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FOR THE GOOD THAT WE CAN DO:
AFRICAN PRESSES, CHRISTIAN RHETORIC, AND WHITE MINORITY
RULE IN SOUTH AFRICA, 1899-1924

by

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B.A. University of Central Florida, 2013

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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ABSTRACT

This research examines Christian rhetoric as a source of resistance to white minority rule in South Africa within African newspapers in the first two decades of the twentieth-century. Many of the African editors and writers for these papers were educated by evangelical protestant missionaries that arrived in South Africa during the nineteenth century. Most prior research on these presses has examined the importance of Christianity, but has not taken into account the evolution of its use over the entirety of the period. Without this emphasis on evolving utilization, the current scholarship lacks a complete understanding of African newspapers and their relationships with Christianity, the African population, and white minority rule. This research shows the importance of this evolution in the larger legacy of African resistance to marginalization in twentieth-century South Africa.

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INTRODUCTION

The twentieth century began with massive contradictions between the professed beliefs in the prosperity of a new century and the realities of increased disparity and marginalization for many populations worldwide. Very quickly, these contradictions produced a realization within certain groups that prosperity was confined to and defined by a small section of the global population. Twentieth-century prosperity and difference became tools for European and European-descendent populations to reorganize political and societal structures. These schemes of reorganization were most strongly felt in the colonized world, where nineteenth century concepts of colonial administration and imperialism became increasingly antiquated.

British southern Africa felt the strains between reorganization and retention of outmoded nineteenth century Imperialism very strongly. Throughout the nineteenth century British administration in southern Africa relied upon local, white governmental functionaries to dispense policy along Imperial lines as determined by the metropole. The degree to which the actual policy aligned with the ideologies of the metropole varied largely due to the incredible diversity of populations within southern Africa, both white and black, and their already long-standing relationships.

In the group of colonies that would become the modern state of South Africa in 1910, there lived many large and small communities of indigenous Africans. Most of these communities had lived in the region, to one degree or another, for hundreds of years prior to European contact. Some of the largest groups were the Khoikhoi in the south-western most regions of southern Africa, the Xhosa and Zulu in the south-eastern regions, and the Tswana in

the north and in modern day Botswana. These groups, and the many smaller ethnic communities, interacted with each other on a multiplicity of complex levels.

By the time Britain exerted authority, at least in name, over southern Africa in 1805, there was also a white settler community that had developed its own understandings of administration and relationships with African communities. The Dutch East India Company (VOC) arrived in southern Africa in 1652. The mercantile company intended to establish a small refueling station on the tip of Africa in order to service ships rounding Africa to reach the spice islands and markets of the Indian Ocean. The remoteness of this outpost established a need for self-subsistence and a desire for autonomy. The resulting Dutch settler community developed their own sense of superiority through their whiteness, often relying on Christian religious ideology to support their belief in a “Divine right” to control in southern Africa.

Due to the perceptions of racial difference developed through the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, the British largely contended with this Dutch settler community when it came to political and social control. Indigenous Africans were, as will be seen in later chapters, able to garner some voice in the production of southern Africa as it was understood in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. This voice often came through the rhetoric of Christianity, be it direct intervention by white missionaries and their congregations or through protest via Christian language by missionary-educated Africans. The complexities of these relationships became increasingly difficult to administer from the perspective of British Imperialism as the Empire grew in the late nineteenth century and events such as the South African War of 1899-1902 and World War I caused Britain to reconsider its position in South Africa.

Within this context, the first quarter of the twentieth century is an incredibly pivotal time in the history of South Africa. In the aftermath of the South African War of 1899-1902, Britain pushed for unification within the colonies of southern Africa with the intention of limiting administration from the metropole. The war proved to be costly and unpopular in the United Kingdom.¹ Britain's other colonial commitments in West Africa and India were considered more pertinent to the Imperial agenda. Because of this, Britain envisioned a self-governing South Africa in which British and Dutch settlers worked together, but British settlers would have a clear majority. Britain's agenda for reconciliation was two pronged. The first was a relatively relaxed treatment of the Dutch leaders of the two Dutch settler republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State in order to foster good relationships for future governance. The second was an influx of British settlers to form a British voting majority among the white populations of southern Africa.² Only the first came to fruition. This resulted in a strong Dutch, which would become Afrikaner, majority that completely controlled government from Unification in 1910 until the end of apartheid in 1992.

With autonomy from Imperial administration already set in motion, the remainder of the first quarter of the twentieth century saw the conclusion of this process. With global events such as World War I shifted Britain's focus increasingly away from South Africa, the African populations had to reconstitute their resistance to oppressive racialized governance and their overall worldview without the British protection that had become familiar through British missionary rhetoric of the nineteenth century. The ways missionary-educated African leaders grappled with this reality forms the base of this research. The evolution of African resistance in

¹ L.M., Thompson, *The Unification of South Africa, 1902-1910* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960), 112.

² Ibid., 120.

this period, along with the massive restructuring of white minority rule, constitutes the foundation of African-Afrikaner relations that defined the twentieth century.

This project applies a deep reading rhetorical methodology to analyze five African run newspapers and their evolving utilization of Christian evangelical language to resist increased political and social marginalization by white minority rule in South Africa between 1899 and 1924. Much of the standing scholarship acknowledges the importance of Christian ideology to early African resistance, but few recognize the alterations within this ideology as the dynamics of relationships between African and European descendent populations change drastically in the first twenty-five years of the twentieth century. This project serves to fill this scholarly gap in order to better understand how African resistance transitioned from an ideology of petitioning Britain for protection to one that sought diverse ways to unify and resist within African and other non-white communities.

Scholars of South Africa have debated the place missionaries, and Christianity more broadly, hold within the annals, a debate that has looked largely at the tangible contributions of missionaries. Greg Cuthbertson argues that missionaries were simply tools utilized by the colonial government to garner a labor force and mediate favorable relations between white colonizers and African indigenous populations.³ Cuthbertson saw missionaries as agents of empire whose sole intention was to expand the influence of imperialism throughout the Cape Colony and her frontiers. On the other end of the spectrum, Richard Elphick champions the view that missionaries were virtually autonomous entities, capable of largely impacting the social and

³ Greg Cuthbertson, "The English-Speaking Churches and Colonialism," in *Theology and Violence: The South African Debate* (Institute for Contextual Theology, 1987), 15.

political spheres of South Africa, especially in the early nineteenth century.⁴ Both of these positions, according to Robert Strayer, grant too much power, either negative or positive, to missionaries. Strayer contends that missionaries were too poorly funded and represented to actually impact the religious make-up of South Africa, let alone instigate political change on their own behalf or that of indigenous populations.⁵

Although these varying positions represent large trends within the missionary historiography, they largely miss the actual impact of missionaries on South African history. This is due mostly to their methodology of analysis. Cuthbertson, Elphick, and Strayer all measure missionaries based on their tangible contributions. The missionary's use of resources to enact negative or positive change, be it the acquisition of labor or the education of the indigenous population, is only one small facet of the complexity that is the legacy of missionaries in South Africa. To more fully understand missionaries, it is necessary to alter the mode of analysis and synthesize the three previously presented view-points.

This type of analysis is represented by the scholarly team Jean and John Comaroff and the literary analysis of Leon de Kock. The Comaroffs recognize that missionaries cannot be entirely measured in materialistic terms, their influence was much more nuanced. The Comaroffs, therefore, combine the contentions that missionaries were agents of empire, positive forces in education and the spread of humanitarian ideals, and restricted by a lack of resources into one overarching analysis.⁶ They accomplish this by shifting their methodology away from materialistic determinism and toward discourse analysis. This is where the Comaroffs and De

⁴ Richard Elphick, *The Equality of Believers: Protestant Missionaries and the Racial Politics of South Africa* (Virginia: University of Virginia Press, 2012), 62.

⁵ Robert Strayer, "Mission History in Africa: New Perspectives on an Encounter," *African Studies Review* 19, no. 1 (April 1976): 11.

⁶ Jean and John Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism, and Consciousness in South Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 311-313.

Kock overlap; both utilize discourse analysis to analyze the impact of missionaries on the dominating colonial power and the indigenous population. Through this methodology, the Comaroffs and De Kock are able to highlight the give and take between the colonial power and the indigenous population as mediated through missionaries.⁷ Understanding how the language utilized by the colonial power shifts through the injection of indigenous South Africans and, in turn, how the indigenous South Africans interacted within the bounds of said language sheds light on the actual influence of missionaries on South African history.

Other authors not directly engaging the history of missionaries and their impact have noted the importance of Christian rhetoric as a platform of resistance to early African nationalist movements in South Africa. The leading figure on this topic, Peter Walshe, analyzes Christianity's influence upon the early figures of the African National Congress (ANC), a group he refers to as the missionary-educated petty-bourgeoisie. In his still highly relevant work *The Rise of African Nationalism*, Walshe indicates the primacy of evangelical Christian tenets such as universalism and nonracialism in the views of early African resistance leaders, but he does not examine the rhetoric in depth.⁸ This lack of depth produces a certain criticism in Walshe's analysis of early attempts to garner support utilizing these tenets one that draws Walshe to the conclusion that these individuals were ineffective in their attempts. Walshe attributes this ineffectiveness to their conservative nature and the excessive contradictions present in early African attempts to formulate a unified voice. These contradictions are more fluid than Walshe affords and are indicative of the differing colonial environments from which these individuals emerged.

⁷ Leon De Kock, "Sitting for the Civilization Test: The Making of a Civil Imaginary in Colonial South Africa," *Poetics Today* 22, no. 2 (Summer 2001): 392.

⁸ Peter Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa: The African National Congress, 1912-1952* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 8.

Peter Limb, in *The Early Years of the ANC*, places particular emphasis upon the differing regions that made up South Africa as the root of diverse perspectives of resistance. Limb's focus on place production in these regions as they interacted with each other and became more uniform as South African policy consolidated greatly broadens the understanding of African worldviews in the early twentieth century.⁹ Limb does analyze Christian rhetoric to a degree, but his major focus is upon the relationship between the African National Congress and workers.

An analysis combining the deep reading methodology of the Comaroffs with Limb's focus on differing influence provides a framework from which to evaluate the nuance of utilization of Christian rhetoric as it evolved in relation to the changing conditions of the early twentieth century. This method will be applied to five African owned and operated newspapers: *Imvo Zabantsundu*, *Izwi Labantu*, *Ilanga lase Natal*, *Koranta ea Becoana*, and *Tsala ea Batho*. Each of these papers represent a different region in South Africa with differing colonial backgrounds. The various colonial backgrounds produced incongruent utilizations of Christian rhetoric within each newspaper, much of which was contingent upon the particular editor of each paper. These backgrounds and differences of usage are further examined in chapter two.

The African newspapers here discussed, although some of the largest and from multiple areas of South Africa, need to be examined within their own contexts. In the best of cases, these papers were no more than thirteen pages long, published bi-monthly, and had runs of a thousand papers. The averages were often much lower. This means that each paper reached an actual readership that represented only a fraction of the millions of Africans residing in South Africa. The African intelligentsia, of which the editors and political leaders here discussed are a part,

⁹ Peter Limb, *The ANC's Early Years: Nation, Class and Place in South Africa before 1940* (Pretoria: University of South Africa Press, 2010), 9.

may have been a few hundred in the early part of the twentieth century. Thus, the actual impact of this evolution of rhetoric on African resistance as a whole is difficult to qualify. Les Switzer; however, contends that traditional African forms of disseminating information, such as oral readings of newspapers and political pamphlets, was very common in South Africa.¹⁰ This in itself is difficult to gauge, but it shows that these newspapers had a further reach than just their own readerships. African newspapers also believed to speak for the African majority, be that their specific audiences within a regional context or the African population in South Africa at large. The noticeable impact of changing rhetoric and worldview on later leaders also serves to prove the importance of the developments within these newspapers in the first quarter of the twentieth century. Thus, although still largely an impact felt within the intellectual group of Africans, the evolution and outcomes discussed in this work reached more than the small readerships of each paper.

The newspapers chosen for this study represent the largest African newspapers in South Africa and come from diverse colonial backgrounds. This combination makes them ideal to fully grasp how African presses represented their various understandings of Christian rhetoric as it applied to resistance. The editors of these papers also assisted in the founding of major political parties in the early twentieth century, particularly the South African Native National Congress which became the African national Congress in 1923. These individuals utilized their newspapers as platforms to articulate their worldviews and attempt to represent the entirety of the African population in resistance to white minority rule. These papers, and their respective

¹⁰ Les Switzer, "Introduction: South Africa's Alternative Press in Perspective" in *African Resistance Presses: Voices of Protest and Resistance, 1880s-1960s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 24.

editors, are best suited to facilitate a study of Christian rhetoric and its impact on twentieth century resistance in South Africa.

This analysis will follow three broad themes. The first is an analysis of evangelical Christianity as it was presented to Africans through missionaries in southern Africa during the nineteenth century. A focus upon British missions as represented by the London Missionary Society provides a scope through which to understand the particular connection between missionaries, Africans, and the British metropole. The second focuses on the period from the South African War, fought between 1899-1902, and the Unification of South Africa in 1910. This includes an analysis of how Africans utilized the language gained through missionaries in the nineteenth century to articulate varied resistance to white political domination and exclusion. The third focuses upon the events that ranged from the passing of a highly racially segregating land policy known as the Natives Land Act of 1913 through World War I and its aftermath. This will provide an analysis of how Africans altered their utilization of Christian rhetoric from one linked to British Imperialism to one internally African. These themes define the bounds of the following three chapters.

This in-depth analysis of Christian rhetoric as its utilization evolved within the pages of African newspapers to contend with changing dynamics within South Africa provides a lens through which to better understand African resistance throughout the twentieth-century. The generation of African leaders after the one discussed in this work benefited greatly from the evolution of this rhetoric and the coinciding changes in worldview. The intra-African relationships and diverse utilization of multiple ideologies, such as traditional African communalism, Christianity, and secular concepts of socialism, that define the resistance movements of Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, and Walter Sisulu owe much to the

developments produced by African leaders in the first quarter of the twentieth century. In this way, the conclusions drawn by this work contribute to a broader grasp of the legacy of African resistance to white minority rule in twentieth century South Africa.

CHAPTER 1: EDUCATION ON BRITISH MISSION STATIONS IN NINETEENTH CENTURY SOUTHERN AFRICA

The legacy of missionaries in South Africa is one filled with complexity and contradiction. The earliest Christian religious organization to gain a foothold at the Cape of Good Hope, which was the name given to the southern tip of Africa and the site of the earliest Dutch settlements, was the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC). The DRC was a product of the Protestant Reformation and thus had some early evangelical, missioning intentions. These intentions of spreading the gospel “to the four corners of the globe” did not; however, extend to non-whites in South Africa until after the beginning of the twentieth century.¹¹ The DRC would, in fact, become the major source of the idea of white superiority in South Africa among the Dutch descendants of the original colony.

The first Christian organizations with the goal of bringing Christian civilization to South Africa came toward the end of the eighteenth century. These organizations developed out of the Second Great Awakening and were inextricably linked with industrialization, which fostered both civilization development and the ability to move peoples around the world with greater ease. The Second Great Awakening’s emphasis on individual connections with God, the importance of bringing the vernacular Bible to more peoples, and the overall importance of missioning had very strong links with the development of industrial societies. The ability of religious figures to travel farther and print Bibles with greater ease correlated with the need for wider markets and resources. Industrial Europe, especially Britain, ardently linked its industrial success with this type of evangelical Christianity. Thus, when Britain expanded outward in the

¹¹ Simphiwe A. Hlatshwayo, *Education and Independence: Education in South Africa, 1658-1988* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2000), 44.

late eighteenth century, for a variety of reasons, one facet almost always involved the transmission of Christian civilization to those without.

Although not the original reason as to why Britain forcefully took over the Cape of Good Hope in 1795, the transmission of Christian civilization, as was understood through evangelicalism and industrialization, quickly became a major source of justification. The initial reason for Britain's taking of the Cape was military in nature. During the French Revolution, France developed a program of aggressive expansion. This formed the base of French empire building in the early nineteenth century. Initially, France expanded into the territories of her neighbors one of which was the Netherlands, who requested the assistance of Britain in 1794. Part of the alliance between Britain and the Netherlands involved a British presence in the Dutch Colony at the Cape of Good Hope.¹² Due to further diplomacy, the Dutch Batavian Republic reacquired the Cape of Good Hope, but further conflict between Britain and Napoleon led to Britain's total acquisition and establishment of a colony at the Cape of Good Hope in 1806. Britain's actual interaction with the southern African colony would be minimal until the discovery of diamonds in the 1860s and gold in the 1880s.¹³ This lack of British metropolitan oversight afforded other entities such as Dutch settlers and British missionaries the ability to actively alter Cape policy.

The outset of British rule in southern Africa brought with it a large number of changes to the power relations of the Cape. Due to the lack of resources for administration and the minimal usefulness of the Cape prior to the discovery of diamonds in the 1860s, the British government

¹² Aran Mackinnon, *The Making of South Africa: Culture and Politics* (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall Press, 2004), 48.

¹³ Ibid.

relied heavily upon appointed governors to mediate the affairs of South Africa.¹⁴ These governors operated independently of the metropole, but were considered to embody the policies and ideals of Westminster. The British government considered the governor and his staff to be much better equipped for dealing with and understanding the conditions on the ground. In some cases this produced vast contradictions between the idealistic policies of the British home government and their actual implementation within the Cape. These contradictions often revolved around the choice or necessity on the part of Cape governors to ally themselves with the dominant white groups already in existence prior to British rule. This group, prior to the 1820s when a sizable but still minority influx of British settlers further complicated southern Africa's race relations, was mostly descendants of Dutch farmers who had been occupying land at the Cape from 1652 onward.¹⁵ These Dutch farmers developed strong understandings of racial difference and animosity due to a number of wars, of which many continued to solidify racial animosities throughout the nineteenth century, and the employment of racialized labor systems such as slavery. These labor systems became increasingly racialized as a need for a steady supply of cheap labor to work the diamond and gold mines of the late nineteenth century dominated the minds of British officials at the Cape.

Within this largely manipulative political system, missionary organizations sought to both relieve African suffering and gain converts. Although not the first, one of the most extensive and longest lasting of these organizations was the London Missionary Society (LMS). The LMS was formed in Britain in 1795 by members from a collection of evangelical nonconformist churches. Their main tenets revolved around interdenominational universalism

¹⁴ Andrew Ross, *John Philip (1775-1851): Missions, Race, and Politics in South Africa* (Aberdeen, Scotland: Aberdeen University Press, 1986), 36.

¹⁵ Mackinnon, 25.

with rhetorical overtones of nonracialism, sobriety, and equality under God.¹⁶ These tenets were very much indicative of early nineteenth-century humanitarian imperialism, the same that ended the British slave trade in 1807 and slavery in British colonies in 1834. This is not to say that the missionaries arriving in southern Africa, nor the intentions of British imperialism for that matter, were not manipulative. It must be kept in mind that evangelical societies such as the LMS, and imperialism as a whole, had at its root a belief in their own superiority. The often awkward ways in which these contradictory ideals played out within the systems erected by missionaries had more far-reaching consequences than were immediately recognized.

The analysis presented in this chapter is multifaceted. An examination of sermons and education systems throughout the nineteenth century provides a better understanding of the information missionaries disseminated to Africans, while an analysis of LMS missionary reports sheds light on how missionaries viewed Africans within official documentation. Another important contribution to the latter is an analysis of *missionary propaganda*. These are the published works intended for British audiences with the particular intention of garnering support from the British public and Parliament for a number of policy changes in southern Africa, all of which were described as humanitarian in nature and for the betterment of the African population. The LMS, in particular, had a strong lobby in England that assisted in the alteration of some key pieces of legislation.¹⁷

As stated earlier, the influx of mining capitalists in the 1860s and 1880s greatly altered the power dynamics of southern Africa. In addition to this, two Dutch republics developed from 1834 to the mid-1870s in the eastern portion of southern Africa largely due to unsavory dealings

¹⁶ Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff, "Cultivation, Christianity and Colonialism: Towards a New African Genesis," in *The London Missionary Society in Southern Africa, 1799-1999*, ed. John W. De Gruchy (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2000), 2.

¹⁷ Richard Elphick, *The Equality of Believers: Protestant Missionaries and the Racial Politics of South Africa*, 60.

with the British administration at the Cape. Britain's attempts to restrict Dutch land holdings and condemnation of their poor treatment of African populations led to a Dutch settler mass exodus from Cape Colony. The result of this Great Trek was the eventual establishment of the South African Republic (Transvaal) and the Orange Free State.¹⁸ The existence of these two Dutch republics and their continued conflict with the British Cape administration further complicated the latter half of the nineteenth century. Within these largely different periods of the nineteenth century, Africans developed the most intense relationships with Europeans in southern Africa. African world views, or at least those of the African minority that engaged with missionary-led education systems, were forged within this turmoil.¹⁹ Their responses were strong and varied as the promises of Christian equality and access were betrayed by the realities of altering power dynamics in the latter nineteenth century.

Schools, Scripture, and Sermons

Religion-led education in southern Africa dates back to the original Dutch colonists of the seventeenth century. Having established a refueling station at Cape Town in 1652, the Dutch East India Company (VOC), under the local leadership of Johan van Reibeeck, began granting land to previous employees in 1656 with the stipulation that they would sell the surplus of their farms and ranches to the company. This allowed for a buffer between the VOC settlement at Cape Town and the indigenous African populations while also providing foodstuffs to ships traveling to and from the various Dutch holdings in the West Indies. These farmers, as well as

¹⁸ MacKinnon, 108-109.

¹⁹ Although by far the minority within the African community, those reached by missionaries in the nineteenth century formed a missionary-educated African leadership. These individuals had the most intimate contact with Europeans and their systems. They also dominated resistance to and criticism of white minority domination as it existed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

the VOC at Cape Town, required African workers and interpreters to expand their presence at the Cape of Good Hope. The establishment of a school for Cape Africans, mostly local Khoikhoi, to learn the rudiments of Dutch and the basics of Christianity became integral to this need. The DRC built such a school in 1658 to facilitate the acculturation of Africans to better serve the Dutch system of labor. Historian Simphiwe Hlatshwayo in quoting another author, Cook, states that missionary education was “for the most part, a purposeful process aiming at the incorporation of the dependent peoples into the structures of Western civilization.” This does not preclude Hlatshwayo from also stating “the role of missionaries in educating Africans in South Africa has been invaluable in one sense: most of southern Africa’s leaders went to mission schools.”²⁰ This minority group of missionary-educated Africans would gain their education largely due to the influx of missions after the British take-over of the Cape in 1806.

With the establishment of British rule at the Cape came a broader global web of connectivity. It also brought southern Africa within the scope of British missionary organizations such as the LMS. LMS missionaries worked to establish churches and schools throughout southern Africa, as notable members such as David Livingstone and Robert Moffat had moved far north past the Cape Colony frontier by the middle of the nineteenth century. The influence of the LMS outside of the Cape, as noted by Elizabeth Isichei, was often tenuous and much more complex due to the lack of European presence until much later in the century.²¹ This did not mean that attempts to establish mission stations outside of the Cape were not undertaken, and not without success. Robert Moffat, for instance, established a mission school at Kuruman in the very north of Cape Colony in 1820, which became the well-established Moffat Institute by the end of the

²⁰ Cook quoted in Hlatshwayo, 30.

²¹ Elizabeth Isichei, *A History of Christianity in Africa: From Antiquity to the Present* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1995), 100.

century.²² Their expanse across southern Africa afforded a steady interaction with many Africans throughout the century. Further movements of Europeans out of the Cape would also bring missionaries into contact with new groups of Africans.

The education systems within these schools relied upon the three R's as a base for standard education. This curriculum of writing, reading, and arithmetic taught African students the rudiments of English, usually with the Bible as the main text, with the intent of preparing them to proselytize, teach, and work within colonial political and societal structures.

Missionaries working for the LMS had to write annual reports, and sometimes reports that synthesized the work of an entire decade, to explain their status to the home office in London. These reports are an invaluable insight into the curriculum of mission schools throughout southern Africa. At the Kuruman Boarding School, the head missionary J.T. Brown, discussed the utilization of the three R's with the addition of physical geography in 1892.²³ Kuruman was by no means a small institution by 1890 when Brown wrote his report. Even so, it had suffered due to its location and the various wars between African groups and colonial entities that enveloped it.²⁴ As can be seen with the addition of physical geography at Kuruman, the curriculum did not consist solely of the three R's.

In the early part of the nineteenth century, LMS reports were often incomplete and inconsistent. This often had to do with the lack of interest on the behalf of missionaries to undertake the task of writing them. Their reasonings varied but often revolved around having a

²² Steve De Gruchy, "The Alleged Political Conservatism of Robert Moffat," in *The London Missionary Society in Southern Africa 1799-1999*, ed. John W. De Gruchy (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2000), 21.

²³ J.T. Brown Kuruman Boarding School Education Report 1892, Box 2, Folder 1893, South Africa Reports, Council for World Mission and London Missionary Society Archive, School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London.

²⁴ One such war, the First Matabele War, took place between 1893-1894. The conflict between British capitalist entities under Cecil Rhodes and the Matabele chief Labengula saw its beginnings in the region around Kuruman in 1890.

great deal of work to accomplish and lamenting the tedium of the task. One such missionary, W.A. Elliott at the Inyati mission stated, “It has been very heavy on my mind for a long time past to write that dreadful decennial report.”²⁵ This is not to say that missionaries purposefully shirked the job of reporting, but reflected more that the difficulties of running mission stations, especially in the early years of the nineteenth century, made reporting a less valuable task. With these challenges in mind, examining some of the most complete reports from stations that were considered the peak of mission schools can assist in understanding what the LMS hoped for in the best-case scenario as it came to education.

One such example may suffice in displaying the potential extent to which missionaries, under the best of circumstances, could develop mission station curriculum. Tiger Kloof, an industrial and educational school just outside Vryberg in the eastern Cape, was the LMS’s most ambitious project and one of its last of the nineteenth and early twentieth-century era. A 1912 report of the school emphasized reading and writing in English and African languages, arithmetic, drawing, music, carpentry, geography, sewing, cartography, dance, elementary bookkeeping, nature studies and science, and gardening. Tiger Kloof also boasted a theological school and a facility solely for the training of African teachers. The instruction in the three R’s and English went up to Standard VI, which was much higher than the maximum of Standard IV that formed the average of most LMS mission stations.²⁶ The range of study shows the interest missionaries had in training individuals as contributing members of religious and secular society.

Curriculum was not the only medium through which missionaries disseminated information and altered the world-views of African congregations. Brown at the Kuruman

²⁵ W.A. Elliott Decennial Report of Inyati February 14, 1891, Box 2, Folder 26, South Africa Reports, CWM/LMS Archive, School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London.

²⁶ W.C. Willoughby Report of Tiger Kloof 1912, Box 4, Folder 1912, South Africa Reports, CWM/LMS Archive, School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London.

Boarding School stated, “Scripture has always formed our opening study every morning.”²⁷ At Tiger Kloof the theological examination to become an African preacher involved the construction and delivery of “a Sermon, reading in the Vernacular and English.”²⁸ These examples show that an analysis of Scripture, as well as its memorization, was encouraged within mission schools. Further study in African vernaculars was possible after missionaries undertook the translation of the Bible into African languages. For example, Robert Moffat translated Psalms and the New Testament into Sechuana in 1842.²⁹ Missionaries were the first to translate the Bible into southern African languages. Most African languages existed as entirely oral languages. Missionaries, therefore, devised the alphabets for these languages, making vernacular Bibles possible. The expectation that Africans would personally interact with Scripture was consistent with evangelical protestant ideology as it came to individualism.

Further involvement with Scripture and Biblical interpretation came through sermons. It was common at missionary stations to have daily services in both English and vernacular languages. Due to their oral nature and frequency, most of these sermons throughout the nineteenth century were not written down or recorded afterward. Robert Moffat, however, did keep notes. The LMS archive in London holds a large number of Moffat’s sermon notes from various sermons delivered throughout his career. As Robert Moffat missioned in southern Africa for 53 years, these extensive notes provide a sufficient source base for a brief analysis of missionary sermons and their content.

Moffat’s notes relate to an unknown number of sermons. They contain several common themes that are indicative of evangelical Protestantism. The first theme pertains to obedience to

²⁷ J.T. Brown Report of Kuruman Boarding School January 4 1891, Box 2, Folder 26, South Africa Reports, CWM/LMS Archive, School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London.

²⁸ W.C. Willoughby, Report of Tiger Kloof, 1912.

²⁹ Steve De Gruchy, 19.

God and his commandments. Moffat referenced Job 22.19-21 in one note. He centered the majority of this note around Job 22.21 in particular: “Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee.”³⁰ In his commentary, Moffat noted, “All good in peace and grace...all good in glory...all good in nature.”³¹ Moffat made further reference to obedience by citing Daniel 3.17-19, which is a portion of the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. In particular, Moffat utilized verses 17 and 18 to project obedience in the Lord regardless of the outcome: “If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.”³² In these two examples Moffat projected the need to stay in obedience to God and the result would be prosperity and life.

Another theme within Moffat’s sermon notes is that of internal connection with the Lord. The best example of this comes from Matthew 7.21-24. Moffat quoted in full verse 24 to emphasize its importance: “And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”³³ Moffat further stressed the personal connection with God by juxtaposing inward and outward Christianity. In relation to inward Christianity Moffat stated, “It is inward Christianity says he that doth nothing with difficulty,” and of outward Christianity, “Outward religion no matter how earnest does not when brought to the test.”³⁴ This understanding of individual conviction to God and the rejection of hypocritical expressions of religion were integral to evangelical Protestantism. Individual connections and rejections of

³⁰ *King James Bible*.

³¹ Robert Moffat Sermon Notes, Box 4, Folder Robert Moffat Papers, Personals, CWM/LMS Archive, School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London.

³² *King James Bible*.

³³ *King James Bible*.

³⁴ Robert Moffat Sermon Notes.

hypocrisy became major themes upon which missionary-educated Africans criticized white governments in southern Africa and missionary figures for their inequality along racial lines.

Potentially the most influential theme presented by Moffat and other missionaries was that of universal nonracialism through Christianity. In John 17. 17-21, Christ discussed his plan to send his disciples to bring the Word of God to all. Christ stated, “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe in me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”³⁵ Moffat added, “That they all may be one – union is strength.”³⁶ This evangelical idea of a universal people under Christianity spoke very strongly to Africans who were being oppressed by various white governments based on their race. Access to equality through Christianity became a very important rhetorical device wielded by African leaders to combat racial inequality in southern Africa throughout the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

This sketch of missionary curriculum in education and the content of sermons shows the adherence to a rather typical evangelical nonconformist model. These examples point to the propagation of an evangelical protestant view of the world within nonconformist churches of the nineteenth century.³⁷ A base education in writing and reading both English and African languages extended up to a much broader education curriculum that incorporated elementary bookkeeping and gardening among other activities prepared Africans for functions within and without the church. The representations within sermons of obedience to God, individual

³⁵ *King James Bible*.

³⁶ Robert Moffat Sermon Notes.

³⁷ Hlatshwayo, 34.

importance, and universal nonracialism prepared Africans for teaching and preaching, while also altering their understanding of self within the new European colonial structure.

It is important to remember that missionaries came to southern Africa with the intention of bringing a “better” social structure one based in Christian civilization as they understood it. Such beliefs were informed by their sense of an inherent superiority that translated into clear hierarchical structures within missionary churches. As the nineteenth century progressed, these hierarchies became more and more racialized.³⁸ A better understanding of the disconnect between Christianity as it was presented through curriculum and sermons and the actual prejudices of missionaries can be seen through an analysis of the language utilized when talking about Africans in reports and missionary propaganda.

³⁸ This is not to say that the majority of missionaries in southern Africa were overtly racist as compared to some governmental functionaries and a large portion of the Dutch settler community. Missionary prejudices involved a multifaceted set of reasonings, one being the overall nineteenth-century ideology. Most of their racism was rooted in an inherent sense of superiority based on their belief that they were the gift givers when it came to Christian civilization, which to them implied a sense of hierarchy to be adhered to.

Perceptions of White Missionaries

Missionary prejudices largely revolved around their perceived importance in bringing Christian civilization to southern Africa and in their maintenance of said civilization. Expressions of this less overt prejudice often took the form of paternalism, which translated into a perceived need on behalf of missionaries to be consistently present to watch over their African charges. In one of the reports cited above, J.T. Brown at the Kuruman Boarding School stated that he would like to maintain the various schools he had worked to establish in other villages around Kuruman but was unable to because “it would take away too often from the Boarding School, and in many parts we have lost a lot of ground owing to the people being left so much to themselves.”³⁹ At a smaller station such as Hankey, located in the Eastern Cape, the head missionary, J.D. Philip, criticized the African teachers present as “ill-qualified to carry them on” without the presence of an “efficient enough schoolmaster” who would be European.⁴⁰ These expressions display both the lack of trust in African leadership at mission stations and the self-prescribed need of missionaries to maintain the highest positions within church hierarchy.

The pervasiveness of patriarchal control within mission schools can be seen in a document written by one of the African boys at the Kuruman Boarding School in 1891. J.T. Brown submitted this document with his report of that year. Its inclusion further exemplifies the importance to project the development of southern Africa. The document, entitled “About the Gospel of Jesus,” was signed J. Kesieman. Kesieman discussed the arrival of missionaries in Africa and was very glad “the Lord recollected us; by sending the missionaries into Africa to interest himself and this world too.” The document continued on to discuss the need for Africans,

³⁹ J.T. Brown, Report of Kuruman Boarding School, January 4, 1891.

⁴⁰ J.D. Philip, Report of Hankey Mission, April 1867, Box 1, Folder 1, South Africa Reports, CWM/LMS Archive, School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London.

in this case the Bechuana, to proselytize among their own people. Although Kesieman articulated the necessity of the Bechuana to mission and teach other Africans about the gospel, he stated, “But the Bechuanas cannot do this themselves because it is too difficult...They want the white missionaries who understand every things; because white missionaries know much more than the Bechuanas.”⁴¹ The actual identity of Kesieman is not fully divulged other than J.T. Brown’s representation of him as an African student at the Kuruman Boarding School. This could easily be a forgery intended to promote the importance of missionaries in the region. Nonetheless, these excerpts exhibit the relationship established between missionary and African within the education system of mission stations, at least as it was presented to the British home office. The authority to lead based on missionary knowledge was increasingly challenged as Africans gained a greater understanding of power relations and the dynamics of southern African relationships changed toward the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Missionary propaganda was somewhat different than the reports discussed above. These published works were undertaken by missionaries from southern Africa often while on sabbatical in England. Publications of this type were intended for a British audience and frequently had an underlying agenda that sparked their being written. These works of propaganda promoted some of the same paternalism and projected need for missionaries in southern Africa, but with the added facet of attempting to curb actual racially oppressive legislation within southern Africa through support in the metropole. Such works portray the inextricable link between Christianity and imperialism as they made up the version of Christian civilization brought to southern Africa by evangelical missionaries. The situations in which missionary agitation, of which these works

⁴¹ J. Kesieman, “About the Gospel of Jesus,” in J.T. Brown Kuruman Boarding School Education Report January 4 1891.

were an integral part, became very important to the memory of missionary-educated Africans as it pertained to Christianity and imperialism as the source of protection from oppressive southern African systems of racial policy.

The best known of these works was John Philip's *Researches in South Africa*, which he published in England in 1828. John Philip was the superintendent of LMS missions in southern Africa from 1819 until his death in 1851.⁴² Philip was a politically minded missionary with the intention of agitating for change within southern Africa through petitioning the British metropole for reform. Philip wrote his *Researches* for this explicit purpose with immediate and far-reaching consequences. Philip's agenda was to remove the Calendon Codes of 1809, which were the latest iterations of Dutch laws that effectively enslaved a population of Cape Africans called the Khoikhoi. In direct relation to Britain's decision to end their involvement in the international slave trade in 1807 and as part of the refashioning of Cape politics, Parliament declared the Khoikhoi free from bondage. The Calendon Codes were easily manipulated to ensure the Khoikhoi would effectively remain a slave labor force within the Cape.

Philip utilized a number of tactics to gain the result he had hoped for, one of which was to play off the anti-slavery rhetoric of the time. In the introduction, Philip painted a picture of abuse, slavery, and stolen independence:

They (indigenous peoples) were deprived of their country; from a state of independence they were reduced to the miseries of slavery; their herds of cattle followed their lands and passed over into the hands of their intrusive neighbors; and all they had gained in return for these sacrifices, were a few beads, tobacco, and spirits, and a number of vices unknown to them in their former ignorance.⁴³

⁴² Ross, 78.

⁴³ John Philip, *Researches in South Africa*, vol. 1 (London: J. Duncan Publishing, 1828), x-xi.

This would resonate with the average Englishman of the 1820s on several different levels. Due to Enlightenment and humanitarian ideals, the English public believed that missionaries and imperialism were intended to bring civilization to the ‘savages’ of Africa.⁴⁴ By equating the condition of a group of people that had been granted freedom by British law to slaves ran counter to British public perception of colonial agendas.

Philip furthered the connection between British ideals of liberty, missionaries, and Africans at the Cape by appealing to British nationalism. He first denounced the atrocities of the Dutch government and then presented the arrival of the British as a sign of “deliverance” among the “natives.”⁴⁵ In doing so, Philip intertwined the ideas of Christianity and British nationalism, which would have been familiar themes to the British populace. Philip presented Britain as being better than the Batavian Republic⁴⁶ based upon Christian humanity. He then quickly dissolved the idea of national superiority by equating the more recently established British government with that of the Dutch in regard to their overall treatment of indigenous peoples.⁴⁷ Philip did not outrightly blame his readers for their lack of knowledge of such activities. Instead, he appealed to their identity as British citizens to create common ground between the English public and the Khoikhoi of southern Africa. Philip utilized language like “civil rights” and “unalienable rights conferred upon them (the Khoikhoi) by the Creator” to provide a point of sympathy for the British population to cling to.⁴⁸

This sympathy was further driven home in the conclusion of his *Researches*. Philip posed the following question: “Can Englishmen any longer declaim against Dutch inhumanity? Can we

⁴⁴ Ross, 35.

⁴⁵ Philip, *Researches* vol. 1, xvi.

⁴⁶ The Batavian Republic was what the various federated states of Northern Europe considered themselves. It existed from 1795 to 1806 when it was succeeded by the kingdom of Holland.

⁴⁷ Philip, *Researches* vol. 1, xvi.

⁴⁸ Philip, *Researches* vol. 1, xxvi.

any longer hold up the Spaniards to execration for their conduct to the nations of South America?”⁴⁹ By drawing the comparison between Britain, the Dutch, and the Spanish Philip shattered any concept of national superiority that his readership may have entertained. This was exactly where Philip wanted his readers. He carefully crafted this narrative to instill a sense of national responsibility by presenting how far the British colony at the Cape had slipped. His British readership would have been vulnerable to any suggestion as to how to remedy the situation and restore the “honour of my [Philip’s] country!”⁵⁰ Philip then proceeded provided his readers with the exact answer he believed would rectify the dismal governmental situation at the Cape.

The final section of Philip’s conclusion examined what made Britain better than the Bavarian Republic or the Spaniards when it came to empire and humanity.⁵¹ In this section, Philip proposed the question “To what is England indebted for the high place she occupies in the scale of nations?”⁵² To answer, Philip examined the various social constructs that had been traditionally equated with national superiority; constructs such as science, civil rights, and literature were all referenced and given their due. However, Philip contended that “it ought never to be forgotten” that all of these constructs, although important to the perpetuation of British greatness, “were gained for us in the same field in which the martyr obtained his crown.”⁵³ Christianity was the force that underpinned all other social constructs. Thus, Philip made the argument for Christianity as the source of Britain’s greatness. He then referred back to the issues

⁴⁹ Philip, *Researches* vol. 2, 287.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ This is not to say that I actually believe Philip’s contentions about the superiority of Britain over any other country in terms of humanitarianism; that is too subjective to effectively gauge. This is simply how Philip constructed British society in order to highlight his overall agenda.

⁵² Philip, *Researches* vol.2, 366.

⁵³ Ibid.

at the Cape, reassessing the problem through a Christian lens: “It is to Christian charity alone we are to trace any attempts to elevate them in the scale of being, break asunder their chains, lessen their miseries, and multiply their comforts.”⁵⁴ Philip presented Christianity as the only true way to raise the “savage” out of “barbarism” and into “civilization.” He then represented the missionary as the benevolent mediator between the “savage” and “civilization” as well as the only check upon colonial exploitation.⁵⁵

Philip’s utilization of antislavery rhetoric and nationalism as it was understood through Christian imperialism, allowed him to draw the ultimate conclusion that missionaries in southern Africa were best equipped to assist in the overall protection of Africans. The result of Philip’s agitation was the replacement of the Calendon Codes with Ordinance 50 on July 17, 1828. The Ordinance held masters accountable for all forms of maltreatment present in the Calendon Codes of 1809, while at the same time it provided greater legal representation for Khoikhoi. The latter took place due to a shift in the magistrates that presided over contracts. Under the Calendon Codes local Landdrosts or Field Cornets were the main arbiters over such contracts. Their close relationship with the region in which they were employed and the overall Cape power system caused a vast conflict of interests, one that often resulted in a contract heavily favoring the white master. Ordinance 50 replaced these local officials with Justices of the Peace, the Governor himself, or the Superintendent of Police. All of these positions were held by British officials that had been appointed by the Governor. The attempt here was to account for the obvious bias of allowing a regional magistrate to preside over a contract between a class of people dubbed inferior and a peer. British officials appointed via Cape Town were intended to be non-biased

⁵⁴ Philip, *Researches* vol. 2, 358.

⁵⁵ Philip, *Researches* vol. 2, 277.

representatives of justice. The Ordinance also limited the system of passes, which plagued much of southern Africa throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century. This was by no means perfect as many British officials held similar views of Africans as the Dutch settlers, but it did provide some relief. On a rhetorical level the ability of a missionary to enact such perceived change had a profound impact.

Philip had a personal agenda in mind while fighting for the instillation of Ordinance 50 in that he desired for the prominence of missionaries as arbiters of humanity to be established and their missions to be unrestricted. This was probably more of the actual result, because Ordinance 50, as it applied to Khoikhoi labor, could still be exploited. The importance of this event within the grander scheme of power politics and African understandings of resistance were more profound than Philip could have known. In the immediacy, this Ordinance and other overturns of Dutch law were cited as the main reasons for the Dutch migration out of the Cape to the eastern portion of southern Africa, known as the Dutch Great Trek. Here they established two Dutch republics; namely the Transvaal and the Orange Free State.⁵⁶ These republics competed with the British Cape for authority and control, which eventually culminated in their largest conflict between 1899 and 1902.

The establishment of Ordinance 50 and the Dutch Great Trek of the 1830s also provided the base from which the British Cape would develop an identity of liberalism and humanitarianism. Historians have long debated the actuality of such an identity, but this does not change the fact that these ideals translated into the only non-racial franchise in southern Africa

⁵⁶ Norman Etherington, *The Great Treks: The Transformation of Southern Africa, 1815-1854* (London: Pearson Education, 2001), 60.

upon the grant of responsible government to the Cape Colony in 1853.⁵⁷ This franchise certainly had its drawbacks and inherent constraints. For instance, there was a minimum property ownership of £25 that disqualified many Africans due to other abusive systems of labor and ownership that existed within southern Africa. Although still more complex than a base level nonracial franchise, especially when taking into account the various alterations that would take place to said franchise over the next several decades, Cape Colony's income qualification was a comparatively lower bar to the vote than most around the world.⁵⁸ As will be seen in the next two chapters, this nonracial franchise became the beacon of sound government and an integral part of African resistance throughout the twentieth century. The link between Cape liberal ideology, Philip's *Researches*, and the ability for missionaries to utilize Christian civilization to exact change formed a solid memory from which Africans would later draw to resist further oppression in the twentieth century.

Philip's *Researches* was but one of several works of missionary propaganda published with the intention of exacting political change in southern Africa through support from the British metropole. Another instance in which an actual delegation of Africans, led by the LMS missionary W.C. Willoughby, travelled to England to garner support for the retention of Bechuanaland, now Botswana, further exemplifies the connection between missionaries, political change, and African rights. This delegation, which travelled to England in 1895, was made up of three Tswana chiefs: Khama, Sabele, and Batheon. Their successful utilization of evangelical Christian tropes as was indicative of British Christian understandings of civilization such as piety, sobriety, and loyalty to Britain meant the maintenance of Bechuanaland as a British

⁵⁷ Rodney Davenport, "The Cape Liberal Tradition to 1910," in *Democratic Liberalism in South Africa: Its History and Prospect*, eds. Jeffrey Butler, Richard Elphick, and David Welsh (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1987), 32-33.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

protectorate.⁵⁹ This event has largely been seen as an integral part of Botswana's history and overall existence.

These different occasions upon which missionaries worked on behalf, although not entirely, of Africans to alter the political landscape of southern Africa solidified an important link between Africans, missionaries, Christianity as a whole, and the British metropole. This avenue of political change was integral to missionary-educated African leaders, even though it had been largely closed by the end of the nineteenth century. The discovery of diamonds and gold ultimately altered southern African dynamics.

Diamonds, Gold, and the Origins of African Resistance

Prior to the discovery of diamonds in the 1860s and gold in the 1880s, Britain dedicated as few resources to southern Africa as possible. The discovery of these resources greatly increased private and governmental interest in the region. With increased interest came increased British presence and a strong impetus toward smoothing out conflict in order to efficiently extract wealth. This first came in the form of Cecil Rhodes who was an ardent imperialist and mine capitalist. He first began by organizing diamond mine companies into the De Beers Consolidated Mining company, which by the mid-1890s monopolized diamond mining. Rhodes also held political office at the Cape, in particular the Prime Minister position from 1890-1896. He and his Royal Charter company: the British South Africa company, instigated a number of wars against Africans throughout the 1880s and 1890s to further "pacify" the African population into a source of mine labor. With his sights on economic and political domination, Rhodes had

⁵⁹ Neil Parson, *King Khama, Emperor Joe, and the Great White Queen: Victorian Britain through African Eyes* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 36-37.

very little sympathy for African rights. His notoriously inhumane dealings with Africans was the main reason why the three African chiefs Khama, Sebele, and Batheon wished their groups would remain part of the British protectorate instead of being absorbed into the Cape Colony under Rhodes.⁶⁰ Rhodes's thirst for control in southern Africa developed into great conflict when he attempted to instigate rebellion in order to gain access to the gold mines of the Witwatersrand on the border of the Transvaal, one of the Dutch republics.

Gold was discovered on the Witwatersrand in the late 1880s. The mining that developed in this area of the Transvaal greatly transformed the South African Republic into an economic and military rival to British interest at the Cape.⁶¹ As the traditional policy of hemming in the scope of territory controlled by the Transvaal continued to fail, Rhodes organized a clandestine raid with the help of his business partner Dr. Leander Jameson. The Jameson Raid of 1896, as it was later called, was intended to instigate a revolt by a group of British miners called the *uitlanders* working in the gold mines. With poor logistics and a lack of actual support from the beginning of the raid, Jameson and his three hundred troops were quickly captured. This ended in a political debacle in which Rhodes resigned from the Prime Minister position and the British Secretary of State for the Colonies, Joseph Chamberlain was implicated in colluding with the raiders.⁶² The Jameson Raid and subsequent political fallout is often considered the main push toward open war between Britain and the Dutch republics in the Second South Africa War of 1899-1902. Within this tumult, missionaries and Africans had fewer and fewer options of representation.

⁶⁰Ibid., 34.

⁶¹ Mackinnon, 165.

⁶² Ibid., 168-9.

Missionaries, for their part, also found themselves in a difficult position. As the link between a sympathetic British metropole faded, due to the up-swell of economic incentives, and a build-up in British and Dutch organizations that cared little for the meddling of missionaries, church organizations were largely unable to maintain any form of agency. As a result, the memory within a missionary-educated African leadership of past instances of British humanitarian assistance clashed with racial bars to church hierarchies. This resulted in the separation of various African dominated movements away from missionary churches. Since Africans were encouraged to read and write in both English and African languages, they were ideal candidates to work in the various missionary-run newspapers. The Lovedale press and that at Kuruman were the largest missionary presses in the country. Due to conflict within the church, the very influential John Tango Jabavu left as editor of the Lovedale press, *Isigidimi*, in order to start his own paper *Imvo Zabantsundu* in 1884.⁶³ Jabavu became one of the most recognized African leaders in southern Africa. In the next twenty years, a large number of other African presses developed and used that platform to resist white domination in southern Africa. These papers would vary in position and message due to a large number of factors, not least of which were regional location, editor personality, and funding. These papers formed the major source base for the next two chapters.

Another movement that began out of the conflict between missionary-educated Africans and their missionaries was that of the Ethiopian Church movement. This movement began in the late 1880s and involved the separation of African congregations from mission stations to establish completely African churches. These churches became increasingly widespread after the

⁶³ Les Switzer, "The Beginnings of African Protest Journalism at the Cape," in *South Africa's Alternative Press: Voices of Protest and Resistance, 1880-1960*, ed. Les Switzer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 59.

end of the Second South Africa war in 1902. One such leader that separated due to the racial bars within missionary hierarchies was a Methodist Reverend named Mangena Maake Mokone, who left the mission station with his congregation in 1892 to establish his own church.⁶⁴ Mokone took to calling his church Ethiopian, the name that would define the movement, from a Bible verse, Psalms 68.31: “Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.”⁶⁵ Mokone and other African church individuals that left missionary churches contributed to the broader conversation of racial criticism in the late nineteenth century. Ethiopian Churches as they were discussed within the pages of African newspapers formed a major facet of resistance in the post-war period.

Conclusion

Further retraction by missionaries and continued racialized policy build-up defined the end of the nineteenth century in southern Africa. The competition between British colonialism and that of the Dutch would reach a peak in 1899 with the outset of war. The aftermath of that war paved the way for white minority rule as it was understood in the apartheid era. African resistance to white domination and the racialized policy that underpinned it evolved considerably in the early twentieth-century. The early nineteenth century reliance upon missionaries to lobby for African rights like John Philip did in 1828 faded as missionary-educated Africans became more critical of their ability to accomplish this task.

The African memory of these accomplishments, however, were consistently reiterated with a variety of intentions. The commonality between all these intentions was the centrality of

⁶⁴ J. Mutero Chirenje, *Ethiopianism and Afro-Americans in Southern Africa, 1883-1916* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1987), 2.

⁶⁵ *King James Bible*.

Christian evangelical and British liberal ideologies as they were presented by missionaries in the nineteenth century. These understandings, gained through education and sermons, gave Africans tools to criticize the increasingly oppressive governmental system in southern Africa. A deep knowledge within some missionary-educated Africans allowed them to utilize a common language to resist and unify in diverse ways. Much of this diversity between the Second South Africa War and the Unification of South Africa in 1910 revolved around differences of colonial experience within the understandings of African leaders. These differences were still articulated utilizing Christian language, which makes it a consistent way to examine the evolution of resistance throughout the early twentieth century.

CHAPTER 2: AFRICAN NEWSPAPERS, BRITISH IMPERIALISM, AND THE UNIFICATION OF SOUTH AFRICA

In the aftermath of the Second South Africa War, 1899-1902, many, both white and black, in southern Africa believed the twentieth century would be better than the century that had just ended with such calamity. Out of fire and war would rise a more equal and ordered country. But equality and order for whom and by what means? “Better” was and is still a matter of perspective. In a region where two white minority groups held political dominion over a majority black populace, the beginning of the twentieth century meant a great deal of different things to a great many peoples. Perspectives varied based on relationships, region, ethnic group, and ideology. The physical war may have officially ended on May 31, 1902, but another rhetorical war began one that had more far reaching consequences.

At some points, the war of words that followed the South African War was fought within the arenas of Parliament or in the forums of Colonial legislatures. However, in a country where the majority of the population, those who were not white, were not allowed a voice in these spaces, many of these battles were fought outside of those battlefields. Newspapers often became the arenas of choice for voices barred from political structures. In the case of African populations their newspapers were, at least at the outset of the twentieth century, typically run and produced by individuals who gained an education through missionary-run stations and schools. This produced a set of ideas based in evangelical Christian understandings of “civilization” and social relationships. Peter Limb posits that there is a complication in describing this group of missionary-educated Africans as a petty bourgeoisie due to the racialized nature of socio-political

systems in southern Africa.⁶⁶ Representing these Christian Africans as entirely middle-class disregards their relationship with worker groups. Instead, this group was much more fluid in identity and interacted with many interest groups. Their fluidity produced a multitude of perspectives on what a “better” southern Africa should be. Many of these perspectives pertained specifically to their perceived audiences.

In some cases, these newspapers engaged with the standard political conversations then raging within Parliament and Colonial legislatures. In others, more nuanced assertions of belief were discussed in more mundane contexts. These diverse methods range from examinations of equality through the non-racial franchise and political protection from inhumane treatment to assertions of equality through liquor laws and the legitimacy of African Independent Churches. The diverse ways in which these African newspapers approached and presented their views of southern Africa in the twentieth century exemplify the varied colonial experiences present in the early portion of the century, all of which pointed to the fluidity of identities present within southern Africa prior to Unification in 1910.

This chapter will explore the diverse ways in which four newspapers: *Imvo Zabantsundu* and *Izwi Labantu* in Cape Colony, *Koranta ea Becoana* in Bechuanaland, and *Ilanga Lase Natal* in the Natal, presented their views of southern Africa in the aftermath of the Second South Africa War. Peter Walshe described this diversity of belief as producing an ineffective front to resist any of the policies set by white colonials to consolidate power.⁶⁷ This chapter argues that the range of perspectives present within these newspapers are indicative of particular colonial

⁶⁶ Peter Limb, *The ANC's Early Years: Nation, Class and Place in South Africa before 1940* (Pretoria: University of South Africa Press, 2010), 9-10.

⁶⁷ Peter Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa: The African National Congress, 1912-1952* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 24.

experiences and serve to strengthen a broader base of resistance from which to criticize white minority rule.

Imvo Zabantsundu, edited by John Tango Jabavu, and *Izwi Labantu*, edited by Walter Rubusana, operated within the Cape Colony. Their editors grew up in this colonial context and represented a Cape audience. In this, these papers had the strongest connection with European populations due to density and longevity of colonial contact. The Cape was also the only colony in southern Africa that, after 1853, had a non-racial franchise. The relationship with Europeans and the ability to vote as British citizens greatly impacted the worldviews of these two papers. Their major differences can also be attributed to a regional context in that *Imvo* was published in Cape Town, where the largest number of Europeans resided in southern Africa, and *Izwi* was published in the eastern Cape in a town called Kingwilliams Town.⁶⁸ This difference, and the personalities of their respective editors, produced two distinct views of African resistance and advancement. *Imvo* articulated the importance of European assistance to African growth, while *Izwi* represented a model of African self-help through education and action.

Koranta ea Becoana, edited by Solomon Plaatje, operated in the northern Cape first at Kimberley and then at Mafeking. Although technically within Cape Colony by the twentieth century, the northern Cape had been the Bechuanaland Crown Colony until 1895.⁶⁹ The major population of this region were the Tswana which identified much more with the semi-autonomous Bechuanaland Protectorate (now modern-day Botswana) than with the Cape. Solomon Plaatje, the editor, himself was of the Barolong ethnic group and identified very

⁶⁸ Les Switzer, "The Beginnings of African Protest Journalism at the Cape," 60-63.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 73.

strongly with these roots. *Koranta* represented a view forged in remoteness, independence, and relative autonomy from European intervention.

Ilanga Lase Natal, edited by John Dube, was printed in Natal, a region to the east of Cape Colony and west of the Orange Free State. First printed in Durban, a port city and Natal's largest urban area, *Ilanga* was quickly moved to Dube's school for Africans called Ohlange Institute. Natal was predominantly made up of two major communities: British settlers, descendant from those that arrived between 1820 and 1835, and the Zulu ethnic group. *Ilanga* was the first Zulu newspaper and represented many of the ideals of this group.⁷⁰ Dube was himself an ordained preacher within the American Zulu Church. His strong Christian influence filtered into his newspaper, *Ilanga*, more so than other African newspapers. Natal, although British, paralleled the Dutch republics more than Cape Colony when it came to treatment of African populations. Natal had some of the most restrictive policies and was often criticized by the Africans that lived there for inhumane relations. Dube's strong religious tenets and his self-reliance, represented best in his cultivation of the Ohlange Institute, greatly influenced the tone of *Ilanga*. The pride of the Zulu and the intense restrictions placed on them by the Natal government also contributed to *Ilanga's* more outspoken and less reserved nature.

These various regional differences, many of which will be fleshed out further in the pages that follow, greatly contributed to the immense diversity in deployment of Christian rhetoric by African newspapers. Christian rhetoric still formed a common language in which African newspapers could find commonality among themselves and with an international community.

⁷⁰ Heather Hughes, *First President: A Life of John Dube, Founding President of the ANC* (Auckland Park, South Africa: Jacana Publishing, 2012), 67.

This rhetoric was also an important tool in which to criticize white governance without incurring heavy censorship.

Censorship, although not nearly as extensive as it would become after World War II, was a reality for many African newspapers in southern Africa. The best example of censorship relates to *Ilanga lase Natal* and its criticism of the way the Natal government put down a Zulu rebellion led by a petty chief named Bambata in 1906. *Ilanga* was incredibly critical of the government's use of force, as well as the utilization of the rebellion as justification for further restrictions on Africans in Natal. For *Ilanga*'s criticism, the Natal government gave Dube, the editor, an ultimatum: either publish an official statement of apology and retraction or have the paper shut down. Dube published the statement but in a way that betrayed its forced nature.⁷¹ The utilization of Christian rhetoric was one way for African newspapers to avoid heavy censorship while still criticizing white governance.

African newspapers, and also African political organizations, were considered to be examples of European perceived "civilization" and "superiority". The civilizing mission of the nineteenth century, mainly a British initiative but one still rhetorically represented by some Dutch settler leaders, required a certain amount of adoption of European institutions. The use of Christian language, European-style newspapers and political organizations, adoption of European fashion, etc. were all considered to be representations of Europe's civilizing mission at work. Thus, African leaders could utilize certain tenets of European ideology, especially those found in Christianity, as tools to criticize the increasingly restrictive nature of white government policy toward Africans in the early twentieth century. This can be seen as a form of what Homi

⁷¹ Ibid., 146.

Bhabha terms “sly civility”.⁷² This term invokes a broad range of expressions but relates to the acceptance of certain seemingly oppressive concepts while articulating that acceptance through different means than what was intended by the originator of those concepts. In this context, Christianity, although not oppressive in itself, was represented to Africans as a superior religious and social system to that of their own. Missionaries intended to remove the previous belief systems of Africans and replace it with what they believed to be better. The “sly civility” comes into play when African newspapers utilize Christian language to criticize the colonizer for not adhering to the basic tenets of the religious ideology they presented to Africans. In this way, African newspapers in southern Africa were able to, at times, boldly criticize racial policy and marginalization without incurring legal penalties.

The nuanced ways in which African newspapers and missionary-educated African leaders articulated resistance through Christian language varied greatly based on regional background and interpretation of Christian ideology. This diversity, although difficult to measure within the guise of actual political change, contributed immensely to the broad rhetorical base from which twentieth century resistance would rise. It also shows the multiple ways in which different African communities dealt with the turmoil of the early twentieth century. The editors of these papers were intensely involved in the production and representation of their papers. They embodied the diversity of their papers. All were missionary educated, but they differed based on the colonial backgrounds discussed above. Because of this, the following chapters will utilize editors and papers interchangeable when discussing their changing views. The variety of

⁷² Homi K. Bhabha, “Signs Taken for Wonders: Questions of Ambivalence and Authority under a Tree outside Delhi, May 1817,” *Critical Inquiry* 12, no. 1 (1985), 163.

interpretation and articulation is of paramount importance within the legacy of African resistance and has not been extensively covered by current scholarship.

Although historians have focused more on the interwar and post-World War II period when analyzing African resistance to white racial domination in southern Africa, there are a few important works about the early period that have created the basis for the studies of later years. Within these important works, Peter Walshe's *Rise of African Nationalism* stands out. His work focuses on the origins of the African National Congress (ANC). Walshe discusses African resistance to the rise of Dutch Settler nationalism and the reformation of British Imperial expansion within the framework of the articulation and expression of nationalism. In this context, Walshe views the diversity of opinions about identity within the African community as a weakness that ultimately makes them ineffective when attempting to organize.⁷³ Walshe's narrow focus on large ideological connectors limits his ability to view the importance of this diversity and its origins.

Les Switzer's introduction to *South Africa's Alternative Press* analyzes African and other non-white newspapers in the early twentieth century to examine the types of resistance within populations.⁷⁴ *South Africa's Alternative Press* is a collection of essays that affords a diverse look but does not put these diverse perspectives within a collective conversation about resistance as it changed over the first two decades of the twentieth century.

Peter Limb discusses the strengths and shortcomings of these works. He argues that they focus only on the uniformity of resistance and European conceptions of nationalism without

⁷³ Walshe, 48.

⁷⁴ Les Switzer, "Introduction: South Africa's Alternative Press in Perspective," 2.

taking into account regional and local African differences.⁷⁵ Limb analyzes the early African National Congress and its relationship with workers through this regional approach.

This chapter will build upon the important insights of these major works to further understand the diversity within African resistance in the early twentieth century. Limb's regional approach will be followed here but with a focus on the African newspapers within those regions, and instead of an analysis of worker relationships this chapter will focus on the social and cultural definitions of identity through Christian rhetoric. A more nuanced approach will provide a better understanding of the cultural intenders with which African intellectuals and groups resist prior to their regional identities being diminished after Unification.

Although the South African War was a pivotal moment in the history of South Africa, especially in regard to race relations, the immediate aftermath proved to be even more important in the intensification of racial schisms. Between the signing of the Peace Treaty of Vereeniging on May 31, 1902 that ended the South African War and the establishment of the Union of South Africa Act on May 31, 1910, Southern Africa went through a drastic period of reorientation and revolution.⁷⁶ Southern Africa's industrial revolution, first beginning in the mining industry and then extending into agriculture, began in the 1860s. The lack of cohesion between industrial build-up and the then archaic early nineteenth-century political apparatus was a major factor in the South African War. With the war over and British supremacy reestablished, at least in theory, all major socio-political organs turned to developing a new South Africa one with the proper structure to function within the new century. The major question at hand revolved around what

⁷⁵ Limb, 31.

⁷⁶ G.H.L. Le May, *British Supremacy in South Africa, 1899-1907* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), 213.

that South Africa should look like and who was to create it. As had existed prior to the war, a plethora of voices had their own perspectives on this process.

The British believed in an agenda that would eliminate the old nineteenth-century systems that had previously hamstrung the antebellum southern Africa. For the British, this agenda would be brought about by a coalition between British administrators and settlers and their counterparts in the Afrikaner republics. Upon arrival in southern Africa after the war, Joseph Chamberlain, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, spoke to a crowd of British and Dutch in the city of Durban. In this speech Chamberlain said, “Why should not reconciliation be easy?...We must show our readiness to welcome our new fellow-subjects.”⁷⁷ Chamberlain and the British had every intention of reconciling with the Dutch on equal terms to create what they understood to be a better southern Africa. This equality was not extended to the non-white majority.

The British largely ignored the interests of African and other non-white populations considered as corollaries to those of white South Africans. Only within rhetorical flourishes of paternalism were non-white South Africans mentioned. As if the very same populations that had treated these marginalized groups so poorly in the nineteenth century would suddenly take up the charge with renewed gusto and sympathy in an increasingly industrial southern Africa. The intention to build a new southern Africa without the input of non-white voices was evident within both the final clause of the Peace Treaty of Vereeniging and the words of Joseph Chamberlain upon his arrival in southern Africa. Within the Peace Treaty of Vereeniging, the military officials who signed and drafted the document included a clause on the question of

⁷⁷ Joseph Chamberlain, “In a spirit of reconciliation...of firmness also,” Durban, December 27, 1902, in *Mr. Chamberlain's Speeches*, vol. 2, ed. Charles W. Boyd (London: Constable and Company, 1914), 79.

voting rights. The clause read, “The question of granting the Franchise to Natives will not be decided until after the introduction of Self-Government.”⁷⁸ This clause removed the necessity for immediate decisions to be made regarding the extension of a non-racial franchise throughout the colonies of southern Africa. The Cape Colony already had a non-racial franchise, in existence since 1853. The inclusion of this clause shows the great contention present in relation to voting rights for Africans. It also shows that neither British nor Dutch had any real intention of including Africans in the reconstruction process. Those who developed the peace treaty and the Secretary of State for the Colonies projected the immediate tendency toward a white dominated southern Africa with a firmer control of non-white groups.

On the other hand, Africans utilized the political and social turmoil to articulate their own vision of a new South Africa, in turn portraying certain understandings of self within this period of redefinition. In many respects much of this was possible due to the comparatively developed educational system of southern Africa for African populations. British influence in southern Africa began in 1805, whereas most other British colonies in Africa, such as those in West Africa, did not come into being until the end of the nineteenth century. Missionaries were able to establish more education structures due to this longevity, which produced a mature missionary-educated group of Africans by the outbreak of the South African War.⁷⁹ These missionary-educated Africans at this time, utilized Christian evangelical rhetoric to project authority in determining their own place in a new South Africa. In doing so, these groups challenged attempts at outside definition and oppression along racial lines.

⁷⁸ Peace Treaty of Vereeniging May 31, 1902.

⁷⁹ Elizabeth Isichei, *A History of Christianity in Africa: From Antiquity to the Present* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1995), 124.

In the immediate aftermath of the South African War, a multitude of political and social “questions” were discussed by white and black leaders alike. Some of these dealt with broader concepts, such as the non-white Franchise and Imperial loyalty, while others were more specific, such as the liquor trade and the legitimacy of African Independent Churches. Within each of these contexts, African newspapers challenged white perceptions and attempts at rhetorical justifications for modes of control. The ways in which Christian religious language was deployed varied in relation to a multitude of factors, not least among these were: colonial context, audience, personality of newspaper staff, and booster constituencies. Although this variability often produced divergent representations, there are a number of similarities that categorize each approach into temporal frames. Each newspaper’s approach to some of the “questions” demonstrated a sense of reserved hope for positive change within the period from 1902-1907. What this positive change actually looked like varied somewhat drastically at points.

Discussions surrounding Imperial loyalty were multi-faceted and taken up by every population group within the colonies of southern Africa. This featured prominently since the British – not the Dutch – had emerged victorious from the recent war and thus demanded a certain amount of performative loyalty. Black African newspapers expressed loyalty to Britain but often with ulterior intentions. These newspapers articulated British loyalty to separate themselves from the Dutch rebellion and with the hope of garnering civil rights of equality that had previously been denied. African newspapers utilized loyalty to Britain as a rhetorical device to gain protection against mistreatment and stronger representation in government. By the end of the war in 1902, when some Africans had separated themselves from the discriminatory practices of missionary churches and missionary presses, Africans developed their own interpretations of the relationship between Empire, Christianity, and civilization. As Homi Bhabha discusses,

missionary-educated Africans were not simply vessels of white missionary rhetoric, they were active agents in its understanding.⁸⁰ The African presses discussed actively criticized the white government in southern Africa with the intention of portraying their own distilled understanding of Britain's role in bringing about the South Africa they desired, the one they believed to have been promised. As previously stated, differing regional experiences contributed to the variability of these understandings. The fact that African presses utilized Christian rhetoric makes it, as a unit of analysis, helpful in comparing the divergent and convergent ways Africans understood their relationships to European organs and, more broadly, their articulation of what South Africa should become in the twentieth century.

The conclusion of hostilities and the signing of peace brought further signs of hope in a more equal post-war southern Africa, but these were quickly tempered by reservations about Britain's resolve. One such occasion that offered a platform for multiple African newspapers to discuss their views of post-war southern Africa was the visit of Joseph Chamberlain in the later months of 1902. After the signing of the Peace Treaty of Vereeniging on May 31, 1902, Joseph Chamberlain toured the colonies of southern Africa in order to drum up support for British interests and the necessity of unification to avoid further conflict in the country.

Chamberlain himself was a complicated figure in relation to the colonies of southern Africa. Throughout his tenure as Secretary of State for the Colonies, Chamberlain represented one of the most imperially minded politicians in the British government. He ardently supported British hegemony at the Cape, so much so that his actions leading up to the South African War are largely believed to have been direct causes of said war. Outside of his support for and appointment of Alfred Milner in 1897, who himself believed from the very outset of his duties in

⁸⁰ Bhabha, 150.

the irreconcilable nature of Dutch and British interests at the end of the nineteenth century, Chamberlain assisted in the orchestration of one of Britain's greatest blunders in southern Africa: the Jameson Raid.⁸¹ This capitalist, resource extraction approach to governance produced much anxiety among the populations of southern Africa. Africans themselves put these anxieties aside once the British won the South African War.

Within this context, African presses at once heralded Chamberlain's visit, and Chamberlain himself, as the potential beginnings of a new more equal southern Africa and criticized for the reconciliationist agenda he set forth to do so. Chamberlain gave a speech in Durban entitled "In a Spirit of Reconciliation...of Firmness also" on December 27, 1902, only seven months after the signing of the peace treaty that ended the South African War. The speech articulated the immediacy of reconciliation between the white populations of southern Africa. Within this speech, Chamberlain referred to the British and Dutch as "kindred races, kindred in origin, alike in the great qualities which both nations have throughout their glorious history constantly displayed." Chamberlain further discussed the similarities between the Dutch and the British as indicative of their ability for "victim and vanquished alike" to reconcile and experience "all the privileges of a greater and a freer Empire than the world has ever known." Chamberlain expressed the predetermined nature of federation in South Africa with the only stipulation being "when that time will come depends upon the spirit in which our (the British) advances are met."⁸²

Although, like all political speeches, this information must be understood within the context of its delivery to a combined Dutch and British audience from the upper echelon of

⁸¹ Le May, 3-4.

⁸² Joseph Chamberlain, "In a spirit of reconciliation...of firmness also," Durban, December 27, 1902, 76-81, in Mr. Chamberlain's Speeches, ed. Charles W. Boyd. Vol. 2 (London: Constable and Company, 1914), 79-80.

Durban society, the British model of reconciliation here represented was the true ideology behind post-war relations. Chamberlain's only discussion of non-white populations was an ambiguous reference to refraining from a regression in the way non-white populations were dealt with in the pre-war era. Chamberlain's discussion of the "privileges of a greater and a freer Empire" is particularly telling, in that here it is intended toward the white populations of the southern African colonies only.

African presses understood their rights to equal political representation through their continued loyalty to Britain and the promised citizenship granted to some but not all. The British themselves had very different understandings of citizenship and how non-white populations would be incorporated into the federation. With such an immediate and obvious trend toward white reconciliation and domination, African presses were forced into a position of almost over-performance when it came to expressions of loyalty.

These performances were purposefully overstated; the loyalty of Africans throughout the war was well-known. Missionary-educated Africans viewed their loyalty to Britain as a product of their citizenship that had been gained through Christian civilization as presented by missionary rhetoric in the nineteenth century. The intention was to reassert their rights to equal political representation whilst also raising awareness of the racialized inequalities that came to define southern African relationships prior to the South African War. Reactions to Chamberlain's visit and language of peace were thus both intense in their articulations of legitimacy of citizenship while also critical of the ways in which the British hoped to achieve federation.

Within the two African papers at the Cape, *Izwi Labantu* and *Imvo Zabantsundu*, the lack of assurances toward the non-racial Franchise was particularly disconcerting. At surface level,

this can be attributed to the fact that Cape Colony was the only province in southern Africa that had any form of Franchise for non-white populations.⁸³ The presses within Cape Colony had the most to lose in that they were the only groups that had the ability to vote in political forums. Although relatable in their colonial experiences, these two papers were operated by owners with largely different personalities. *Izwi Labantu* was run by Walter Rubusana and largely edited by Alan Kirkland Soga. Jabavu and Rubusana represented two diverging trends within the missionary-educated Africans at the Cape. Jabavu, the editor of *Imvo Zabantsundu* believed in the need for European assistance to protect and provide for Africans. Rubusana was much more in the camp of self-help, although not to the degree that would become common after the British retracted from southern Africa.⁸⁴ Their differing views and close proximity also made Jabavu and Rubusana major political rivals.

These two papers had very different understandings of what loyalty and citizenship in Empire meant even though they agreed on the necessity of equal political rights. These differences and similarities can further be seen in the ways their pages portrayed Christian rhetoric when discussing loyalty and equality within the context of commentaries on Chamberlain's visit and subsequent promises. *Izwi* fully understood the relationship between Britain and "those of whom civilisation and education have introduced to an intelligent appreciation of their relations."⁸⁵ *Izwi* did not rely upon Britain as the only source of representation for African views. Instead, *Izwi* wished "to consider what the natives can do for

⁸³ Rodney Davenport, "The Cape Liberal Tradition to 1910," in *Democratic Liberalism in South Africa: Its History and Prospect*, 32-3.

⁸⁴ Z Pallo Jordan, "Social Origins" 21-36, in *The Historical Roots of the ANC*, ed. Ben Turok (Auckland Park, South Africa: Jacana, 2010), 32.

⁸⁵ *Izwi Labantu* November 18, 1902.

themselves, by way of qualifying themselves to become more enterprising.”⁸⁶ *Izwi* believed the best way to do this was not through patronage but through the grant of equal civil rights, something that the British should have done for all Africans. Thus, it was not a matter of Britain subsidizing African communities to raise them up. For *Izwi*, it was a matter of Britain removing the existing racial bars and allowing Africans to raise themselves.

Imvo Zabantsundu had a somewhat different perspective on Britain’s role in the post-war period. *Imvo* desired the swift attainment of a federation among the colonies of southern Africa where “representatives from Colonies liable to be affected by the action of statesman answerable to the British Parliament.”⁸⁷ *Imvo* also praised the new British monarch, King Edward VII, for his “liberal views” and claimed that he “would throw himself into the task of ameliorating the condition of the people.” The article wishes King Edward VII “God-speed” in this endeavor.⁸⁸ *Imvo* further praised King Edward VII for his reliance upon the legacy of his mother Queen Victoria. The figure of Queen Victoria was integral to many missionary-educated Africans’ understanding of their relationship to the British metropole. Queen Victoria was often praised for her humanitarian views and her accomplishments as monarch in the nineteenth century. *Imvo*’s quickness to full-fledged support for federation and the new king expresses the worldview of Jabavu and his perceived audience. For *Imvo* the only way by which Africans would attain equality was through the oversight of a liberally minded, humanitarian British government.

Comparing these two perspectives shows the variability of views even within the same colonial system. Both *Izwi* and *Imvo* hoped for British support in the aftermath of the South African War. They differed in what that support would accomplish. Rubusana and *Izwi* hoped

⁸⁶ *Izwi Labantu* July 23, 1901.

⁸⁷ *Imvo Zabantsundu* April 9, 1901.

⁸⁸ *Imvo Zabantsundu* February 4, 1901.

British support would remove the racial bars hindering Africans from helping themselves. Jabavu and *Imvo* hoped British intervention would continue to prop-up Africans. These views form two facets of an evolving relationship with a worldview gained through missionary education. The concepts of self-reliance, as exemplified by *Izwi*, and that of paternalism, as exemplified by *Imvo*, are both tenets of the brand of Christian evangelical civilization transmitted through missionary education in the nineteenth century. Other tenets, such as sobriety would further provide a platform from which to discuss race relations in southern Africa.

Christians, Brandy, and Beer

In the aftermath of the Second South Africa War, one of the umbrella discussions revolved around systematizing southern Africa's burgeoning industrial production apparatuses. Enveloped within this broader process, the "liquor question," as colonial law makers often referred to it, formed a base from which Africans and Europeans grappled with larger issues of identity, control, and perceptions. Commentaries on the trade and consumption of liquor involved every strata of southern African colonial society throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many of the tropes that developed in relation to liquor in southern Africa found their origins in an early nineteenth-century evangelical understanding of social responsibility. Sobriety and public respectability underpinned evangelical Christianity as it was presented to Africans via missionaries in the nineteenth century. These types of social standards were integral to Christian missionary teaching in southern Africa, whilst also acting as a fabricated social indicator of difference between ethnic groups, further justifying hierarchies of peoples within the hegemonic state structure. The perceived inability of Africans to handle liquor

was continually referenced to prop up European paternalism in southern Africa. P.R. Frames, a political official in the Rhodesian legislature, stated, “Under our liquor laws it was provided that no child would be supplied with intoxicating liquor, and the native was put on the same footing as the white child.”⁸⁹ This in itself was a discourse designed to perpetuate racialized views of Africans as luses and children. Europeans brought liquor to southern Africa, continued its sale to Africans sometimes even through clandestine means, and determined the working and wage conditions within labor systems that promoted a tendency toward drink.

The banning of liquor sales under Martial law during the South African War disrupted the use of liquor as a devise of control. In the aftermath of the war, Europeans and Africans weighed in on policy decisions related to the continued ban on liquor sales to Africans. Through the discussion of liquor policies, African newspapers at once projected a Christian characteristic of sobriety and contested the domination of this control structure by whites. This took on an additional facet through the projection of cultural independence through endorsements of African beer whilst condemning European liquor, specifically brandy.

In the context of liquor as a platform to discuss the issues of governance in southern Africa, *Izwi* demonstrated the incompatibility of liquor and Christian civilization. *Izwi* stated, “It is one of the saddest reflections of Christian civilization...introduced into the country by the beneficial rule of Great Britain...should be placed in the position of having to contend, inch by inch, with the demoralizing vice of liquor and its supporters.”⁹⁰ By evoking the relationships between Christian sobriety and British rule, *Izwi* criticized the very nature of colonialism in southern Africa. *Izwi* blamed the “administration of the country” that “has been largely

⁸⁹ *Koranta ea becoana* November 29, 1902.

⁹⁰ *Izwi Labantu* February 25, 1902.

dominated by the Trade.” *Izwi* further criticized the administration of southern Africa by directly addressing “laying the blame upon the Natives for the faults of the administrative incapacity” by white governmental authorities. *Izwi* extricated Africans from blame when it articulated that if it were up to Africans themselves “the whole traffic would be swiftly consigned to perdition.”⁹¹ This statement is particularly telling in that it evoked *Izwi*’s belief in the agency of Africans within colonial systems; Africans actively extracted from colonial structures that which is portrayed as beneficial, Christianity and civilization, and rejected that which is not, liquor.

Koranta paralleled much of *Izwi*’s commentary on the divisiveness of liquor but with a different end in mind. *Koranta*, edited by Solomon Plaatje, operated in the northern Cape and strongly aligned with the Tswana of the Bechuanaland Protectorate. The Bechuanaland Protectorate (modern-day Botswana) held a semi-autonomous status due to its direct relationship with Britain. In the context of *Koranta*, this perceived autonomy is reflected in its representation of African rights in southern Africa. Through an extensive commentary titled “Rhodesian Legislature” *Koranta* examines the governmental discussions by Rhodesian politician P.R. Frames. In the immediate aftermath of the South African War, colonial legislatures across southern Africa actively discussed the state of the colonies with the intention of reforming policy to pave the way for federation. Many of these discussions, especially in the northern and eastern colonies, exemplified the racially charged nature of southern African society and politics. Within this context, Frames represented the patronizing Colonial who utilized established tropes that perpetuated the belief that “the native (African) was put on the same footing as the white child.”⁹² Within Frames’ comments on liquor, the equation between African and white child

⁹¹ *Izwi Labantu* February 25, 1902.

⁹² *Koranta ea Becoana* November 29, 1902.

formed the authoritative backbone of his belief that black Africans were inferior to white Colonials, thus supporting the need for Colonials to systematically control almost every aspect of southern African life. Instead of resisting this logic of inequality between peoples, *Koranta* took the commentary one step further, “We never claimed to be your equals...All we say is that some of our people at all events have inferiors as well as superiors among the whites.”⁹³ By expressing inequalities within ethnic groups, *Koranta* broke down the racial binary espoused by white Colonials with Frames as a mouthpiece. This breakdown of perceived racial superiority challenged the simplistic belief by Frames that Europeans are inherently capable of controlling themselves due to their whiteness. This then added credibility to *Koranta*’s statement that all should be “entitled to the same privileges.”⁹⁴ *Koranta* reasoned that if both Europeans and Africans had variability in the ability to control liquor consumption, then neither group could be totally superior to the other. The capacity for self-control was individual, not racial. Through commentaries on liquor *Koranta* challenged Frames’ logic of inequality and racial superiority to reinforce its understanding of citizenship to which “race or colour is no bar.”⁹⁵ Throughout the pages of *Koranta*, there was a notable reliance on nuance and representations of diversity within populations to combat the simplistic racial binaries deployed by Colonial governmental organs. This can largely be attributed to the colonial environment under which *Koranta* existed.

Koranta, printed in Mafikeng, had a composition that mirrored the region in which it resided and the personality of the print staff. By the South African War, Mafikeng was an established railroad hub and important administrative town for the Northern Cape (formally British Bechuanaland) and the Bechuanaland Protectorate. The town itself stood almost directly

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ *Koranta ea Bechoana* September 13, 1902.

at the crossroads between these two colonies and the Transvaal, which made it a strategic asset during the war and a realm of cultural fluidity otherwise. The importance of Mafikeng as a hub for British administration afforded an important link between *Koranta* and British entities, a link that produced a worldlier understanding than most areas that far north of Cape Town. The region itself, still dominated by the Tswana people, had an established level of autonomy courtesy of earlier interactions between the British metropole and the peoples of the Tswana ethnic groups. These interactions also involved a missionary presence.⁹⁶

Two major events largely contributed to the relative autonomy of the Bechuanaland areas prior to the twentieth century. The first involved the direct intervention by John Mackenzie on behalf of the Tswana people. The two Dutch majority states under responsible government intended to incorporate many portions of the region north of the Cape (then informally described as Bechuanaland for the Tswana, also known as the Bechuana, that lived in the area). In the late 1860s and 1870s, Mackenzie publicly denounced Dutch encroachments and advocated for the establishment of a British protectorate to safeguard the Tswana from further loss of land and inhumane treatment.⁹⁷ This resulted in the establishment of British Bechuanaland, a Crown Colony between Cape Colony and the Limpopo River, and the Bechuanaland Protectorate between the Limpopo and the Zambesi Rivers. The formal establishment of these two regions within the domain of British southern Africa would have far reaching consequences as later

⁹⁶ The well-known David Livingstone preached to the Tswana prior to his travels further north. More established missionaries such as Robert Moffat and John Mackenzie spent much of their decades-long careers among the Tswana peoples. More information can be found in Paul Maylam, *Rhodes the Tswana, and the British: Colonialism, Collaboration, and Conflict in the Bechuanaland Protectorate, 1885-1899* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1980).

⁹⁷ Paul Maylam, *Rhodes the Tswana, and the British: Colonialism, Collaboration, and Conflict in the Bechuanaland Protectorate, 1885-1899* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1980), 18-19.

attempts at annexation by Cape Colony and the Dutch republics threatened to redefine these areas as little more than large labor pools for newly industrializing enterprises.

One such attempt at annexation and the second major event pertaining to the Bechuanaland colonies prior to the turn of the century, came in 1895. The British South Africa Company (BSA), a British charter company that dominated Cape politics through its control over the diamond mines at Kimberley, sought to annex both British Bechuanaland and the Bechuanaland Protectorate into the domain of Cape Colony to expand the mining labor pool. Through the combined efforts of three major Tswana chiefs (Khama III of the Ngwato, Sebele of the Kwenya, and Bathoen of the Ngwaketse) and John Willoughby of the London Missionary Society, the Bechuanaland Protectorate maintained its status and resisted the hegemony of the BSA in southern Africa.⁹⁸ The emissary mission these men undertook to Britain garnered popular British support required to alter the Parliamentary decision to allow annexation to Cape Colony. These chiefs represented an agenda that utilized Christian language such as sobriety and humanity to oppose the BSA's attempts to annex the region. The BSA sold liquor to Africans and practiced coerced labor to get cheap labor for the diamond mines at Kimberley. The success of the chiefs' mission and the ability of Mackenzie to gain British support a decade earlier, proved to have an influential legacy among the Tswana. The importance of missionaries and Christian language to gain this support is very important to the perspectives held by Tswana-related presses such as *Koranta ea Batho*.

These efforts also exposed the manipulative and inhumane treatment of Africans at the hands of the BSA and mining capitalists. One such aspect this mission exposed was the introduction and continued sale of liquor in Bechuanaland. Using liquor as a platform to expose

⁹⁸ Parsons, xiv.

the manipulations of Colonials by the 1895 mission formed an important memory from which *Koranta* drew when discussing equality through liquor in 1902.⁹⁹ The legacy of sobriety as a useful tool to gain British support was not lost on the editors of *Koranta*. Thus, the similarities in usage between the chiefs in 1895 and *Koranta* in 1902 are directly linked. These expressions of agency through continued loyalty to Empire and exposing the inhumane nature of various Colonial entities contributed both to the physical autonomy of portions of Bechuanaland, now Botswana, and to the rhetorical use of this autonomy by *Koranta* above. *Koranta*'s statements about African autonomy in relation to liquor broke down the colonial utilization of tropes associating Africans with a propensity toward vice while simultaneously criticizing the hypocrisy of a colonial government which flaunted Christian values with one hand and utilized liquor, both physically and rhetorically, to maintain racial hierarchies.

Within the historical context of the region in which *Koranta*, and its audience, resided, the commentaries, such as “if he [the African] were the white man’s equal, why take from him the privilege of drinking himself to death, if he felt so disposed,” are better understood as representations of autonomy and the right of equality in all matters.¹⁰⁰ To further exemplify *Koranta*'s dedication to autonomy through loyalty to Empire, *Koranta* stated, “We do not hanker after social equality with the white man...we advise every black man to avoid social contact with the whites.” *Koranta* presented the logic behind racial segregation as a fear of “total obliteration of our race and colour, both of which are very dear to us.”¹⁰¹ The anxieties of dilution through ethnic mixing may often be more attributable to Colonial entities, but the relative autonomy, real

⁹⁹ Ian Marsh, “The Bechuanaland Protectorate and British Colonialism,” in *Redefining the African Diaspora: Expressive Cultures and Politics from Slavery to Independence*, eds. Toyin Falola and Danielle Porter Sanchez (Amherst, New York: Cambria Press, 2016), 58.

¹⁰⁰ *Koranta ea Becoana* November 29, 1902.

¹⁰¹ *Koranta ea Becoana* September 13, 1902.

or ideological, of the region produced an understanding as to why *Koranta* would be interested in such an arrangement. This also added credibility in the eyes of the British to *Koranta*'s statement that "it cannot be said that we demand too much" when asking for political equality, not social mixture.¹⁰² This is an example of how *Koranta* engaged in "sly civility" with the intention of gaining political equality through acceptance of European anxieties over social mixture.

Liquor provided more than just a platform from which to criticize colonial systems of control or project equality, it also served as an argument for African sovereignty through the maintenance of tradition. Southern Africa, like many places around the globe, has its own range of indigenous alcoholic beverages. The particular beverage utilized by some African presses to project independence and identity through tradition was a type of beer made from sorghum or maize. Within the criticisms against European attempts to manipulate African populations with liquor, African newspapers projected their own identity through this beer. This created a juxtaposition where European goods were considered harmful and destructive while indigenous African goods were seen as beneficial and communal. *Izwi Labantu* stated, "Total prohibition we all want, but not at the price of the constitutional liberties of the native people...we would like to say something here about Kaffir beer but will refrain."¹⁰³ *Izwi* equated the banning of an indigenous alcoholic beverage to an infringement upon personal liberties. *Izwi* turned the argument around to make the point about cultural liberties, when it stated, "Fancy depriving an Englishmen of their beer."¹⁰⁴ Similar to *Koranta*'s representation of citizenship through alcohol consumption, *Izwi* presented the rights to indigenous beer, be one English or African, as indicative of civil equality.

¹⁰² *Koranta ea Bechoana* September 13, 1902.

¹⁰³ *Izwi Labantu* November 18, 1902.

¹⁰⁴ *Izwi Labantu* September 23, 1902.

African presses internalized personal liberty and projected it through these rights to cultural objects, like beer, and the rights of Africans to choose between indigenous African beer and European brandy. Thus, liquor reform provided African presses with a platform to criticize the manipulations of colonial structures and articulate equality. This was accomplished from different perspectives due to the differences in colonial backgrounds, but within a Christian worldview. Sobriety was integral to evangelical Christianity, but beer was also very important to British identity. These themes of criticizing colonial manipulation and projecting equality are further developed in other realms such as churches.

Evangelicalism, Equality, and African Independent Churches

Another arena in which Africans projected equality through varied means was that of African Independent Churches. African Independent Churches, called Ethiopian Churches by contemporary Africans, were church organizations that separated from missionary-run establishments. These churches developed in reaction to several actions taken within missionary hierarchies that were seen as irreconcilable with the teachings of the Bible. African Independent Churches first began in the 1880s with Nehemiah Tile and Isaiah Shembe, but the late 1890s and early 1900s saw a boom in their development as more and more African congregations realized the inequity between non-racial teaching and racialized practice within missionary churches.

Colonial governments often did not view African Independent Churches as positive entities. Within official governmental documents and white newspapers, Colonials presented these churches as overtly political, corrupting the minds of African congregations with the intention of promoting rebellion. Although some churches may have adopted an anti-colonial

language, the political statements made by African Independent Churches were much more nuanced. Historians of these churches have at various times attempted to present African Independent Churches as apolitical or politically inclined depending on their understandings of the congregations.¹⁰⁵ Within the pages of African newspapers similar discussions of the political nature of church organizations took place in real time. The analysis of African Independent Churches sheds further light on the various ways in which African newspapers viewed their identities.

Within Cape Colony, African Independent Churches were often scrutinized for their quickness to remove themselves from white missionary patronage. *Imvo* in Capetown was particularly critical, often describing those who would leave missionary churches to establish African Independent Churches as “Native enthusiasts who think that the time has now arrived to set up autonomy without the help of white missionaries.”¹⁰⁶ This is not to say that *Imvo* rejected the usefulness or existence of such churches within southern Africa. Instead, *Imvo* questioned the readiness of Africans to separate themselves from the white Church and other organizations. *Imvo* believed that such attempts would provoke “much mischief” and could quickly devolve into a “movement to assert the supremacy of the Blacks over the Whites,” which could then escalate into another war based on “supremacy” of one ethnic group over another. *Imvo* held to the view that contact with and guidance from white men, through Holy Writ, was “the right

¹⁰⁵ Bengt Sundkler, *Bantu Prophets in South Africa* Second ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970). examines largely Zulu Independent Churches. His intention, having spent much of his early adulthood among said congregations, was to counter the belief that these churches were simply political statements with no religious value for Africans. Another work, Mutero J Cherinje, *Ethiopianism and Afro-Americans in Southern Africa, 1883-1916* Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1987, discusses the inextricably political maneuver of an African congregation removing itself from a white-dominated mission organization. Although Charinje is quick to point out that few church leaders made explicit anti-colonial statements, the sheer act of independent missioning contradicted colonial understandings of white domination with Christian missions as a facet.

¹⁰⁶ *Imvo Zabantsundu* November 1, 1902.

policy for the sons of Africa.”¹⁰⁷ This skepticism of African independent organizations and a reliance on white administration defined much of *Imvo*’s world view throughout the early twentieth century.

Other newspapers, such as *Ilanga lase Natal*, approached the separation of church structures along racial lines from a different perspective. Through this perspective, *Ilanga* projected a differing understanding of Africans’ identity in the new century. *Ilanga*, printed in Natal, had a drastically different colonial experience than those papers in Cape Colony. Natal developed out of agitation for political representation by British settlers and their offspring after the 1820s influx of British agriculturalists. These groups, similar to the Dutch states that developed out of the desire for autonomy by Dutch farmers in the 1830s and 1840s, believed in a strong sense of white racial superiority. Such beliefs translated into the overall way Natal was governed in the mid-to late-nineteenth century. Racialized labor and segregation policies took strong root in Natal to the extent that, by the early twentieth century, some policies were even more harsh toward Africans than their counterparts in the Dutch states.¹⁰⁸ *Imvo* noted some of the rhetorical underpinnings of these policies when quoting a self-styled “British pioneer” and offspring of the British settlers from 1820: “Show the Natives that they are not our equals, and that they must be made to obey!”¹⁰⁹ Countless other articles within *Ilanga* and other African newspapers discussed the inequity between the treatment of various groups based on color. Much like the Dutch states, these views of difference based on color were born from the need for labor

¹⁰⁷ *Imvo Zabantsundu* May 20, 1901.

¹⁰⁸ Although not revolutionary in the minds of members of the African intelligentsia, in an article from November 29, 1902 *Koranta ea Becoana* equated the Dutch racial slur for educated Africans “die kaffer is geleerd” with the British “cheeky nigger” when countering the view that only Dutch Colonials were discriminatory toward Africans socially and politically. Many contemporary Europeans in South Africa, especially the British administration, believed British Colonials to be more sympathetic and equal in their dealings with Africans.

¹⁰⁹ *Imvo Zabantsundu* January 14, 1901.

in largely agricultural capacities. The rhetoric utilized to perpetuate racial difference for economic purposes became much more standard throughout all of southern Africa after Unification in 1910.

Within Natal, a region heavily divided by skin color, *Ilanga* had to contend with structures of oppression that their contemporaries in Cape Colony did not. *Ilanga* and those Africans residing in Natal viewed the British governing body in similar fashion to those of the Dutch, all of which culminated in a more critical view of white governance than most of their contemporary newspapers. These criticisms even often hinged upon the undervaluing of Africans within colonial societies. As a result, *Ilanga* often took a more favorable view toward independent African organizations, particularly churches and educational structures.

To continue the comparison between how various African newspapers viewed African Independent Churches, the pages of *Ilanga* contained no shortage of commentaries. Within an article published July 17, 1903, *Ilanga* analyzed the upswell of “Ethiopian Churches.”¹¹⁰ Through these lengthy comments, *Ilanga* discussed the inevitability of African Independent Churches as well as some of their drawbacks. Taken as a whole, this commentary sheds light on the lenses through which *Ilanga* and its staff viewed and presented the state of southern Africa in the post-war period.

Ilanga’s lengthy article on African Independent Churches began with a criticism of Christianity, especially missionaries, in southern Africa. The article highlights the racialized nature of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century missionary enterprise through the “fear missionaries are doing all they can to keep the natives from independent efforts in mission

¹¹⁰ Ethiopian was the name often given to these churches by contemporaries. Africans viewed these independent churches as the inevitable and determined outcome of Christian missioning. Psalm 68:31: “Ethiopia shall soon stretch forth its hands unto God,” formed the Biblical basis for the naming. Consequently, the term “Ethiopia” from the Bible refers to Africa as a whole, which was based in Roman Latin references.

work.”¹¹¹ This difference of understanding between white missionaries and African congregation was building since the late nineteenth-century.

The training of Africans in church posts and education systems that would prepare an even broader African intelligentsia had, by the late nineteenth century, produced a body of individuals who interpreted the teachings of equality in the Bible to mean legitimate equality. Missionaries, having been born and educated under a different set of understandings, believed there to be an inherent racial bar, one that was intentionally or otherwise veiled in humanitarian efforts.¹¹² Missionary-educated Africans identified this ideological schism and actively criticized missionaries for their hypocrisy.

Ilanga discussed these schisms, in relation to African Independent Churches, as often being too hasty but also as an inevitable reaction. *Ilanga*’s criticism of African Independent Churches for being too quick to leave without developing a primary objective is tempered through further criticism of a government that produced “vacillating, blundering policies” and of anti-black sentiments in state presses.¹¹³ In reaction, these Independent African Churches took on an overtly political nature. *Ilanga* described these Churches from a place of hope in that they are a “manifestation” of “the desire to be someone, to do something...to enjoy the sense of proprietorship in homestead, business, school, and church.”¹¹⁴ *Ilanga* believed this to be a logical next step on the road to equality and effective autonomy, one that was being stymied by overtones of racial supremacy and white colonial hegemony. The final suggestions put forth by *Ilanga* discussed the necessity of the country and church organizations to be supervised by bodies sympathetic to all and based largely in the teachings from the Sermon on the Mount, an

¹¹¹ *Ilanga lase Natal* July 17, 1903.

¹¹² Isichei, 100.

¹¹³ *Ilanga lase Natal* July 17, 1903.

¹¹⁴ *Ilanga lase Natal* July 17, 1903.

expectation *Ilanga* believed that neither white nor black in southern Africa was ready to undertake independently of the other.

The belief in mutual need between white and black to bring about good governance and the Kingdom of God formed the backbone of *Ilanga*'s ideological framework. This was different than *Imvo*'s reliance on European humanity to guide Africans, which established a much more static relational hierarchy. Instead, *Ilanga* posited the primacy of Africa in world affairs. *Ilanga* references Biblical actors and Christian events to support the importance of Africans. An article from April 1, 1904 discussed Africa as the haven for the sons of Jacob and the Savior, as the last bastion of Christianity "when knowledge and religion were well-nigh obliterated," and heralds Simon of Cyrene for his assistance of the "Redeemer to bear His Cross in order to accomplish the redemption of mankind," all with the intention of promoting African importance. *Ilanga* utilized Christian Biblical references in order to posit the need for African pride as well as the right, through services rendered, to "the enjoyment of freedom, long withheld and willfully, and cruelly denied."¹¹⁵ A fuller picture of *Ilanga*'s understanding of equality in southern Africa can be seen through these representations of African importance and the freedoms denied them by European colonial systems. This then informed a broader belief in African-run institutions that work in tandem with those of the European.¹¹⁶ Other African papers articulated similar beliefs but in varied ways and with different outcomes.

As discussed in brief earlier, *Imvo* felt very strongly about the necessary connection between Africans and Europeans, often with an internalized understanding of European as guide

¹¹⁵ *Ilanga lase Natal* April 1, 1904.

¹¹⁶ *Ilanga*'s main editor, John Dube, himself the son of a missionary preacher and superintendent of Inanda Missionary School, started a school for Africans at Ohlange in 1901. The official title of the school was the Zulu Christian Industrial School which portrays Dube's dedication to Zulu, and African, pride and Christian education through African means.

and African as follower. *Imvo*'s understanding of this connection in the early twentieth century largely mirrored that of its main benefactor and ideological leader John Tengo Jabavu. Jabavu had a close relationship with both British and Dutch groups at the Cape, due largely to his public role at the Cape, which was much more integrated than the other colonies of southern Africa.

When viewed in connection with each other, these four African newspapers exemplify the complex nature of southern African colonialism on the eve of Unification. Their articulations of identity and the future they envisioned are varied and sometimes contradictory. They all had some important ideological undercurrents of relatability not least of which was Christian evangelical rhetoric. All of these papers would be challenged in new ways after the hope for British protection faded with Unification in 1910. The Unification Act of 1910 struck a heavy blow against missionary-educated Africans that desired stronger links between the colony and the metropole. Instead, the Unification Act granted responsible government to South Africa. This allowed the Union government, which was completely made up of white males, the ability to determine the affairs of all people within the unified South Africa.¹¹⁷ British officials in southern Africa were unable to unify in the same way that representatives of the old Dutch republics were able to. This resulted in a Dutch-dominated parliament.

The power of this group, now better referred to under the term Afrikaner which incorporated a sense of settler nationalism, to manipulate the structure of the Union government during its formation from 1907-1910 contributed to their domination of South African politics until the fall of apartheid in 1992.¹¹⁸ Afrikaners, with fewer and fewer oversights from Britain, would utilize their governmental control to consolidate Africans into an oppressed labor force to

¹¹⁷ L.M. Thompson, 482.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 306-307.

a degree beyond even that of the nineteenth century. This consolidation will further be discussed in the next chapter.

African newspapers lamented the thought of an Afrikaner-led governmental system. *Izwi Labantu* called the Union Act both a great betrayal and “the South African Conspiracy Act” as it applied to the franchise rights of Africans. *Izwi* continued these accusations of the Union government and Britain, “They assume the powers of God Almighty and decree the destiny of the Universe.”¹¹⁹ *Izwi* concluded that the Union Act swept away the efforts of the nineteenth century to bring Africans into the European system. This scathing article blamed British complacency for allowing the Union Act to pass through parliament. Other similar representations existed within African newspapers throughout South Africa. The hope of a renewed connection with Britain faded very rapidly after this perceived abandonment. The next chapter will discuss the various attempts by missionary-educated Africans to deal with these facts through a worldview still laden with British ideologies of liberalism.

¹¹⁹ *Izwi Labantu* February 23, 1909.

Conclusion

The preceding presentation demonstrates that although the African newspapers had divergent views on southern African social and political relationships, they had stronger connections than originally realized by scholars. Despite the differences in colonial background, these papers were incredibly aware of the conversations being had within each other's columns. This relatability is further articulated through common themes of understanding, many of which were imparted through Christian evangelical means. Such a mature press culture with commonalities in language and understanding mirrors Benedict Anderson's articulations of an imagined community through press.¹²⁰ These arenas of exchange and discussion provided the basis of understanding although not always acceptance. This began to change as Union forced a reevaluation of identity based more on race than regional colonial experience. Common ground between African groups became increasingly important as further consolidation on the part of white political systems continued to restrict African rights and agency in the 1910s and 1920s.

The differences here discussed may seem to be many: *Imvo*'s reliance on white "friends" at the Cape seemed irreconcilable with *Izwi*'s belief in Africans helping themselves, while *Koranta*'s understanding of autonomy through segregation would become less and less tenable as white political dominance continued to consolidate Africans as a whole into a large labor pool to supply the new industrial state. However, there are more commonalities and uses here than initially seen.

Even though these differences did not disappear upon Unification, they did contribute to a broader understanding of identity as African relations became more homogenous in the post-

¹²⁰ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983), 141.

Union era. A common understanding of plight under white domination contributed to a melding of *Imvo*'s reliance on white "friends", *Izwi*'s expressions of Africans' need to raise themselves, *Koranta*'s understandings of diversity and autonomy, and *Ilanga*'s championing of the primacy of Africans and education, all of which were partially informed and presented through the lens of Christian evangelical rhetoric. Such tenets would become increasingly important pillars in the aftermath of Unification as Africans faced even greater forms of white political and social domination.

CHAPTER 3: CHRISTIAN RHETORIC BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER WORLD WAR 1

In post-Union South Africa, the hopes of Joseph Chamberlain in 1902 of a unified white-ruled government became a reality, although not in the way that he and Alfred Milner had hoped. The first Parliamentary elections in 1910 proved that the hope for an even split, or possible British majority, between British and Afrikaners had not come to fruition. The attempts by British administrative organs in southern Africa to propagate an influx of British immigrants between 1902-1907 yielded very little in the way of British influence.¹²¹ This inability to install British settlers loyal to the agenda of Chamberlain and Milner, coupled with the ability of Afrikaners to maintain much of their autonomy and status in the post-war reconstruction period, resulted in an Afrikaner-dominated Parliament and cabinet, the aftermath of which spelled increased oppression for all non-white populations.

L.M. Thompson, a British liberal historian writing in the 1970s, believed this was the result of the errant decision to install a political schema that resembled Britain's instead of utilizing a model where provinces had more political autonomy, resulting in the ability of Afrikaners to divest control from British Cape Progressives, who were more sympathetic to the plight of non-whites in South Africa.¹²² Thompson attempted to remove blame from British Colonials in his historical writings, but these attempts are frustrated by the representations within African newspapers during reconstruction and the actions of British Colonials in the aftermath of Union. The collective actions of white political leaders, mining capitalists, and agriculturalists proved that the true intentions of Unified South Africa were to reduce Africans and other non-

¹²¹ Aran Mackinnon, *The Making of South Africa: Culture and Politics* (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall Press, 2004), 173.

¹²² L.M. Thompson, *The Unification of South Africa, 1902-1910* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960), 483.

whites to a state of servitude in the burgeoning industrial economy. The obviousness of this plan during reconstruction and Unification truly disillusioned the African intelligentsia. This was the betrayal *Izwi Labantu* lamented in 1910.¹²³

This disillusionment did not translate into idleness or capitulation. Instead, the African intelligentsia espoused an internal, African solidarity to represent themselves through whatever limited means were available. African newspapers became integral to this goal. The editors and correspondents saw themselves as the last line of defense against total marginalization, as the only true representatives of the realities of inhumanity, then only in its infancy, within a unified South Africa.¹²⁴ This is not to say that there was actual total solidarity between African populations, just as the solidarity between whites was also not total. There was; however, a strong rhetorical and ideological current that attempted to bring about solidarity among African and other non-white populations. Christian language, albeit in new and contested forms, formed an important facet of this solidarity and the presentations of identity that developed thereof. This chapter addresses the utilization and evolution of this language in relation to the Natives' Land Act of 1913, World War I, and the ultimate reevaluation of resistance in the post-war period as a new group of educated Africans contested the legitimacy of missionary-educated Africans to represent the interests of South African blacks.

¹²³ *Izwi Labantu*, February 23, 1909.

¹²⁴ The assumption of this mantle of true mediator in relation to inhumane and unequal treatment within South Africa by African newspapers displays the fluidity of exchange between South African newspapers and those of the rest of the world. These African papers maintained strong global networks that provided an interchange of ideas able to support the belief that these papers could truly represent the plight of non-whites to a global audience. Even though the responses from global supporters appeared not to garner real results in the way of more equal treatment of non-white populations by the South African government at that time.

The Natives' Land Act and African Resistance

In the immediate aftermath of Unification, the all-white Parliament endeavored to further consolidate South Africa into a more standardized socio-political schema. In a number of areas this process was frustrated by the continued conflicts within Afrikaner conglomerates and also between British and Afrikaner ideologies, as evidenced by the strained relationship between Louis Botha and Jan Smuts, who led the first governmental cabinet and supported a reconciliation with British Imperialism, and James Hertzog, who represented a more extremist, isolationist ideology that would form the basis of Afrikaner nationalism in the years to come.¹²⁵ One area in which the key members of Government and Parliament were in agreement was that of relations with African populations. This is best exemplified in the creation and passing of the Natives' Land Act in 1913, which would have dire consequences for African populations until its final repeal in 1991.

The Natives' Land Act of 1913 was not the first racialized, or even segregationist, policy developed in South Africa. It was one of the most far-reaching and defined the base upon which formal apartheid would be built.¹²⁶ The actual intended outcome and purpose of the act is somewhat a matter of contention within the historiography. Aran MacKinnon examines the Natives' Land Act within the context of South Africa's agricultural and mining industrialization and consolidation of Africans as a labor source.¹²⁷ Harvey Feinberg and Peter Walshe view the act more as a political maneuver, in that the Botha government conceded to Hertzog's demands in regard to land segregation with the hope of maintaining political unity between Afrikaner

¹²⁵ Harvey Feinberg, "The 1913 Natives Land Act in South Africa: Politics, Race, and Segregation in the Early 20th Century," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 26, no. 1 (1993), 70-71.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ MacKinnon, 194.

constituencies, an attempt that would eventually fail after the outbreak of World War I.¹²⁸ In reality, the reasoning behind the Natives' Land Act was most likely a combination of these various perspectives. Immediately after Unification the new governmental structure was attempting to consolidate and unify the country to best serve a white minority. Thus, the delineation of African "locations" from which labor could be extracted and the maintenance of unity within Afrikaner political organizations are both indicative of attempted white domination in the new South Africa.

For Africans, the Land Act meant massive dislocation and forced relocation into small, poorly resourced areas regardless of the specific intentions behind the act from the white governmental perspective. Several historians, Walshe being at the vanguard, have discussed the impact of the Natives' Land Act on African and other non-white populations. The majority of historians acknowledge the detrimental nature of the act, Walshe even discusses it within the context of African solidarity and roots of nationalism.¹²⁹ The majority of these analyses take the Natives' Land Act from a policy perspective which often truncates the conversation within African communities in regard to the act. African newspapers discussed the act in various ways. There was a common theme for the most part, that tended toward the creation of a unified opposition. A deeper analysis of the actual language utilized exposes the difficulties of this unification. Further understanding of these difficulties provides a fuller picture of post-Unification resistance to racial policies, which assists in a broader examination of the contradictions that eventually led to a loss of faith in the abilities of missionary-educated Africans to represent the African majority.

¹²⁸ Feinberg, 108-109.

⁹ Peter Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa: The African National Congress, 1912-1952* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 44.

¹²⁹ Walshe, 44.

Although many missionary-educated Africans viewed and described Unification as a betrayal by the British, the Natives' Land Act provided the impetus to attempt a resurrection of the relationship between Africans and Britain. Attempts at reforging the relationship between Africans and Britain took place on very different terms than in the aftermath of the South African War. Africans increasingly relied on intra-African relations to oppose the Union government, as is best exemplified in the creation of the South African Native National Congress (Congress) in 1912 and the African-dominated mission to Britain to protest the Natives' Land Act in 1913. These two events were inextricably linked. The government's first action was the consolidation of African movements and early discussions in 1911 about further land segregation formed the flashpoint from which members of the African intelligentsia increasingly recognized the need of an African organization to represent the African population.¹³⁰ Pixley Seme, a lawyer and founding member of Congress, delivered a speech in which he called for "co-operation...which leads into progress and all national success."¹³¹ Within this speech, which was widely published throughout the Union by African and Indian newspapers alike, Seme identified both the origination of this desire for progress and its major obstacle.

Seme ascribed the collective movement toward unity and co-operation to Christianity which "teaches men everywhere that in this world they have a common duty to perform both towards God and towards one another."¹³² Conversely, Seme attributed the continuation of difficulty for Africans to "the demon of racialism." He stated "We are one people. These

¹³⁰ Congress was not the first non-white political organization formed to represent the agenda of the non-white majority. The African Peoples' Organization, formed by Dr. Abdullah Abdurahman and W. Collins in 1902, intended to represent the Coloured population of South Africa, and Muhatma Gandhi formed the Natal Indian Congress in 1894. These are only a few of the organizations formed in response to the lack of representation from white political organs. Congress; however, was dominated by Africans and developed during a period of intense reformation with far-reaching consequences.

¹³¹ Pixley Ka Seme, "Native Union," October 24 1911, Articles, South African History Online, accessed June 23, 2017, <http://www.sahistory.org.za/archive/native-union-article-pixley-ka-isaka-seme-october-24-1911>.

¹³² Ibid.

divisions, these jealousies, are the cause of all our woes and of all our awkwardness and ignorance today.”¹³³ Seme identified many of these divisions between ethnic groups directly: the Xhosa-Fingo feud, disputes between Zulus and Tongas, etc., with the intention of rendering visible the divisive nature of said divisions and to show that they are only a hindrance to Africans themselves. For Seme, the only way to combat the oppression of the Union Government was to unite as “the children of one household” under the auspices of a single African organization: the South African Native National Congress. The relationship between Christianity as the basis for unity, the need to unify against an increasingly oppressive government, and the acknowledgement of continued dissent within African communities was further developed by African newspapers in relation to the Natives Land Act of 1913.

Shortly after Congress came into being on January 8, 1912 its members, and the entirety of the African population of South Africa, were challenged by a new racial policy from the Union Government. The Natives’ Land Act came under consideration during the governmental session of 1912. This was not the first land segregation policy proposed along color lines. Its timing and far-reaching nature made it one of the most detrimental pieces of legislation for African populations. The Land Act, officially enacted in 1913, came after the Union Government had passed laws restricting African movement and streamlining procedures for controlling African employment.¹³⁴ Thus, the Land Act had obvious intentions to restrict Africans within zones from which they could be drawn from to work in the mines of the Eastern Cape or on white run farms throughout the country.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Mackinnon, 191.

The Natives Land Act of 1913 differed from previous land segregation acts in South Africa in a few key ways. As stated previously, land segregation did not begin in 1913, it had a long legacy reaching back to the early Dutch colony of the seventeenth century. The Union Government even claimed to have gotten the direct inspiration for the Land Act from the British South African Native Affairs Commission of 1903-5. In fact, the report from that commission discussed the need for segregation between white and non-white populations to avoid further conflict like that which contributed to the South African War of 1899-1902: “the time has arrived when the lands dedicated and set apart should be defined, delimited and reserved for the Natives by legislative enactment.”¹³⁵ As discussed in the previous chapter, even African newspapers espoused the benefits of segregation prior to Unification; a theme that would not leave their rhetoric after the enactment of the Land Act. The major differences between previous land segregation acts and the main points of contention within the African community stemmed from the incredible inequality of separation and the racialized control structures sanctioned by the Land Act of 1913.

The obviousness of the racial hierarchy at the root of the Land Act caused, in many cases, a further realization of unity within African and other non-white populations. This often resulted in a more cohesive rhetoric of solidarity. Dissent still existed in specific cases, and the ultimate decision to curtail the protest mission to England at the outbreak of World War I would become the lynchpin of ideological separation within the African leadership in the post-war period.

One-sided segregation and the manipulative nature of the structures that governed the areas designated for indigenous Africans revolved around three clauses within the Land Act. Clause 1 segregated South Africa into European and African territories. Within this clause,

¹³⁵ Cd. 2399 (1905), *Report of the South Africa Native Affairs Commission, 1903-1905*.

Africans were not allowed to purchase or hold land outside of the areas demarcated to them, nor were Europeans allowed to purchase land within the African areas “except with the approval of the Governor-General.”¹³⁶ This also meant that those Africans who did hold land or worked upon land outside of the designated African areas would be removed from those lands upon the enactment of the Land Act or the termination of their employment. Clause 4 allowed for full access by the appointed committee for scheduling these areas. This clause afforded a default to a manipulative Proclamation from 1902 in the Transvaal in the event of a disagreement with the owner of private land, which restricted the ability of Africans to seek legal recourse. Clause 5, specifically section 2, determined that every member of a “company, corporation, or other body of persons (not being a firm or partnership)” found in violation of the first clause shall be liable for prosecution. Since Africans were debarred from forming what the Union government termed firms or partnerships, the collective holdings of lands by Africans were considered illegal. This process of communal holding had been deployed by Africans between 1902 and 1913.¹³⁷

The overall result hemmed the majority African population, which in 1910 totaled four million into 7% of the overall land within the Union of South Africa. Whites then dominated the remaining 93%, with complete control over who worked within the bounds of that land, since employment could be terminated at any time and then the residing African ex-employee would be considered squatting on a European held farm.¹³⁸ The ease of control of these African areas further served to coerce the African population into acting solely as a labor force from which agriculture and industry could pull. Thus, at once, the Land Act of 1913 corralled the African majority into a despairingly small portion of their own land, removed the possibility of African

¹³⁶ Natives Land Act 1913.

¹³⁷ Mackinnon, 194.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

land organization and agricultural entrepreneurship, tipped employment contract to completely favor European employers, and provided for a system of governance within the African areas that could be manipulated by the white government. These issues, combined with how quickly the Act passed through the Union government with very little attempt at informing the entire South African population let alone allow the African population to dispute the Act, greatly alarmed African leaders.

This alarm translated into widespread protest throughout African newspapers and other public bodies. The first major resolution of the South African Native National Congress was to send an African delegation to England to bring their grievances in regard to the Act before Parliament and the British public. Virtually all African leaders supported the delegation even though, as Walshe states, they did not fully agree on its ultimate goals.¹³⁹ The divergent views can be somewhat boiled down to differences of colonial experience within the delegation members. Those that were chosen to address Parliament were John Dube from Natal, Dr. Walter Rubusana from Cape of Good Hope, Solomon Plaatje from what was the Bechuanaland Crown Colony, Saul Msane from Natal, and T.M. Mapikela from the Orange Free State. Thus, the Cape delegates, due to their more continuous relations with Europeans and the fact that the Land Act did not impact the Cape, had a more moderate view of how to address Britain, while the delegates from Natal or the Free State, areas where the Act was particularly devastating, felt much stronger about more active intervention by British officials. Walshe describes this lack of overall unity of opinion as crippling the delegation, which resulted in its ultimate failure.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ Walshe, 48.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 52.

In reality, it was more likely that the position of the British government and the outbreak of World War I determined the outcome of the delegation regardless of unity of opinion. This is not to say that disunity did not exist, nor that it did not continue to plague African resistance for years to come. Rather, the recognition within African communities of this disunity and the necessity to overcome it, as Seme discussed in his speech in favor of the South African Native National Congress, contributed to continued attempts at agitation and alliance as the twentieth century careened toward further calamity: World War I.

Prior to World War I, African presses adamantly protested against the Natives Land Act. In *Tsala ea Batho*, Solomon Plaatje's newspaper, an article regarding the Land Act by Saul Msane both condemns the Act while also criticizing Britain's lack of intervention. Msane describes the Act as "a most fatal weapon which the Government could use against the Natives in striking a blow at their improvement and progress in civilisation." Msane goes on to ask "will England support such a policy, which belies all her former pledges to the Natives? Will England permit the name of Her Late Majesty Queen Victoria the Good, of blessed memory to be smudged..."¹⁴¹ In the same issue of *Batho*, another article by A.K. Soga espouses the need for a policy of "outspokenness and agitation" among Africans against the Land Act which he considers part of the Union government's "war of extermination." Soga praises *Batho* and other African presses for presenting the wrongs of the Union government to "the Christian civilised world."¹⁴² Soga would become very critical of the decision to cease agitation once World War I broke out.

¹⁴¹ *Tsala ea Batho*, October 18, 1913.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

Other newspapers placed the inhumanity of the Land Act within Christian religious terms. An article in John Dube's *Ilanga lase Natal*, entitled "The Bantu and Religion," warned that the Land Act and others of the recent era were "utterly conflicting with the concepts taught by the Missionaries" which caused many Africans to begin "questioning the advisability of throwing over the whole thing."¹⁴³ The article does not state the ultimate result but does believe further action by the Union government in limiting Africans will have detrimental results for all. In another article, *Ilanga* further places the Land Act within a foreboding religious context. The article asks "is there a conviction that God will hold the impious responsible for the evil that comes of them?"¹⁴⁴ *Ilanga* believes it in the best interest of "our Native land" to comment upon such issues and hold those in power responsible for their lack of religious conviction.

These articles show the great task taken up by African presses to present the activities of the Union government to both the rest of the world and to the African population of South Africa. These papers undertake such a task as somewhat of a Divine mission. Such articulations are important on a number of levels. The belief that African papers not only had the ability to properly represent the atrocities of the Union government but the Christian obligation exposes the belief in an ordained authority to resist the Union government's oppressive policies. These articles also articulate a belief in a broader Christian community within South Africa and the world, one that could be tapped into via the utilization of Christian rhetoric. Such beliefs shed light on the ways African presses viewed themselves in relation to the world and the language through which they unified.

¹⁴³ *Ilanga lase Natal*, August 1, 1913.

¹⁴⁴ *Ilanga lase Natal*, October 10, 1913.

Although most African presses and African leaders in South Africa condemned the Natives Land Act, one paper and leader stood in support. *Imvo Zabantsundu*'s long time editor and influential African leader, J.T. Jabavu initially supported the Land Act. This can, in part, be seen due to his position within the Cape of Good Hope, a region of South Africa exempted from the provisions of the Act as per clause 8 subsection 2.¹⁴⁵ In other ways, Jabavu's support of the Land Act had to do with his paper's need for new sources of funding. This representation is very similar to that of some historians who believe Jabavu's relationship with J.W. Sauer, the architect of the Land Act, as being the source of his support. These historians contend that this relationship ultimately ended Jabavu's credibility as an effective mouthpiece of African resistance.¹⁴⁶ Although the Land Act drew a great deal of attention from African presses for many years after its enactment, the global turmoil instigated by World War I occupied most of the pages of these presses from 1914-1920.

Questions of Loyalty and Humanity in World War I

World War I forced many groups in South Africa to make hard decisions about which side to take, none of which were clearly demarcated as beneficial. The newly formed Union government under Botha and Smuts spent the majority of their formative years attempting to reconcile with both the British metropole and the British populations of South Africa. The goal of unity between the white races of South Africa defined their early policy.¹⁴⁷ Thus, the Union government officially sided with Britain against Germany and its allies upon the outbreak of war

¹⁴⁵ Natives Land Act 1913.

¹⁴⁶ Feinberg, 83.

¹⁴⁷ MacKinnon, 185.

in 1914. A loud minority within the Afrikaner population, led by Hertzog, disputed this loyalty, positing a South Africa first policy of action.

This gap between reconciliationists and South African nationalists could further be seen in the Maritz Rebellion which took place in the early portion of World War I. Although the Botha government quelled the rebellion, successfully aligning South Africa with Britain against Germany, South Africa engaged in two campaigns against German colonies in Southern Africa and also sent troops to fight in Europe, the issues that formed the impetus for rebellion became even more acute. The party split in 1914 between Botha supporters and those of Hertzog would eventually lead to a change in government at war's end. This change placed Hertzog and Afrikaner nationalism in power, which spelt further hardship for the African population. Within this turmoil, African leaders continued to project resistance against oppression, often rhetorically referring to the issues that plagued the Union government as counterpoints to their own views' authority. This often, as many African leaders were still loyal to Britain and British ideology, translated into expressions of hope that war's end would bring about better conditions for Africans in South Africa. As the war continued and certainly after its conclusion, these hopes and the loyalist identity that enveloped it became less and less tenable. This process ultimately resulted in a reformation of African leadership and the identity which it chose to express.

By the outbreak of World War I in June of 1914, many throughout Europe and the rest of the world knew a large scale conflict was inevitable. Few; however, could have predicted the four and a half years of conflict that claimed some sixteen million lives in total.¹⁴⁸ In South Africa, the well-connected African presses discussed the build-up of the war prior to its outbreak

¹⁴⁸ Philip Jenkins, *The Great and Holy War: How World War I Became a Religious Crusade* (New York: HarperCollins, 2014), 31.

and continued to disseminate information about its goings-on as the war progressed. These presses also commented upon the Maritz Rebellion as it applied to British loyalty versus Afrikaner nationalism, as well as the two campaigns against German colonies in southern Africa that the Union government undertook throughout the conflict.

Some historians have analyzed South Africa's role in World War I, most of which have focused on the military engagements of the South West Africa Campaign, fought from September 1914 to July 1915, and the East African Campaign, fought from August 1914 to November 1918. One scholar, Peter Norrington, in *Springbok's on the Somme* examines the involvement of white South African troops in European battles.¹⁴⁹ Although an important work examining the involvement of South African troops, Norrington neglects the social response from the African homefront of South Africa. Another scholar, in *The Carrier Corps*, examined the involvement of African troops as engineers and transports in the East African Campaign. This work, by Geoffrey Hodges, takes a military perspective in analyzing the utilization of Africans as non-combatants.¹⁵⁰ Hew Strachan examines the racialization of combat to a degree but focuses mostly on battles from a military history perspective.¹⁵¹ Few, if any, works have addressed the social discussions of the war that took place within the African communities. The ways African newspapers represented the causes and outcomes of World War I has not been examined by historians. Thus, a scholarly gap exists that deserves to be filled in order to further understand how South African blacks viewed World War I.

¹⁴⁹ Bill Nasson, *Springbok's on the Somme: South Africa in the Great War, 1914-1918* (Johannesburg: Penguin Books, 2007), 5.

¹⁵⁰ Geoffrey Hodges, *The Carrier Corps: Military Labor in the East African Campaign, 1914-1918* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1986), 4.

¹⁵¹ Hew Strachan, *The First World War in Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 10-11.

When World War I broke out, the African delegation to Britain to protest the Natives Land Act of 1913 had only been in London for a month.¹⁵² In similar fashion to Ireland, a country whose population also agitated against oppression and one that black South African found common cause with, the delegation vowed to “suspend operations, so as to show a united front to the enemy.”¹⁵³ Many African newspapers supported this decision with hope that the end of the war would provide an opportunity to revisit the coercive Land Act and other racial policies of the Union government. This did not mean that African newspapers ceased to discuss the Land Act or the necessity of Britain to remedy the issue.

During World War I, African presses in South Africa discussed the Land Act within the context of a general loss of humanity and need to regain that humanity through its repeal. Couching the Land Act within a general inhumanity of the war contributed to a common rhetorical theme utilized by many African presses throughout World War I. *Ilanga* states the need to end the Land Act and unify “a land that should be, in all such matters at one...we should all try to profit by the awful experience that man’s folly has brought as curse (World War I)...Humanity as God’s work must be honoured, else any form of worship is deceptive and in vain.”¹⁵⁴ By discussing the Land Act and World War I within the context of governmental folly in ignoring the importance of humanity, *Ilanga* evoked a common Christian understanding of twentieth century greed causing these issues. *Ilanga* hoped South Africa, the British Empire, and the world would learn from these mistakes to align global relations with God’s testaments on a shared humanity. *Ilanga* continued this trend of reasoning throughout the war, and when discussing peace and the Land Act states “war and desolation are climaxes that can be avoided

¹⁵² Solomon Plaatje, *Native Life in South Africa* (London: The Echo Library Press, 2007), 128.

¹⁵³ *Ilanga lase Natal*, October 16, 1914.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

by one class of policy...which is based on the best and only authority of our Lord Jesus Christ.”¹⁵⁵

Other African leaders in South Africa utilized the equation of a loss of humanity in a Biblical sense to the cause of World War I. Selope Thema, a prominent member of the South African Native National Congress, condemned Britain’s allowance of the Land Act, which he calls an affront to the Divine law “that all mankind shall be free,” while continuing to flaunt British ideals of liberty. Thema made particular reference to Lord Harcourt, the Secretary of State of the Colonies, and his comments to the South African Native National Congress delegation in 1914 “that the Imperial Government could not interfere with the internal affairs of the Union of South Africa.” Thema believed that England had the only right to protect the interests of Africans since it was England that allowed for the formation of the Union government without the consent of Africans. Like other such articles in African newspapers, Thema “cherish(ed) the hope that the nation which delivered us...from barbarism and heathenism will yet prove itself worthy of that venerable Constitution (the British Constitution).”¹⁵⁶

The African presses of South Africa understood the cause of World War I and the inhumane legislations, namely the Natives Land Act, as being one and the same: the loss of Christian ideals. African leaders still hoped that Britain would realize its mistakes after the hard lessons of a world war. In order to further promote the necessity of intervention on behalf of oppressed Africans in South Africa, black presses projected forms of British loyalty throughout World War I.

¹⁵⁵ *Ilanga lase Natal*, December 6, 1918.

¹⁵⁶ *Ilanga lase Natal*, April 6, 1917.

In order to project the credibility of black South African claims to assistance from Britain, the majority of missionary-educated African organs articulated loyalty in a variety of ways. These ranged from muster lists of African troops to be utilized by Britain in the war effort, condemnations of Afrikaner rebellion against Britain, and analyses of how such an inhumane war developed in the first place. All of which utilized Christian language to present both legitimacy and a solution to avoid similar conflict in the future. Analyzing this language assists in further understanding how Africans in South Africa viewed the world and their relationship to it.

As citizens of the British Empire, the expectation was to produce troops to assist in the war effort. Britain and France utilized colonial troops in order to field enough soldiers to fight in World War I. Unlike any previous war, World War I involved nations from across the globe which fought with twentieth century industrial technologies but utilized outmoded tactics. The result was often massive loss of life. Those nations that had colonies, relied increasingly upon colonial troops as the war progressed. Britain largely relied upon the militarily trained troops of India which had already been deployed under British officers to unify Britain's south Asian possessions. Black South Africans viewed themselves as equally capable and wished to project their own citizenship and loyalty through troop participation. As such, influential African leaders such as Dr. Walter Rubusana presented the British Colonial Office with a troop muster of 5,000 Africans willing to take up arms in defense of Empire. The British Secretary of Defence declined Rubusana's offer on the grounds that "the Government are anxious to avoid the employment of its native citizens in a warfare against whites."¹⁵⁷ Chiefs of virtually every African group also expressed their support through presentations of troops. These were; however, rejected by the

¹⁵⁷ Plaatje, 184.

British Government on the grounds of South African law; an obvious capitulation to “the demon of ignorance and prejudice” that dominated white South African governance.¹⁵⁸

In Solomon Plaatje’s famous work *Native Life in South Africa*, he criticized racial prejudice determining those who fight to preserve Empire and those who do not: “if the safety of the Crown is at stake and it could be saved only by employing black men, we would much rather let the Crown go than suffer the humiliation of seeing black warriors resisting a white enemy.” Plaatje blamed this counterintuitive reasoning on Dutch intentions to place the desires and ideologies of white South Africa above those of Empire.¹⁵⁹ Here Plaatje placed the loyalty to Empire of Africans above those of the Dutch South African Government even though Britain had afforded, in Plaatje’s representation, white South Africans more freedoms than they ever had under the old republics of the Transvaal and Orange Free State.

Plaatje continued his argument against racial prejudice in wartime by stating that Africans were in fact expected to participate in the war, but in a non-combatant capacity. Plaatje discussed these Africans, the engineers and wagon drivers of white military outfits, as being reduced to being “classed with the transport mules.” Plaatje furthered the comparison between African wagon drivers, who faced great peril during the war while moving munitions throughout the battlefields, and pack animals by stating “while the owner of a mule receives monetary compensation for each animal that falls on the battlefield...the Government’s interest in the black driver ceases when he is killed.”¹⁶⁰ Plaatje at once discussed the loyalty of black South Africans to the Crown in both patriotism and desire to defend the freedoms afforded by Empire, criticizes the Dutch Government for resisting full support, and condemns the fallacy of

¹⁵⁸ Plaatje, 185.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 186.

disallowing African combatants but still reducing actual African involvement in the war to beneath that of mules. The discussion of African non-combatants, their overall importance to the war effort, and their lack of recognition by the South African government can all be confirmed within Hodges work on the carrier corps in the East Africa Campaign.

Within these analyses of loyalty, prejudice, and inequality, Plaatje displayed the evidence to support his desired conclusion. He hoped that “when peace again reigns over Europe...you [the British people and Government] will...grapple with this dark blot on the Imperial emblem, the South African anomaly that compromises the justice of British rule and seems almost to belie the beauty, the sublimity and the sincerity of Christianity.”¹⁶¹ Plaatje, like many other missionary-educated Africans loyal to Britain, believed the war would expose the inhumanity of global governance and convince Britain to remedy the issues present in South Africa. These beliefs would be challenged as the war came to a close but not before further commentary and appeals from black South Africans.

It is important to note that Plaatje wrote *Native Life in South Africa* during and immediately after the delegation to England in 1914. He remained in England after the outbreak of the war, not returning to South Africa until after *Native Life*’s publication in late 1916.¹⁶² This work was meant for a British audience with similar intent as nineteenth century missionary publications that discussed the inhumanity of race relations in South Africa, several of which were analyzed in chapter one. The work takes on the function of open criticism of the Union Government while maintaining the supremacy of British liberal ideals and the victimization of black South Africans. This is not to say; however, that the information within the work was at all

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 245.

¹⁶² Ibid., iii.

a fabrication. Plaatje took very seriously the representation of factual information, especially in relation to the Natives' Land Act and Africans in World War I. His efforts to sway both British liberal politicians and the British public upon such grounds earned him widespread recognition throughout South Africa and the United States.

John Dube's newspaper *Ilanga lase Natal* in 1917 described him as "a worthy defender," and praised his work for black South Africans as "one of whom Britishers of all kinds are proud" and as an "intelligent and energetic champion for the cause of our peoples."¹⁶³ These comments from *Ilanga* show how well-connected African newspapers were to the activities of Europe while also exposing the alignment of thought and common cause among black South Africans.

Not all black South African leaders aligned with Plaatje and *Ilanga* in the matter of African loyalty through involvement in World War I. J.T. Jabavu's *Imvo Zabantsundu*, rejected African involvement in combat. Jabavu believed in neutrality for Africans on the grounds that Africans had no cause in the war and that "he (Africans) did his best to avoid but were forced upon him."¹⁶⁴ *Imvo* still defended their noncommittal views of African involvement in the war through Christian rhetoric. In another article, *Imvo* criticized Churches for their culpability in the outbreak of the war, which it referred to as "the long-talked-of-but-scarcely-credible Armageddon." The article states that Christian churches "have lamentably failed in emphasizing Christ's teaching on the peace issue."¹⁶⁵ Among other missionary-educated African leaders this position was seen as unfavorable. The continued utilization of Christian rhetoric is telling in that it expresses a particular lens through which African leaders viewed their world. The elasticity of

¹⁶³ *Ilanga lase Natal*, April 6, 1917.

¹⁶⁴ *Imvo Zabantsundu*, August 25, 1914.

¹⁶⁵ *Imvo Zabantsundu*, August 11, 1914.

this rhetoric as a common thread of association would take on further diversity as World War I came to an end and post-war issues incorporated different African voices.

Seen in the light of previous commentary from *Imvo* on the Land Act, which Jabavu originally supported and then changed his position in the face of massive criticism, one can see how Jabavu's alliances at the Cape with Afrikaner contingents became increasingly unpopular. Les Switzer discusses how Jabavu's support of the Land Act and his lack of expressions of loyalty throughout World War I led to his ultimate demise as an influential figure in African resistance.¹⁶⁶ As seen in *Tsala ea Batho*'s criticism of *Imvo*'s alliance with Cape Afrikaners to procure funds for the paper, this largely had to do with the financiers of the paper and its associations, although Jabavu had a long-standing relationship with Afrikaner groups even prior to unification. This is a further example of how well informed African presses were about the activities of other papers and exposes the falling out of favor of important African leaders as their associations were seen as less and less credible. This would be a recurring theme throughout the late 1910s and 1920s as the ability of missionary-educated Africans, who espoused the importance of European connections, to represent the opinions of the African masses became increasingly less credible.

Other expressions of loyalty to Britain came through commentaries on the circumstances that led to the outbreak of such a large-scale war in the first place. These articulations sometimes criticized the industrial nature of world powers for their lack of compassion for humanity. In an article titled "Is Civilization a Failure?," *Ilanga* examines both the failure of the Church and that of secular governance. The article condemns both for "denial of that great doctrine of the All-

¹⁶⁶ Les Switzer, "The Beginnings of African Protest Journalism at the Cape," in *South Africa's Alternative Press: Voices of Protest and Resistance, 1880-1960*, ed. Les Switzer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 70-71.

Fatherhood of God...the trend of a large number of people to evade the filial obligation and ignore the fraternal responsibility.” The article concludes with the belief that the “little plans and crooked ideals” will eventually give way to God’s will.¹⁶⁷ *Ilanga* further discredits the greed and individualism of Germany, and the South African Government, when praising the end of the war: “hording the worldwealth is defiance of God...private holding of wealth can be very oppressive.”¹⁶⁸ In further conversations about the peace, *Ilanga* thanks Britain for its sacrifices to bring about a possible world where communities can grow together and prosper.

Ilanga’s criticism of personal greed and oppression as having caused the war, its belief that Britain contributed greatly to the end of the war, and the association of communal growth with the word of God are particularly telling in how the editors viewed the world. The acknowledgement of failure within Church and State shows a change from *Ilanga*’s previous faith in missionary churches as seen in the previous chapter. Instead, a deeper reliance on Christ’s teachings of community and worldwide assistance as the key to raising all to new heights can be seen by the end of World War I. This notion became increasingly important in the 1920s when individualism, in the form of increased oppression of the black majority to raise up the white minority government, was seen as determining much of South Africa’s trajectory.

Ilanga’s belief that Britain had the ability to bring about the end of the tyranny of individualism, due to its sacrifices and ideologies, was similar to that found in Plaatje’s *Native Life*. Plaatje appealed to the British people through Bible verse in his conclusion when he stated “Christ “has gathered your people into a great nation, and sent them to sow beside all waters and multiply sure dwellings on the earth...reverent in your use of freedom, just in the exercise of

¹⁶⁷ *Ilanga lase Natal*, November 24, 1916.

¹⁶⁸ *Ilanga lase Natal*, December 6, 1918.

power, and generous in the protection of the weak.”¹⁶⁹ These two mediums, the *Ilanga* newspaper and Plaatje’s *Native Life*, articulate a particular understanding of global relations in the post-war period. Although still strapped to British Imperialism, a broader understanding of communal relationships and unity can be seen.

John Dube, the main editor of *Ilanga*, and Solomon Plaatje, as will be seen in the aftermath of the war, may not have been able to fully divest this internal African unity from the graces of British liberal ideology, but they most certainly articulated it to a degree. This is evident in an article in *Ilanga* entitled “What is Our Duty?” from 1919. The article states “that events are now so full of opportunity for the bettering of the status of the Bantu Commonwealth...we Bantu should prove that we are thinking men and women and are able to take part in the betterment of our own nation, and of that of the whole world.” The article still expresses an adherence to British Empire and not a model of separation, but in different terms than previously in the early twentieth century. Instead of needing Britain to grant assistance, the article declares that “British fairplay” should contribute to this cause or “get out.”¹⁷⁰ The relationship here expressed exposes a stronger articulation of African nationalism and self-reliance. This is no longer the victim seeking protection. Instead, *Ilanga* espouses a mutually beneficial relationship between British Empire and the African community of South Africa. Although the lack of British interest in this relationship would ultimately disillusion many missionary-educated African leaders, such as John Dube and Solomon Plaatje, these articulations of African reliance on self would form the backbone of resistance for the new generation of

¹⁶⁹ Plaatje, 244.

¹⁷⁰ *Ilanga lase Natal* January 10, 1919.

African leaders. The actions of missionary-educated Africans throughout difficult times from 1913-1919 greatly assisted in the realization of this transition.

After the signing of the Treaty of Versailles on June 28, 1919, many African leaders in South Africa hoped that their continued loyalty and support of Britain throughout World War I would be rewarded. The suspension of agitation for repeal of the Land Act and the restraint from further pleas for assistance to curb the Union government's continued oppressive treatment of Africans throughout the war, of which there were many, instead fell on a relatively unsympathetic British government.

Much of this disconnect originated from differences of interpretation as well as practicality. African leaders of the South African Native National Congress organized another delegation to England in 1919 with the intention of contributing the peace negotiations. In December of 1918, Congress sent a petition to King George V of England which articulated the intentions, hopes, and interpretations of Africans in a post-war era. This petition is exceptionally useful in understanding how missionary-educated Africans viewed their continued relationship with Britain. The petition lists multiple instances of loyalty throughout the war: from offers of troops, to decreased agitation even when Afrikaner rebellion swept through the Union, to supplies of funds and men as non-combatants in both the South West Africa Campaign and the East Africa Campaign.¹⁷¹ The most telling portion of this petition revolves around the reasoning from which Congress displayed this continued loyalty to Britain. Certainly, it had to do with the "high ideals permeating the British Constitution," but the petition specifically references actions taken by Britain in South Africa during the nineteenth century under "the late Queen Victoria,

¹⁷¹ Sheridan Johns III, "Petition to King George V, from the South African Native National Congress, December 16 1918," in *From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882-1964*, eds. Thomas Karis and Gwendolen M. Carter (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1972), 137.

the Good, with reverence and devotion.” These moments range from the end of slavery in 1834, of which the petition mentions the “veiled form of slavery” then in existence under Union government legislation, to the retention of certain African territories such as Bechuanaland under British protection.¹⁷²

These references are important in that they expose the base from which Congress leaders understood their rights to British assistance and “her love for free institutions for all peoples. Congress leaders believed World War I to have been fought to “liberate oppressed nations; to grant every nation, great or small, the right to determine its sovereign destiny.”¹⁷³ From the base of Anglo-African relations in the nineteenth century, Congress understood the duty of Great Britain, the one they fought for, as being the protection of Africans through intervention in Union politics. This memory of British humanitarian intervention from the nineteenth century had long since faded as a reality.¹⁷⁴ However, it still permeated the belief structures of missionary-educated Africans. The association between good Imperial governance and Christianity as posited by missionaries throughout the nineteenth century allowed for Congress leaders to maintain hope in a more humane and equal post-war world. The fact that black South Africans had assisted in “bringing about victory and peace” was payment enough, in the minds of Congress, to afford such an outcome.¹⁷⁵

The reality of post-war difficulties for Britain, formed a very different understanding of sovereignty for nations and equality under the British flag. Britain’s global empire that had been supported upon an inflated military economy, began to crumble in the post-war era. The inability

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Richard Elphick, *The Equality of Believers: Protestant Missionaries and the Racial Politics of South Africa* (Charlottesville, Virginia: University of Virginia Press, 2012), 63.

¹⁷⁵ Sheridan Johns III, “Petition to King George V, from the South African Native National Congress, December 16 1918,” 137.

of Britain to fund widespread administration forced a reevaluation of Empire as a whole.

Whereas British Imperialism of the nineteenth century could be described as paternalistic, that of the post-war era became defined by free association between international partners.¹⁷⁶ This became a reality with the assistance of Jan Smuts, the Prime Minister of South Africa after the death of Louis Botha in 1919, and further under James Hertzog during the Imperial Conference of 1926.¹⁷⁷

Britain's less direct interaction with its dominions assisted in alleviating many issues faced by an overtaxed British government, but it was very far from the sovereignty and equality understood by Congress in their petition to King George V in 1918. Selope Thema's condemnation of the Secretary of State for Colonies', Lord Harcourt, comments of inability to intervene in Union legislation as it regarded the Land Act of 1913 was tempered by the hope that a post-war Britain would rectify this fallacy. This hope was dashed by Britain's new model of Empire. Complete autonomy to create both foreign and domestic policy was seen by many as a British betrayal bigger than that of the Union Constitution. The young black South African leadership, many of whom gained educations in law and business through secular institutions and worked in the spreading urban spaces of the 1920s, blamed the missionary-educated African leadership's over-reliance on Imperial intervention for not protesting from a point of power in 1913.¹⁷⁸ This upcoming group of Africans believed that passive expressions of loyalty during

¹⁷⁶ John Darwin, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World-System, 1830-1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 406-407.

¹⁷⁷ Hertzog previously distained Imperial connection. His Nationalist Afrikaner party had gained ground during and after the war due to increased resentment for the "English war" and its disruption. After Smuts maintained his position as Prime Minister in the 1921 election; however, Hertzog altered his strategy to incorporate moderate Afrikaners and white British voters. This resulted in the new, equal relationship between autonomous entities that defined British Imperialism after 1926. It also assisted Hertzog in his takeover of the Union government in the 1927 election.

¹⁷⁸ Peter Limb, *The ANC's Early Years: Nation, Class, and Place in South Africa before 1940* (Pretoria: University of South Africa Press, 2010), 122.

World War I contributed to the increased oppression of Africans in the post-war period. This group took over as the African leadership and championed a much more self-reliant, inter-African unity as the base for resistance to Union racial oppression. These individuals formed new connections with worker and socialist entities within South Africa to achieve this goal. They did not; however, abandon Christian rhetoric as a tool to assist in this resistance.

Many missionary-educated African leaders, disillusioned by the decisions of Britain to grant full autonomy to the Union government, retracted from national politics. John Dube, after being asked to resign as President of Congress, returned to local politics in Natal and his work as educator at the Inanda school for Africans.¹⁷⁹ Solomon Plaatje toured the United States after the failure of the Congress delegation to England in 1919. After his return in 1921, he largely refrained from public politics, favoring a life of writing and transcription.¹⁸⁰ The new African leadership still exhibited a strong link to Christianity, the Congress President after Dube, S.M. Makgatho, was himself a reverend. Their continued reliance upon Christianity as a way of connecting African peoples may have shifted but it still maintained prominence. This group of leaders was challenged by a new, more vigorous form of racial legislation in the 1920s.

¹⁷⁹ Hughes, 197-199.

¹⁸⁰ In the 1920s and 1930s Plaatje wrote a number of works of fiction in English and Tswana. He also translated many works such as those by Shakespeare into various African dialects.

Christian Rhetoric and the new African leadership in the early 1920s

After World War I, the Union government faced incredible difficulty. Smuts succeeded Botha as Prime Minister, but the nationalist contingent under Hertzog gained massive ground as wages were stifled by the war and living prices rose due to post-war economic retraction.¹⁸¹ Post-war consolidation attempted to remedy some of these issues. This translated into further restrictions of African labor and movement.¹⁸² The young African leaders of South Africa formed new alliances within African communities to combat these and other oppressive pieces of legislation in the early 1920s. One major group that would become increasingly important was that of workers.

Industrialization in South Africa began with the discovery of diamonds and gold in the 1860s and 1880s. By the unification of South Africa in 1910 a recognizably industrial society, with budding urban centers and a sizable worker population made up of both white and non-white workers.¹⁸³ Military escalation just prior to and during World War I increased the necessity of high production, especially of South African gold. The stagnation of wages due to war disruption coupled with rising living expenses caused many mine laborers to organize into labor unions. Most of these unions formed along racial lines, the earliest being the white dominated Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) and the black dominated Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU).¹⁸⁴

Within African communities, the relationship between worker unions such as the ICU and other organizations like the South African Native National Congress, which officially changed its name in 1923 to the African National Congress to incorporate a broader scope, was

¹⁸¹ Darwin, 402.

¹⁸² Limb, 201-202.

¹⁸³ Limb, 26.

¹⁸⁴ Mackinnon, 202.

often tenuous. These relationships fluctuated with the personalities of leadership within the more traditionally conservative Congress. The early 1920s; however, saw some of the broadest support and unity prior to the 1940s. This was due to Congress presidents that were sympathetic to worker rights such as S.M. Makgatho, president from 1917-1924, and J.T. Gumede, president from 1927-1930.¹⁸⁵ Makgatho, a Methodist preacher, recognized the necessity of early connections with workers. Gumede in 1927 attempted to ally the disconnect between more traditional segments of the ANC and the younger, more radical worker oriented entities when he wrote “just as a bird must have both wings for successful flight, so must any movement have the conservative and radical wings.”¹⁸⁶ It is worth noting that Gumede signed the article in which this excerpt can be found with “God Bless Africa,” a reference to the ANC’s anthem Nkosi Sikelele y-Afrika (God Bless Africa) by Enoch Sontonga.

Clements Kadalie, the founder of the ICU, organized a number of strikes to gain higher wages for African dock workers and miners throughout 1918-1920. His ICU was exceptionally influential in organizing and representing African prior to its demise due to internal strife in the early 1930s.¹⁸⁷ These early strikes were supported by the majority of ANC leaders, in part due to the necessity of reorganizing relationships of resistance within African communities instead of petitioning England. The Manifesto of the ICU shows the importance of humanitarian community and Christianity as it had developed throughout the early twentieth century. Kadalie also continuously relied upon church leaders to support his cause as he travelled throughout South Africa to organize workers.

¹⁸⁵ Limb, 21.

¹⁸⁶ Sheridan Johns III, “To All Leaders of the African People.” Statement by J.T. Gumede, President, ANC, September 7, 1927,” in *From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882-1964*, eds. Thomas Karis and Gwendolen M. Carter (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1972), 304.

¹⁸⁷ Mackinnon, 203.

Other African leaders in the 1920s utilized Christian language to espouse a desired unity of resistance among Africans in South Africa. In 1922 Selope Thema wrote “the African has the right to live and has a place in God’s scheme of creation, that he was not created in the image of God to occupy a position of servitude.”¹⁸⁸ A common right to equality and unity among Africans was indicative of the new generations utilization of Christian rhetoric. African presses also utilized Christian language to combat the rise in religious fervor by the nationalist Afrikaner movement and the Dutch Reformed Church. In *The Workers’ Herald*, a newspaper organized by Kadalie as the mouthpiece of the ICU in the early 1920, James Thaele discussed the difference between Union governmental Christianity as the backbone of racial policy and the Christianity of equality understood by African resistance. Thaele highlights the hypocrisy of utilizing Christianity to prop up racial policy when he writes “What is the good of any hypocrite or a group of hypocrites telling us to “do as I tell you but don’t do as I do.”¹⁸⁹ The recognition of difference between Union governmental reliance upon Christianity as a tool of manipulation as discussed by Thaele and his belief in Christianity as a generally good doctrine further exposes the internalization of Christianity within African communities. Thaele’s declaration of “religious apostasy” as it pertained to the marriage between Union governmental entities and the Dutch Reformed Church further shows the evolution of the relationship between Africans and Christianity.¹⁹⁰ The hypocrisy of Union governmental Christianity was intended to segregate

¹⁸⁸ Sheridan Johns III, ““The Race Problem.” Article in *The Guardian* by R. V. Selope Thema, September 1922,” in *From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882-1964*, eds. Thomas Karis and Gwendolen M. Carter (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1972), 212.

¹⁸⁹ Sheridan Johns III, ““Christianity, Basis of Native Policy?” Article in *The Workers’ Herald* by James S. Thaele, December 21, 1923,” in *From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882-1964*, eds. Thomas Karis and Gwendolen M. Carter (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1972), 214.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

peoples, whereas the Christianity of African communities as intended to unite in common resistance.

By the Late 1920s Africans would face an even greater difficulty in the organization of Union government under James Hertzog. Hertzog, the Nationalist party, and the Labour Party gained control of the South African government in 1924. Hertzog's "Native Policies", as he referred to them, of 1927 and then those of the 1930s paved the way for official apartheid of 1948.¹⁹¹ The Afrikaner nationalism upon which these policies were built, with its reliance upon Dutch Reformed Church religious fervor, intensely discriminated against non-white communities. The resistance to this type of hypocrisy by African presses and leaders was indicative of rhetorical use of Christianity in the 1920s. The process of disillusionment felt by Africans after World War I may have caused an overturn of personnel, but the importance and malleability of Christian language ensured its continued prominence. Tracing its use throughout this period affords a stronger understanding of African resistance and the ways in which these communities viewed themselves locally and globally.

¹⁹¹ MacKinnon, 194-195.

Conclusion

African resistance between 1913 and 1923 reacted to and internalized a number of incredibly dislocating events. The Land Act of 1913, World War I, and the autonomy of South Africa gained in the 1920s all served to drastically alter African relationships. The evolution of resistance, although by no means completely unified at any point, moved closer and closer to a common sense of oppression and solidarity. Tracing the utilization of Christian language through this period contributes to a broader understanding of how missionary-educated Africans viewed their relationships up to the end of World War I and then their ultimate replacement by a younger, more secularly educated group of lawyers and teachers. The importance of Christianity as a tool of unification and a language of resistance that could be understood within South Africa and globally remained prominent. The overall elasticity of this rhetoric, with its common source base but wide interpretation, afforded Africans and whites alike to deploy Christianity in a multitude of ways. Its continued importance within resistance movements during this period, prior to, and thereafter shows the adaptability of Christianity and African communities. This adaptability and the process of evolution from 1913 to 1923 would become increasingly important as racialized legislation became more and more formalized under Afrikaner apartheid.

CONCLUSION

When will we learn that human beings are of infinite value because they have been created in the image of God, and that it is blasphemy to treat them as if they were less than this and to do so ultimately recoils on those who do this? In dehumanizing others, they are themselves dehumanized. Perhaps oppression dehumanizes the oppressor as much, if not more than, the oppressed. They need each other to become truly free, to become human. We can be human only in fellowship, in community, in *koinonia*, in peace. -Desmond M. Tutu

In 1984 Desmond Mpilo Tutu, one of the highest respected anti-apartheid leaders of the twentieth century, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his crusade against inhumanity and fight for the rights of the oppressed. The above excerpt is clipped from Tutu's Nobel Lecture. It outlines, not in name but in concept the South African idea of *ubuntu* which roughly translates into English as "A person is a person through other persons."¹⁹² Tutu's representation of oppression as detrimental to all parties involved is further developed throughout his Nobel Lecture. Tutu referenced facets of the "evil system" of "a land which claims to be Christian" such as the inequality of land distribution, of education, of political representation along racial lines as some of the causes of South Africa's overall struggles. Tutu further utilized ubuntu to promote positivity and justice as the solutions to South Africa's issues: "if we want peace, so we have been told, let us work for justice. Let us beat our swords into ploughshares."¹⁹³ These concepts of mutual weakness or mutual strength mirror the influence of Christian rhetoric as it was interpreted by African leaders.

¹⁹² The full phrase in Xhosa is "Umntu ngumtu ngbantú." In Tutu's mother language of Setswana the full phrase is "Motho ke motho ka motho yo mongwe." Tutu's full representation of this concept as it applied to a human community based on universalism and equality can be found in Desmond Tutu "Ubuntu: On the Nature of Human Community." In *God is Not a Christian: and Other Provocations*. Eds. John Allen. New York: HarperCollins Publisher, 2011, 21-24.

¹⁹³ Desmond Tutu. "Nobel Lecture." Delivered December 11, 1984 in Oslo, Norway.

Certainly not the sole source of *ubuntu*, evangelical Christianity did contribute to the conceptualization of this ideology. Evangelical beliefs in universalism, individual contribution to a whole, humanitarianism, and equality through faith greatly enhanced Tutu's representation of mutual greatness. It also provided him and other influential African leaders, like those studied in the previous chapters, a platform from which to hold a supposedly Christian nation accountable. This understanding of mutual benefit along the lines of universalism, just as the concept of racial segregation as its antithesis, has a long legacy in South African history.

The period from 1899-1924 embodied massive change in the legacies of both these concepts. Exclusion from politics did not begin in 1910 with the Union Constitution, nor did racial segregation of land and education begin with the Natives Land act of 1913. Total autonomy from British influence, and its concepts of "free-play" and equality of civil rights did not first come into being with the exclusions of World War I, articulated officially in the Balfour Declaration of 1926.¹⁹⁴ The culmination of all these conclusions, the turmoil they created within both white and black populations, and their far-reaching consequences make this period particularly important within the contexts of the development of white minority rule and the resistance from the African majority to said oppression. This thesis provides a broader understanding of the relationship between Africans and Christianity in South Africa.

This understanding provides a stronger analysis of the malleability of Christian rhetoric as it is understood by various African groups in South Africa. The evolution of African relationships with Christian rhetoric, from the missionary led petitions of the nineteenth century

¹⁹⁴ The Balfour Declaration of 1926 solidified into official Imperial policy a practice already implemented in relation to Britain's dominions after World War I. This policy was that of autonomy within the Commonwealth. Balfour believed British Imperialism to be a compact between autonomous countries working toward mutually beneficial ends. More information can be found in John Darwin, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World-System, 1830-1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 420-422.

to the assumption of those petitions by Africans in the 1910s to the disillusionment and reorientation along intra-African lines in the 1920s, provided the base from which later leaders such as Desmond Tutu, Nelson Mandela, and Walter Sisulu could further adapt the usage of that rhetoric to both unify in opposition and combat the affronts to Christian law as they saw them within the apartheid system in South Africa. Africans utilized this common language to converse with each other and the world at large and as a platform for resistance unified resistance.

The struggle against apartheid did not begin nor end in the two decades covered by this study. However, the importance of Christian rhetoric as a tool adapted from the hegemon used against that same system, owes much to these decades. The deep reading of this evolution of usage presented in this study provides the best source from which to understand this phenomenon.

Further direct connections can be drawn between the historical actors discussed and that of Tutu and his compatriots. For instance, Anton Lembede, the founder of the ANC Youth League in the early 1940s, worked with Reverend John Dube at Ohlange and with Pixley Seme at his law firm. Dube's emphasis on self-reliance and Christian universalism can most certainly be seen in Lembede's hopes for the ANC Youth League. Lembede and the Youth League greatly influenced the generation of resistance leaders born right after World War I and defined by personalities such as Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, and Walter Sisulu.¹⁹⁵ These individuals were in turn very influential in the career of Tutu and his ilk. This connection of individuals represents a physical legacy of the evolution of resistance that is seen rhetorically in the evolution of Christian rhetoric as a tool for unifying and resisting. It is no coincidence, then, that

¹⁹⁵ Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma and Ben Turok, "The Congress Alliance," in *The Historical Roots of the ANC: Understanding the ANC Today*, edited by Ben Turok (Auckland Park: Jacana Press, 2010), 68-70.

Tutu's presentation in 1984 of *ubuntu* reflects the importance of John 17: 21-22, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one," to the worldview of Africans as presented by African presses in the first quarter of the twentieth century.

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