



Maxeke, Charlotte Manye *(1872-1939)*

Maxeke was a leader in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the first African woman from South Africa to obtain a BSc and the first African woman to be made a probation officer. She may also be called the 'Mother of Ethiopia' because of the part that she played in the amalgamation of the Ethiopian Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

She was born on 7 April 1872, near Beaufort West (Skota gives 1874 as the date of her birth but 1872 is used by her sister Katy). Her mother was a teacher and her father a foreman on the road gangs. He was also a lay preacher in the Presbyterian Church. Charlotte attended primary school in Uitenhage and senior school in Port Elizabeth. She planned to be a teacher.

Just before the family moved to Kimberley in 1890 Charlotte and her sister Katy were invited to join the Jubilee singers and tour Britain. This was an exciting time and the choir was even asked to sing for Queen Victoria. During the tour Charlotte met students from Wilberforce University in America and realised for the first time that in America there were opportunities for black students which were not available in South Africa. The two sisters learned to speak English fluently with a British accent. When they returned home both were given the opportunity of touring America with the McAdoo singers. Katy decided to remain at home and later became dispenser for Dr McCord of the American Board Mission. Charlotte travelled to America to join the choir.

While in America she met Bishop Derrick of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, who arranged for her to study at Wilberforce University, Ohio. She managed to arrange opportunities for other African students to study at Wilberforce. One of the students was Marshall Maxeke, who would later become her husband. Others were James Tantsi, Charles Dube, Henry Msikinya and Edward Tolityi Magaya.

While Charlotte was in America, changes had been taking place in the

church in the Transvaal. Her mother's cousin, Mangena Mokone, decided to leave the Methodist Church and form his own Ethiopian Church. Katy read her sister's letters to Mokone. The letters told of a church in America under black control where there was opportunity for education and for leadership. Mokone discussed what he had heard with the other leaders of the Ethiopian Church. In 1896 they decided to invite the AMEC to amalgamate with the Ethiopian Church. Charlotte Manye acted as an intermediary. She became one of the pioneers of the South African AMEC. Although as a woman she could not be an elder, she served on the missionary committee and was invited to give talks on mission at the AMEC conferences. In 1901 Charlotte said that she was thrilled to be asked to speak and 'congratulated herself on the rare opportunity afforded her ... to speak to her own conference for the first time in her lowly life'.

In 1903 Charlotte Manye married Marshall Maxeke, who by now had a BA from Wilberforce. They worked together as missionaries for the AMEC, first in Pietersburg in the Transvaal and then in Idutywa in the Eastern Cape. There they were invited to establish a school by the headman, Enoch Mamba, who had had a disagreement with the colonial authorities.

Education became a priority for the Maxekes and in 1908 they established Wilberforce Institute for the AMEC at Evaton in the Transvaal. The influence of Charlotte Maxeke was beginning to be more widely felt. She was asked to speak at meetings on various subjects. For example, at the 1925 General Missionary Conference she read a paper entitled 'The native Christian mother'.

Maxeke was a founder member and president of the Bantu Women's League, a forerunner of the ANC Women's League. Her husband had been a member of the ANC from its inception so she had the interests of the organisation at heart. Maxeke, through the league, worked for the relaxation of the Free State pass laws.

When the Maxekes moved to Johannesburg Charlotte's concerns centred on the church. She involved herself in social action and started an employment bureau. She was made a probation officer, the first African woman to hold such a post. Her work at the courts brought her into contact with the effects of the break-down of family life and the problems caused by the migrant labour system. She sought a common meeting ground between white and black women but met with little success. Through this she hoped to foster a better understanding of the problems facing urban Africans.

In 1928 Maxeke was sent to America as a delegate to the AMEC Conference. During the 1930s she continued to address meetings such as the 1935 All African Convention at Bloemfontien where she played a leading role in the establishment of the National Council of African Women. Busy to the end, she died four years later in 1939.

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Mgiijima, Enoch Josiah *(1858-1929)*

Mgiijima was the leader of the Israelites whose massacre in 1921 caused a wave of concern throughout South Africa. Edgar writes: 'Almost every African household in South Africa knows about the massacre of the people at Bulhoek in the Queenstown district' (Edgar 1988:38).

Enoch Mgiijima was born in Bulhoek in 1858. He was the third of four sons of Josiah Mgiijima, a Mfengu peasant. There were also five daughters in the family. The Mgiijima family were part of one of the Hlubi groups that had to left Natal. The group eventually found a home among Hintsa's Gcaleka Xhosa. According to African custom they were helped to replenish their herds and eventually became an independent group. Josiah and his family followed the Methodist minister John Ayliff, and settled near Peddie and then Fort Beaufort. This was probably in about 1848. Josiah was one of Ayliff's converts and he and his family became members of the Methodist Church.

When Josiah Mgijima decided to move to Ntabelanga, near Queenstown, he was the owner of many sheep, cattle, goats and horses. At this stage he only had daughters and longed for a son. He climbed to the top of Ntabelanga mountain and prayed: 'God you have given me these sheep, cattle, goats and horses but I have no boy among my children.' His prayer was answered; his next four children were sons: Josiah, Timothy, Enoch and Charles.



Ntabelanga Mountain

Kamastone, of which Bulhoek and Ntabelanga were a part, was an overcrowded township where most people struggled to make a living. Schools went as far as Standard 3 and those who wanted to study further, like the sons of Mgijima, had to look elsewhere. All the boys except Enoch went to Lovedale and then to Zonnebloem College in Cape Town. Timothy and Josiah became interpreters, while Charles, before he joined the Israelites, was a court interpreter and a school teacher. Only Enoch, because of headaches which recurred every time he went to Lovedale, never went beyond Standard 3. He became a farmer and hunter. He also became a lay preacher and evangelist in the Methodist Church. Because of his lack of education, he was never able to become an ordained minister.

When Enoch Mgijima began to have visions, he felt that God was calling him to be a leader. This was impossible in the Methodist Church because he could not study for ordination. His millennial visions were not in line with Methodist teaching either.

He had his first vision in 1907 while out hunting for game. He saw three mountains of different heights, which he believed was a sign that some people would receive him immediately, some reluctantly and some with difficulty. He saw an angel who told him about a coming war when only the faithful would be spared (Edgar 1977:26). Mgijima thought that he was unworthy to be a prophet and called himself a drunkard and a sinner. Three years later he saw Haley's Comet and he regarded it as a sign that confirmed his calling as a prophet. He felt he had to return to the ancient religion of the Israelites. Many people started to follow Mgijima and the Moravian missionaries at Shiloh asked him to preach for them. When, in 1912, their converts began to follow Mgijima they asked him not to return.

Mgijima then joined the Church of God and Saints of Christ. This had been founded in America by an African-American, William Crowdy. He claimed that black people were descended from the lost tribes of Israel. This appealed to Mgijima and he joined the local branch, which had its headquarters in Uitenhage. His contact was John Msikinya, who at one time had also been a Methodist local preacher. However, Mgijima's visions continued and eventually he was asked to leave this church as well. He called the new church that he established the Israelites.

Both visions that led to Mgijima being asked to leave the Church of God and Saints of Christ had political implications. In the first he saw two goats and a male baboon fighting. The baboon seized the goats and took the lead. Mgijima explained that the blacks (the baboon) would fight the whites (the goats) and win.

In 1920 he had a vision of children lying on their backs with their feet in the air. This he later interpreted as the Bulhoek tragedy. Later that year he had a 'call' while sitting on top of Ntabelanga mountain.

More and more Israelites moved to Ntabelange to be near Mgijima. Because the land for houses was on swampy ground, the authorities had given permission for a few houses to be built on the common grazing land which belonged to the Crown or government. Mgijima's own house was on Crown land. As more and more people moved into the area they built temporary huts wherever they found space. The people of Oxkraal complained when their grazing land was no longer available. The farmers complained because they said the Israelites were stopping their workers from working. Then in 1921 the Israelites refused to give their names for the census saying that God knew who they were (Bulhoek 1921:6).

The 'Mattushek affair' brought matters to a head. Two Israelites who said that they were buying fodder were thought to be trespassing and were shot. One of them, Charles Dondolo, was fatally wounded. Charles Mgijima, his brother's right-hand man, was subpoenaed to appear in court but refused. The authorities became angry because the Israelites refused to speak to them. If they tried to approach Ntabelanga, they were turned back by an armed guard. There seemed to be a stalemate.

A massive force of policemen under Colonel Truter was summoned to Queenstown. Both sides prepared for battle and it became apparent that neither side would give in. When the time came, they drew up in military

formation. The police and army had guns while the Israelites had only 'broad-bladed assegais, knobkerries and knives', although later some of them were found to have a few guns as well. The Israelites were given the chance to turn back but they answered: 'We will fight and Jehovah will fight with us' (Bulhoek 1921:23). Mgijima promised them that the bullets would turn to water so that they would be safe.

The Israelites fought with great bravery, but the outcome was inevitable as they did not have the same weaponry as the police. After the battle it was discovered that Mgijima had been hiding when he saw the tide turning against him. He was taken prisoner, as was his brother Charles. The battle, however, left 163 people dead, 129 wounded and 95 people taken prisoner (Bulhoek 1921:28). *The Times* of London described how Mgijima watched impassively while the prisoners were being led away.

There was widespread reaction to the tragedy and it was debated in parliament. The reaction of the white church leaders was interesting in that they showed little sympathy for the Israelites. Bishop Carter from the Anglican Church felt that the massacre was the inevitable result of threatening behaviour against the government (Cochrane 1987:128). The Rev Allen Lea from the Methodist Church saw the Israelites as 'a fanatical politico-religious body from America' which had caused a disturbance. The event had direct bearing on the appointment of a commission to investigate the Independent Churches. The question still remains - why was the position allowed to deteriorate to such an extent that so many people lost their lives?



The grave of Mgijima

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Mogatla, David Modibane (c 1814-1874) _____

Mogatla (or Magatta, as he is known by the Methodists) established the first Methodist society in the Transvaal. He was actually involved with a number of denominations that also claim him as their pioneer ~ the Lutherans from the Hermannsburg Mission and the Dutch Reformed Church.

Mogatla was born in about 1814 in the Rustenburg district of the Transvaal. He belonged to one of the Tswana clans, possibly the Bagamalete. During the 1830s, when Mzilikazi and his warriors stormed across the Transvaal attacking Tswana clans, Mogatla's home was destroyed and he was taken to Mosega as a prisoner. He became Mzilikazi's personal attendant (Notices 1878:62).

In 1836 the American Board missionaries Daniel Lindley and Henry Venables came to Mosega to try to establish a mission station among Mzilikazi's people. For the first time Mogatla heard the Gospel. Two years later a Voortrekker commando stormed Mzilikazi's stronghold and Mogatla escaped and made his way south to Thaba'Nchu, the Wesleyan Methodist mission station.

Here Mogatla was educated and later converted. David was the name given to him at his baptism. Years later he told the Methodist missionary Blencowe that he was 'born of God among the Wesleyans, I have lived a Wesleyan and I shall die a Wesleyan'. This may have been biased reporting as Mogatla continued his friendship with missionaries from other denominations.

Mogatla determined to return home to the Magaliesberg district where he found his family scattered or dead. He received a 'note to preach' from the missionary William Shaw authorising him to preach in the name of the Methodist Church. This was probably in about 1852 as there is an English Bible at a Lutheran mission station near Rustenburg with his name and the date in it. He also worked as an evangelist for the Rev Behrens of the Hermannsburg Mission in Bethany and the Rev Gonin of the Dutch Reformed Mission in Rustenburg.

During the 1850s he worked as a labourer for white farmers in the Rustenburg district. He met Commandant Paul Kruger while he was working there. Mogatla decided to go to Potchefstroom and in 1865 he was

listed as an evangelist on a 'Memorial' for William Shaw (John Rylands Library).

In Potchefstroom Mogatla 'preached in the streets and in their houses' and 'exhorted and commanded them to repent'. Blencowe noted that Mogatla was able to speak and understand six languages: Sechuana, Amatonga, Xhosa, Zulu, Dutch and English.

The landdrost punished and banished him for holding services, possibly because they were held at the same time as those of the Dutch Reformed Church. He wandered first in Natal and then in Sekhukuniland, where he again met Commandant Kruger. Kruger heard his story and gave him a letter granting him permission to preach in Potchefstroom.

Mogatla had been preaching without payment except for donations from his listeners. In 1871 the Methodist missionary George Blencowe arrived in Potchefstroom and met Mogatla. He gave him a stipend of twelve pounds per annum (all that he was allowed to pay without permission from Synod). Blencowe also arranged accommodation for Mogatla's congregation, who called themselves Methodists. He found that some of Mogatla's converts had begun their own mission work in the surrounding district. Blencowe reported that he had heard 'interesting testimonies as to the purity, the benevolence, the constancy and the efficiency of David's ministry' (Notices 1878:62).

A chapel was built in 1873, but the following year Mogatla died while on a visit to the Rustenburg district. He was buried at Bethany where the Rev Behrens recorded that: 'He was a man full of zeal and faith, always busy with the furtherance of the Kingdom of God.'

The Methodist Church in the township in Potchefstroom is named the David Magatta Church in his honour.

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Mokone, Mangena Maake *(1851-1931)*

Mokone was the founder of the Ethiopian Church in 1892. His move from the Methodist Church to his own inter-tribal African church led in time to the formation of numerous other independent churches. Mokone took as his watchword Psalm 68:31 ~ 'Cush [Ethiopia] shall stretch out her hands to God.'

Mokone was born in Sekhukuniland in 1851, a member of the Bogaga tribe. His father, a secondary chief, was killed in the Swazi War of 1863. The young Mokone and a friend fled to Durban where Mokone found work with a Mrs Steele who belonged to the Methodist Church. She encouraged him to attend night school and taught him to read. Mokone saw the Bible next to Mrs Steele's bed and longed to be able to read it, which made him a keen student. Mrs Steele also encouraged him to attend Sunday School at the Aliwal Street Chapel.

In 1870 Mokone moved to Pietermaritzburg and found work on a sugar plantation. However, after six months he returned to Durban. One day Mokone heard a local preacher, Mr Fine, preaching about the wiles of the Devil and he was converted to Christianity. In 1874 Mokone was baptised by the Rev Damon Hlongwana and returned to Pietermaritzburg to attend Edendale College.

Mokone became a local preacher himself and worked as a carpenter during the day while at night he preached at revival meetings. One day his congregation was so moved that they were noisy and tearful. A white neighbour told them to 'vuka' ('get up') and asked that Mokone be replaced by a more moderate preacher.

When the Methodist Church decided to appoint probationer ministers at the 1880 Synod in Pietermaritzburg Mokone was among those selected. He became a 'native assistant missionary'. After spending two years in Newstead, Natal, he was sent to Pretoria.

In Pretoria Mokone started a school and established a congregation. After serving his probation he was ordained in 1887. The following year he was

sent to the Waterberg district, north of Pretoria. While he was there his wife died of tuberculosis, leaving him with two small daughters.

He next went to Johannesburg, where he met people such as J Z Tantsi who would later join him in the Ethiopian Church. During the years that Mokone worked in the Transvaal, racially segregated district meetings had become the accepted form of church government. Mokone resented this and gave racial segregation as one of his reasons for leaving the Methodist Church. At the so-called 'Native meetings' the work of the evangelists and 'native assistant missionaries' was discussed and tuition given to those 'on trial'. Mokone felt that some of the evangelists had been judged unfairly. One of these was Samuel Mathabathe who was told, after Mokone had resigned, that he was not intellectually astute enough to be ordained and had to continue to work as an evangelist (Minutes 1895). At the time of his resignation Mokone was working as a tutor at Kilnerton College.

Mokone waited for his friend the Rev Owen Watkins to retire before he resigned. In 1892 he wrote to the District Superintendent, George Weavind, and said: 'I hereby give you notice that at the end of the month I will leave the Wesleyan Church and serve God in my own way.' He gave a number of reasons for his decision. Among them were the separate district meetings, lack of understanding from white ministers, no family allowances for African ministers and poor wages (Minutes 1892).

In November 1892 Mokone and twenty others held the founding service of the Ethiopian Church. Among those who joined him was Samuel Brander. He was later joined by a number of men such as J Z Tantsi, J G Xaba and Marcus Gabashane. Later Dwane and Goduka also became members of the Ethiopian Church.

Having learned from the letters of Charlotte Manye how the African Methodist Episcopal Church in America had black leadership and enough money to help educate their members, Mokone and the other Ethiopians decided to invite them to amalgamate and form a South African branch. Dwane was sent to America and returned to 'reoblige' or ordain the ministers of the Ethiopian Church.

In 1898 Bishop Turner of the AMEC visited South Africa. He was welcomed by the Ethiopians and ordained a number of ministers. Mokone became an elder of the AMEC.

The following year Dwane was already restless and at a conference in Queenstown he and others resolved to leave the AMEC. Mokone remained loyal and met with the ministers who remained to try to prevent the trouble from spreading.

At AMEC conferences Mokone took a leading role, although he could not be the bishop as that position was kept for an American. He served on various committees and often led the devotions.

In 1903 the members of conference wanted to hold a 'Mokone day' but he asked them to refrain from doing so while he was still alive. Three years later he was sent to America as a delegate to the General Conference. He continued to serve the AMEC and came to be respected as a 'father figure' until his death in 1931 (October).

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Obed Mooki

Mooki, David (1876-1927) _____

Mooki came from an African Independent Church background and in his search for Zion joined the New Jerusalem Church.

He was born in 1876 in the Transvaal and lived in the 'Old Location', near Krugersdorp. Mooki was a member of the African Catholic Church, which

Krugersdorp.

In December 1909 Mooki was window-shopping in Krugersdorp when he saw a book in the window of a second-hand shop entitled *The true Christian religion* by Emmanuel Swedenborg. He was intrigued and bought the book and started reading. Swedenborg, who wrote the book in 1771, was a Swedish scientist. He applied his own interpretation to texts in his search for 'the inner meaning contained in the inspired texts of the Bible' (Kingslake 1981:12). Swedenborg taught that a new church was being formed to replace the church of his time. It was called the 'Church of the New Jerusalem'.

Swedenborg appeared to have an understanding of Africans even though he had never been to Africa. He wrote: 'Africans are the best, gentlest and most intelligent of all the gentiles ... They long for information and rejoice when they get it' (Evans 1991:10). Again he wrote: 'because Africans are of this character (ie spiritual) a revelation has this day been made to them, which is spreading in all directions ...' (Swedenborg 1771: para 840, 387). Mooki believed that he had found the answer to his search and had soon read the whole book. He decided to try to find people who belonged to the New Church and wanted to start a branch himself. In 1911 he established the New Church of Africa.

Mooki did not give up his search for the Swedenborgians. He wrote to the printers of the book, who furnished him with the address of the British General Conference of the New Jerusalem Church in England. In 1917 he was able to establish links with the church overseas. The British church sent him literature and brought his church under the direction of the Foreign and Colonial Missions Committee. His church became known overseas as 'the New Church (Native) Mission in South Africa'.

Mooki had to wait another two years before a New Church minister came to South Africa. By this time his church was a thriving organisation. The Rev James Buss instructed the New Church members in the Swedenborgian doctrines. He ordained Mooki on 23 January 1921, and nine days later nine other ministers were ordained.

Through the efforts of Mooki and Buss the New Church expanded as far afield as Basutoland (Lesotho). There were also branches of the New Church in Nancefield Location (Pimville) and other parts of the Rand.



Obed Mooki

Mooki died of enteritis on 2 April 1927. The missionaries continued the work until Obed Simon David, Mooki's second son who had been born in 1919, had completed his education. Obed then took over his father's work. Under Obed Mooki and his wife, Eulalia, the New Church grew even more. A church and a school, known as the Mooki Memorial Church, were erected in Orlando East. Obed Mooki became a leading member of the African Ministers' Association as well as serving on the Johannesburg Joint Advisory Boards.

Obed Mooki saw many changes take place in the New Church. The Mooki Memorial College was formed in Soweto. In 1961 the New Church amalgamated with the Ethiopian Catholic Church in Zion which had been threatened with closure by the Government. The ECC in Zion had been started by Samuel Brander in 1904 and now the sons of the two founders met to form one church.

Obed Mooki was made superintendent of the new Church in 1989 and for the rest of his life remained president of the church. He died on 3 June 1990 after a protracted illness.

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Mzimba, Pambani Jeremiah (1850-1911)

Mzimba, an ex-Lovedale graduate, was the founder of the Presbyterian Church of Africa. He was born at Ngqakayi in the Eastern Cape halfway through the nineteenth century. His father, Ntibane, was an old Lovedale student and he and his wife were baptised by the Rev James Laing of the Free Church of Scotland in 1852. Ntibane later became a deacon in the Lovedale Native Church where his son, Pambani, would one day serve as a minister. So it may be seen that Mzimba's roots were firmly grounded in the Lovedale Presbyterian Church.

Mzimba entered Lovedale as a student in 1860. He remained there until 1875 when he was ordained, the first South African-trained black Presbyterian minister to achieve this status. During his time as a student he worked in the telegraph office to help pay his fees. Like Makiwane, he was a teacher of biblical studies.

The year before he was ordained Mzimba married Martha Kwatsha, a member of the Soga family. She came from Burnshill Mission in 1868 and was a pupil at the girls' school until 1875, when she spent a year in Scotland with Mrs Stewart. She married Mzimba when she returned (Stewart 1887:435).

Mzimba was ordained on 2 December 1875. Stewart was not among those present and Dr Waterston chided him saying: 'Your being away for Pambani's ordination gave me great pain ... Mpambani said little about it ... but he felt it. He has such deep feelings ... I have known Mpambani go off like some wounded animal to some solitary spot where no human eye can see his pain' (Waterston 1983:97).

Although Stewart was absent, there were others who appreciated the importance of the occasion. The *Christian Express*, for which he had worked for a time, published an account of the ordination and how he had been elected by the Lovedale congregation as their minister. The Rev Bryce Ross conducted the ordination service and preached on the office of the Christian ministry from Ephesians 4:11. The girls from the school gave him a

gold chain and his fellow students a gift of money (*Christian Express* 1876:11).

The year that Mzimba was ordained he and Makiwane volunteered to go to the Livingstonia Mission in Malawi, but neither of them was chosen. Instead, Mzimba served the Lovedale congregation and taught at Lovedale Institution.

The year 1891 was Lovedale's Jubilee Celebration. Mzimba was chosen to deliver one of the sermons. In the Jubilee Report he was recognised as a modest and capable minister, a satisfactory pastor and a successful evangelist.

Two years later he was sent to Scotland as a delegate to the anniversary of the Free Church severing its ties with the Scottish government. Mzimba wrote to Dr Smith of the Missionary Society: 'God in his goodness has at last given me my long desire to see Scotland and be in the General Assembly'(MS 1093). He wanted to know what aspect of the mission they wished him to speak about. The delegates were interested in what he had to say, but there is a note of paternalism in the way they received him. One of the delegates wrote: 'The Rev Mpambani Mzimba ... is a splendid specimen of what the grace of God can produce in the African race' (MS 1120). Mzimba collected a large amount of money in Scotland, some of which he hoped would be used to rebuild the Lovedale Church. Stewart thought his plans too grandiose.

The year 1896 was a busy one for Mzimba. A theological school was started at Lovedale and he and Makiwane taught biblical studies. He went to Johannesburg with Stewart to act as a mediator in the Tsewu affair and he continued to serve the Lovedale congregation.

The first National United Presbyterian Assembly was held in 1897. Mzimba was a delegate at this too. The Kaffrarian Presbytery felt that they could not accept union with the other presbyteries if their African ministers did not receive equal recognition.

A year later Mzimba, after twenty-two years in the Presbyterian ministry, felt he could no longer remain a member of the Free Church of Scotland and formed his own independent church. Stewart's biographer wrote that Stewart felt 'peculiar sorrow' because Mzimba had been like a son in the faith to him and 'the matter aged Dr Stewart perceptibly' (Wells 1906:295).

Wells had nothing to say about Stewart's non-attendance of Mzimba's ordination.

The congregation at Lovedale Church was mainly of Mfengu origin and they decided to leave the church and remain with Mzimba. They called themselves the true 'Free Church' and 'joined Mzimba wholesale' (MS 7801:804). Makiwane had trouble with Headman Bovani Mabandla of MacFarlan village who joined Mzimba. There were disputes over property and Lennox wrote from Lovedale that: 'Mzimba's people were very active in asserting that all South African property would pass, or rather had already passed into the hands of the Free Church [Mzimba's Presbyterian Church of Africa] and that they, the Mzimbatites were to have the use and possession of it' (MS 7801:652). Many were even convinced that after the death of Stewart Lovedale would belong to them. These disputes resulted in ill feeling between the Presbyterians of the Kaffrarian Presbytery and those of Mzimba's Presbyterian Church of Africa.

Mzimba died in 1911 and his son became head of the Mzimbatite Church. The formation of Mzimba's church had a direct influence on the formation in 1923 of the Bantu Presbyterian Church ~ the African branch of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa.

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Napo, Joseph Murtunye Kanyane *(born c 1860)*

Kanyane Napo was the founder of the African Church, an independent denomination in the Transvaal that broke away from the Anglican Church in 1888.

Napo belonged to the Mopedi people and was born in Matlala's Kraal, Sekhukuniland. He was baptised in the Independent Church (Congregational) in Uitenhage by the Rev Paterson. He belonged to this church for a number of years, even becoming a lay preacher.

Napo then left the Independent Church and joined the Anglican Church because he liked their liturgical style of worship (MS 14 787). He had no grievance against his previous church but simply preferred the Anglican service. Napo remained in the Anglican Church until April 1888 when he left to establish his own African Church. At the time he was living in Pretoria. Napo retained the Anglican doctrines and style of worship in his new church.

In 1892 when Mangena Mokone left the Wesleyan Methodist Church and founded the Ethiopian Church, Napo, like Brander and other church leaders, joined him in his venture. Napo's church in Marabastad served to show Mokone that it was possible to have a wholly African church without missionary support.

When the Ethiopian Church amalgamated with the African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1896 Napo also became a member. His name is listed among the elders at the 1901 Conference of the AMEC. However, by this time Napo was beginning to feel the lack of freedom he had in his own church. The elders at the conference were angry that Napo had appointed his own preachers 'by consecration and laying of hands' (Minutes 1903).

Napo, in return, retold the whole history of how he came to be a member of the AMEC. He stated that he did not want to join Dwane, as others had done, but asked why the AMEC had taken away his plot for a church in Kimberley. Napo wanted to be made a bishop of his own district. In his Pretoria district he had eight churches, nine ministers, twenty-three local preachers and teachers.

Napo left the AMEC and re-established his African Church. In the 1920s,

when he became old and blind, he was succeeded by his son Joseph Kanyane, Jr.

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Ngcayiya, Henry Reed (1860-1928)

Ngcayiya was a founder of the Ethiopian Church of South Africa. This is not to be confused with the Ethiopian Church founded by Mangena Mokone in 1892, although Ngcayiya considered that he had returned to the original Ethiopian position.

He was born in 1860 near Fort Beaufort in the Eastern Cape. He attended Healdtown, the Methodist college, where he obtained a teacher's certificate. After teaching for some years he became an interpreter at the Aliwal North Magistrate's Office. While he was working in Aliwal North, Mokone visited the Eastern Cape in 1893 looking for men to join the ministry of the Ethiopian Church. By this time Goduka and the remnants of the Tembu Church had already joined Mokone. Ngcayiya volunteered and was accepted as an Ethiopian.

As part of the Ethiopian ministry, Ngcayiya was ordained into the ministry of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1898. He became a loyal member of the AMEC and served on a number of committees, for example in 1901 he was listed among the elders and served on the committee to consider the 'state of the church', as well as the finance and missions committees (Minutes 1901). He was also among those delegated to record the history of the Ethiopian movement in South Africa.

In 1899, after Dwane's defection to the Anglicans, Isaiah Goda Sishuba held a meeting at the Friendly Hall in Cape Town. Sishuba wanted to ensure the unity of the ministry of the AMEC. Ngcayiya was not at the meeting, but later he and Sishuba joined forces to establish a new Ethiopian Church.

When in 1900 Bishop Coppin became the first bishop of the South African AMEC Ngcayiya was not among those, such as Mokone and Tantsi, who were granted leadership positions. Even though he had travelled extensively for the AMEC in the Eastern Cape, bringing in many new members, he was not among those listed by Tantsi in 1904 as having 'figured prominently in the struggle' to become established. However, Ngcayiya was made the presiding elder for Natal.

In 1908 a constitution for a new independent church was drawn up and signed by Sishuba, Ngcayiya, Spawn, Sonjica and Phakane. They said that they had seen the 'deplorable spiritual and mental condition of the people' and membership of the new church would be based on 'an intelligent profession of faith in Christ' (Constitution). However, it was only at the 1912 Conference that Ngcayiya, Sishuba and 17 ministers took leave of the AMEC and the new Ethiopian Church of the United South Africa came into existence. Ngcayiya said in 1925 that one of their main reasons for leaving the AMEC was that it was controlled from America.

Ngcayiya was a member of the Executive of the African National Congress and acted as chaplain. He was a member of the 1919 deputation of the ANC to the British government in England. When Sishuba died, Ngcayiya became the head of the Ethiopian Church, a post he held for sixteen years until his death in 1928. Skota described Ngcayiya as 'a good preacher, energetic, very shrewd in his judgment, the soul of generosity who made many sacrifices, a very cheerful disposition' who was loved by all his colleagues (Skota 1933:78).

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Ntsikana (Chief Sicana) Gaba *(1780-1820)*

Ntsikana founded the first African Christian organisation in about 1815. He was also the first great Xhosa hymn-writer and his 'great hymn' appears in many of the modern hymn books.

Ntsikana was born in about 1780 of the Ngqika tribe and became a hereditary councillor to Ngqika, Paramount of the Rharhabe chiefdom. He lived at a time when white settlement of the eastern frontier was increasing and there was conflict between the Xhosa and the new settlers. Ntsikana's father, Gaba, was a polygamist, as were most of the Xhosa before they were converted (Bokwe 1914:4). His mother, Nonabe, was the second wife. Because the first wife was jealous, she accused Nonabe of witchcraft and Nonabe had to flee for her life. A few months later Ntsikana was born.

When Ntsikana was about twelve years old his father sent for him. As Gaba had only a daughter from his first wife, Noyiki, she adopted the boy as her own. Ntsikana grew up tending his father's herds and learning to hunt.

When he was an older teenager, Van der Kemp of the London Missionary Society came to the area where he lived. From 1799 to 1801 the missionary tried to evangelise but met with little success. From him Ntsikana first heard the Christian message. Van der Kemp left Ngqika's territory and went to live in Graaff-Reinet. A time of war followed on the eastern frontier between the leading Rharhabe chiefs, Ngqika and Ndlambe. This ended with the Battle of Amalinde where Ngqika was defeated. Ndlambe's warriors then attacked Grahamstown in 1819 (the Fifth Frontier War) and a buffer zone was declared between the Fish and Keiskamma rivers.

It was not until 1816 that the next missionary came to Ntsikana's area. He was the Rev Joseph Williams, who opened a mission station near the Kat River.

After Ntsikana had gone through the ceremony as an Amakweta and was accepted into manhood, two wives were found for him, Nontsonta, who became the mother of Kobe, and Nomamto, who was the mother of

Dukwana and two younger brothers. When his father died, Ntsikana inherited his property.

At about this time Ntsikana had a vision. He had a favourite ox, a large dun-coloured animal, spotted with white and with long horns, which he named Hulushe. One morning he went to the kraal and noticed a ray of the sun, brighter than the others, strike the side of the ox. He went into a trance. When he asked Kobe who was standing by if he had seen what had happened, the boy replied that he had seen nothing. Ntsikana continued to puzzle over what had happened. Further strange happenings took place at a wedding celebration that day. Ntsikana took his family home and on the way washed off his red ochre. Nobody could understand what had happened to him.

During the next few days Ntsikana started humming a chant that eventually became his 'round hymn'. He told the people that they should all pray and from then on he held regular services. He said that they must not listen to Nxele, the 'witch doctor'. This was the start of his ministry. Ntsikana did not settle at the mission station but visited Williams and, after his death, the missionary Brownlee regularly. He had been considering moving to Chumie Mission when he died in Thwatwa in 1821 (Hodgson 1981:6).

Ntsikana wrote four hymns, the best known of which is his 'great hymn'. This is still found in modern hymnbooks. Years later Alan Soga wrote a tribute to Ntsikana:

What 'thing' Ntsikana, was't that prompted thee
To preach to thy dark countrymen beneath yon tree?
What sacred vision did the mind enthrall,
Whil'st thou lay dormant in thy cattle kraal?

Ntsikana's hymn praises God as the Great God of the heavens. Much of Ntsikana's theology came from his personal experience and he is remembered as the first important Xhosa convert.

Ulo Tixo omkulu, ngosezulwini
(The Great God, He is in heaven.
Thou art thou, Shield of truth.
Thou art thou, Stronghold of truth.

Thou art thou, Thicket of truth.
Thou art thou, who dwellest in the highest.
Who created life (below) and created (life) above.
The Creator who created, created heaven.
This maker of the stars, and the Pleiades.
A star flashed forth, telling us.
The maker of the blind, does He not make them on purpose ?
The trumpet sounded, it has called us,
As for His hunting, He hunteth for souls.
Who draweth together flocks opposed to each other.
The Leader, he led us.
Whose great mantle, we put it on.
Those hands of Thine, they are wounded.
Those feet of Thine, they are wounded.
Thy blood, why is it streaming ?
Thy blood, it was shed for us.
This great price, have we called for it ?
This home of Thine, have we called for it ?
J. K. B.

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Pamla, Charles (1834-1917)

Pamla was one of the first African Methodist ministers to be ordained. In 1866 Bishop Taylor of California described him as 'about six foot high, muscular, well-proportioned but lean ... [with] regular features, very pleasant expression, logical cast of mind and sonorous, powerful voice' (Taylor 1895:361).

Pamla was born in 1834 in the Butterworth district of the Eastern Cape. He was the son of Mdingazwe and great-grandson of Zulu, a prominent chief of the Amabambo tribe. Even before the flight of the Mfengu, Mdingazwe had left his home in Mzinyati, Natal, and settled among the followers of Hintsá in the Peddie district. When Hintsá heard that his name was Mdingazwe, meaning a person with no settled abode, he renamed him 'Pamla' meaning 'wanderer' (Mears 1958:12). When the missionary John Ayliff approached Hintsá for permission to start a mission, Hintsá told him to 'go to the Mfengu; those are the men for whom such a Gospel is fit'. One of Ayliff's first converts was Pamla's grandmother, Mbuya, who was a sangoma. Pamla's father, mother and uncle were also converted.

In 1833 the whole family was baptised by the Rev W Garner of the Methodist Church, so Charles was born into a Christian family. He attended school in Nyara but did not receive much education as he had to look after the family's sheep. He carried his Bible with him so that he could read while in the veld. While he was herding the sheep he used to preach to the trees to practise public speaking because he wanted one day to become an 'umfundisi' or preacher. Pamla, too, was baptised into the Christian faith by the Rev Garner.

At about this time the family moved to Keiskammahoek, where Pamla became a class leader and local or lay preacher. When the Rev Robert Lamplough came to the area Pamla acted as interpreter. Lamplough was stationed at Annshaw Church, Middeldrift, and Pamla began to be involved as an unpaid evangelist. One night in 1866 Pamla had a vision and decided to offer himself for the ministry. He sold his home and farm to concentrate

on his work as an evangelist. He studied Wesley's sermons and often used them as the basis for his own preaching. Pamla became known as a powerful preacher.

In 1866 Bishop Taylor of California came to South Africa to hold revival meetings. When he reached Queenstown he was introduced to Charles Pamla who became his interpreter. At the meetings Pamla would repeat what Taylor had said in words that the listeners could understand. Many lives were changed. As people came to find out more, Taylor found himself continually asking: 'Charles, what are they saying?' (Taylor 1895:409). Taylor wrote: 'Charles Pamla's training for our great work together was going on quite independently of me' (MS 1534 Cory Library).

At Annshaw there was an emotional revival. Here Taylor began to preach in what Pamla called 'low English' so that Pamla could interpret more easily. Pamla was even able to translate the hymns. He wrote in 1916, referring to the service at Annshaw, that: 'There the Holy Spirit came mightily on us all and many wonderful things were seen and done' (Mears 1958:17).

Pamla continued to travel with Taylor. At Clarkebury the Tembu chief wanted to give himself to God. Everywhere men and women, black and white turned to God. When they reached Natal, Taylor's mission came to an end. Taylor said, before he left: 'If my fellow labourer, Brother Charles Pamla, and a few others were set apart as were Barnabas and Saul for this work ... I believe the Holy Spirit would do a work through them he could not so readily do through me.' He also said: 'These are the men to evangelise Africa.'

The following year a theological institution was opened in Healdtown. The first students were Charles Pamla, James Lwana, Charles Lwana and Boyce Mama. They were ordained in 1871.

Pamla started his ministry in an isolated church in Tsitsana. He then worked in Butterworth and Etembeni. He had a long ministry as a pioneer preacher, always standing firm on his Christian principles, such as refusing to drink 'Kaffir beer'. He tried to have the African customs that the missionaries condemned discussed at Synod.

In 1909 he was appointed a connexional evangelist with wider responsibilities, although based in Clarkebury. He continued in this post until he retired

to Matatiele in 1913. The mission station 'Pamlaville' was named after him. He remained active and a year before he died he wrote: 'Time would fail me to tell of all the wonders of God's grace ... My own heart is full of wonder and thankfulness at the remembrance of all my eyes have seen.'

Pamla died on 24 June 1917. Speaking to members of the family, after his death, the Rev T Curnick told them: 'He is not only your father, but is the father of the whole Connexion [the Methodist Church in South Africa].'

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Soga, Tiyo (1829-1871)

Tiyo Soga was the first African minister to be ordained into the ministry of the Presbyterian Church in South Africa. He was born in Gwali in 1829, at the time that Chief Makoma was expelled from the Kat River. He was the son of Jotello, one of the chief councillors of Chief Ngqika, and Nosuthu, Soga's 'great wife'. C L Stretch, a member of the Legislative Council, relates how he taught Old Soga to cultivate crops to feed his family and livestock. He became the first Xhosa to use a plough and irrigate his crops with running water and was soon able to sell produce to the military at Fort Cox (Cousins 1899:14).

Nosuthu became a Christian and, after much thought and prayer, asked Jotello, who had eight wives, to release her from the marriage. She wanted her son Tiyo to grow up a Christian. She also refused to allow Tiyo to be circumcised. This would later prove to be a stumbling block where cultural matters were concerned as he was not considered by traditionalists to have passed the test of manhood. Nosuthu took Tiyo to Chumie Mission which had been founded in 1818 by the Rev John Brownlee. Old Soga had been

instructed by Ngqika to promote the interests of the mission. A few years earlier Ngqika had sent him to visit Ntsikana to hear what the Christian message was about. Ngqika was not a Christian but was willing to allow the missionaries to work in his area. Here, at Chumie, Tiyo grew up and attended the school of the Rev Chalmers.

In 1844 Tiyo Soga was given a free scholarship to Lovedale, about thirteen kilometres from Chumie. Two years later, during the 'War of the Axe', Lovedale was closed and the military took over the buildings. Tiyo and his mother were among the refugees at Fort Armstrong. He kept his school-books with him and continued to study, often at night, by the light of the sneezewood fire lit by his mother. The Rev William Govan, principal of Lovedale, decided to return to Scotland. Two of the other missionaries asked him to take their sons with him for higher education. Govan decided to ask whether Tiyo could accompany them and paid all his expenses out of his own pocket. His mother did not know whether she would see her son again, but she let him go with the words: 'My son belongs to God; wherever he goes God is with him ... he is as much in God's care in Scotland as he is here with me' (MacGregor 1978:72).

Soga attended the Normal School in Glasgow. During this time he was 'adopted' by the John Street United Presbyterian Church. While he was in Scotland he made a profession of faith and was baptised in May 1848. Little is known of his school years, but his time in Scotland gave him a sympathy for both the white and the black races which was to last him throughout his life.

He returned to the Eastern Cape, and from 1849 worked as a catechist and evangelist in Chumie. He found that the people in the area were enthralled by the power of a sorcerer called Mlanjeni. At this time Soga was asked by the Rev Robert Niven to help open a new mission station in the Amatole mountains ~ the Uniondale Mission in Keiskammahoek. Here, for the first time, he experienced problems when scholars of the school were withdrawn because of his lack of circumcision.

During this time Soga began to compose sacred songs. When Soga preached it was to a congregation that identified religion with the colonial authorities with whom they were at war. On Christmas day 1850 Uniondale Mission was burnt to the ground and Soga narrowly escaped with his life. He refused to take the side of the chief in the war. He then declined a government offer of employment as an interpreter. Instead, he accompanied

the Rev Niven back to Scotland to embark on theological studies so that he might 'learn better how to preach Christ as my known Saviour to my countrymen who know Him not' (*Christian Express* 1878).

He studied at the Theological Hall, Glasgow, and on 10 December 1856 was licensed as a minister of the United Presbyterian Church. When he left the college his fellow students presented him with a gift of books. Two months later he married a Scot, Janet Burnside, and they returned to South Africa. She was to prove herself 'a most honourable, thrifty, frugal and devoted woman who marched heroically and faithfully by her husband's side through all the chequered scenes of his short life' (Cousins 1899:59). She soon learned what it meant to be married to an African in colonial South Africa. Soga recorded that when they landed in Port Elizabeth 'you should have seen the wonder and amazement with which a black man with a white lady leaning on his arm seemed to be viewed by all classes' (Cousins 1899:67). Poor Janet Burnside was viewed with suspicion by both black and white! Soga had to put up with accusations of trying to become a 'black Englishman'.

1857 was the year of the 'Cattle Killing' and, as the Sogas travelled through the Eastern Cape, their eyes were met with signs of the starvation that the people were facing. Soga started his ministry in Peulton near King William's Town, a mission of the London Missionary Society, but soon moved to Emgwali. In March 1857 Soga received a letter from the Glasgow Missionary Society saying that according to the rules of the Society he was now an 'ordained Caffre missionary', even though his training had been the same as the white missionaries. His salary would be 100 pounds a year, with thirty pounds for incidental expenses, and his life was insured for 300 pounds. He was also given a grant to buy a horse, saddle and bridle (MS 7640 1857:650).

The site for Emgwali Mission was given to the society by Sandile and Soga was to work among his own people, the Ngqikas. Permission to start the mission had also been given by Sir George Grey, the governor. Soga had to negotiate with the chiefs and then supervise the erection of the mission buildings (MS 7640 1857:681).

Soga was often sick and fell behind with his correspondence. He received letters from the Rev Somerville requesting news and reports of his work. During the years in Emgwali the Sogas had seven children ~ four sons and three daughters. Janet Soga returned to England for the births of her

children. For example, in 1864, Somerville wrote to her saying that he was 'glad to hear that she had been safely delivered of a daughter' and could now return home to Emgwali. He asked after John, their first son, who had a crippled leg (MS 7645 1864:592). John's medical care would entail a number of trips to England.

Soga worked in Emgwali but travelled extensively so that the influence of the Presbyterian Church spread throughout Sandile's country. In 1866 he was unable to work for a time because of ill-health. During this time he translated the *Pilgrim's Progress* into Xhosa. Two years later he was on the board to revise the Xhosa Bible.

Towards the end of his life he was sent to open a new mission station in Tutuka (Somerville) in Kreli's country. The burden of work was too much for so frail a man. The *Christian Express* noted in 1878 that 'one cannot help lamenting his removal from Emgwali ... It hastened his end as difficult ground had to be broken.' He wanted his boys to be educated in Scotland as he had been. Before he died he instructed his sons: 'For your own sakes never appear ashamed that your father was a "Kaffir" and that you inherit some African blood. It is every whit as good and as pure as that which flows in the veins of my fairer brethren ... You will ever cherish the memory of your mother as that of an upright, conscientious, thrifty, Christian Scots woman. You will ever be thankful for your connection by this tie with the white race' (Cousins 1899:146).

His older brother, Festiri, came to help him as an evangelist, but Soga had tuberculosis and was very weak. In August 1871 the Rev Cummings wrote to the Missionary Board and told them that Soga was 'suffering from injury sustained by exposure to rain during a lengthened journey on horseback' (MS 7651 1871:765). The secretary of the board wrote back to Janet Soga suggesting that he 'remove for a time to a suitable place for a change and rest' at their expense. But the letter came too late and Soga was already dead. He died in the arms of his friend, the missionary Richard Ross, with his mother, Nosuthu, at his side.

After his death numerous tributes were made to his memory. The Board wrote that they had always had a 'high estimate of his character as a Christian missionary and a man of God' (MS 7651). They recommended that Janet Soga and her four youngest children should return to Scotland on a full allowance.

His epitaph was drawn up by Dr Anderson in Scotland and the gravestone reads: Sacred to the memory of the Rev Tiyo Soga the first ordained preacher of the Caffre race. He was a friend of God, a lover of His Son, inspired by His Spirit, a disciple of His holy Word. A zealous churchman, an ardent patriot, a large-hearted philanthropist, a dutiful son, an affectionate brother, a tender husband, a loving father, a faithful friend, a learned scholar, an eloquent orator and in manners a gentleman. A model Caffrarian for the imitation and inspiration of his countrymen (MS 7652 1872:13). The words were written in Xhosa and English and are a fitting memorial to his ministry.

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Tile, Nehemiah (d 1891)

Nehemiah Xoxo Tile founded an independent tribal church in 1884 which he called the Tembu National Church. He may be called the forerunner of the Ethiopian movement in South Africa.

The origins of Tile are obscure. He was born in Tembuland and is said to have been baptised by the Rev Dugmore of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. He was educated in Boloto and eventually became a lay preacher and then an evangelist.

In 1870 he was sent to Pondoland where he became a personal friend of Paramount Chief Mhlontlo and Chief Lehane of the Basutos. The following year he was transferred to Shawbury to work with the Rev E Gedye. In accordance with the Methodist style of an itinerant ministry, 1872 found him in the Clarkebury district working with the Rev Peter Hargreaves. Here he was once more working among his Tembu people and he enjoyed a successful ministry at Cwecini, near Clarkebury. Chief Ngangeliswe allowed him to build a church a year later and his work as an evangelist flourished.

The Methodist authorities decided to send Tile to Healdtown for three years of theological training. Here he got to know James Dwane, who also became the leader of an independent church. Tile was accepted as a probationer minister in 1879, but left the Methodist ministry before he could be ordained.

In 1882 Tile worked in Xora and here he came into conflict with the authorities, both colonial and church. Tile was accused by the colonial authorities of telling the people not to pay taxes. The Cape Department of Native Affairs told the Methodist church leaders to discipline Tile and he was called to account for his actions. Tile had become an advisor to the chief, who wanted more independence for the Tembu people. He had addressed public meetings and even written to the newspapers.

At the same time Tile had a disagreement with his superior, the Rev Theophilus Chubb. Tile had donated an ox to the circumcision feast of Dalindyebo, the son of the chief. Chubb had little patience with traditional cultural practices, while to Tile they were a normal part of life.

In 1882 Tile left the Methodist Church and two years later founded the Tembu National Church in Qokolweni, in what was then the Transkei. Tile had great respect for the British Crown and he made Chief Ngangelizwe the head of the church, a copy of the church in England. The Tembu National Church was meant to be a unifying force for the Tembu nation.

At first, Tile met with great success and he added the words 'South Africa' to the name of the church to include non-Tembu people. The church

membership spread as far afield as the Transvaal where they were known as 'Tilites'.

Tile trained his ministers according to the Church of England priesthood. Tile himself applied to register as a theological student at St John's College in Umtata in order to learn the Anglican doctrines (Evidence SANAC). He was not reacting against the Christian Church but against the insensitivity of the Methodist authorities.

In 1884 Dalindyebo succeeded his father as chief. For a while he supported Tile's church, but in 1895 he returned to the Methodist fold and withdrew his support from the 'Tilites'.

Tile died in 1891 and was succeeded by Jonas Goduka, although on his deathbed he had given three of his ministers, Gqamani, Kula and Mkize, the task of continuing the work of the church. Later, there was a split in the church and some of the membership followed Goduka and others chose Gqamani as their leader.

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Tikhuie, Vehettge Magdalena (d 1800) _____

Vehettge, or Magdalena, as she was named by the missionary at her baptism, was one of the earliest indigenous church leaders in South Africa. She belonged to the church in Genadendal and when the missionary, George

Schmidt, returned to Europe, she continued to hold services under the peartree that he had planted.

Vehettge was born to Khoisan parents in the early years of the eighteenth century. Her parents were semi-nomadic farmers and moved around in the Rivierzonderend and Sergeant's River area. She first met the Moravian missionary George Schmidt when he settled in Sergeant's River in 1737. In April 1738 the missionary moved inland to Baviaan'skloof (which was later called Genadendal) and Vehettge (or Lena) and a number of other people moved with him.

When Schmidt met Vehettge she was already married to Janneke or Jantjie Tikkuie (Bredekamp 1981:73). Her husband helped Schmidt establish the new mission station and performed various tasks like going to the military post for stores and to collect post. Sometimes Vehettge was lucky and was allowed to accompany him. Janneke was also a hunter and helped to keep the community supplied with meat.

One of the first things that Schmidt did was to start a school. He taught in Dutch because he was unable to master the clicks of the Khoi language. Schmidt recorded that four of his best students were Africo (the first convert to be baptised), Kupido, Willem and Vehettge (Krüger 1966:21). The numbers of those who wanted to learn continued to grow and by December there were four men, two women and four children in the school.

It was difficult for semi-nomadic people to settle down. Janneke and the others sometimes went off on their own for weeks on end. In February 1739 Vehettge decided that she too would go off alone. She marched up to the missionary and announced: 'I'm not going to stay here any longer!'. When he asked 'Why?,' she answered, 'All the people are against me.' Schmidt told her that her own behaviour was the cause of the trouble. 'Didn't I warn you that it is your own fault that they are treating you like this?' She slammed down her ABC school book and New Testament and disappeared, only to return five days later seeking forgiveness.

Schmidt was not an ordained minister, but he knew that there were people at the mission who were ready for baptism. He requested permission to baptise from Count Nicholas Zinzendorf in Herrnhut, Germany, the Moravian headquarters. When a letter of ordination arrived in 1742, he first baptised Willem and Africo, and then it was the turn of Vehettge. Willem

was given the baptismal name of Joshua, Africa became Christian, and Vehettge was called Magdalena. Her husband was not baptised at the same time, perhaps because he was not as mature in the Christian faith as his wife was perceived to be.

In 1744 Schmidt returned to Europe. He had intended to return to South Africa but this was not to be. Gradually the community at the mission dispersed. Christian and Joshua (Willem and Africo) remained in Baviaan's kloof until 1756, when they died in a smallpox epidemic.

Lena (or Magdalena) returned to her old home in Sergeant's River, half-an-hour's journey to the south of Genadendal (Baviaan'skloof). She would gather the people that remained under the peartree in Schmidt's garden, pray with them and read to them from the New Testament. As the families grew, so people taught their children to pray. Inhabitants of the area testified, saying: 'Every evening we all, men, women and children would go to old Lena. Then she would fall on her knees and pray. When her eyes were better we read the New Testament' (Ou suster:1937). As they ate the pears from Schmidt's tree, they would remember the days when the missionary was among them. There were enough pears for everyone, even the baboons!

Lena became something of a legend. In 1775 and 1776 a traveller from Europe was told of the Khoisan woman who used to pray and read the Bible. She carried on with her teaching even after she heard that Schmidt had died in 1785. When the Moravian missionaries Kühnel, Schwinn and Marsveld arrived to re-establish the mission station at Genadendal, she met them and showed them her well-used Dutch New Testament. A young woman, Magdalena Fredericks, read from the Book which had been kept safe, wrapped in sheepskins in a leather bag. When they told Lena that they had come to work in Genadendal, her response was 'Thanks be to God.'

By this time Lena's eyesight was bad and she could only get around with difficulty. Marsveld recorded in his journal that Lena visited the missionaries to offer support. She attended the school lessons and helped those who found learning difficult.

Two years later Lena wrote to the mission authorities in Germany. Her eyesight was so bad that someone else had to do the actual writing. The year 1794 was one of illness in the community and Schwinn recorded that 'three of our baptised folk were so ill that we doubted their recovery. One

of them was Lena' (Bredekamp et al 1992:182). Lena was so grateful for her recovery that she wrote to tell the authorities that her 'good and loving God had let her live so long'. She saw her recovery as a sign of God's great love (Ou suster 1937:6).

Lena enjoyed life to the full. Visitors to Genadendal demanded to be introduced to her. In 1797 Mrs Matilda Smith, who was renowned for her good works and interest in mission, visited Lena. She wrote in her *Memoir* that the people that she met in Genadendal showed 'traces of His holiness and love' (Philip 1824:49). These were the people whom Lena had kept together as a Christian community. Lady Anne Barnard, the wife of the secretary to the governor of the Cape, said that when she visited Genadendal a year later that she had felt as if she 'was creeping back seventeen hundred years to hear from the rude but inspired lips of evangelists the simple sacred words of wisdom and purity' (Anderson 1924:180).

Lena gradually grew weaker until she died on 3 January 1800. For fifty years she had acted as the church leader of Genadendal.

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Tsewu, Edward (b 1856)

Edward Tsewu started an independent Presbyterian Church in Johannesburg, but his church did not last beyond 1905. He was born in Grahamstown in 1856, the son of one of the deacons of the Lovedale (Presbyterian) Native Church. He attended primary school at Gqumahashe and was taught by Nkohla Falati who had been trained as a teacher at Lovedale and who also worked as a catechist (Stewart 1887:58). Another teacher was Gwayi Tyamzashe, who was supporting his theological studies at Lovedale by teaching at Gqumahashe. His third teacher was Bolompana Majombozi, who also trained as a teacher at Lovedale.

With such a Lovedale-oriented background it is not surprising that from 1871, when he was fifteen years old, he too attended the institution and trained as a teacher. He taught at Adelaide to support himself while he studied and in 1875 obtained the Certificate of Competency at the government examination for elementary teachers.

Tsewu felt called to the ministry and during the years 1880 to 1883 he attended theological classes at Lovedale. He was licensed by the Free Church Mission Presbytery of Kaffraria in 1884. He went to work at Toleni Station during the absence of the missionary, the Rev Ross. Two years later he was transferred to Idutywa (Stewart 1888:864).

Tsewu was later transferred to Johannesburg, and although his work appeared successful, some of his congregation accused him of irregularities. In 1895 the Kaffrarian Presbytery, under which his church fell, decided that Tsewu should change places with Elijah Makiwane of MacFarlan Mission. Tsewu refused to be moved and the following year sent a letter from some of the members of his congregation saying that they were satisfied with his work. In 1896 he was still listed in the minutes of the Kaffrarian Presbytery as the minister in charge of the mission in Johannesburg. However, the Presbytery decided that 'the serious charges made against Mr Tsewu were proved beyond reasonable doubt' (*Christian Express* 1897). He was accused of falsifying reports, of not calling banns for marriages, and of

charging exorbitant fees for performing marriages. He also forced people to pay their church dues and appointed his own elders without any regard to the Presbyterian Church rules.

The distance between Kaffraria and the Transvaal did not make the process of coming to an understanding easy. Tsewu accused Stewart, the principal of Lovedale, of causing a split in his church because the presbytery would not listen to Tsewu's witnesses. Tsewu refused all invitations to attend the presbytery meetings. First his child had died and then his brother-in-law passed away and Tsewu did not want to leave Johannesburg. In the end Stewart, accompanied by the Rev Pambani Mzimba, travelled to Johannesburg to examine the charges against Tsewu.

Tsewu went to the newspapers with his story. Once again he was asked to appear before the presbytery and refused. He resigned from the ministry, although according to the rules of the Free Church of Scotland he was 'deprived of his ministry', and started an independent church with those members of his congregation who had supported him. It is difficult to assess how much the distance between Johannesburg and King William's Town, the seat of the Kaffrarian Presbytery, added to the misunderstanding and also to Tsewu's desire to be free of presbytery control. By 1903 the Presbyterian Mission Church in Johannesburg had been transferred to the Transvaal Presbytery and the Rev C B Hamilton was put in charge (Letter 1903).

Tsewu remained in Johannesburg and later joined the African Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1905, together with other members of the AMEC, Marshall Maxeke, John Mtshula and James Tantsi, he formally challenged the Registrar of Deeds' refusal to register land in an African's name. Tsewu ignored the proper channels and went to the top officials of the provincial administration. He was successful in his struggle for African land rights and soon after Africans were allowed to buy land in certain urban areas. His desire for religious freedom became channelled into a struggle for political freedom.

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UNISA

This book is a collection of profiles of 30 African church leaders from different denominations from the past. The first missionaries, the Moravians, had established a mission station in South Africa as early as 1737, but it was only after 1800 that work by various missionary societies and denominations really began.

Although the missionaries were dedicated to the task of spreading the Gospel, the Christian church would not have been planted so successfully without the help of indigenous South African converts who were familiar with the language and culture of the people to whom they preached. These men and women were every bit as dedicated to spreading the Gospel as the missionaries, but little is known about their work. This publication is an attempt to set the record straight. These early African evangelists were missionaries in own right. They 'Africanised' the message so that the people could understand the Gospel and through their commitment the Word was spread throughout southern Africa.

**Malihambe* literally means 'May it go'. It is also the name of a missionary outreach programme of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa