in Malawi National Archives

Not available in Malawi National Archives

### GOVERNMENT

S5/15/6/8 CORRESPONDENCE  
 S5/15/6/8/1 GOVT CORREL. - DOCUMENTS - 1894-1920  
 S5/15/6/8/2 GOVT CORRESP + DOCUMENTS - 1921-1938  
 S5/15/6/8/3 GOVT CORRESP + DOCUMENTS - 1941-1948

Documents from 1894 to 1926 not available in National Archives of Malawi. Some documents from 1927 onwards are available.



DRC Archival documents of correspondence with the Government range from 1894 to 1948, covering a wide spectrum of issues. But the DRC Archives does not have documents of correspondence with the Government from 1849 to 1960 (or to 1929).

MGHS 1 CORRESPONDENCE:  
 MGHS 1/9 GOVERNMENT:  
 1/9/1 NYANJA EXAMS: 1927 JAN - 1955 JUN 28  
 1/9/2 NYANJA EXAMS: 1927 NOV 18 - 1937 NOV 19  
 1/9/3 NYANJA EXAMS: 1946 OCT 22 - 1951 DEC 26  
 1/9/4 NYANJA EXAMS: 1954 FEB 15 - 1954 NOV 13  
 1/9/5 NYANJA EXAMS: 1959 JAN 5 - 1960 NOV 28  
 1/9/6 WELFARE SOLDIERS: 1943 JAN 13 - 1953 DEC 29  
 1/9/7 K. A. R. CHAPLAIN IN EAST AFRICA:  
 1945 AUG 27 - 1947 DEC 30  
 1/9/8 LAND LEASE: 1943 NOV 16  
 1/9/9 LAND LEASE: 1952 APR 29 - 1962 JUN 4  
 1/9/10 LAND LEASE: 1948 DEC 30 - 1953 JUL 18  
 1/9/11 LAND LEASE: 1954 FEB 13 - DEC 16  
 1/9/12 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY:  
 1944 APR 8 - 1951 DEC 19  
 1/9/13 AGRICULTURE DEPT: 1947 JAN 2 - 1953 MAR 23  
 1/9/14 FORESTRY DEPT: 1929 SEP 23 - 1953 NOV 23  
 1/9/15 PROVINCIAL COMMISSIONER (CENTRE):  
 1946 APR 8 - 1951 DEC 19  
 1/9/16 PROVINCIAL COMMISSIONER (CENTRE):  
 1952 FEB 7 - 1954 AUG 31  
 1/9/17 TRANSPORT DEPT: 1927 JAN - 1955 JUN 28  
 1/9/18 WATER DEPT: 1947 MAR 17 - 1954 JUL 5  
 1/9/19 IMMIGRATION: 1947 JUN 17 - 1954 DEC 1  
 1/9/20 POSTS + TELECOMS DEPT:  
 1947 OCT 23 - 1954 DEC 31  
 1/9/21 CHIEF SECRETARY: 1947 DEC 4 - 1952 JAN 4  
 1/9/22 CHIEF SECRETARY: 1952 FEB 16 - 1954 JAN 11  
 1/9/23 MEDICAL TRAINING AND FACILITIES:  
 1946 JUN 7 - 1954 APR 1  
 1/9/25 HEALTH DEPT: 1952 JAN 25 - 1954 DEC 29  
 1/9/26 POLICE DEPT: 1948 JAN 22 - 1954 DEC 30  
 1/9/27 P W D: 1948 FEB 24 - 1950 NOV 10  
 1/9/28 P W D: 1952 JAN 29 - SEP 29  
 1/9/29 REGISTRAR GENERAL: 1948 JUN 22-1954 OCT 14  
 1/9/30 SOLICITORS: 1950 OCT 20 - 1952 APR 29  
 1/9/31 INSPECTOR OF FACTORIES:  
 1951 MAY 5 - 1953 SEP 22  
 1/9/32 MIGRATED LABOUR: 1951 NOV 28 - 1952 APR 21  
 1/9/33 CENTRAL PROVINCE LABOUR ADVISORY BOARD:  
 1945 OCT 24 - 1952 JAN 8  
 1/9/34 NYASALAND LABOUR CHAPLAIN IN S RHODESIA:  
 1953-1958  
 1/9/35 DISTRICT COMMISSIONER LILONGWE:  
 1952 JAN 3 - 1957 NOV 14  
 1/9/36 N A S: 1952 DEC 15 - 1954 JUN 22  
 1/9/37 N A S: 1956 MAY 22 - 1960 MAY 30

REMARKS: The above documents are symbolic of the relationship that existed between the missionaries and the Government from the early years. They shared common tasks in medical work, agriculture, forestry, labour, road works and administration. A historian writing on the relationship between the Church and the State will undoubtedly refer to these invaluable documents. The language used in the correspondence was English. However, one is likely to find a few letters in either Chichewa or Afrikaans, depending on the person addressed.

## EDUCATION

24/15/6/6 CORRESPONDENCE

25/15/6/6/4 EDUCATION 1900-1945

(There are no archival documents on correspondence for Education available in the DRC Archives for the period 1946 to 1959.)

F.15.1 CORRESPONDENCE

(Malawi National Archives has no archival documents on Education from 1889 to 1900.)

NKHS 1/2 EDUCATION

NKHS 1/2/1 EDUCATION: 1901 JUL 26-1930 JUN 3

NKHS 1/2/2 EDUCATION: 1939 AUG 14-1951 OCT 31

NKHS 1/2/3 EUROPEAN SCHOOLS:

1946 JAN 25-1950 DEC 26

NKHS 1/2/4 BLANTYRE SECONDARY SCHOOL:

1946 MAY 24-1953 OCT 19

NKHS 1/2/5 SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL COMMITTEE:

1948 JUL 23-1953 JUN 4

NKHS 1/2/6 EDUCATION DEPT:

1947 FEB 6-1959 AUG 17

NKHS 1/2/7 SCHOOL MATTERS:

1951 JAN 27-1953 OCT 13

NKHS 1/2/8 EDUCATION: 1951 OCT 22-1954 FEB 3

NKHS 1/2/9 MISSION TEACHERS:

1952 JAN 4-1954 AUG 3

NKHS 1/2/10 NYANJA LANGUAGE LESSONS:

1952 MAR 12-1954 JUL 25

NKHS 1/2/11 EDUCATION: 1952 MAY 25-1954 DEC 23

NKHS 1/2/12 SCHOOLS: 1954 DEC 15-1961 DEC 19

NKHS 1/2/13 MISSION EDUCATION:

1955 AUG 14-1962 DEC 31

NKHS 1/2/14 EDUCATION: 1957 OCT 14-1962 JUL 13

NKHS 1/2/15 EDUCATION MATTERS:

1959 JUN 23-1960 FEB 2

NKHS 1/2/16 MISSION TEACHERS AND FORMER

STUDENTS: 1962 JAN 24-1963 JAN 21

NKHS 1/2/17 KONGWE (ROBERT SLAKE) SECONDARY

SCHOOL: 1963 AUG 2-SEP 17

REMARKS: In the above table archival documents, one appreciates the fact that the Education of indigenous people was a matter of great concern for the missionaries right from the beginning. In this respect, the language used in planning was mainly Dutch/Afrikaans. Going through the files, one finds that a few letters were written in English or Chichewa, especially from the time when education was coordinated with the Government and when the indigenous people began to participate in the programme. Their letters to the mission office are in Chichewa.

A historical study of the correspondence on matters of Education will help to understand the philosophy of education as it was initiated by the Dutch Reformed Church Mission in Malawi.

## DIVERSE MATTERS

25/15/6/6/5 PROPERTIES: 1893-1955

Correspondence on properties is not available in the Malawi National Archives for the period 1893-1955.

25/15/6/6/6 BIBLE TRANSLATION: 1913-1958

Correspondence on Bible Translation is not available in the Malawi National Archives: 1913-1958.

25/15/6/6/7 THE PRESS: 1911-1960

Nothing on the press available 1911-1945 in the Malawi National Archives

NKHS 1/23 PRINTING DEPT

NKHS 1/23/1 PRINTING DEPT 1946 FEB 4-1954 NOV 23

NKHS 1/23/1 PRINTING DEPT AND KHUNIKA

1955 JAN 28-1962 JUL 31

Correspondence on the press for the period 1961-1962 not available in the D R C Archives

- 85/15/6/8/8 MEMA AND THE FILM ON MALAWI: 1956-1963  
Correspondence on MEMA and the Film on Malawi for the period 1956-1963 not available in the Malawi National Archives
- 85/15/6/8/9 TRANSPORT, ROADS AND BRIDGES: 1898-1946  
Correspondence on Transport, roads and bridges for the period 1898-1946 not available in the Malawi National Archives
- [85/15/6/9 CORRESPONDENCE]  
85/15/6/9/1 PROSPECTIVE WORKERS: 1907-1951  
[NKHS 1. CORRESPONDENCE]  
Correspondence on prospective workers for the period 1907-1951 not available in the Malawi National Archives
- NKHS 1/15 MISSIONARIES (PERSONNEL)  
NKHS 1/15/1 S AND N RHODESIA: 1939 JUN-1953 OCT 13  
NKHS 1/15/2 S AND N RHODESIA 1953 AUG 12-1957 OCT 12  
NKHS 1/15/3 PERSONNEL GENERAL 1940 MAY 7-1950 DEC 28  
NKHS 1/15/4 PERSONNEL GENERAL 1952 FEB 9-1954 NOV 18  
NKHS 1/15/5 PERSONNEL GENERAL 1953 MAR 31-1954 DEC 7  
NKHS 1/15/6 S RHODESIA: 1952 MAR 26-1957 DEC 12  
NKHS 1/15/7 AFRICANS: 1952 MAR 27-1954 SEP 13  
NKHS 1/15/8 AFRICANS: 1960 DEC 7-1961 DEC 16

REMARKS: The correspondence on missionaries of the C C A P in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) fell under the administration of Nkhoma Synod from 1912. Salisbury Presbytery was a presbytery of Nkhoma Synod C C A P from 1956 (see minutes Presby. Aug 1956, p.12) until it became Salisbury Synod in 1965 (now Harare Synod C C A P). The same is true of African pastors. However, correspondence on African (Malawian) pastors is still going on as originally agreed by the two synods that Malawian pastors serving the Lord in Zimbabwe among Malawians shall be called from Nkhoma Synod and vice versa. Since Harare Synod C C A P became an independent synod in 1965, correspondence on missionaries is their own responsibility without consultation with Nkhoma Synod.

#### SUPPORT

- 85/15/6/9 CORRESPONDENCE  
85/15/6/9/2 CONTRIBUTIONS FOR MISSION WORK  
1918-1960  
NKHS 1. CORRESPONDENCE  
Correspondence on contributions for mission work 1918-1960 not available in the Malawi National Archives. It is likely that it was locally done in the D R C in S A but with the aim of supporting mission work of the D R C in Malawi.
- 85/15/6/9/6 AMERICAN SUPPORTERS: 1913-1925  
Correspondence on American supporters who supported the D R C mission work in Malawi not available in the Malawi National Archives.

#### PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS

- 85/15/6/9/4 GENERAL:  
PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS: 1903-1959  
DIVERSE LETTERS: 1958-1969  
ANONYMOUS LETTERS IN INDIGENOUS  
LANGUAGES  
These general correspondences are not available in the Malawi National Archives. Written by individuals, most of whom are Malawians, they should be insightful to the historiography of Nkhoma Synod.

#### BUSINESS LETTERS

- 85/15/6/10 CORRESPONDENCE  
85/15/6/10/1 BUSINESS LETTERS AND STATEMENTS:  
1895-1921  
NKHS 1. CORRESPONDENCE  
Business letters and Statements 1895-1925 are not available in the Malawi National Archives.

- S5/15/6/10/2 FINANCES: 1922-1936  
 S5/15/6/10/3 FINANCES: 1937-1946  
 S5/15/6/10/4 FINANCES: 1947-1962
- Correspondence on Finances from 1922-1942 are not available in the Malawi National Archives. However, there is a minimal correspondence dating from 1942 Nov 9 to 1963 as indicated below.
- NKHS 1/19 FINANCES:  
 NKHS 1/19/1 FINANCES: 1942 NOV 9-1954 NOV 20  
 NKHS 1/19/2 FINANCES: 1955 JAN 19-1963 JAN 16  
 NKHS 1/19/3 SALARIES: 1963 JUN 18-AUG 6  
 Not available in the Malawi National Archives.
- S5/15/6/10/5 BUSINESS LETTERS: 1963-1969
- S5/15/6/10/6 THE REV G F HUGO (RELATIONS OFFICER AND HEAD OF MISSIONARIES): 1956-1968
- Correspondence written by the Rev G F Hugo, 1958-1968 not available in Malawi National Archives.
- S5/15/6/10/7 DR CHRISTIE BURGER (RELATIONS OFFICER): 1962-1969.
- Correspondence written by the Rev G F Hugo
- S5/15/6/10/8 OFFICIALS IN MALAWI  
 THE REV JOHAN STEYTLER: 1960-1968  
 THE REV A C HUMAN: 1961-1969  
 THE REV K J MGWANI: 1965-1968  
 THE REV Y A CHIENDA: 1969-  
 THE REV J A ROOS  
 THE REV W A LANDMAN  
 A P VILJOEN
- Although correspondence with officials in Malawi from 1960 onwards is not available in the Malawi National Archives, it is likely that copies of these letters by the officials are still in the possession of the Synod of Nkhoma at the Synod office, Nkhoma, pending their loan to the Archives.
- S5/15/6/10/9(A) MEMORANDA: 1951-1969
- S5/15/6/10/9(B) SALISBURY SYNOD: 1969  
 CENTRAL AFRICA REGIONAL SYNOD:  
 1957-1962  
 LIAISON COMMITTEE: 1959-1966
- [NKHS 1. CORRESPONDENCE]  
 NKHS 1/1 MISSION COMMITTEE:  
 NKHS 1/1/1 MISSION COMMITTEE: 1895 OCT 6-1904 DEC 10  
 NKHS 1/1/2 MISSION COMMITTEE FINANCE:  
 1897 JUL 18-1899 NOV 28  
 NKHS 1/1/3 MISSION COMMITTEE: 1905 OCT 5-1916 SEP 25  
 NKHS 1/1/4 MISSION COMMITTEE: 1917 JAN 23-1920 NOV 26  
 NKHS 1/1/5 MISSION COMMITTEE: 1921 JAN 10-1922 NOV 22  
 NKHS 1/1/6 MISSION COMMITTEE: 1945 SEP 1-1946 DEC 7  
 NKHS 1/1/7 MISSION COMMITTEE: 1954 MAR 5-1960 DEC 28
- 1/11 GENERAL MISSION COMMITTEE SECRETARY  
 1/11/1 1933 JAN 22 - 1936 DEC 28  
 1/11/2 1937 JAN 21 - DEC 31  
 1/11/3 1938 JAN 1 - DEC 30  
 1/11/4 1939 JAN 6 - 1940 DEC 31  
 1/11/5 1941 JAN 5 - 1942 DEC 1  
 1/11/6 1943 JAN 22 - 1951 NOV 7  
 1/11/7 1946 DEC 6 - DEC 23  
 1/11/8 1948 JAN 5 - DEC 15  
 1/11/9 1949 FEB 7 - DEC 28  
 1/11/10 1950 JAN 3 - DEC 30  
 1/11/11 1950 DEC 30 - 1951 DEC 14  
 1/11/12 1952 JAN 5 - DEC 29



1/11/13	1953 JAN 6 - DEC 29
1/11/14	1954 JAN 8 - DEC 31
1/11/15	1955 JAN 3 - DEC 28
1/11/16	1956 JAN 9 - NOV 28
1/11/17	1956 OCT 9 - 1957 MAR 26
1/11/18	1957 APR 1 - JUN 20
1/11/19	1957 JUN 10 - SEP 25
1/11/20	1957 SEP 26 - DEC 31
1/11/21	1958 JAN 9 - MAR 26
1/11/22	1958 APR 1 - JUN 26
1/11/23	1958 JUL 3 - SEP 2
1/11/24	1958 OCT 1 - DEC 15
1/11/25	1959 JAN 16 - MAR 20
1/11/26	1959 APR 21 - JUN 26
1/11/27	1959 JUN 8 - SEP 22
1/11/28	1959 OCT 2 - DEC 23
1/11/29	1960 JAN 4 - JUN 30
1/11/30	1960 JUL 15 - DEC 22
1/11	1961 JUN 13 - 1962 DEC 18
1/11/32	1964 JAN 7 - DEC 18

## [NKHS 1. CORRESPONDENCE]

## NKHS 1/3 MISSION STATIONS:

NKHS 1/3/1 MVERA:	1904 FEB 25 - 1907 FEB 14
NKHS 1/3/2 NKHOMA:	1925 NOV 11 - 1929 DEC 7
NKHS 1/3/3 NKHOMA:	1938 JAN 21 - 1939 AUG 17
NKHS 1/3/4 NKHOMA:	1950 JAN 4 - 1954 DEC 31
NKHS 1/3/5 NKHOMA:	1955 JAN 10 - 1957 MAR 1
NKHS 1/3/6 NKHOMA:	1957 NOV 18 - 1959 NOV 13
NKHS 1/3/7 NKHOMA:	1960 FEB 19 - 1962 DEC 18
NKHS 1/3/8 NKHOMA:	1964 JAN 7 - 1965 DEC 28
NKHS 1/3/9 CAPE TOWN:	1925 AUG 24 - 1932 SEP 24
NKHS 1/3/10 VARIOUS STATIONS:	1931 JUL 30-1935 FEB 11
NKHS 1/3/11 VARIOUS STATIONS:	1952 JAN - 1952 DEC 31
NKHS 1/3/12 OTHER STATIONS:	1937 JUL 31 - 1939 DEC 30
NKHS 1/3/13 MISSION STATIONS:	1945 MAY 23-1946 DEC 28
NKHS 1/3/14 MISSION STATIONS:	1947 JAN 8 - NOV 5
NKHS 1/3/15 MISSION STATIONS:	1948 JAN 5 -1949 DEC 21
NKHS 1/3/16 MISSION STATIONS:	1950 APR 10-1951 DEC 28
NKHS 1/3/17 MISSION STATIONS:	1958 JAN 8 - DEC 26
NKHS 1/3/18 MISSION STATIONS:	1959 JAN 11 - DEC 31
NKHS 1/3/19 MISSION STATIONS:	1960 JAN 3 - DEC 30
NKHS 1/3/20 VARIOUS STATIONS:	1961 JAN 9 - DEC 28
NKHS 1/3/21 KONGWE:	1935 JAN 15 - 1940 JAN 19
NKHS 1/3/22 KONGWE:	1956 JAN 19 - 1963 JUN 18
NKHS 1/3/23 MCHINJI:	1935 MAR 16 - 1940 JAN 22
NKHS 1/3/24 CHINTHEMBWE:	1935 MAY 31 - 1939 AUG 20
NKHS 1/3/25 MPHUNZI:	1935 JUN 2 - 1939 SEP 22
NKHS 1/3/26 MLANDA:	1935 JUN 11 - 1940 JAN 26
NKHS 1/3/27 MLANDA:	1955 JAN 26 - 1961 MAR 9
NKHS 1/3/28 IN AND OUTSIDE MALAWI:	1948 AUG 27 - 1954 DEC 25
NKHS 1/3/29 KASUNGU:	1935 JAN 19 - 1939 DEC 25
NKHS 1/3/30 CHITUNDU:	1935 JUL 15 - 1938 DEC 7
NKHS 1/3/31 MALINGUNDE:	1935 AUG 27 - 1960 OCT 2
NKHS 1/3/32 DZENZA:	1935 NOV 17 - 1963 JUN 11
NKHS 1/3/33 SOUTHERN RHODESIA:	1935 JUL 15-1938 DEC 7

NKHS 1/3/34 TRADING PLOTS: 1952 FEB 1 - 1953 NOV 26  
 NKHS 1/3/35 NYASALAND + S RHODESIA:  
   1955 JAN 3 - 1961 OCT 13  
 NKHS 1/3/36 MALEMBO:                                  1959 JUL 26 - 1961 MAY 30  
 NKHS 1/3/37 HEADS OF STATIONS: '55 JAN 17-1956 OCT 18  
 NKHS 1/3/38 IN AND OUTSIDE MALAWI:  
   1964 DEC 16 - 1965 DEC 20

[NKHS 1, CORRESPONDENCE]

NKHS 1/4 PRESBYTERIES:  
 NKHS 1/4/1 BLANTYRE + LIVINGSTONIA:  
   1912 OCT 12 - 1940 MAY 31  
 NKHS 1/4/2 LIVINGSTONIA: 1939 DEC 18 - 1951 JAN 25  
 NKHS 1/4/3 MISSION AND COMMITTEE:  
   1939 DEC 18 - 1951 JAN 25  
 NKHS 1/4/4 BLANTYRE:                                  1946 MAY 3 - 1950 JUL 14  
 NKHS 1/4/5 COMMITTEE:                               1946 MAY 6 - DEC 16  
 NKHS 1/4/6 NKHOMA:                                  1948 JUL 27 - 1953 OCT 17  
 NKHS 1/4/7 UNION OF:                                 1946 JUL 2 - 1953 APR 14  
 NKHS 1/4/8 MISSION:                                  1949 MAR 10 - 1953 MAY 19  
 NKHS 1/4/9 NKHOMA PRESBYTERY COMMITTEE:  
   1952 FEB 22 - JUL 7

[NKHS 1, CORRESPONDENCE]

NKHS 1/5 CHURCH:  
 NKHS 1/5/1 ELDERS:                                  1919 APR 28 - 1926 MAY 26  
 NKHS 1/5/2 OFFENCES:                               1925 MAR 4 - 1945 SEP 21  
 NKHS 1/5/3 UNION:                                   1926 OCT 19 - 1958 APR 14  
 NKHS 1/5/4 FINANCE:                                1927 JUN 18 - 1930 DEC 15  
 NKHS 1/5/5 ACTIVITIES:                             1935 OCT 16 - DEC 12  
 NKHS 1/5/6 ACTIVITIES:                             1963 APR 27 - 1964 DEC 11  
 NKHS 1/5/7 ISSUES:                                  1935 NOV 20 - 1953 JUN 12  
 NKHS 1/5/8 COUNCIL COMMITTEE: 1946 AUG 18-1954 NOV 15  
 NKHS 1/5/9 COUNCIL COMMITTEE: 1961 JAN 27-1962 NOV 28  
 NKHS 1/5/10 COMPLAINTS: 1948 APR 22 - 1961 JUL 26  
 NKHS 1/5/11 MINISTERS: 1952 JAN 14 - 1953 DEC 31  
 NKHS 1/5/12 MINISTERS: 1954 JAN 5 - 1956 DEC 4  
 NKHS 1/5/13 MINISTERS: 1957 JAN 3 - 1958 DEC 31  
 NKHS 1/5/14 VARIOUS COMMITTEES: '55 JAN 7-1956 JUN 29  
 NKHS 1/5/15 PROBLEMS: 1956 OCT 2 - 1961 JUN 9

1/6 AFRICAN (NATIVE) MARRIAGES:

1/6/1 AFRICAN MARRIAGES: 1920 DEC 24 - 1936 JUL 16  
 1/6/2 AFRICAN MARRIAGES: 1945 NOV 6 - 1953 DEC 21  
 1/6/3 AFRICAN MARRIAGES: 1954 JUL 13 - 1960 NOV 30  
 1/6/4 RITES:  1948 DEC 30 - 1952 NOV 20

1/7 STATIONERY, STORES AND EQUIPMENT:

1/7/1  1926 DEC 11 - 1932 MAR 30

1/8 See above on the Rev Pretorius personal papers of correspondence.

1/9 See above on correspondence with the Government

1/10 See above on C L J de Jongh Papers of correspondence.

## [1. CORRESPONDENCE]

## 1/12 THEOLOGY:

- 1/12/1 SCHOOL APPLICATIONS: 1929 - 1953 NOV 17  
 1/12/2 NKHCMA APPLICATIONS: 1932 MAY 10 - 1949  
 1/12/3 STUDENTS: 1935 FEB 13 - 1945 AUG 16  
 1/12/4 SCHOOL GENERAL: 1946 FEB 25 - 1956 JUN 28  
 1/12/5 TRAINING: 1952 MAR 1 - 1958 DEC 31  
 1/12/6 TRAINING: 1958 APR 1 - 1962 NOV 28

## 1/13 CONSULTATIVE BOARD OF FEDERATED MISSIONS:

- 1/13/1 1934 MAY 3 - 1951 JAN 17  
 1/13/2 1937 OCT 7 - 1943 NOV 12

## 1/14 CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

- 1/14/1 UNITED SOCIETY: 1937 JUN 1 - 1949 OCT  
 1/14/2 NYASALAND UNITED SOCIETY:  
 1945 SEP 22 - 1950 MAY 9  
 1/14/3 PUBLISHING AND DISTRIBUTION  
 1954 JUL 28 - 1962 AUG 22

1/15 See above on correspondence with missionaries  
(Personnel), M N A.

## 1/16 NYASALAND CHRISTIAN COUNCIL

- 1/16/1 1942 MAY 15 - 1945 AUG 14  
 1/16/2 1946 MAR 25 - 1953 JAN 7  
 1/16/3 1951 OCT 16 - 1957 NOV 1  
 1/16/4 1958 JAN 6 - 1962 OCT 17

## 1. CORRESPONDENCE

## 1/17 MISSIONS:

- 1/17/1 COUNCIL: 1939 AUG 16 - 1954 NOV 30  
 1/17/2 SECRETARY: 1949 JAN 7 - 1947 JAN 4  
 1/17/3 PERSONNEL: 1948 DEC 16 - 1950 DEC 28  
 1/17/4 FORMER PERSONNEL: 1952 JUL 21 - 1954 NOV 4  
 1/17/5 TREASURER: 1954 APR 20 - 1966 MAY 9  
 1/17/6 LABOURERS: 1954 OCT 20 - 1954 MAR 24  
 1/17/7 STAFF: 1954 JAN 5 - 1964 DEC 30  
 1/17/8 STAFF: 1954 JAN 10 - 1961 JAN 7  
 1/17/9 PERSONNEL: 1954 JAN 13 - 1956 DEC 24  
 1/17/10 TREASURER: 1954 JAN 15 - 1964 OCT 2  
 1/17/11 BUILDING SCHEME: 1955 JAN 17 - 1962 SEP 19  
 1/17/12 DEPARTMENTS: 1955 JAN 19 - 1962 NOV 3  
 1/17/13 PERSONNEL: 1957 JAN 7 - 1961 FEB 18  
 1/17/14 PROBLEMS: 1958 NOV 27 - 1963 JAN 9  
 1/17/15 PERSONNEL: 1962 OCT 22 - 1963 DEC 30  
 1/17/16 FORMER STAFF MEMBERS: 1954 MAR 10 - 1960 FEB 3

## 1/18 ASSOCIATIONS

- 1/18/1 MISSION WOMEN WORKERS: 1945 JAN 20 - 1950 DEC 28  
 1/18/2 WOMEN: 1948 JUN 8 - 1953 NOV 21  
 1/18/3 MISSION WOMEN WORKERS: 1949 JAN 9 - 1951 SEP 21  
 1/18/4 MISSION PERSONNEL AND WOMEN:  
 1951 DEC 14 - 1958 JAN 2  
 1/18/5 NYASALAND NORTHERN PROVINCE  
 1948 JUN 23 - 1952 APR 10

- 1/18/F NYASALAND CENTRAL PROVINCE:  
1957 JAN 14 - 1960 JUN 10
- 1/19 See above on correspondence pertaining to  
finances
- NKHS 1. CORRESPONDENCE  
1/20 CHAPLAIN'S DEPT:  
1/20/1 1942 NOV 26 - 1944 SEP 19
- 1/21 TIMBER:  
1/21/1 1945 SEP 4 - 1951 NOV 6
- 1/22 MTHENGA MAGAZINE:  
1/22/1 1946 JAN 7 - 1950 FEB 1
- 1/23 See above on correspondence pertaining to  
Printing Department
- 1/24 SYNODS:  
1/24/1 COMMITTEE: 1946 APR 24 - 1962 AUG 8  
1/24/2 NKHOMA: 1932 AUG 13 - 1945 OCT 24  
1/24/3 NKHOMA: 1955 DEC 31 - 1958 JAN 9  
1/24/4 NKHOMA: 1963 MAY 23 - 1965 APR 17  
1/24/5 BLANTYRE: 1956 MAY 5 - 1963 MAR 21  
1/24/6 LIVINGSTONIA: 1959 MAY 8 - 1962 JUN 23
- 1/25 BUILDING DEPT:  
1/25/1 1946 JUN 29 - 1954 NOV 29  
1/25/1 KONGWE: 1959 DEC - 1963 NOV 29
- 1/26 CARPENTRY:  
1/26/1 1946 OCT 2 - 1954 DEC 8
- NKHS 1. CORRESPONDENCE  
1/27 ANNUAL REPORTS:  
1/27/1 1946 NOV 11 - 1948 NOV 15
- 1/28 AFRICANS ON MISSION STATION GROUNDS  
1/28/1 1949 JAN 28 - 1954 MAY 25
- 1/29 DIAMOND JUBILEE:  
1/29/1 1950 JUL 6 - 1951 SEP 8
- 1/30 BIBLE SOCIETIES:  
1/30/1 BRITISH AND FOREIGN: 1952 JAN 7 - 1954 JUL 28  
1/30/2 RHODESIA AND NYASALAND: '56 MAR 14-1962 AUG 17
- 1/31 COMPANIES:  
1/31/1 1952 FEB 1 - 1954 NOV 18  
1/31/2 NYASALAND AND AGRICULTURE:  
1954 JAN 11 - 1957 AUG 12
- 1/32 DIVORCE:  
1/32/1 CASES: 1954 JAN 4 - JUL 14
- 1/33 CONFERENCES:



1/33/1 1954 MAY 15 - 1959 MAR 2

NKHS 1. CORRESPONDENCE

1/34 C C A F:

1/34/1 1954 SEP 23 - 1955 APR 1

1/35 SCHEMES:

1/35/1 ELECTRICITY AND WATER SUPPLY:

1954 DEC 28 - 1962 JUL 10

1/36 LOSS OF SHEEP AND CATTLE:

1/36/1 ARSENIC POISONING: 1955 NOV 14

1/37 G C REYNEKE PAPERS:

1/32/1 1957 MAY 18 - 1959 SEP

1/32/2 1960 JAN 4 - 1962 FEB 11

1/38 SPORTS CLUB:

1/38/1 NKHOMA: 1960 MAY 28 - 1961 SEP 8

1/39 STUDY TOUR IN R S A

1/39/1 MALAWIAN PASTORS: 1965 MAY 11 - 1966 MAY 10

REMARKS: Almost three-quarters of entries in the inventory of the D R C Archives are concerned with matters of correspondence between mission officials and private individuals on the one hand and the church officials in Malawi on the other. Most of the letters are written in Afrikaans/Dutch; only a few are in English or Chichewa. But from 1962 when Malawians began to administer the church, letters between the Mission office in Cape Town to the General Secretary's office in Malawi were written in English. Sometimes letters were received by the General Secretary from certain circles in Afrikaans or some other language unknown to him. These had to be translated for him to enable him to reply. As such, some of the files of Nkhoma Synod have letters in Afrikaans and other languages.

## CORRESPONDENCE

The decisions or resolutions which are found in the minutes of all the church courts are not without purpose. They concern the members of the church which is the Body of Christ (1 Cor.12:12-31). Their questions on the faith and how they should put it into practice are the contents of the minutes. Their questions are asked through correspondence. The members write letters to the church officials and the church officials report these questions to their nearest church courts. The church courts discuss these questions and reply from a Scriptural basis where possible. These decisions are then written in the minutes and letters are written to those who raised the question to inform them of the outcome. As a result there is a considerable amount of correspondence with the church offices and this forms part of Nkhoma Synod's history from the earliest time of mission work to the present. Letters are in Afrikaans, English and Chichewa. When reading these letters, the historical church researcher will discover supplementary information to the minutes which do not necessarily contain all the detail of the underlying factors which caused the church courts to arrive at the resolution as entered in the minutes. Congregations also have many letters from various sources in their possession. These should be preserved for historical reconstruction.

## REPORTS

### 25/15/6/11 REPORTS

25/15/6/11/1(A) STATION REPORTS: BULUWAYO  
- KONGWE: 1901-1960

25/15/6/11/1(B) STATION REPORTS: BULUWAYO  
- KONGWE: 1919-1962

### NKHS 4. REPORTS

4/1 MISSION STATIONS STATISTICS

4/1/1 1902 DEC - 1913 DEC

4/1/2 1914 - 1918

4/1/3 1919 - 1925

S5/15/6/11/2(A) STATION REPORTS: LILONGWE  
- MALINGUNDE: 1913-1962

S5/15/6/11/2(B) STATION REPORTS: MCHINJI  
- NKHOMA: 1917-1962

S5/15/6/11/3 STATION REPORTS: MLANDA  
- MPHUNZI: 1911-1961

S5/15/6/11/4 STATION REPORTS: MVERA  
- SALISBURY: 1906-1962

S5/15/6/11/5 STATION REPORTS FROM INDIGENOUS  
WORKERS: 1927-1952

S5/15/6/11/6 OUT-POSTS REPORTS: 1916-1933

### GENERAL ANNUAL REPORTS

S5/15/6/11/7 EDUCATION: 1905-1966

S5/15/6/11/3(A) GENERAL ANNUAL REPORTS: 1911-1949

S5/15/6/11/8(B) GENERAL ANNUAL REPORTS: 1951-1968

S5/15/6/11/9(A) REPORTS, CONTRACTS, LECTURES, ETC.  
1903-1960

S5/15/6/11/9(B) REPORTS, CONTRACTS, LECTURES, ETC.  
1951-1966

S5/15/6/11/10 WORK: WOMEN AND YOUTHS  
(YOUNG PEOPLE) 1916-1960

S5/15/6/11/11 FARMING REPORTS: 1918-1960

S5/15/6/11/12 TRANSPORT AND HANDWORK: 1916-1960

S5/15/6/11/13 PRINTING WORKS AND LITERATURE:  
1916-1968

S5/15/6/11/14 MEDICAL WORK: 1917-1965

BOUND REPORTS 1962-1967

S5/15/6/11/15 FINANCES (REPORTS, BUDGETS,  
STATEMENTS: 1920-1940

S5/15/6/11/16 FINANCES (REPORTS, BUDGETS,

4/1/4 1926 - 1931

4/1/5 1961 JUL - 1962 JUN

Reports on Mission Stations Statistics from 1932 to 1960 are not available in the Malawi National Archives

4/14/1 OUTSTATIONS ANNUAL REPORT 1923-1937

4/19/4 MISSION STATIONS ANNUAL REPORTS: 1953

4/19/5 MISSION STATIONS ANNUAL REPORTS: 1954-1957

4/19/6 MISSION STATIONS ANNUAL REPORTS: 1958-1961

### ANNUAL REPORTS

4/21/1 ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON AFRICAN EDUCATION  
1937-1954

4/23/1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL PLANS AND POLICY:  
1948

4/36/1 SCHOOL INSPECTION: 1941-1954

4/5/1 NORMAL SCHOOL: 1921-1934

4/31/1 W M T T C: 1966

General annual reports from 1911 to 1948 are not available in the Malawi National Archives.

4/19/1 GENERAL: 1948-1955 JUN 30

4/19/2 GENERAL: 1955 MAY-1958 APR

4/19/3 GENERAL: 1958 APR 1-1963 JUN 14

4/9/1 AGRICULTURE DEPT: 1921-1937

4/16/1 LIVESTOCK: 1923 JUL 19 - 1937 JAN 1

4/15/1 TRANSPORT DEPT: 1923-1936

4/6/1 BASKET- AND SHOE-MAKING DEPT 1921-1929

4/4/1 PRINTING DEPT: 1921 SEP 15 - 1934 MAR 9

4/7/1 MEDICAL: 1921 NOV - 1936 DEC

4/7/2 MEDICAL: 1945-1950 (TRAINING AND FACILITIES)

4/17/1 FINANCE DEPT 1923 JUL 19 - 1937 JAN 1

4/25/1 FINANCIAL REPORTS: 1952 - 1961 AUG

4/2 FEDERAL MISSION REPORTS

4/2/1 1917-1945

4/2/2 1946-1952 DEC

4/2/3 1953-1967 JUN 8

4/3 DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS (UNCLASSIFIED, MISC.)

4/3/1 1918-1935

4/3/2 1934 MAR 16 - 1938 MAR

4/3/3	1940 JAN - 1944 DEC
4/3/4	1945 JAN - 1946
4/3/5	1947 JAN - 1948
4/3/6	1949-1953
4/3/7	1951-1953
4/3/8	1961-1964
4/3/9 NATIONAL ROADS IN THE CAPE PROVINCE (n.d.)	
4/13 WORKSHOP DEPT REPORTS	
4/13/1	1922 SEP - 1937
4/8 EVANGELISTS' SCHOOL REPORTS	
4/8/1	1921-1936
4/10 SERVANT HOSTELS	
4/10/1	1921-1937
4/11 TEMPORAL COMMITTEES REPORTS	
4/11/1	1922-1935
4/12 CHITUNDU MUHAMMEDANS REPORTS	
4/12/1	1922 SEP - 1924
4/18 MISSION REPRESENTATIVES IN THE GRANGE FREE STATES AND N RHODESIA	
4/18/1	1925-1928
4/20 SYNODICAL COMMITTEE REPORTS	
4/20/1	1936 OCT 20 - 22
4/22 USE OF TIMBER REPORTS	
4/22/1	1946 APR 29 - 1951 JUL 14
4/24 LITERATURE SITUATION IN NYASALAND REPORTS	
4/24/1	1950-1953
4/26 AFRICAN CHURCH MINISTERS REPORTS	
4/26/1	1955-1962
4/27 THE REV W MWANSAMBO'S REPORT TO LIVINGSTONIA SYNOD AT EKWENDENI	
4/27/1	1957 AUG 20
4/28 THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE HELD AT UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, SALISBURY. REPORT.	
4/28/1	1959 MAY 27-28
4/29 NKHOMA SYNOD BIBLE SCHOOL REPORT	
4/29/1	1960-1961
4/30 ELECTRICITY AND WATER SUPPLY SCHEMES REPORT	
4/30/1	1961 SEP 9-30
4/32 EVANGELISM REPORT	
4/32/1	undated

4/33 NKHOMA SYNOD LIFE AND WORK REPORT  
4/33/1 undated

4/34 NYASALAND LABOUR CHAPLAIN IN SOUTHERN RHODESIA  
4/34/1 undated

4/35 NKHOMA HOSTEL REPORTS  
4/35/1 1931 JUN 18 - 1960

#### NKHS 2. REGISTERS

2/1 CHURCH MEMBERSHIP	
2/1/1 VARIOUS STATIONS	1893-1905
2/1/2 LIVLEZI:	1893-1928
2/1/3 LIVLEZI:	1928-1971
2/1/4 DZENZA:	1897-1928
2/1/5 DZENZA:	1928-1971
2/1/6 KHOLA:	1900-1928
2/1/7 KHOLA:	1928-1971
2/1/8 CHINTHEMBWE:	1900-1926
2/1/9 CHINTHEMBWE:	1928-1971
2/1/10 MPHUNZI:	1906-1928
2/1/11 MPHUNZI:	1927-1971
2/1/12 MALINGUNDE:	1908-1927
2/1/13 MALINGUNDE:	1927-1971
2/1/14 MCHINJI:	1915-1929
2/1/15 MCHINJI:	1930-1971
2/1/16 MALEMBO:	1922-1929
2/1/17 MALEMBO:	1930-1971
2/1/18 SALISBURY:	1915-1971
2/1/19 NKHOMA:	1930-1971
2/1/20 KASUNGU:	1931-1971
2/1/21 LILONGWE:	1947-1960
2/1/22 KOLOWIRO:	1947-1971
2/1/23 MPATSA:	1853-1971
2/1/24 MLANDA:	1928-1971
2/1/25 KONGWE:	1928-1971
2/1/26 MACECHE:	1928-1971
2/1/27 MVERA:	1930-1971
2/1/28 CHIKOMA:	1940-1971
2/1/29 CHILEKA (MCHINJI):	1942-1971
2/1/30 CHITUNDU:	1942-1971
2/1/31 THUMBA:	1949-1971
2/1/32 NTAKATAKA:	1950-1951
2/1/33 GWELO (S R):	1951-1958
2/1/34 NYANJA:	1953-1970
2/1/35 KANJIWA:	1953-1971
2/1/36 MANG'A:	1953-1971
2/1/37 MDZIKA:	1953-1971
2/1/38 LIVINZA:	1953-1971
2/1/39 BULUWAYO (S R):	1955-1958
2/1/40 DEDZA:	1955-1971
2/1/41 CHIMWANG'OMBE:	1956-1971
2/1/42 KAPIRI:	1956-1971
2/1/43 HIGHFIELD (S R):	1957-1958
2/1/44 MPANDO:	1957-1969
2/1/45 BALANG'OMBE:	1958-1971



2/1/46 MTHANDIZA:	1958-1971
2/1/47 NSAMBE:	1958-1971
2/1/48 CHIWE:	1959-1971
2/1/49 CHIMWANKANGO:	1959-1971
2/1/50 CHIRANZI:	1960-1971
2/1/51 MATENJE:	1960-1971
2/1/52 KAWERAWERA:	1961-1971
2/1/53 KADEDWA:	1961-1971
2/1/54 CHILOBWE:	1962-1971
2/1/55 CHAWA:	1966-1971
2/1/56 MJOGO:	1966-1968
2/1/57 MONEKERA:	1966-1971
2/1/58 KADZIYANG'ANE:	1966-1971
2/1/59 KALICHERO:	1966-1971
2/1/60 GOLOMOTI:	1966-1969
2/1/61 CHILANGA:	1966-1971
2/1/62 MAWELO:	1966-1970
2/1/63 RUSA:	1966-1971
2/1/64 NCHEU:	1966-1971
2/1/65 MPHONGWE:	1966-1971
2/1/66 MTENGOWANTHenga:	1967-1971
2/1/67 MDZOBWE:	1967-1971
2/1/68 DWANGWA:	1967-1971
2/1/69 MSOZI:	1967-1971
2/1/70 ULONGWE:	1967-1971
2/1/71 CHOWO:	1968-1971
2/1/72 NKHOTAKOTA:	1968-1971
2/1/73 KATAYAUTA:	1968
2/1/74 CHILOMA:	1968
2/1/75 MNDOLERA:	1968-1971
2/1/76 CHAMBIDZI:	1969-1971
2/1/77 KAKONJE:	1969-1971
2/1/78 LUMBADZI:	1969-1970
2/1/79 CHIMWALA:	1969-1971
2/1/80 MSONKHAMANJA:	1969-1971
2/1/81 MZIZA:	1969-1971
2/1/82 KAPOLODZUNGA:	1968-1970
2/1/83 CHIGODI:	1969-1970
2/1/84 KATAYAUTA:	1970-1971
2/1/85 GOLOMOTI:	1970-1971
2/1/86 MKUNZA:	1970-1971
2/1/87 MAWIRI:	1971-
2/1/88 MTENTHERA:	1971
2/1/89 NTOHISI:	1971
2/2 INFANT BAPTISM	
2/2/1 VARIOUS:	1884-1953
2/2/2 MPHUNZI:	1906-1927
2/2/3 MPHUNZI:	1928-1971
2/2/4 MALINGUNDE:	1907-1927
2/2/5 MALINGUNDE:	1928-1971
2/2/6 CHINTHEMBWE:	1909-1928
2/2/7 CHINTHEMBWE:	1928-1971
2/2/8 KONGWE:	1913-1932
2/2/9 KONGWE:	1928-1971
2/2/10 MCHINJI:	1914-1929
2/2/11 MLANDA:	1915-1928

2/2/12 MLANDA:	1919-1928
2/2/13 MLANDA:	1928-1971
2/2/14 SALISBURY:	1917-1928
2/2/15 KHOLA:	1919-1928
2/2/16 KHOLA:	1928-1971
2/2/17 NKHOMA:	1919-1928
2/2/18 NKHOMA:	1921-1928
2/2/19 NKHOMA:	1929-1971
2/2/20 DZENZA:	1920-1928
2/2/21 DZENZA:	1929-1971
2/2/22 LIVLEZI:	1921-1928
2/2/23 LIVLEZI:	1928-1971
2/2/24 MALEMBO:	1925-1929
2/2/25 MALEMBO:	1928-1971
2/2/26 KASUNGU:	1927-1960
2/2/27 MCHINJI:	1929-1971
2/2/28 MVERA:	1931-1971
2/2/29 MACECHE:	1939-1971
2/2/30 CHITUNDU:	1940-1971
2/2/31 CHIKOMA:	1940-1971
2/2/32 CHILEKA (MCHINJI):	1942-1971
2/2/33 KOLOWIRO:	1946-1971
2/2/34 LILONGWE:	1946-1971
2/2/35 MPATSA:	1947-1971
2/2/36 MPHUNZI AND MPATSO (EUROPEANS) 1949	
2/2/37 NKAKAKATA:	1949-1971
2/2/38 GWELO:	1950-1958
2/2/39 THUMBA:	1950-1958
2/2/40 MANG'A:	1953-1971
2/2/41 NYANJA:	1953-1971
2/2/42 KANJIWA:	1953-1971
2/2/43 MDIKA:	1953-1971
2/2/44 LIVINZA:	1953-1971
2/2/45 DEDZA:	1955-1971
2/2/46 HIGHFIELD:	1957-1958
2/2/47 BULUWAYO:	1957-1958
2/2/48 CHIMWANG'OMBE:	1958-1971
2/2/49 BALANG'OMBE:	1958-1971
2/2/50 MPANDO:	1958-1969
2/2/51 SANBE:	1958-1971
2/2/52 GOLOMOTI:	1958-1971
2/2/53 KAPIRI:	1958-1971
2/2/54 MTHANDIZA:	1959-1971
2/2/55 CHIWE:	1959-1970
2/2/56 KADEDWA:	1960-1971
2/2/57 KAWERAWERA:	1960-1971
2/2/58 CHAMKANGO:	1960-1971
2/2/59 CHIBANZI:	1961-1971
2/2/60 KADIYANG'ANE:	1966-1971
2/2/61 L'AWELO:	1966-1970
2/2/62 CHILOBWE:	1966-1971
2/2/63 NTCKU:	1966-1971
2/2/64 MJOGO:	1966-1968
2/2/65 KALICHERO:	1966-1971
2/2/66 MATENJE:	1966-1971
2/2/67 CHILANGA:	1966-1971
2/2/68 CHAWA:	1966-1971

2/2/69 MONEKERA:	1966-1971
2/2/70 MPHONGWE:	1966-1971
2/2/71 RUSA:	1967-1971
2/2/72 ULONGWE (MCHINJI):	1967-1971
2/2/73 MDZOBWE:	1967-1971
2/2/74 MDOZI:	1967-1971
2/2/75 DWANGWA:	1968-1971
2/2/76 CHOWO:	1968-1971
2/2/77 NKHOTAKOTA:	1968-1971
2/2/78 KAPOLOHADZUNGA:	1968-1971
2/2/79 KATASAUTA:	1968-1971
2/2/80 MNDOLERA:	1968-1971
2/2/81 MKUNZA:	1969-1971
2/2/82 MTEROGWANTHERGA:	1969-1971
2/2/83 KAKONJE:	1969-1971
2/2/84 CHIGODI:	1969-1971
2/2/85 CHAMBIDZI:	1969-1971
2/2/86 LUMBADZI:	1969-1971
2/2/87 MSONKAMANJA:	1969-1971
2/2/88 MZIZA:	1970-1971
2/2/89 CHIMWALA:	1970-1971
2/2/90 MAWIRE:	1971
2/2/91 BUNDA:	1971
2/2/92 MTENTHERA:	1971
2/2/93 MKUNZA:	1971
2/2/94 NICKISI:	1971
2/2/95 NCHU:	1959

## 2/3 KHONDE MARRIAGES:

2/3/1 KHONDE MARRIAGES: 1898 OCT 10 - 1907 OCT 31

## 2/4 MARRIAGES AT KONGWE + NKHOMA:

2/4/1 MARRIAGES AT KONGWE + NKHOMA:

1899 NOV 19 - 1906 APR

## 2/5 NKHOMA STUDENTS HOSTEL:

2/5/1 NKHOMA STUDENTS HOSTEL: 1910 NOV 29 - 1930

2/5/2 NKHOMA STUDENTS HOSTEL: 1920 - 1953

## 2/6 SCHOOL MARKS:

2/6/1 SCHOOL MARKS: 1913-1947

2/6/2 SCHOOL MARKS: 1937-1946

53/13/6/12/3 STATISTICAL RECORDS: 1900-1960  
STATION PERSONNEL (STAFF)  
MAPS NEWSPAPERS

## NKHS 5. STATISTICS

5/1 MPHUNZI C C A P

5/1/1 1931-1954

5/2 DZENZA C C A P

5/2/1 1932-1960 DEC 31

5/3 MALINGUNDE C C A P

5/3/1 1932-1960 DEC 31

5/4 LIVLEZI C C A P

5/4/1 1932-1956

5/5 KASUNGU C C A P	
5/5/1	1932-1961 DEC 31
5/6 KONGWE C C A P	
5/6/1	1932-1961 DEC
5/7 CHINTHEMBWE C C A P	
5/7/1	1932-1959 DEC 31
5/8 MALEMBO C C A P	
5/8/1	1932-1955 DEC 31
5/9 KHOLA C C A P	
5/9/1	1932-1955
5/10 MCHINJI C C A P	
5/10/1	1932-1960 DEC 31
5/11 NKHOMA C C A P	
5/11/1	1932-1959 DEC 31
5/12 MYERA C C A P	
5/12/1	1932-1961 DEC 31
5/13 MLANDA C C A P	
5/13/1	1932-1954
5/14 MACENCHE C C A P	
5/14/1	1939-1961 DEC 31
5/15 CHITUNDU C C A P	
5/15/1	1940-1955 DEC 31
5/16 CHIKOMA C C A P	
5/16/1	1941-1955 DEC 31
5/17 CHILEKA (OF NKHOMA PRESBYTERY)	
5/17/1	1942-1960 DEC 31
5/18 SALISBURY C C A P	
5/18/1	1945-1955 DEC 31
5/19 KOLOWIRO C C A P	
5/19/1	1947-1961 DEC
5/20 LILONGWE C C A P	
5/20/1	1947-1960 DEC 31
5/21 MPATGA C C A P	
5/21/1	1947-1960
5/22 NKATAKATA C C A P	
5/22/1	1949-1954
5/23 THUMBA C C A P	
5/23/1	1949-1959 DEC 31



5/24	GWELO C C A P	
5/24/1		1950-1955 DEC 31
5/25	LIVINZA C C A P	
5/25/1		1953-1955 DEC 31
5/26	NYANJA C C A P	
5/26/1		1954-1960 DEC 31
5/27	MDIYA C C A P	
5/27/1		1955 AUG 1-1958 DEC 31
5/28	KANJIWA C C A P	
5/28/1		1955 AUG 1 - DEC 31
5/29	DEDZA C C A P	
5/29/1		1955 AUG - DEC
5/30	BHULUNAYO C C A P	
5/30/1		1955
5/31	CHIMBAG'OMBE C C A P	
5/31/1		1956 AUG 1-1960 DEC 31
5/32	LIWE (GRIWE) C C A P	
5/32/1		1958 JAN 1-1960 DEC 31
5/33	BALANG'OMBE C C A P	
5/33/1		1958 JUL - 1960 DEC 31
5/34	MANG'A C C A P	
5/34/1		1958 DEC 31-1960 DEC 31
5/35	NSAMBE C C A P	
5/35/1		1958 JAN 1-1960 DEC 31
5/36	MPANDO C C A P	
5/36/1		1958 JAN 1-1960 DEC 31
5/37	KAPIKI C C A P	
5/37/1		1958 DEC 31-1959 DEC 31
5/38	MATENJE C C A P	
5/38/1		1959 JAN 1-1961 JAN 1
5/39	MTHADIZA C C A P	
5/39/1		1959 JAN 1-1960 DEC 31
5/40	CIBANZI (CHIBANZI) C C A P	
5/40/1		1960 AUG
5/41	RUSA C C A P	
5/41/1		1961 JAN 1 - DEC 31
5/42	CHAMKANGO C C A P	
5/42/1		1961 JAN 1 - DEC 31

5/43 MPHONGWE C C A P  
5/43/1 1961 JAN - 1962 DEC 31

5/44 KAWERAWERA  
5/44/1 1961 JAN - DEC 31

5/45 KADEWERE  
5/45/1 1961 JAN 1 - DEC 31

## NKHS 6. CERTIFICATES

6/1 AUTHORIZATION OF APPOINTMENT OF ELDERS:  
6/1/1 AUTHORIZATION OF APPOINTMENT OF ELDERS:  
1906-1918

6/1/2 AUTHORIZATION OF APPOINTMENT OF ELDERS:  
1927-1962

## 6/2 ORDINATION

6/2/1 ORDINATION: 1924 NOV 8 - 1944 JUL 12

## NKHS 7. ACCOUNTS

7/1 LEDGER NOTE BOOKS:  
7/1/1 LEDGER NOTE BOOKS: 1893-1911

7/2 KONGWE TEACHERS' PAY:  
7/2/1 KONGWE TEACHERS' PAY: 1909-1912

7/3 GOVT GRANT IN AID OF EDUCATION:  
7/3/1 GOVT GRANT IN AID OF EDUCATION: 1913-1924  
7/3/2 GOVT GRANT IN AID OF EDUCATION:  
1927 JUL - 1963 JUN 11

7/4 NYASALAND AGRICULTURAL COMPANY LIMITED BALANCE  
SHEET AND LOSS ACCOUNTS:  
7/4/1 NYASALAND AGRICULTURAL COMPANY LIMITED BALANCE  
SHEET AND LOSS ACCOUNTS: 1957 SEP 30

7/5 MINDOLO ECUMENICAL FOUNDATION INCOME +  
EXPENDITURE SHEET:  
7/5/1 MINDOLO ECUMENICAL FOUNDATION INCOME +  
EXPENDITURE SHEET: 1962 JUN 30 - 1963

7/6 STOCK SHEETS:  
7/6/1 STOCK SHEETS: 1925-1955

NKHS 8. AGREEMENTS + DEEDS

8/1 VOLS 1 NOS 6-7; VOL 2 NO 6 AND VOL 7 NO 3  
8/1/1 1920 JAN 29-1929 NOV 6

8/2 BETWEEN D R C IN S AFRICA AND NKHOMA SYNOD IN  
NYASALAND:  
8/2/1 BETWEEN D R C IN S AFRICA AND NKHOMA SYNOD IN  
NYASALAND: 1951 OCT 8-1962 APR 26

## NKHS 9. SCRIPTURE

## 9/1 NOTES

9/1/1	1930 MAR 27
9/1/2	1936-1937
9/1/3	NO DATE
9/1/4	NO DATE
9/1/5	NO DATE
9/1/6	NO DATE
9/1/7	NO DATE

## NKHS 10. MEMORANDA

## 10/1 CHURCH SITUATION IN N RHODESIA

10/1/1	(1946)
--------	--------

## 10/1/2 STUDIES IN THE LIFE AND WORK OF YOUNGER CHURCHES

10/1/2/1	1957 MAR 16
----------	-------------

## 10/1/3 CHURCH DISCIPLINE (DRAFT)

10/1/3/1	1948 JUN
----------	----------

## 10/1/4 MARRIAGES AMONG AFRICAN CHRISTIANS IN EAST AFRICA

10/1/4/1	NO DATE
----------	---------

## 10/1/5 DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION ON EDUCATION SYSTEM

10/1/5/1	NO DATE
----------	---------

## NKHS 11. CIRCULAR LETTERS AND PRESS RELEASE:

## 11/1 CIRCULARS AND PRESS RELEASE

11/1/1	1955 JAN 17-1958 DEC 5
--------	------------------------

## 11/2 ADDRESSES AND PRESS RELEASE

11/2/1	1958 MAY 25-1962 JUL 27
--------	-------------------------

## 11/3 ADDRESS TO EXECUTIVES ASSOCIATION BY S AFRICAN HIGH COMMISSIONER

11/3/1	1961 APR 11
--------	-------------

## NKHS 12. CONSTITUTION AND BILLS

## 12/1 ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION DRAFT BILL

12/1/1	NO DATE
--------	---------

## 12/2 PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF EAST AFRICA

12/2/1	NO DATE
--------	---------

## 12/3 CHURCH OF CHRIST (REFORMED CHURCH) IN BENUE

12/3/1	NO DATE
--------	---------

## 12/4 NYASALAND AND RHODESIAN INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION (COOPERATIVE) IN THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

12/4/1	1946 SEP 10-1947 FEB
--------	----------------------

## 12/5 NKHOMA THEOLOGICAL

12/5/1	1947 JAN 7-FEB 21
--------	-------------------

## 12/6 NKHOMA SYNOD

12/6/1	1948-1949 MAY 27
--------	------------------

- 12/7 CONVENTION OF ASSOCIATIONS OF NYASALAND  
12/7/1 1951 MAY
- 12/8 ST PAUL'S UNITED THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE, LIMURU  
(DRAFT)  
12/8/1 1956 MAY
- 12/9 UNION OF THE CHURCH OF BAROTSELAND, CHURCH OF  
CENTRAL AFRICA IN RHODESIA, FREE CHURCHES IN THE  
COPPER BELT AND METHODIST CHURCH (1956 DRAFT)  
12/9/1 1958 APR
- 12/10 MINDOLO ECUMENICAL FOUNDATION  
12/10/1 C. 1962 MAR 3
- 12/11 C C A P  
12/11/1 NO DATE
- NKHS 13. SUNDRY PAPERS
- 13/1 CORRESPONDENCES
- 13/1/1 1939 OCT 13 - 1951 DEC 20  
13/1/2 1943 JAN 5 - 1952 NOV 11  
13/1/3 1946 JAN 4 - 1959 MAR 23  
13/1/4 1948 SEP 18 - 1953 OCT 19
- 13/2 NOTULE (MINUTES)
- 13/2/1 1948 MAR 6 - AUG 26  
13/2/2 1949 JUN 21 - OCT  
13/2/3 1950 FEB 23 - NOV  
13/2/4 1951 MAR 6 - DEC 7  
13/2/5 1952 JAN 17 - NOV 20  
13/2/6 1953 JAN 12 - DEC 31  
13/2/7 1954 JAN 26 - DEC  
13/2/8 1955 MAR 10 - DEC 13  
13/2/9 1956 JAN 6 - DEC 18  
13/2/10 1957 MAY 7 - DEC 23  
13/2/11 1958 JAN 7 - DEC 22  
13/2/12 1959 MAY 6 - DEC 3  
13/2/13 1960 FEB 4 - DEC 2  
13/2/14 1961 MAR 17 - DEC 12  
13/2/15 1962 FEB 12 - AUG 7  
13/2/16 1963 AUG 12 - 1964 DEC 9
- 13/3 MANUSCRIPTS - MOYO WATHU WA UZIMU  
13/3/1 NO DATE
- 13/4 EVANGELISM  
13/4/1 NO DATE
- 13/5 CHIYEMBEKEZO CHA CHIKRISTU  
13/5/1 NO DATE
- 13/6 LIST OF FILES FORM NKHOMA  
13/6/1 NO DATE
- 13/7 BRIEF HISTORY OF THE C C A P IN S RHODESIA  
13/7/1 NO DATE



13/8 TRAINING INSTR. FOR AFRICAN CHURCH MINISTERS	
13/8/1	NO DATE
13/9 BUILDING PLANS - NKHOMA	
13/9/1	NO DATE
13/10 CITSANZO CHA MA CHONGEDWE A INDEX BOOK	
13/10/1	NO DATE
13/11 SYLLABUS IN THEOLOGY	
3/11/1	NO DATE
13/12 RULES GOVERNING LEASING OF THE BREAD COTTAGE FOR THE A S K	
13/12/1	NO DATE
13/13 MZIMU WOYERA NDI NTCHITO YAKE AND ZOLAMULIRA - MANUSCRIPTS	
13/13/1	NO DATE
13/14 MTHENGA MAGAZINE MANUSCRIPTS	
13/14/1	1909-1911 APR 19
13/15 TENTATIVE DRAFT PLAN FOR UNITED THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN NORTHERN NIGERIA	
13/15/1	1950
13/16 QUESTIONS ON NKHOMA SYNOD PRIESTS	
13/16/1	1950 MAR 31-1964 MAR 8
13/17 NEWSPAPER CUTTINGS	
13/17/1	1939-1941
13/17/2	1948 SEP 30-1961 DEC
13/18 CHINYANJA BIBLE CORRECTIONS	
13/18/1	1947
13/19 EXAM PAPERS NKHOMA THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL	
13/19/1	1944 DEC 12 - 1949
13/20 BISHOP NEILL'S TRAVEL DIARY PARTS 1 TO 12	
13/20/1	1950 MAR 31 - MAY 28
13/21 NYANJA LANGUAGE AND ETHNOLOGICAL STUDIES	
13/21/1	1955 APR 2 - 1961 AUG 15

#### 4. GENERAL REMARKS ON ARCHIVAL SOURCES

1. The DRC Archives allocates and marks the documents of Nkhoma Synod as one of the Ministries of the DRC Synod of the Western Cape. These documents are marked S5/15/6, MALAWI. The "S" stands for "sending" in Afrikaans which means "mission" in English. All documents in this class are in connection with Nkhoma Synod as a mission of the DRC. The documents allocated in this way do not reflect the fact that the Church in Malawi is now independent and that its centenary in 1989 indicates that it is recognized as such. It is advised that the documents of Nkhoma Synod be allocated (at least from 1965 onwards) in terms of an indigenous church and not in terms of a mission of the DRC. If the allocation of documents showing the missionary enterprise is to be maintained, there should be a clear separation of the two periods of development. If this separation is done now, it will save the trouble in the future of handling more complex documents than those that are presently available in the archives.
2. The archival documents of Nkhoma Synod in the Malawi National Archives are classified and allocated, not according to church courts, but according to a system developed in Malawian history in general. This is due to the fact that the MNA is not a church archives but a public or general archive. In spite of that, it is advisable that the church documents in the archives be allocated and indicated in terms of church courts. According to the Presbyterian Church courts, the order in which the documents should appear is the following:  
  
Congregations, presbyteries, synod(s) and general Synod. The documents of each of these courts should be allocated separately in their various categories.
3. In this case, the minutes of these courts are important documents, followed by letters, reports, and other general documents.
4. The documents of the ministries or departments of the church such as medical, printing, agriculture, lay training, education, building, works and transport, carpentry and all others, should be kept separately in their various categories. The Malawi National Archives has met this requirement by keeping the minutes, reports and correspondence of the departments in their various categories without mixing them with other documents.
5. The thirteen classes of documents in the MNA and their various subject-headings should be clearly identified and the difference between them should be made clear by means of code-references such as the ones suggested in the integration of the archival sources in this chapter. The reference numbers should help the researcher to identify the information of the particular document. For instance, Nkhoma Presbytery was the first in

1925 and it had only thirteen congregations. But in 1956 three other presbyteries were formed, namely Malembo, Mvera and Salisbury. At that time Nkhoma Presbytery had only ten congregations in its area. At present there are eleven presbyteries of Nkhoma Synod altogether and Nkhoma Presbytery has only eight congregations. The birth of each presbytery means a new chapter in the history of the Church. To make reference to all these new developments easier, a proper allocation is necessary. Nkhoma Presbytery is the first and the year of its birth should be indicated. The lineage of birth of all the other presbyteries should be maintained consecutively and their documents should be kept separately from the day they were established as presbyteries. The same procedure should be followed in allocating all the other documents.

6. The two archives concerned (DRCA & MNA) would help historical researchers if they used the same system of allocation of documents and identification. At present they are different.
7. It is the responsibility of the Church to gather all documents from its congregations. The congregations have many documents which need to be sent to the archives periodically, so that they may not be lost. The congregations themselves must be advised not to destroy documents which they have in their possession.
8. It is also the responsibility of the Church to classify the documents into their different classes and identify them according to their different categories.
9. The documents should be sent to the MNA for safe custody and availability to researchers. Documents of the Church also contribute to the history of the country and should therefore be made available for those historical researchers who request to read them.
10. When sending the documents to the MNA on loan, an inventory should be kept by the Synod. The MNA must be responsible to collect the documents from the Church.

## SUMMARY OF THESIS

The thesis is an evaluation of the historiography of Nkhoma Synod, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian in Malawi, which was initiated in 1889 by the missionary work of the Dutch Reformed Church (Cape Synod) in South Africa. The pioneer missionaries, the Revs A C Murray and T C B Vlok, started mission work at Mvera in Chief Chiwere's kingdom, midway between Salima to the east and Dowa to the northwest, in the central region of Malawi. They enjoyed the advice and cooperation of Dr Robert Laws and other missionaries of the Free Church of Scotland doing mission work in the northern region of Malawi. The mission work was successful and extended rapidly through the efforts of the missionaries themselves and their indigenous helpers.

From 1889 to 1902 there was no properly organised church. The missionaries, however, wrote accounts of their experiences and encounters in diaries, journals and in a log book. These documents are the first written documents of the young Church. Unfortunately, none of the reports and diaries record that indigenous people were also involved in the running of the Church.

However, from 1903 when the Council of Congregations was formed, indigenous people began to participate in the ministry of the Church. Apart from the teacher-evangelists who had been trained to teach in church schools during the week and to preach on Sundays as well as to evangelize, full-time evangelists began to be trained in 1911. Eventually, because of the increase in the number of converts, it was decided to train some of the evangelists to become ministers. The first two to be appointed to this work were the Revs Andreyana Namkumba and Namon Katengeza. They started their training in 1923 and completed it in 1925. They were both ordained in the same year along with Lameke Manda who had been handed over to the DRC mission by the Free Church of Scotland Mission. He completed his theological training at Livingstonia Mission.

With their ordination the third phase of mission work started. The Nkhoma Presbytery was formed and replaced the Council of Congregations, after joining the CCAP Synod in 1926. As the number of indigenous ministers multiplied, some of them began to participate in executive committees' decision-making with the missionaries. Thus, they helped to shape the philosophy of the African Christian way of life. As a result, spiritual books for instruction and teaching in the Church appeared. At the same time their participation in CCAP Synod meetings with other missionary churches began to broaden their horizons and to strengthen them spiritually.

During the next phase, from 1956 onwards, the CCAP Synod developed a General Synod while the presbyteries of Livingstonia, Nkhoma and Blantyre became synods. Autonomy to



the mission churches was granted by the various missionary agents. Indigenous leadership began to play an active and independent role. In 1962 Nkhoma Synod received autonomy from the DRC. This meant meeting challenges of new environments, theologically, socially and politically.

But while the missionaries showed the way and were writing the minutes and making decisions, the indigenous people were being trained and became co-workers. Today the latter are taking the place of the missionaries. It is most important to note that there are minutes and reports written in Chichewa for the period 1903 to 1989. However, mission reports and newsletters continued to be written in Afrikaans even after Nkhoma Synod received autonomy in 1962.

The missionaries did not write only official documents and diaries. Some were also spontaneous writers who wrote books about their missionary work among the indigenous people of Malawi. The messages of those books varied but were basically meant to arouse the interest of their readers at home, mostly supporters of mission work. Hence, some of them wrote books on the culture of the people, their history, food and also the plants and animals that were found in the area. Others wrote specifically about the people they encountered and their efforts to evangelize them. Many of them wrote biographies of missionaries, e.g. Robert Laws, William Murray, Donald Fraser and Henry Henderson.

Their writings were different in approach and motivation. Some were honest and gave a true reflection of the environment and the people they found while others were exaggerated and biased, the writers seemingly overwhelmed by the culture of the people which was pitiable to them or by the colonial impact.

Almost all of them paid scant attention to the part played by their indigenous helpers. As a result, there are no recorded accounts of their participation. Names, if any, are only mentioned in passing. The missionaries were mainly concerned with their own work and its effect. In spite of this, the books of the missionaries provide the Church in Malawi with the earliest published sources of its history. Some of them are historiographically of great importance.

In the missionary writings technical and historiographical problems abound. In the case of Nkhoma Synod the language used was Dutch/Afrikaans which is completely foreign to indigenous people. Most of the reports, correspondence, minutes of the Mission Councils and books which would otherwise be useful to historical researchers in younger churches are in those languages.

Another problem is the fact that these important documents were removed from the mission churches until the time that the indigenous people began to exercise self-rule. This meant that the documents were almost inaccessible to researchers from younger churches whose financial resources are in most cases meagre. Someone doing research on Nkhoma Synod the research worker must not only visit the Malawi National Archives, but also the DRC Archives in Cape Town, South Africa, or the Archives in Edinburgh, Scotland. For lack of funds distinct archives are not visited e.g. the archives in Edinburgh and Cape Town.

The missionaries did not indicate the sources they based their writings on, nor provide references. The Malawians are an oral people. Their consciousness of written history started only in the early years of the twentieth century, stimulated by indigenous educated Christians. After the revolt of the Rev John Chilembwe of the Providence Industrial Mission (PIM) in the Chiradzulu district in 1915, a few indigenous Christians wrote essays about it. The majority of them were members of the Blantyre Mission of the Church of Scotland. The Rev Harry Kambwiri Matecheta's writings are comprehensive. He later interested himself in history and wrote a book entitled **Blantyre Mission: Mbiri ya Chiyambi Chache** in the year 1951.

In 1949 Samuel Yosiya Nihara wrote a book entitled **Msyamboza** in which he made some reference to the mission work of the DRC. He is the author of several books. Another book, **Mbusa Namon Katengeza**, which he wrote in 1964 at the request of the Synod, is also church historical. It is a biography of the Rev Namon Katengeza, one of the first two ministers to be ordained in 1925 by the DRC. Although the "historical" writings of these men and others are not scientific, they are the beginning of written historiography by indigenous people versed in oral tradition.

In modern days, especially from the late sixties, quite a few Malawians have interested themselves in historical studies on an academic level. They published their scientific research on the historical aspects of the Church as well as on Islam and Christianity, politics and Christianity, economics and Christianity, church music, African traditional religions, independent churches, etc. Critical studies on the writings of the missionaries made their appearance. These are signs that indigenous people are beginning to realize the importance of written history.

In the Church, writers of the Church magazine **Kuunika** busy themselves with historic topics. They provide short notes on the activities of the Church. Others report the deaths of fellow Christians or leaders of the Church. Malawians have become leaders of the Church and keep Church minutes and records, duties which were previously performed by missionaries. Students of theology are being taught how to write short essays on the history of congregations.

Naming institutes after local people is another sign that the people are beginning to show an awareness of history. It is significant that the Synod of Nkhoma has decided to write notes and revise its history related in the book *Mbiri ya Misyoni ya DRC m'uziko la Nyasa*.

The problems with church history are many. As can be deduced from their writings, the missionaries interpreted church history in different ways. Some wrote as anthropologists, confining themselves to descriptions of the culture of the people whom they evangelized. Others wrote as colonialists, emphasizing the coming of Western civilization, the British government and development. These missionaries interpreted and understood church history as the spreading of Western civilization among the people. They did not differentiate between secular and church history. Other missionaries confined themselves to recording the work they did among the people they were called to evangelize.

Although these writings are important to church historians of the younger churches, it must be understood that church history should be treated and studied as a discipline in which God is in control and which relates His people to His acts of history. Therefore it is so important that historians comprehend the Christian approach to God and history. To our mind a church historian must be a Christian, his discipline a witness of the Christian faith in God. He must be guided by the Scriptures, proclaim the sovereignty of Jesus Christ and given honour and glory to God in His Church.

Although the Church owes its origin and perfection to God through Jesus Christ and His Spirit, it is an institution composed of human beings who fail and in so doing bring shame to the Church. When the church historian writes church history he must not be biased. He must write honestly on both the weaknesses and the strengths of the people who constitute the Church. It must be realized that the strength of the Church is in Christ and not in man.

Sometimes there are errors in written church history because the sources of reference have not been critically studied. Only by critical analysis can the theological critical method be achieved. One must be aware of the system of government when studying the history of a reformed church. The various courts of the church must be considered. In the Presbyterian Church there are the church councils of the various local congregations, the presbyteries in which the congregations of a region meet to consider common matters, the Synod where representative office bearers from the local congregations gather and finally the General Synod where representatives from the regional synods meet to discuss matters of common interest. These respective courts keep minutes, write reports and correspondences which must be studied. They represent the views of groups of members and not of a single person. These are usually the church elders, called ruling elders, and ministers, usually called teaching elders.

By investigating and studying church related documents, one can assess and describe official positions taken by the church and judge if they were according to Scripture.

The indigenous helpers of the missionaries were overlooked, and historical writings are marred by colonialism, cultural orientation and various motivations. In trying to set the record straight, oral historiography can be a help.

In the past, oral history was not recognised by Western historians. As a result they concluded that because Africans do not have written sources, they were without history. In reality Western nations also used oral history before writing became common. Africans have conducted their affairs by chieftainship, tribal lineages, peace agreements between tribes, marriages and the like without written documents for ages. They kept their memories alive and handed them down to posterity, so conserving their history. A critical study of this source is therefore invaluable to the reconstruction of church history by the younger churches. But the oral word must be written down so that there will be written sources before much is lost because of impaired memory or death.

However, what the missionaries have already done should not be discarded. Any oral research should be used to balance and correct the writings of the missionaries.

At present there are numerous primary historical sources of Nkhoma Synod in the congregations, presbyteries and offices of Synod which can be used by researchers. But dispersed as they are, they are not easy to research.

It is therefore the responsibility of Synod to collect them from congregations and presbyteries, identify them and classify them in their different categories for availability and accessibility to researchers.

There are many historical documents in the Dutch Reformed Church Archives in Cape Town and the Malawi National Archives at Zomba. It is a fact that not many Malawian church historians are familiar with these archival documents, especially those in the DRC archives, where most sources of Nkhoma Synod's history are kept. For that reason it is recommended that the two archives consult with each other on the missing documents on either side. They should also use the same system of allocation of sources.



## SAMEVATTING

## 'n EVALUERING VAN DIE HISTORIOGRAFIE VAN DIE NKHOMA-SINODE, KERK VAN SENTRAAL-AFRIKA PRESBITERIAANS

Die Nkhoma-sinode van die Kerk van Sentraal-Afrika Presbiteriaans verteenwoordig 'n kerk wat in 1899 gestig is deur sendelinge van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in die Kaap. Die kerk is te Mvera begin op advies - - onder leiding van die sendelinge van die Vrye Kerk van Skotland wat in 1875 met sendingwerk in Malawi begin het.

Die kerk het vinnig uitgebrei, veral met die hulp van die inheemse lidmate, die onderwyser-evangeliste, wat die Evangelie van Jesus Christus onder hulle eie mense verkondig het.

Die sendelinge het hul bediening skriftelik gedokumenteer en ook verslae oor hulle werk geskryf. Die verslae en amptelike dokumente is na hulle tuisrade gestuur om dié oor die vordering van die werk in te lig en ook om lidmate te motiveer om hulle met gebed en fondse te ondersteun. So het 'n geskrewe oorlewering begin in 'n land waar die mense 'n mondelinge oorlewering gehad het. Dit was die begin van geskrewe bronne oor die sending van 'n "uitheemse" kerk en die begin van 'n inheemse kerk.

Dit het egter tegniese probleme veroorsaak. Die sendingverslae en boeke is in een of self twee van drie tate geskryf: Nederlands/Afrikaans, die sendelinge se taal; Engels, die taal van die koloniale heersers en ander verwante sendelinge; en Chichewa, die taal van die inheemse bevolking onder wie die sendelinge gewerk het. Waardevalie dokumente Afrikaans kan nie deur die inheemse bevolking gelees word nie. Hierdie probleem word vererger deurdat die dokumente op verskeie plekke bewaar word: Suid-Afrika, die land waarvandaan die sendelinge gekom het; Skotland, die tuisland van die sendelinge van die Vrye Kerk van Skotland, saam met wie die sendelinge van die NGK gewerk het en Malawi, die land van die Achewa wat gekersten is. Die taal wat gebruik is en die feit dat die dokumente ver van hul oorsprong verwyder is, beteken dat dit nie altyd toeganklik is vir navorsing oor die gekiedenis van die Kerk van Sentraal-Afrika (Nkhoma) nie.

'n Verdere probleem raak die metodologie van die Afrika-kerkgeskiedenis. Die Europese sendelinge se verslaggewing en dokumentasie is eensydig en subjektief. Hulle het oor hul eie bedrywighede geskryf en dit nie sonder bybedoelings en vooroordele nie. In die sending-historiografie is die inheemse deelnemers eenvoudig geïgnoreer; moontlik vanweë wanbegrippe of 'n onbewuste gevoel van meerderwaardigheid aan die kant van die sendelinge of selfs ander redes soos dié van kolonialisme.

Omdat die Afrikane gevond was aan 'n mondelinge oorlewering, is hulle ervarings nie op skrif beskikbaar nie. Alhoewel dit nie so maklik is om in hierdie verband mondelinge oorlewering te evalueer en te gebruik nie, is dit die enigste manier om die geskiedenis van die kerk in Malawi te reconstrueer, aangesien die rol van die inheemse bevolking sodoende in ag geneem sal word. Eintlik kan dit slegs deur inheemse kerkgeskiedkundiges behoorlik en krities gedoen word. Daar is werklik 'n dringende behoefte om mondelinge oorlewering op skrif te stel.

Die gereformeerde kerk vereis akademiese geskooldes wat sy belydende leerstellings en bediening verstaan. Hulle moet die kerk se geskiedenis in terme van die Skrif bestudeer. Daarom word 'n gereformeerde metode van die interpretering van kerkgeskiedenis bepleit en aanbeveel. Hierdie metode beklemtoon die oppermag van God oor die geskiedenis en die gebruik van 'n wetenskaplike metodologie.

Die verskillende teoretiese, teologiese, praktiese en tegniese probleme is uitgelig en voorstelle om hulle te oorkom, is gedoen.

Die navorser moet gehelp word om die dokumente wat verband hou met die geskiedenis van die Nkhoma-sinode van die Kerk van Sentraal-Afrika Presbiteriaans ter insae te bekom. Daarom is die dokumente in die twee hoofargiewe, in Kaapstad en in Zomba, gelys en van kommentaar voorsien.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

## 1. PRIMARY SOURCES

## 1.1 UNPUBLISHED SOURCES

- Mau a Msonkhano wa Mipingo (Minutes of Council of Congregations) 1903-1923, Nkhoma, (Handwritten).
- Mau a Msonkhano wa Mipingo (Minutes of Council of Congregations) 1924-1925, Nkhoma, (Printed).
- Mau a Msonkhano wa Presbiterio wa Nkhoma (Minutes of the Presbytery of Nkhoma, 1926-1956, Nkhoma (Printed).
- Mau a Msonkhano wa ma Presbiterio a Nkhoma, Mvera, Malembo ndi Salisbury (Minutes of the Presbyteries of Nkhoma, Mvera, Malembo and Salisbury), 1957, Nkhoma.
- Mau a Misonkhano ya Nkhoma Sinodi (Minutes of Nkhoma Synod meetings), 1956-1989, Nkhoma.
- Mau a Misonkhano ya Buruwe la Sinodi/Burwego la tsogolera la Nkhoma Sinodi (Minutes of the meetings of the Synod Committee/Moderamen of Nkhoma Synod), 1956-1989, Nkhoma.
- Minutes of the Standing Committee of CCAP General Synod, May 1961, Livingstonia.
- Minutes of Nkhoma Synod African Teachers' Association, August 1962, Nkhoma.
- Minutes of the Provisional Board of the Diploma in Theology, University of Malawi, July 1975, Nkhoma.
- Nkhoma Synod Statistics, December 1987, Nkhoma.
- Reisjournal Report by A C Murray, 1889, DRC Archives, Cape Town.
- Mvera Log Book Reports, 1891, DRC Archives, Cape Town.

## 1.2 PUBLISHED SOURCES

- The Nyasaland Missionary Council Report, September 1924, Livingstonia.
- The International Missionary Council Report Tambaram, 1938, London.
- Zolamulira ndi Zopangana Nkhoma Sinodi (Rules and Regulations of Nkhoma Synod), 1970, Nkhoma.

## 2. PERIODICALS

- Africa, Vol 7, 1934, London.
- History of Education Quarterly, 1984.
- International Review of Missions, Vol 57, 1968, Geneva, New York.
- Die Jaarboek van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk, 1989, Cape Town.
- The Journal of Royal Commonwealth Society, Vol 36 (1904-1905), London.
- The Journal of Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain, Vol XXIX, 1899, London.
- Kaunika (formerly Mthenga, 1909-1957, later Mthenga ndi Muuni, 1958-1960), 1960ff, Nkhoma.
- The Malawi Daily Times, passim.
- Ministry, Vol 9, January 1969, Morija (Lesotho).
- Missiology, Vol 12, 1984, Pasadena.
- Nuusbrief uit Malawi, Vol 4 No 15, December 1967, Nkhoma.
- The New African Yearbook, 1987-1988, London.
- The Scottish Journal of Theology, Vol 37, 1984, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne.
- The South African Historical Journal No 2, November 1970, Bloemfontein.

## 3. SECONDARY SOURCES

- Abrecht, Audrey (Mrs) (Supervising Editor): *History's Lessons for Tomorrow's Mission*, Geneva, 1960.
- Ajayi, J F A: *Christian Missions in Nigeria, 1841-1891*, London, 1965.
- Ajayi, J F A and Ayendele, E A: "Writing African Church History", in Beyerhaus, Peter and Hellencreutz, Carl, F (Editors): *The Church Crossing Frontiers*, Uppsala, 1969.
- Alagoa, E J: "The Relationship Between History and other Disciplines", in Asiwaju, A I and Crowder, Mickale (Editors) *Tarikh*, Vol 6 No 1 London, 1978.
- Baëta, C G (Editor): *Christianity in Tropical Africa*, London, 1968.
- Barrett, David B: *Schism and Renewal in Africa*, London, Nairobi, 1968.
- Bean, Lucy and Van Heyningen, Elizabeth (Editors): *The Letters of Jane Elizabeth Waterston 1866-1905*, Cape Town, 1983.



- Beidelman, T O: *Colonial Evangelism: A socio-historical study of an East African Mission at the grassroots*, Bloomington, 1982.
- Berkhof, H: *Christ the Meaning of History*, London, 1966.
- Bettenson, Henry (Editor): *Documents of the Christian Church*, London, Oxford, New York, 1967.
- Beyerhaus, Peter and Hallencreutz, Carl F (Editors): *The Church Crossing Frontiers, Essays on the nature of mission in honour of Bengt Sundkler*, Uppsala, 1969.
- Bolink, P: *Towards Church Union in Zambia*, Franeker, 1967.
- Blood, A G: *The History of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa*, Vol II 1907-1932, Vol III 1933-1957 London, 1957, 1962.
- Boeder, Robert B: *World Bibliographical Series, MALAWI*, Oxford, Santa Barbara, 1979.
- Bone, D S: "Sources for the Study of Religion in Malawi", No 6 in *Religion in Malawi: Current Research*, Zomba, 1983.
- Breisach, Ernst: *Historiography: Ancient, Medieval and Modern*, Chicago, London, 1983.
- Brown, E: *A Discussion of the Theological Method of Church History, An Introductory/inaugural speech*, University College of Zululand, Kwa-Dlangezwa, 1969.
- Butterfield, H: *Christianity and History*, London, 1954.
- Calvin, John: *Institutes of the Christian Religion Vol II* Translated by Henry Beveridge, Grand Rapids, Reprinted 1983.
- Campbell, George H: *The Lonely Warrior*, Blantyre, 1975.
- Carr, E H: *What is History?* London, 1961.
- Cochrane, James R: *Servants of Power: The Role of English-speaking Churches 1903-1930*, Johannesburg, 1987.
- Cook, C W: "The writing of South African Church History", in *South African Historical Journal* No 2, November, 1970.
- Cronjé, J M: *Aan God die Dank*, Pretoria, 1981.
- Cronjé, J M: *Born to Witness*, Pretoria, 1982.
- Cronjé, J M: *En daar was lig*, Bloemfontein, 1948.
- Cronjé, J M: *Kwayera: Mbirí ya Misyoni ya DRC M'Northern Rhodesia*, Ft Jameson (Chipata), 1952.
- Daneel, M S: *Mbirí ya CCAP Sinodi ya Harare, 1912-1982*, Harare, 1982.

- De Beer, Pietjie: *Ronél Vertel Nog Meer van Niassaland*, Stellenbosch, 1947.
- De Gruchy, John W: *The Church Struggle in South Africa*, London, 1969.
- Devadutt, V E: "From Missions to Younger Churches" in [Abrecht, A (Editor)] *History's Lessons for Tomorrow's Missions*, Geneva, 1960.
- Du Plessis, J: *A Thousand Miles in the Heart of Africa*, Edinburgh and London, 1905.
- Du Plessis, J: *A History of Christian Missions in South Africa*, Cape Town, 1911.
- Du Plessis, J: *The Evangelisation of Pagan Africa*, Cape Town, 1929.
- Elmslie, W A: *Among the Wild Angoni*, Edinburgh and London, 1901.
- Elton, G R: *The Practice of History*, London, 1969.
- Erasmus, S: *Die Bediening van Johannes du Plessis (1863-1935)*, Unpublished D Th Thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 1986.
- Fage, Peter: *Africa Discovers Her Past*, London, Ibadan, Nairobi, 1970.
- Falck, P: *The Growth of the Church in Africa*, Grand Rapids, 1979.
- Fraser, Donald: *Winning a Primitive People*, London, 1914.
- Fraser, Agnes R: *Donald Fraser of Livingstonia*, London, 1934.
- Garraghan, Gilbert J: *A Guide to Historical Method*, New York, 1946.
- Gilkey, Langdon: "Scripture, History and the Quest for Meaning", in McIntire, C T and Wells, Ronald A (Editors), *History and Historical Understanding*, Grand Rapids, 1984.
- Glasswell, Mark E and Fashole-Luke, Edward W (Editors): *New Testament Christianity For Africa and the World*, London, 1974.
- Goodenough, Erwin R: *The Church in the Roman Empire*, New York, 1970.
- Groves, C P: *The Planting of Christianity in Africa*, Vol II-IV, London, 1958.
- Hanna, A J: *The Story of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland*, London, 1960.
- Hastings, A: *Church and Mission in Modern Africa*, New York, 1967.
- Henige, David: *Oral Historiography*, Nigeria, 1982.
- Hetherwick, Alexander: *Gospel and the African*, Edinburgh, 1932.
- Hetherwick, Alexander: *The Romance of Blantyre*, London, 1930.
- Hinchliff, Peter: *The Church in South Africa*, London, 1968.
- Hofmeyr, J W L: *Attie Hofmeyr van Nyasaland*, Stellenbosch, 1921.

- Hofmeyr, J W L: *Louis Murray Die Leeuehart*, Cape Town, [undated]
- Jack, W J: *Daybreak in Livingstonia*, London, Glasgow, Edinburgh, 1935.
- Johnstone, Patrick: *Operation World 1978*, Bromley, 1979.
- Jones, Griff: *Britain and Nyasaland*, London, 1964.
- Kamukhwani, H A: *A brief History of Mvera Congregation* (unpublished B D Thesis, University of the North) Pietersburg, 1981.
- Ki-Zerbo, J (Editor): *General History of Africa: Methodology and African Pre-history, Vol I*, Paris, London, 1981.
- Kraemer, Hendrik: "The Missionary Implications of the End of Western Colonialism and Collapse of Western Christendom" in [Abrecht, A (Editor)] *History's Lessons For Tomorrow's Mission*, Geneva, 1960.
- Kraemer, Hendrik: *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*, London, Reprinted June 1947.
- Laws, R: *Reminiscences of Livingstonia*, London, Edinburgh, 1981.
- Legg, L G Wickham (Editor): *The dictionary of national Biography*, New York, 1949.
- Livingstone, W P: *Laws of Livingstonia: A Narrative of Missionary Adventure and Achievement*, London, 1923.
- Louw, A F: *Na Nyasaland, maar nie met die Ossewa*, Cape Town, Somerset West, 1948.
- Macleod, Norman: *Africa In Transformation*, London, 1913.
- Makumbi, Archibald J: *Maliro ndi Miyambo ya Achewa*, London, Cape Town, 1955.
- Marsden, George and Roberts, Frank (Editors): *A Christian View of History?* Grand Rapids, 1975.
- Matecheta, Harry Kambwiri: *Blantyre Mission: Nkhani za Chiyambi Chace*, Blantyre, 1951.
- Maury, Philipe: "What is the value of the Church?" in [Abrecht, A (Editor)] *History's Lessons For Tomorrow's Mission*, Geneva, 1960.
- McCall, Daniel F: *Africa in Time Perspective*, New York, 1969.
- McCracken, J: *Politics and Christianity in Malawi, 1875-1940*, London, 1977.
- McIntire, C T and Wells, Ronald A: *History and Historical Understanding*, Grand Rapids, 1984.

- McIntire, C T: "The Ongoing Task of Christian Historiography", in Marsden, George and Roberts, Frank (Editors): *A Christian View of History?* Grand Rapids, 1975.
- Milburn, R L P: *Early Christian Interpretations of History*, London.
- Moorhouse, Geoffrey: *The Missionaries*, London, 1973.
- Moreira, Eduardo: *Portuguese East Africa*, London, 1936.
- M'Passou, Denis: *The Rise and Decline of Missionary Influence in Africa South of the Sahara*, (unpublished D D thesis, American Bible Institute) 1975.
- Mueller, J T: *Great Missionaries to Africa*, Grand Rapids, 1941.
- Murray, A C: *Nyasaland en mijne Ondervindingen Aldaar*, Amsterdam, Cape Town, 1897.
- Murray, A C: *Ons Nyasa Akker*, Stellenbosch, 1931.
- Murray, W H: *Op Pad*, Cape Town, 1940.
- Murray, W H: *Mbiri ya Misyoni ya DRC m'dziko la Nyasa*, Nkhoma, 1948.
- Mwase, George Simeoni: *Strike a Blow and Die*, Cambridge, 1967.
- Neill, Stephen: *A History of Christian Missions*, Middlesex, 1964.
- Nthara, Samuel Yosiya: *Msyamboza*, London, 1949.
- Nthara, Samuel Yosiya: *Nthondo*, Nkhoma, 1935.
- Nthara, Samuel Yosiya: *Mbiri ya Achewa*, Zomba, 1950.
- Nthara, Samuel Yosiya: *Mbusa Namon Katengeza*, Nkhoma, 1964.
- Oosthuizen, G C: *Post-Christianity in Africa*, London, 1968.
- Pauw, C M: *Mission and Church in Malawi: The history of the Nkhoma Synod of the Church of Central Africa presbyterian, 1889-1962*, Stellenbosch, 1980.
- Pachai, B (Editor): *The Early History of Malawi*, London, 1972.
- Pachai, B (Editor): *Malawi: The History of the Nation*, London, 1973.
- Pachai, B (Editor): *Livingstone, Man of Africa*, London, 1973.
- Pretorius, J L (Jnr): "The Story of Education in Malawi, 1875-1941" in Smith W (Editor), *Malawi: Past and present*, Blantyre, 1971.
- Pretorius, J L (Snr): "The Story of the DRCM, in Nyasaland Journal, Vol 10 no. 1, 1957.
- Pretorius, J L (Jnr): "An introduction to the history of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission in Malawi, 1889-1914", in Pachai, B (Editor): *The Early History of Malawi*, London, 1972.



- Ranger, T O and Kimambo, I N (Editors): *The Historical Study of African Religion*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, 1972.
- Ransford, Oliver: *Livingstone's Lake: The Drama of Nyasa*, London, 1966.
- Retief, M W: *Verowerings vir Christus*, Stellenbosch, 1948.
- Retief, M W: *William Murray of Nyasaland*, Lovedale, 1958.
- Read, M: *The Angoni of Nyasaland*, London, 1956.
- Roberts, J H and Du Toit, A B: *Guide to the New Testament*, Vol I, Pretoria, 1979.
- Ross, A C: *The Origins and Development of the Church of Scotland Mission: 1875-1926*, Blantyre, Nyasaland (Unpublished Ph D thesis, Edinburgh, 1968).
- Rotberg, Robert I: *Christian Missionaries and the Creation of Northern Rhodesia 1880-1924*, Princeton, 1965.
- Sales, Jane M: *The Planting of the Churches in South Africa*, Grand Rapids, 1971.
- Selfridge, Jack: *History of the Church in Malawi from 1861-1891*, Nkhoma, [n.d.]
- Shepperson, George: "The Place of John Chilembwe in Malawian historiography", in Pachai, B (Editor): *The Early History of Malawi*, London, 1972.
- Schreier, Robert J: *Constructing Local Theologies*, New York, 1985.
- Shepperson, G and Price, Thomas: *The Independent African: John Chilembwe and the origin, setting and significance of the Nyasaland Native Rising of 1915*, Edinburgh, 1958.
- Simpson, P Carnegie: *The Church and State*, London, 1979.
- Smith, G W, Pachai, B and Tangri, R K (Editors): *Malawi, Past and Present*, Blantyre, 1971.
- Smith, Robert: "Explanation in African History: How? and Why?", in Asiwaju, A I and Crowder, Michael (Editors) *Tarikh* Vol 6 No 1, London, 1978.
- Stevens, Phillips (Jnr): "The uses of Oral Traditions in Writing of African History", in Asiwaju, A I and Crowder, Michael (Editors) *Tarikh* Vol 6 No 1, London, 1978.
- Sundkler, Bengt G M: *Bantu Prophets in South Africa*, London, 1948.
- Thompson, James Westfall: *A History of Historical Writing*, Vol I, New York, 1942.
- Van der Merwe, W J: *The Development of Missionary Attitudes in the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa*, Cape Town, 1936.

- Vansima, Jan: *Oral Tradition: A Study of Historical Methodology*, Chicago, 1965.
- Vansima, J, Mauny, R and Thomas, L V (Editors): *The Historian in Tropical Africa*, London, Ibadan, Accra, 1964.
- Verstraelen-Gilhuis, Gerdien: *From Dutch Mission to Reformed Church in Zambia*, Franeker, 1982.
- Villa-Vicencio, Charles: *Between Christ and Caesar: Classic and Contemporary Texts on Church and State*, Grand Rapids, Cape Town, 1986.
- Vlok, T C B: *Elf Jaren in Midden-Afrika*, Cape Town, 1901.
- Wells, James: *Stewart of Lovedale: The Life of James Stewart*, London, 1908.
- Wendel, Francois: *Calvin*, London, 1963.
- Westermann, D: *Africa and Christianity*, London, New York, Toronto, 1937.
- Wishlade, R L: *Sectarianism in Southern Nyasaland*, London, New York, Ibadan, 1965.