RELIGION AND DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA: AN INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOTERIOLOGY AND CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT IN AN AFRICAN INITIATED CHURCH (AIC)

by

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ABSTRACT

The upsurge of religious movements and independent churches in the Global South is bringing a new twist to world economic development not anticipated by many theologians and social scientists. With a syncretic soteriology geared toward the liberation of the whole person, religious movements and independent churches of the south are preaching to their adherents, mostly the poor and the marginalized, a message of faith in an omnipotent and compassionate God who is concerned for their weal and woes and who offers them an assured and holistic salvation. By placing their faith in God, the poor and marginalized people are discovering their true selves and are saved/liberated. This assured salvation (*certitudo salutis),* which is a total liberation of the physical and spiritual world, becomes, in turn, the motivational energy for capital development.

The Zion Christian Church (ZCC) soteriological predicament stands at this juncture. Through processes of syncretization and purification, ZCC has managed to deconstruct the European/North American and African Traditional Religions soteriologies to construct a "pure" soteriology that is relevant to the socio context of its adherents. ZCC deconstructs these soteriologies by broadening, for example, the classic Christian soteriogical theory of *Christus Victor* in her notion of sin, death and the devil and the African traditional soteriological notion of *uBuntu* and spirit-power. The "purity", or holistic salvation, generated out of these processes serves as grounds for identity and economic empowerment of its adherents.

With a holistic salvation that centers on healing, personal integrity and spiritual power, ZCC members have been able to achieve considerable success in the labour

market by becoming an army of potential employees. They have also distinguished themselves in their work ethic, where they are seen as hardworking, disciplined, obedient and sober. Empowering its adherents economically through a religious soteriology, the ZCC has become an example of a trend that is shaping the Global South and is reviving the interest of social scientists and theologians to further investigate the impact of religious and theological formulations on the economic conduct of individuals.

In the African context, and in the Bible
Salvation as theological concept
Cannot be complete without liberation
As a social/political concept

J. Ndwiga Mugambi

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to the memories of my late Father Danny Nkuey Mafuta and my brothers Bonard Kabama Mafuta, Johnson Lubuele Mafuta and Filston Doko Mafuta Each one of you in your own right has taught me the virtues of Perseverance, Discipline and Dedication.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The culmination of this thesis is the fruit of a collective effort of many people, family and friends, who have supported and encouraged me to think and rationalize on pressing issues of our time and bring my scientific contribution as little as it is to the cause of religion, underdevelopment and capital production in sub-Sahara Africa. To all of you, I will always be indebted.

I am particularly indebted to my wife, friend and sparring partner, Elise Ritter Mafuta. Honey, if it was not for your persistent encouragement, your financial sacrifices, your critical insights and your technical skills, I would have not stood a single chance to bring this work to fruition. I will forever be indebted to you and I will never cease thanking God for bringing you into my life. You are so precious.

I am also indebted to my supervisor Professor RTH Dolamo who patiently walked me through the analytical process of writing and critique. Prof Dolamo never stopped encouraging me to think empirically and advance my knowledge when it comes to issues pertaining to theology and ethics. I thank him deeply. Without him this work would have not been possible.

May my friend Rev Lawrence Mogoera, his wife Junia and his daughter Lerato, and his son Zeph and the Rock of Ages Baptist Church of Atteridgeville, find in here the fruit of their collective effort. Rev Mogoera provided me with accommodations during my field research and allowed his church administrator Thabo to take time away from work and be my guide and interpreter as I navigated my way in Pretoria.

Thabo, “the boss”, to you, I lack words to sufficiently express my appreciation. You drove around Atteridgeville and Pretoria and took me to interview people who otherwise I would have not met.

I cannot forget the support I received from my brother Freddy Mafuta who took me to locations around Johannesburg to take photographs of ZCC adherents. My appreciation goes as well to my friend who is a brother to me, Dr Mulemfo Mukanda

Mabonso. Dr.Mulemfo has been instrumental in challenging my claims through my graduate years and at times has helped me deal with administrative matters that required my presence in South Africa.

To all of you who in one way or another have made a difference in my life, I share this thesis with you.

Student number**: 900-197-2**

I declare that **RELIGION AND DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA: AN INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOTERIOLOGY AND CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT IN AN AFRICAN INITIATED CHURCH (AIC**) is my own work and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledge by means of complete references.

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SIGNATURE DATE
(Mr. L. Mafuta)

KEY WORDS

Sub-Sahara Africa, economic conditions, social life and customs, politics and governance, religion, John Hick, Salvation, globalization, African traditional religions, African Initiated Churches, Soteriology, Zion Christian Church(ZCC), God in Africa, Development Theories

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFM	Apostolic Faith Mission
AIC	African Initiated Church
ANC	African National Congress
ATR	African Traditional Religion
DRC	Dutch Reformed Church
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
NERMIC	New Religious Movements and Independent Churches
NP	National Party
ZAC	Zion Apostolic Faith
ZAFM	Zion Apostolic Faith Mission
ZCC	Zion Christian Church

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CHAPTER I

INVESTIGATING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIGION AND CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

As a concern of the ultimate reality, religion is the most powerful ideological force with which humankind has ever had to contend and seeks to foster. As such, an analysis of the effects of ideology upon economic performance necessarily leads to addressing the role of religion upon growth and development.[1] This truth-claim has never been more apparent than in the developing world during recent decades. With the upsurge of religious movements and independent churches in the developing world, a new trend of economic development has emerged resulting in social scientists and theologians further investigating the impact of religious and theological formulations on economic conduct of individuals. Peter Berger vividly described it in saying, "This trend is bringing a new attitude toward work and consumption, a new educational ethos and violent rejection of traditional *machismo*."[2] By placing their faith in an omnipotent and compassionate God, the poor and the marginalized of the developing world are discovering their true selves by identification with a God who is concerned for their weal and woes and who offers them an assured and holistic salvation.[3] This assured salvation, which is a total liberation of the physical and the spiritual world, becomes the motivational energy for capital development.

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[1]Ian Steuart, "An Investigation into the Relationship between Religion and Economic Development," *Wits Student Journal of Economics* (June 1999) : 4.

[2]Peter Berger, ed., *The Desecularization of the World, Resurgent Religion and World Politics* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1999), 9.

[3]Allan Anderson, *Zion and Pentecost: The Spirituality and Experience of Pentecostal and Zionist/Apostolic Churches in South Africa* (Pretoria: University of South Africa Press, 2000), 275.

Motivation of the Research

I felt the need to examine the relationship between soteriology and capital development from the framework of the Zion Christian Church for two compelling reasons. One is personal and the other is academic.

Personal Motivations

This study focuses on the ZCC soteriological apparatus as grounds for capital production. Soteriology entails the religious and theological processes that religious traditions provide for the physical and spiritual liberation of individuals and the belief in the afterlife. Capital production or development is defined as both the complex bulk of technical methods and institutions that regulate and facilitate production and as well as a social and economic system that enhances the expansion of growth and progress. Although the study is built on areas of my previous work in international development at the University of Iowa and theology at Wheaton College Graduate School, both culminating in Masters Degrees respectively in International Development and in Systematic Theology, my interest in AICs, particularly the ZCC, dates back to when I was a student at Wits University and living in Johannesburg.

In Johannesburg, I encountered so many ZCC members and they reminded me of the adherents of the largest AIC in sub-Sahara Africa, the Church of Jesus Christ on Earth by the Prophet Simon Kimbangu, also known as Kimbanguism, from my native country of the Democratic Republic of Congo. They were dedicated to their church and adopted a strict moral ethic, thus dissociating themselves from the rest of the population.

My interest in ZCC also grew when my brother married a South African whose parents are members of ZCC. I was struck by their dedication and their drive to live a diligent and sober life. I was also curious to understand why they were so secretive, shielding themselves from outsiders.

However, what fascinated me most about them was their moral apparatus. Their way of life reminded me of friends and neighbours in my native country who had the same perception when it came to work ethic and morality. They were dedicated and abstained from drinking and smoking on grounds of soteriological predicament. In addition to this theological apparatus, both ZCC and Kimbanguism were founded by a native of the country, and both churches achieved economic success by engaging their adherents in capital production and contributed human and social capital to the economy of their countries. As I observed ZCC members in South Africa, I continued to question their source of inspiration. This leads me to my second motive for undertaking this thesis.

Academic Motivations

My motivation for studying ZCC is located in the broader spectrum of what has been happening in the context of globalization. The resurgence of religious movement in the Global South brings a new perspective on how we understand religious beliefs, an individual's behavior and capital production. In this trend, ZCC is a particular example. With its soteriological apparatus, ZCC has managed to deconstruct the European/North American and African Traditional religions' soteriologies to construct a soteriology that prompts motivation for capital production among its adherents.

My motivation derives as well from the relatively little amount of research that has been done on the social and economic impact of AICs. With the number of South Africans flocking to AICs, including the ZCC, their impact on capital production and social production is a non-negligible factor. They are an army of employees who bring a distinct work ethic and a moral apparatus, thus contributing to the South African market economy. All of the reasons above account for my desire to complete empirical research on the relationship between soteriology and capital development.

Presenting an African Initiated Church: The Zion Christian Church (ZCC)

ZCC is the largest of the so-called African Independent Churches or African Initiated Churches (AIC) in southern Africa and the second largest in Africa.[4] Historically, the ZCC originated from an apocalyptic church found in the state of Illinois in the USA. It is believed that John Alexander Dowie, the founder of the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church, had a religious experience that led him to reject scientific medicine and promote healing through faith alone.[5] According to GC Oosthuizen, within the first year of the establishment of the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church in the USA, contacts were made with a Congregational Union of South Africa minister named J. Buchler.[6] Rev Buchler's mission was to propagate the Christian Catholic Apostolic faith among the Zulu- and Swazi-speaking South Africans living in the Wakkerstroom area, now known as Mpumalanga. After working for four years, Rev Butchler resigned and a Dutch Reformed Minister named P Le Roux took over his position. In the exercise of his ministry, Le Roux encountered members of the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) who happened to emphasize the speaking in tongues. Le Roux himself went through this spiritual experience of *glossolia* and joined the AFM. While serving as an AFM minister in mostly White churches, a number of his assistants went on to form their own African Initiated churches. Out of this group came the proliferation of Zionist-type churches.

It is believed that the founder of the Zion Christian Church, Engenas Lekganyane, met P Le Roux in Johannesburg around 1908. Lekganyane, labouring as a migrant

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[4]Kimbanguism or the Church of Jesus Christ on Earth According to the Prophet Simon Kimbangu of the Congo is the largest AIC in Africa with an estimated four millions members.

[5]Bengt Sundkler, *Bantu Prophets in South Africa* (London: Oxford University, 1961), 48.

[6] GC Oosthuizen, "Indigenous Christianity and the Future of the Church in South Africa", in *Religion and Social Transformation,* eds. TG Walsh and F Kaufmann (St Paul: Paragon House, 1990), 160.

worker and suffering from a serious eye disorder, had a dream that if he went to Johannesburg and joined a church that baptized by triune immersion in water, he would be healed.[7] It is believed that Elias Malhangu, an AFM minister and an assistant to P Le Roux, baptized Lekganyane and that he was healed. Lekganyane joined the AFM and worked with Malhangu. When Malhangu left to form his own church, the Zion Apostolic Church of South Africa (ZAC), Lekganyane joined him and the two worked together for nearly three years. During this time, Lekganyane was ordained and became a powerful preacher and prophet in the ZAC congregation in his hometown.

One of the striking events of his ministry was that Lekganyane prophesied the defeat of the Germans in World War I. When this happened, his reputation as a prophet grew and he became known as a man of excellent gifts of revelation and healing.[8] Lekganyane eventually split with Malhangu when he objected to some of the customs that Malhangu started to promote among ZAC members. Lekganyane objected to customs such as the wearing of white robes, growing of beards and removing shoes before services. Lekganyane left Mahlangu's ZAC and moved to Lesotho to join Edward Motaung's Zion Apostolic Faith Mission (ZAFM). He worked with Motaung for four years from 1920 to 1924 and was ordained as bishop. Lekganyane split with Motaung over his marriage with a second wife, a practice Motaung found objectionable. After his split, Lekganyane returned to his home town of Thabakgone in 1925 to found his own church which he called the Zion Christian Church.[9]

Lekganyane spent five years in his home town of Thabakgone ministering to his people. In 1930, he became involved in a dispute with the local chief over mistreatment

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[7]Allan Anderson, The Lekganyanes and Prophecy in the Zion Christian Church, *Journal of Religion in Africa*, Vol. 29 no.3 (1999), 287.

[8]Ibid., 288.

[9]Ibid., 289.

of one of his members. The dispute was so tense that Lekganyane was asked to leave town. With the help of the members of the Church, he was eventually able to secure farmland in a town called Boyne, fifty kilometers east of the city of Pietersburg. Lekganyane named this place Moria and later turned it into the Mecca of the Zion Christian Church.

Lekganyane died in 1948. After his death, the Church struggled to determine the successor among his sons, Edward and Joseph. The matter went on for a year without being resolved. The dispute ended up dividing the church into two separate entities. Led by his son Joseph, the smaller of the two factions became St Engenas Zion Christian Church and today is recognized by the dove on their badge. Edward took the bulk of the members and kept the name Zion Christian Church. They have a five-pointed star as their badge.[10]

How well Edward managed the church is debated. While some praised his ministry, others criticized his leadership as being functional rather than prophetic. Edward was accused of not relying on special and direct revelations and healing power in contrast to his father. Edward was also known for setting a precedent in the relationship between the Apartheid government and the church. In 1965, he invited a representative of the government to attend the church's Easter conference in Moria. In a speech he gave that day, while thanking the government for recognizing the ZCC and coming to her rescue during a severe drought that had struck the region, Edward included a section in which Anderson found "a note of servility."[11] In it he said, "I thank the Whites for leading us out of darkness", and "Our Church has no room for people who subvert the security of the state and break the laws of the land."[12] In a twist of events, he presented a

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[10]Anderson, 291.

[11]Ibid., 292.

[12]Ibid.

carved wooden scepter to the state representative saying, "We present this scepter to you for you and your government to lead the Bantu people to orderly freedom."[13] There is clear ambiguity in Edward's speech. While on one hand he is applauding the government, on the other hand he is defying it as well. This ambiguity in the relationship between the church and the government would become an asset as well as a liability that would become an issue for his successor.

Edward died suddenly of a heart attack in 1967 and his son Barnabas, who was 13

Figure 1 Bishop Barnabas Lekganyane

Source: Willy Mafuta, 2007, Pretoria

[13]BaNtu 12 (6) June 1965, 239.

at the time, could not succeed him. Not until Barnabas turned 21 in 1975 could he become the leader of the ZCC and later turn ZCC into one of the largest AICs in South Africa. According to the 2001 census, the Zion Christian Church had a membership of 3.8 million.[14] This means that 1 in every 11 South Africans was a member of the ZCC.

In her theological affirmation, the Zion Christian Church proclaims a holistic salvation that deals with the deliverance of the whole person from the totality of evil forces that rage against one's very existence. This salvation, which centers on healing, personal integrity and spiritual power in a social world in which people are increasingly disempowered, becomes the motivational energy for economic conduct impacting worldviews and lifestyles of ZCC members. Several aspects of the ZCC social and spiritual constructs illustrate this *modus operandi.*

ZCC members are known for their communal and personal purity and integrity. This is grounded in the belief that salvation purifies the whole person, who in turn is called to live in harmony within her/himself and the community. To maintain this personal and communal purity and integrity, each member of the church wears a silver star badge inscribed with "ZCC" on a green cloth that identifies members of the church as a people set apart.[15] This particularity of purity helps ZCC members achieve considerable success in the labour market. In fact, ZCC members are preferred by employers who recognize them as hardworking, disciplined, obedient and sober.

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[14]Jurgens Hendricks and Johannes Erasmus, "Interpreting the New Religious Landscape in Post-Apartheid South Africa," *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa,* 109 (2001): 41.

[15]David Chidester, *Religions of South Africa* (London: Routlege, 1992), 137.

Figure 2 Current ZCC Members wearing the badge with the five-pointed star

Source: Willy Mafuta, 2007, Pretoria

In addition to personal and communal purity, ZCC members find their motivational energy for economic conduct in reinterpreting their eschatology within the framework of their soteriological predicament. In this sense, life is not lived out in a long distant past, but in the present. Through healing, blessings and prophecy, their temporal needs are addressed and traditional and deep-seated fears of witchcraft and sorcery are kept at bay. Salvation/liberation, in this context, is more here-and-now than there-and-then. Because they are saved/liberated, their personal and economic circumstances change. Allan Anderson recalled an example of a couple who were haunted and could not find peace or economical viability until they joined ZCC. It was after being saved/liberated that they were freed from evil misfortunes and were able to be involved in

economic activities that provided a means of living for their family, in particular, and for the community at large.[16]

The Zion Christian Church is indeed an interesting case study of the relationship between religious postulations and ideologies and capital development. The ZCC case reinforces the idea that the new economic trends sweeping the developing world bring a new twist not anticipated by some social science schools of thought.

The Purpose of the Study

My thesis attempts to delineate the religious soteriological predicament of the ZCC and how it enhances its adherents' identity and empowers them economically. It argues that by "recognizing" and "undoing" the syncretic soteriologies of European/North America's Christianity and African Traditional Religions (ATRs), the ZCC has managed to appropriate a "purified" salvation, which is grounds for identity and economic empowerment of its adherents.[17] This "pure" salvation, centered on healing, personal integrity and spiritual power in a social world where people are increasingly disempowered, is a "holistic" salvation that aims to deliver the whole person from the totality of evil forces that rage against one's very existence and empowers individuals to devote to capital production. In this sense, it challenges the status quo of mission churches and the way capital development has been undertaken in the Global South.

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[16]Allan Anderson, *Zion and Pentecost: The Spirituality and Experience of Pentecostal and Zionist/Apostolic Churches in South Africa* (Pretoria: University of South Africa Press, 2000), 275.

[17]Peter Beyer, "At the Crossroads of Identity and Difference: Historical Dimensions of Religio-Cultural Syncretisms in the Context of Globalization," Paper delivered to the 2nd Symposium of the SFB/FK 560 (Lokales Handeln in Afrika im Kontext globaler EnfluBe), Universitat Bayreuth, Bayreuth, Germany, October 2004.

Theoretical Framework

Max Weber and the Protestant Ethic

Uncertainty about salvation creates a psychological effect of producing a single-minded search for certainty, argued Weber.[18] This uncertainty is the result of Calvin's doctrine of double predestination. In this sense, because salvation is by grace through faith (*sola fide*), there is no clear cut way of knowing who is saved and who is damned. Consequently, it is only through worldly asceticism and diligent work that the evidence of being part of the elect is shown.[19] This dynamic of worldly asceticism and work is what Weber termed as a "calling". A calling for Weber was both a vocation and service to God. A person without a calling, argued Weber, lacks the systematic methodological character which is demanded by worldly asceticism.[20] Religious anxiety and worldly asceticism are at the core of Weber's "spirit of capitalism" theory that has, for quite some time, been the *modus operandi* for studying the relationship between religion and economic development.

Religious Anxiety

Weber postulated his religious anxiety assertion in appealing to both Calvin's doctrine of double predestination and Luther's justification by faith alone. Calvin, in the *Institute of Christian Religion*, contended that God, in his eternal decree, foreordained some for eternal life and others for eternal damnation and that this process of selection is based on God's freely given mercy and incomprehensible judgment.[21] Because

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[18]Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), 112.

[19]Ibid.

[20]Ibid., 161.

[21]John T McNeill ed., *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), 931.

predestination is a process solely reserved for God, it created, in persons of faith, a psychological effect of anxiety about who is among the foreordained for eternal life and who is among the damned. Among the Reformed and the North American Puritans, Weber also observed a level of anxiety on what constituted the criteria for selection. He contended that wherever the doctrine of predestination was held as a belief, the question could not be suppressed whether there were any infallible criteria by which membership in the *electi* could be known.[22] The way to cope with this anxiety, according to Weber, was through worldly asceticism or calling.

While Calvin's double predestination created ambiguity where one could not know for sure whether he or she was part of the *electi*, Luther's justification by faith (*sola fide*) offered a feeling of certainty that one was saved. As a young monk, Luther struggled to conquer a permanent fear of God that he had developed. For him, God's punishment was so severe because he felt that he could not, at any cost, please the righteous God despite his good deeds and observance of the Church's ordinances. It was only when reading the Epistle to the Romans, especially Romans 1:17, that he came to terms with his fears. He realized that pleasing God has nothing to do with deeds. In his autobiographical segment he stated:

> I began to understand that 'righteousness of God' as that by which the righteous person lives by the gift of God (faith); and this sentence, 'the righteousness by which the merciful God justifies us by faith, as it is written, the righteous person lives by faith. This immediately made me feel as though I had been born again, and as though I had entered through open gates into paradise itself. From that moment, I saw the whole face of scripture in a new light. And now, where I had once hated the phrase, 'the righteousness of God,' I began to love and extol it as the sweetest of phrases, so that this passage in Paul became the very gate of paradise to me.[23]

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[22]Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, 110.

[23]Martin Luther, *On Christian Liberty* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 7.

Rejecting Weber's religious anxiety stipulation, Jere Cohen in his *Protestantism and Capitalism, the Mechanisms of Influence,* accused Weber of being one-sided. He contended that although Puritanism did induce anxiety, it was also able to comfort the anxious and to some extent alleviate their doubts and fears. For Cohen, Puritanism's self contradictory array of teachings produced a mixed effect rather than enduring anxiety.[24]

Cohen also argued that, contrary to Weber's thought, salvation anxiety was maximized by the doctrine of predestination, to which Puritans adhered; the seventeenth century saw predominant pastoral thought go beyond Calvin. During this time, Cohen contended, one's state of grace, be it salvation or condemnation, was quite ascertainable.[25]

Michael Lessnoff, for his part, rejected Cohen's contentions. He argued that Cohen, by suggesting that Puritan divines were as likely to offer reassurance to their flock as to induce anxiety in them, did not realize that this was precisely what Weber's thesis predicted.[26] Lessnoff contended that Weber did not argue that hard work and profit seeking arose simply out of religious anxiety but rather that they grew out of the attempt to overcome that anxiety.[27] There is not sufficient evidence to prove that sixteenth-century reformed societies and North American Puritans were ever able to overcome their religious anxiety in the strict Calvinist sense of the term. Overcoming their religious anxiety would have meant the end of worldly asceticism as the motivational energy of their economic conduct.

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[24]Jere Cohen, *Protestantism and Capitalism, the Mechanisms of Influence* (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 2002), 147.

[25]Ibid., 148.

[26]Michael Lessnoff, Review of *Protestant and Capitalism: The Mechanisms of Influence*, by Jere Cohen. *Business History Review: Vol. 28, No 4(Winter 2002): 575-588.*

[27]Ibid.

In recent scholarship, academics such as Robert Barro and his colleague Rachel McCleary echoed Weber's religious anxiety postulation in conducting an empirical study of the role religion plays in economic growth. Using a sample of 59 countries from around the world, where levels of economic development, political freedom, and religious beliefs varied widely, Barro and McCleary investigated the effects of church attendance and religious beliefs on economic growth. They discovered that while religion may encourage such traits as honesty, diligence, frugality and openness to others which, in turn may affect economic performance, increases in certain beliefs, notably belief in hell, heaven, and an afterlife, tend to increase economic growth. For Barro and McCleary, belief in heaven and hell affects characters traits by creating perceived rewards and punishments that relate to "good" and "bad" lifetime behavior.

Barro and McCleary also discovered that attendance at religious services indirectly affected economic performance through influences on religious beliefs.[28] They described a chain reaction whereby church attendance affects religious beliefs, which in turn affects individual traits, which affects individual and aggregate economic outcomes.[29] This chain led them to theorize on religious beliefs as an output of the religion sector and church attendance as an input. In this sense, an increase in church attendance signifies that the religion sector is less productive for the reason that resources in terms of time and goods are consumed for given outputs. For Barro and McCleary, church attendance was also a proxy for the influence of organized religion on laws and regulations that affect economic incentives.[30] Barro and McCleary's discoveries came

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[28]Robert J. Barro and Rachel M. McCleary, "Religion and Economic Growth across Countries," *American Sociological Review*, 68, no 5 (2003): 772.

[29]Ibid.

[30]Ibid.

down to the assertion that the fear of hell is more potent for economic growth than is the prospect of heaven.[31]

As a religious anxiety, the fear of hell in colonial Africa was not the motivation for capital development. It was a weapon used to control native populations. John and Jean Comaroff in their book, *Of Revelation and Revolution, the Dialectics of Modernity on a South African Frontier,* documented how British missionaries used the Bible and precepts such as hell to subdue the Batswana in South Africa.[32] In a similar way, David Chidester in *The Savage Systems: Colonialism and Comparative Religion in Southern Africa* documented how the British denied the essence of religion to South African natives by portraying their religious beliefs as primitive, backward and pagan in order to control them. [33] Once they were controlled, they were suddenly discovered to have a religious system. Here again, this discovery was a new tool of classifying their religion as pagan and primitive to incite them to embrace Christianity. Conversions were not necessarily voluntary. The use of physical force and the fear of hell were the methods that colonial powers and their proxy, especially missionaries, used to subdue Africans. It was out of the frustration of dealing with the colonial power that African independent churches arose. Moreover, the failure of the so-called mission churches to address the social and spiritual context of their members also contributed to the massive exodus of Africans to independent churches.

Worldly Asceticism

The discord between Calvin and Luther was not only in terms of the ambiguity of salvation but also in the essence of the worldly asceticism or calling. Where Calvin saw

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31Ibid.

32John L. and Jean Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution, The Dialectics of Modernity on a South African Frontier* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997), 120.

33Chidester, *Religions of South Africa*, 19.

works as a constant endeavour to get rid of the fear of damnation, Luther saw in works a natural occurrence that derives from the ultimate power of spirit dwelling in the inner person. Moreover, in works, Luther found the result being justified and not its essence. For Luther, a saved person has to show some behavior that pertains to his or her salvation. A saved person fulfills good works in this world not because she or he runs from the fear of damnation, but because she or he is certain of being saved. In his treatise, *On Christian Liberty*, Luther gave works a role of stewardship. He contended that a Christian (presumably a saved person) is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all.[34] As with Luther, Calvin pointed to the power of the Spirit to recall us to the individual precepts of the law.[35] He contended that the fruits of repentance include the duties of piety toward God and charity toward men, as well as in one's whole life, holiness and purity.[36] For Calvin, the duty of the believers is to present their bodies to God as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to him, and this consists of the lawful worship of him.[37]

As far as certainty of salvation is concerned, Calvin was not shy about mentioning that,

> He alone is truly a believer who, convinced by a firm conviction that God is a kindly and well-disposed Father toward him, promises himself all things on the basis of his generosity; who, relying upon the promises of divine benevolence toward him, lays hold on an undoubted expectation of salvation.[38]

Furthermore, Calvin contended that no humankind is a believer except he/she who, leaning upon the assurance of his salvation, confidently triumphs over the devil and

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[34]Ibid.

[35]John T. McNeil, ed., *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 609.

[36]Ibid.

[37]Ibid., 689

[38]Ibid., 562.

death.[39] When it comes to certainty of salvation and worldly asceticism or calling, there is a blurred distinction between Calvin and Luther. While Luther emphasized faith alone, Calvin, for his part, without rejecting faith, looked to God's foreknowledge and predestination. While Luther understood works as the natural occurrence of a Christian life, Calvin saw works as an end in themselves.

Weber drew from this distinction by siding with Calvin's concept of works. Making his own distinction between Luther and Calvin, he asserted,

> The religious believer can make himself sure of his state of grace either in that he feels himself to be the vessel of the Holy Spirit or the tool of the divine will. In the former case his religious life tends to be mysticism and emotionalism, in the latter to ascetic action. Luther stood close to the former type, Calvinism belonged definitely to the latter.[40]

According to Weber, although both Luther and Calvin stipulated *sola fide,* because Calvin viewed all pure feelings and emotions with suspicion, faith had to be proved by its objective results in order to provide a firm foundation for the *certitudo salutis*.[41] In this sense, faith must be *fides efficax*, the call to salvation as an effectual calling.[42] For Weber, calling becomes the mechanism of counteracting feelings of religious anxiety. He put it vividly by saying that "in order to attain that self confidence, intense worldly activity is recommended as the most suitable means."[43] Weber's Protestant ethic is a clear combination of Luther's conception of good works and Calvinist asceticism. In this scheme, good works are not a means to salvation but rather the means of getting rid of the fear of damnation.

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[39]Ibid.

[40]Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, 114.

[41]Ibid.

[42]Ibid.

[43]Ibid.,112.

Criticizing Weber's worldly asceticism or calling, H. M. Robertson contended that calling was not exclusive to Protestantism and as such could not have contributed to the rise of capitalism as Weber has argued. For Robertson, capitalism had existed well before the Reformation and thrived under Catholicism as well as Protestantism. Robertson appealed to Thomas Aquinas, who spelled out the concept of calling before the time of Reformation. Aquinas, talking about man's occupation, attributed it to a divine providence. He asserted,

> This division of men in different occupations occurs in the first place through divine providence, which distributes the condition of men in such a way… and also in the second place from natural causes, as a result of which it happens that there are different aptitudes for different occupations amongst different men.[44]

According to Robertson, the fact that this text, dated before sixteenth-century Puritanism, suggested that occupation or "calling" was a divine providence, not exclusive to the Puritans as Weber had argued. He saw in Weber's worldly asceticism a narrowed endeavour.[45]

Regardless of criticisms, Weber's postulations of religious anxiety and worldly asceticism have captivated Western rational explanation of economic endeavour. It has become a *modus operandi* in studying the relationship between religion and economic development.

Related Works on African-Initiated Churches and Economic Development

Weber's postulations on the relationship between religion and capital development have been the subject of studies of AIC scholars such as G. C. Oosthuizen,

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[44]H. M. Robertson, *Aspects of the Rise of Economic Individualism, A Criticism of Max Weber and His School* (Clifton: Augustus M. Kelly, 1973), 6.

[45]Ibid.

Harold Turner and Robert Garner. Oosthuizen, for example, initiated a research center for New Religious Movements and Independent Churches (NERMIC). After spending a decade studying iBandla lama Nazarite, also known as the Shembe Church, during the 1990s, he turned to the study of the socio-economic role of AICs. He subsequently published several articles including *African Independent Churches and Small Businesses, Spiritual Support for Secular Empowerment* and *Indigenous Christianity and the Future*.

In the first article, Oosthuizen contended that AICs facilitated the establishment of civil society institutions to aid small business operators, with the provision of premises and equipment. Furthermore, AIC promoted small businesses, acting as institutional clients of the small business and providing omnipresent support in the forms of prayers and healing.[46] In the second article, he delineated the positive influence of traditional African culture in the AICs. According to Oosthuizen, the positive impact of AICs lay in the fellowship, mutual discussion of problems, and healing procedures that gave them spiritual and physical refreshment and empowerment.[47]

Moreover, Oosthuizen elucidated AICs' positive impact as a broker to overcome and negotiate the dualisms generated by the juxtapositions of modern industrial and post-industrial society with the known world of traditional society.[48] Referring to this impact, he stated,

> The dynamics in the AICs in South Africa are deeply related to the depth of traditional African Spirituality, with its emphasis on relationships of sharing and caring in a holistic sense, and of genuine fellowships. This will direct the future Church of Africa.

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[46]GC Oosthuizen, *African Independent Churches and Small Businesses. Spiritual Support for Secular empowerment, NERMIC Report* (Durban: University of Zululand, 1996), 31.

[47]GC Oosthuizen, "Indigenous Christianity and the Future,of the Church in South Africa" in Religion and Social Transformation, eds T.G Walsh ad F Kaufmann (St Paul: Paragon House, 1990), 163.

[48]Steve DeGruchy and Paul Germond, Review of the Literature on the Social Contribution of African Initiated Churches (AICs) in South Africa, (Pietermaritzburg: The Centre for Development and Enterprise, 2004): 29.

> The deep structures of African Spirituality and worldview will not be destroyed but its influence will continue to be felt. This is particularly true in an era of emphasis on socio-economic development. The AICs, through money-saving clubs (stokvels), small businesses, and skill-training, have much to offer their prospective congregants.[49]

Turner is another scholar who wrote extensively on African religious movements and their social impact. Turner did not write specifically about AICs in South Africa; however, his knowledge of AICs in Africa in general provides some good insight for any scholar interested in making the case of the positive impact of religious beliefs and systems toward economic development. In an article titled, *The Relationship between Development and New Religious Movements in the Tribal Societies of the Third World*, Turner contended that AICs in their practice of rituals and beliefs circumvent "dysfunctional aspects" of taboos, rituals and practices by embracing a worldview favorable for economic development.[50]

Turner came to this conclusion by using a certain number of variables in order to measure the degree of transitions from traditional beliefs to embracing modernity. Among these transition variables were a move from a cosmos based on necessary internal relations to revealing contingent relationships; a move from the power of magic and ritual to dependence on science and faith; an addition of history to myth, as a category of dealing with time; a move from a closed, unitary and sacral society to an open, pluralist and secular society; a move to understanding evil as involving moral rather than ritual pollution located in the individual as well as externally in evil forces.[51]

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[49]Oosthuizen, *Indigenous Christianity and the Future* of the Church in South Africa, 163.

[50]Harold Turner, "The Relationship Between Development and New Religious Movements in the Tribal Societies of the Third World" in *God and Global Justice: Religion and Poverty in an Unequal World*, eds. Frederick Ferre and Rita Mataragnon (New York: Paragon House, 1985), 89.

[51]Ibid., 93

Turner saw substantive transitions of AICs towards the new worldview of modernity to the point of declaring that "I am satisfied that the overall effect of AICs was on the credit side of the development ledger"; however, Turner's approach raised some eyebrows.[52] His critics reproached him for stripping AICs of their traditions at the expense of modernity. Another question that his critics asked is how much remained of AICs if progress or growth was defined solely in terms of Western values.[53] This research does not engage in this debate. Our interest in Turner focuses on the notion that traditional beliefs impact, in one form or another, on economic determinants.

While Oosthuizen and Turner capitalized on AICs' positive impact towards economic growth, Garner saw AICs' worldviews as an obstacle for economic development. He subsequently chastised Oosthuizen's and Turner's claims by labeling them "problematic." Garner asserted,

> Two of the most respected scholars in the field of AIC research (Oosthuizen and Turner) have argued that a change of worldview - from traditional to modern - is necessary for economic development to take place in the African community. This change in worldview will then lead to various changes in lifestyle, consistent with development. They define the essential changes in similar terms: a shift from communalism to individualism; a change in the perception of nature from a dominating force to a resource that can be controlled and utilized; the perception of time as a definable and measurable commodity; and an emphasis on the rational rather than the magical… This claim is problematic.[54]

According to Garner, the problem resided in the fact that researchers, other than Turner and Oosthuizen, who conducted similar studies among AICs obtained different results. He referred to the works of scholars such as Bengt Sundkler on the Zionists Churches as well as Jim Kiernan, Bekker and Hammond-Tooke. Distancing himself from

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[52]Ibid., 90

[53]Ibid., 95.

[54]Robert C. Garner, "African Independent Churches and Economic Development in Edendale" in *Engaging Modernity: Methods and Cases for Studying African Independent Churches in South Africa*, ed Dawid Venter (Westport: Praeger, 2004), 85.

Oosthuizen and Turner, Garner conducted research in the mainline and Pentecostal Churches including Apostolic and Zionist churches, in Edendale, the largest Black township in the city of Pietermaritzburg. In this research, he collected data from 334 households and 1003 adult residents of Edendale.[55] He proposed four variables with each having a variable of strength. These variables included:

1. The extent of indoctrination from Bible studies, study groups and sermon length.
2. The depth of the religious experience including lay participation, spontaneity, testimonies, healing, *glossolalia*, cacophonous prayer.
3. The strength of the threat of exclusion by the use of church uniforms, cosmological dualism, calls to conversion, restriction to communion, adult baptism, levels of surveillance.
4. The degree of socialization including the length of the main service, midweek meetings and youth choir.

Having applied these variables to these Churches, Garner concluded that membership in the Pentecostal group produced a demonstrable change in economically significant attitudes and behavior and made upward mobility more likely[56]. This result, however, did not reflect what he found in AICs. In narrowing his research to the Zionist Apostolic Church, for example, Garner concluded that among this group, there was a reasonable degree of capitalistic tendency without a substantial advance towards economic development. He argued that while there are value systems such as *uBuntu* (community) and *inhlonipo* (respect) that promote social integration and capitalistic values, these values do not turn to the degree of becoming capitalist development

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[55]Robert C. Garner, "Religion and Economics in a South Africa Township" (Ph.D. diss., University of Cambridge, 1998), 85.

[56] Robert C. Garner, "Religion as a Source of Social Change in the New South Africa," *Journal of Religion in Africa 30*, 2000, 337.

catalysts.[57] In other terms, while these churches were keen to create networks of trust among members, the same trust was not often translated into a scale favoring the emergence of capitalistic development. It was a trust that was still deeply embodied in traditional and spiritual connotation.

Garner's end results research is represented in the following table:

Table 1 Hypotheses on the Role of Zionist-Apostolic AICs in Economic Development

	Overall Effect	*Mechanisms*
Legitimacy of the Capitalist Economy	Ambiguous	Leaders support accumulation. Members are preoccupied with the struggle for survival, suspicious of wealth.
Trust and Cooperation	Positive (weak)	Trust is created in AICs; but does it translate into concrete forms of economic cooperation or extend to the wider community?
Worldview	Negative	Persistence of traditional worldview; costs of cultural practices are high for the poor.
Lifestyle	Ambiguous	Positive effects on consumption and lifestyle patterns. Less emphasis on education.

Source: Garner, Robert C., (2004) African Independent Churches and Economic Development in Edendale in *Engaging Modernity*, (Westport: Praeger).

Garner's position is controversial in many regards. It raises the question of judgment of values. Who determines that such trust and not other kinds of trust are or are not compatible with capital development? By dismissing, for example, trust in AICs as a factor of economic development, Garner disputed the positive impact of AICs in capital development, an opposite argument to what this research pursues.

[57]Ibid., 101.

Methodology

My thesis is qualitative research that aims to identify the economic conduct of the ZCC's members toward capital development. The thesis appeals to the sociological approach to the study of religion and to a development framework commonly known as Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD).

Sociological approaches focus on the interaction between religion and society. The working assumption of the sociological framework is that all human experience, including cultural and religious, is socially constructed. In this sense, objects, knowledge, myth, and institutions in the social world are understood as the result of a process of social construction arising out of the interaction between human beings who express and objectify those interactions. Moreover, religious entities such as gods, rituals, beliefs, practices and behaviors acquire their creative force in the social world. Sociologists examine religious practices for evidence of their interrelationship with the institutions, structures, and ideologies of which societies are constituted.[58]

Sociological approaches to the study of religion ask basic questions such as the role religious beliefs or ritual play in sustaining social life. Another question is focused on the relationship or matrix between social contexts and religious beliefs. Sociological approaches do not make a claim about the holy or sacred or even the essence of the ultimate concern. Their prime concern is the role beliefs play in structuring and sustaining social processes.

Critics accuse the sociological approach of being reductionist. Phenomenologists, for example, argue that the sociological approach reduces the distinctive *sui generis* nature of religion (the holy, the sacred) to something that is not religious, that is, social interactions. Other critics have gone as far as contending that the sociology of religion

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[58]Michael S. Northcott, "Sociological Approaches" in *Approaches to the Study of Religion,* ed. Peter Conolly (London: Cassel, 1999), 193.

has an anti-religious bias in adopting a kind of methodological atheism which, in the nature of the case, subverts the phenomenon of religion. These critics have argued that the scientific objectivism adopted by sociology is not neutral but is loaded with ontological value when, for example, it begins by saying that religion is not intelligible on its own and must find its explanation outside of itself.[59]

While these criticisms have merit, they do not, however, erode the core process of the sociological approach to the dependence of religious beliefs and communities on social processes. Max Weber's Protestant ethic postulation is one example where religious beliefs impact social constructions including economics. It comes then without surprise that my thesis appeals to Weber's framework to delineate the theological formulation of the ZCC for economic conduct.

This research attempts to understand how the theological belief of salvation permeates the social life of ZCC members to the point of constituting an economic drive to better the social environment. In this regard, I conducted direct observations and interviews in the township of Atteridgeville, in the metropolitan city of Tshwane, as field research.

Figure 3 Entrance to Atteridgeville

Source: Willy Mafuta, 2007, Pretoria

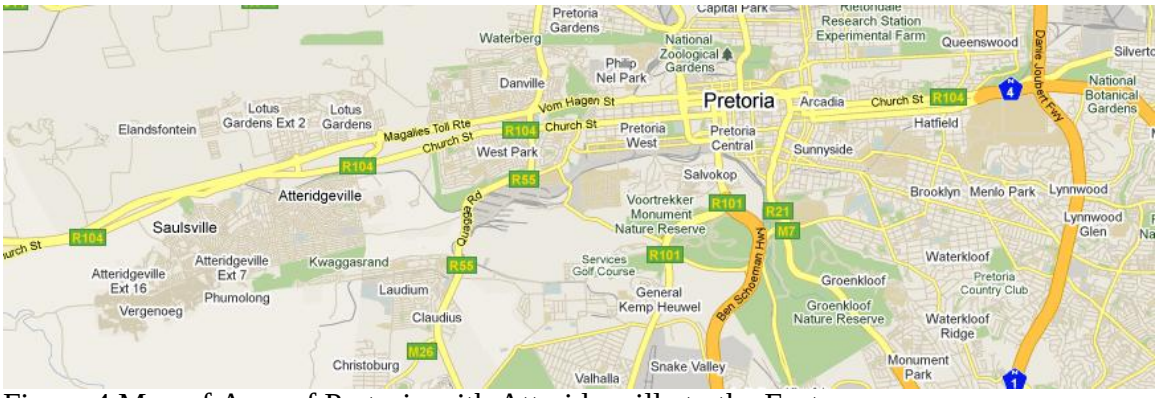

Figure 4 Map of Area of Pretoria with Atteridgeville to the East

Source: Google Maps

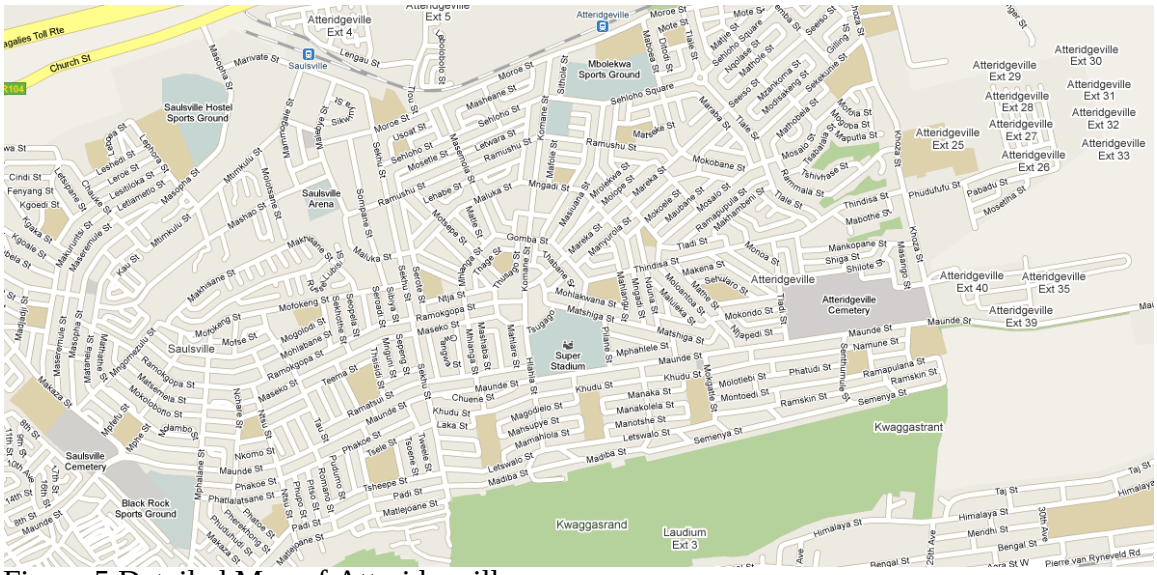

Figure 5 Detailed Map of Atteridgeville

Source: Google Maps

A team of three people interviewed approximately 30 participants from different backgrounds including differences in gender, age, and education. The following set of written questions was asked:

Table 2 List of Questions for Interviews during Field Research

Why did you join ZCC?
How do you understand salvation taught in your church?
Are you saved now or is it something you have to wait for in the future?
Does your salvation have anything to do with your social life?
Are you sure of your salvation?
How did you get your job?
Did the Church help you?
Do you receive any financial help from the Church?
Does salvation taught in your church help or hinder you in doing your job?

When the data were collected, they were measured against the hypothesis that the soteriological predicament of ZCC serves as the motivational energy for members to better not only the social but also the economic environment. Whenever data suggested that there was a relationship between religious ideologies and capital development, I proceeded to inveterate community capacities and assets using a methodology called Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD).

ABCD is a development approach that aims to discover a community's capacities and assets rather than analyzing communities on the basis of their needs, deficiencies and problems.[60] Asset-Based Community Development leans toward the development of policies and activities based on the capacities, skills and assets of poor people and

[60] John P. Kretzmann and John L. McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets* (Chicago: Northwestern University, 1993), 1.

communities. ABCD pays attention to what poor people and communities have rather than what they need. In most cases, what poor communities have are individuals, associations and institutions.[61] ABCD differs from needs-driven development or driven path or deficit-based development. This latter approach reinforces the idea that poor people have needs and problems and that they need services to be provided for them.[62] Poor people in this path become 'clients' and 'consumers' of what outsiders can provide for them. As a consequence, they begin to think of themselves as fundamentally deficient and victims, incapable of taking charge of their lives and of their community's future.[63]

By using ABCD in the ZCC community, my task consisted of understanding the level of commitment ZCC members, as human assets, have to the affairs of the Church. With ABCD, I also assessed the network of social associations such as ritual healings, mutual aid associations, savings clubs and pilgrimages and determined economic patterns that served to better the ZCC economic and social environment. These patterns were determined through the following variables:

1. Legitimation of Market Economy

This category determines the degree of interaction between religion as an instrument of legitimation and delegitimation. As an instrument of legitimation, religion legitimates values and formal institutions required by a capitalist economy (i.e. private property, competition, credit markets, free trade and specialization) and the social inequality that results from it. In this sense religion can, for example, reduce levels of protest in the economy and increase awareness of the need to pay for private and public

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[61]Ibid., 9.

[62]Ibid., 1.

[63]Ibid., 4.

services. As a power of delegitimation, religion can undermine values and the smooth working of the system by increasing levels of protest and encouraging civil resistance.

As related to this variable, my task was to delineate patterns of participation of ZCC members towards the market economy. To accomplish this task, I had to observe certain economics patterns such as how they legitimate or delegitimate wealth and poverty. Is there any inclination towards wealth or poverty? Do they own private property? Are they involved in fair trade or illicit transactions? In other cases, I used non-structured interviewing to delineate economic trends.

2. Creation of Trust and Cooperation

This category assesses the power of religion to catalyze the formation of new social institutions based on trust, which may be associated with economic enterprises and other types of cooperative behavior such as community efforts to curtail crime and nonpayment. My task in this category consisted of assessing who benefits from the mutual associations and saving clubs. In the case of loans, my task consisted of determining if there was any pattern in repayment of a loan, as well as determining if patterns of engaging in business deals with those outside the ZCC exist.

3. Lifestyle and Worldview

This category aims to delineate the influence of religion in fostering an entrepreneurial spirit, a belief in the moral worth of honesty, hard work and advancement. It also centers on personal moral values such as sobriety, prompt payment and avoidance of criminality. Using this variable, I assessed the correlation between church attendance and the degree of individual work performance. One of the questions that I asked was whether ZCC members were productive in the workforce despite a strong commitment to church activities during the week. I also asked to what extent ZCC members are utility

maximizers. Here the task consisted of determining whether ZCC members make their economic decisions based on profit or family obligations and survival. These variables also help determine whether belief in spiritual constructions such as ritual healings, perception of the bishop as authority, and influences of ancestors or shades affect or encourage economic drive.

Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations of the study was accessibility to ZCC members. It was difficult for my team and me to just walk into someone's house and interview him or her or stop a ZCC member in the street. Most of them asked whether we had a letter from headquarters in Moria giving us permission. Because we lacked credentials from Moria, they simply declined. I remember one Saturday morning, one of my informants and I walked to a ZCC compound where groups of people were having tea. We went to the priest and asked whether he would consent to an interview. He called his team to discuss it, and we waited for almost an hour for him to return saying it was not possible for us to interview him or anybody in the compound because we lacked accreditation from the headquarters. Despite this set back, we managed to interview a number of ZCC members around Atteridgeville who did not insist on viewing our credentials.

Another limitation was the cost of doing the field research. The field was entirely financed from the savings of my wife and me. As such, I was only able to be in South Africa for two weeks. This timeframe was challenging in terms of compiling the data I needed in the writing of the thesis. However, I believe that the sample presented in this study gives a broad perspective of the religious and behavioral patterns of ZCC members towards capital production.

Another barrier was the language. Although South Africa is an English-speaking country, most Black South Africans prefer to speak in their native language. Most of the interviews were conducted in Tswana because of their concentration in Atteridgeville.

Nevertheless, my team was able to translate into English. As with any translation, I suspect that some meaning and expressions were lost in the process. But this does not negate the validity of the interviews.

Structure

In order to analyze the claim that religious soteriological predicament impacts individual traits that in turn empower individuals economically, I divided my thesis into five chapters. The first chapter investigates the relationship between religion and capital development. It presents my motivations and purpose and discusses the theoretical framework that informs the investigation. The underlying assumption in this investigation is that any discussion on the ideology of economic performance leads necessarily to a discussion on the impact of religion upon growth and development.

Chapter II addresses the notion of development and its paradigms. It contends that sub-Sahara Africa has been the landscape of development theories and initiatives for the last half-century. Yet this amalgam of theories and initiatives has not yielded anything substantive for Africans to move from underdevelopment to a developing status. African countries of the sub-Sahara simply linger at the bottom ladder of the development index.

Moreover the same ideologies that were used to justify the crafting of development of Africans in the image of Europe/North America were also used to discredit the notion of religion among Africans. In this sense, African religions were defined on the grounds of the European/North American Christian putative normative status.

Chapter III tackles this paternalistic approach and argues that the emergence of African Initiated Churches, including the ZCC, was precisely a resistance to the mistreatment that Western elites inflicted on the colonized people. By resisting and inventing something originally theirs, colonized people were in a position to claim their parity with Western religions. In the South African context, the odious system of

Apartheid created a counteraction culminating in the birth and growth of Independent churches that translated the need for Blacks to identify with a religio-cultural system where their traditions and values were recognized.

Chapter IV is precisely designed to reinstate ATRs as world religions based on soteriological criteria and to claim them at par with world religions. The chapter contends that through a process of "syncretization" and "purification," ZCC has managed to construct a soteriological predicament adapted to the socio-political context of its adherents. It is a soteriology that frees/liberates them from the cosmic chaos of their environment and empowers them to engage in capital production.

Chapter V carries this notion of capital production and analyzes it through a set of economic variables including the legitimacy of the capital economy, creation of trust and cooperation, and lifestyles and worldview. I conclude the thesis by questioning whether AICs are a template for capital production in sub-Sahara Africa. The short answer to the question is yes.

CHAPTER II

PARADIGMS OF DEVELOPMENT THEORIES AND INITIATIVES IN AFRICA

Introduction

In the aftermath of War World II and during the wave of African countries becoming independent in the late fifties and early sixties, two major theories of development emerged: Modernization and Dependency. These theories, in the eyes of the elites in American and Europe, were the roadmap for African countries to move from so-called "underdevelopment" to a developing status. However, more than a half a century later, Africa is at the bottom rung on the Human Development Index. This chapter traces the historical construction of modernization and dependency theories as they relate to capital production and development in sub-Sahara Africa. The chapter delineates their market driven policy and how they have been dismissive of religion/culture as an economic variable. This thesis is of the opinion that the Global South is witnessing a new trend of capitalism in which culture/religion becomes a non-negligible variable, impacting individual traits and prompting virtues favorable to capital production and development.

Table 3 Human Development Index – Countries with Rank of Low

HDI Rank #	Country
159	Togo
160	Malawi
161	Benin
162	Timor-Leste
163	Cote d'Ivoire
164	Zambia
165	Eritrea

166	Senegal
167	Rwanda
168	Gambia
169	Liberia
170	Guinea
171	Ethiopia
172	Mozambique
173	Guinea-Bissau
174	Burundi
175	Chad
176	Congo (DRC)
177	Burkina Faso
178	Mali
179	Central African Republic
180	Sierra Leone
181	Afghanistan
182	Niger

Source: http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/

Note: Complete list of countries ranked in the Human Development Index is available in the Appendix

On Definitions of Development

To define development is an enormous and a complex task: enormous because it means different things to different people and complex because it embraces several aspects that make it almost impossible to get an agreement on its true nature. Gilbert Rist echoed this assertion when he said,

> The images associated with it (development), and the practices it entails, vary from one extreme to the other depending on whether we adopt the viewpoint of the 'developer'- committed to bringing about happiness he wishes for another - or the view point of the 'developed'- who is forced to modify his social relations and his relationship to nature in order to enter the promised new world. The technocrat with a brief to display the originality of the

> institution for which he works; and that of the researcher determined to prove that his chosen parameters are the only ones capable of accounting for the phenomenon under study.[1]

Subsequently, Rist defined development as a myth of progress, growth, and things getting better. It is a myth to which everyone subscribes. It is a myth that we create and to which we all adhere, argued Rist.[2] According to him, development exists only in the mind of those who created it and in those who believe in it. In this sense, it is a myth.[3] In his book, *The History of Development from Western Origins to Global Faith*, Rist traced, in 12 different phases, the historical aspect of development in elucidating his 'myth' contention.

Starting in ancient Greek philosophy with Aristotle and his analogy of nature that grows, peaks and dies, just as in seasons, Rist contended that the Western world saw civilization in the same pattern: a perpetual cycle of new beginnings within the parameters of birth, growth and death.[4]

In his second stage, Rist drew from the myth of development discourse from Augustine's interpretation of history. History, according to Augustine, is not neutral. It is a domain where God acts and where the whole of humanity is configured in a cycle of Creation, Fall, Redemption and Consummation. This divine cycle culminates in the second coming and the establishment of the New Jerusalem. As compared to the Augustinian understanding of history, development becomes a divine call that culminates with a certain end, the same way history culminates with the Consummation.

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[1]Gilbert Rist, *The History of Development, From Western Origins to Global Faith* (London: Zed Books, 1997), 2.

[2]Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

[4]Ibid., 29.

The third stage, for Rist, was the period of the Middle Ages. In this stage, human history is understood to be both cyclical and linear. History follows nature with seasons, Spring-Summer-Fall-Winter, while at the same time showing some sense of progress. It is also a stage of reflecting on great things that have been lost, such as the great Roman Empire.

Rist's fourth stage was the Enlightenment. Here, the Augustinian divine cycle is abandoned and possibilities that never before existed are explored, leading to the discovery of science and technology. History is no longer a divine cycle that culminates in consummation, but is linear and endlessly open. This linear and endlessly open history gives room to the notion of unlimited growth and progress. In this sense, development is seen as following the same pattern.

The rise of capitalism, as the fifth stage, saw the application of the enlightenment notions of linear progress and growth in social sciences including economics. Leading to the emergence of a new language, terms such as accumulation of capital, re-investment of profit, and industrialization became *l'ordre du jour*. Moreover, the need for raw materials and new markets arise as a way of sustaining the new spirit of capitalism.

With the spirit of capitalism, especially in the need to find raw materials, came colonization. This is the sixth stage in Rist's history of the myth of development. At this stage, colonization became a tool to showcase Western hegemony. Through the accounts of explorers, merchants, researchers, and missionaries, the Western elites portrayed themselves as a superior race. Subsequently, they developed a myth that for the natives to emulate them, they would have to be colonized. With this agenda in mind, they put in place a scheme that is known as the three C's: Christianity, Capitalism, and Civilization.

The First World War was the seventh stage in the propagation of the myth of development. In the aftermath of the war, the League of Nations was created. It officially legitimized the relationship between powerful and less powerful nations and

recommended that the former look after the latter.[5] It was during this time that concepts such as "stages of the development" began to emerge. Article 22 of the covenant of the League of Nations, for example, stated,

> There should be applied the principle that the well-being and development of such peoples form a sacred trust of civilization… the best method of giving practical effect to this principle is that the tutelage of such peoples should be entrusted to advanced nations who by reason of their resources, their experience and their geographical position can best undertake this responsibility… the character of the mandate must differ according to the stage of the development of the people.[6]

From the League of Nations, Rist moved to the mid-forties to contend his eighth stage of development. At this stage, the United States' President Harry Truman and his advisors replaced the binary relationship of 'colonizer' and 'colonized' with that of 'developed' and 'underdeveloped.' Truman voiced this new attitude in his "Point Four Message." In it, he asserted:

> We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas.[7]

According to Rist, the appearance of the term 'underdeveloped' evoked not only the idea of change in the direction of a final state but, above all, the possibility of bringing about such change.[8] Moreover, no longer was it just a question of things 'developing' but it was possible to 'develop' a region.[9] For Rist, the very fact of President Truman introducing the concept of 'underdevelopment' gave development a transitive meaning: an action performed by one agent upon another. Development, in this

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[5]Rist, 60.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Harry S. Truman, *Public Papers of the President of the United States (1949)* (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, (1964).

[8]Rist, 73.

[9]Ibid.

sense, corresponded to a principal of social organization while by the same token 'underdevelopment' became a 'naturally' occurring state of things.[10] It was not the opposite of 'development,' but its incomplete or metaphorically embryonic form. In this sense, an acceleration of growth was the only logical way of bridging the gap.[11] Thus, in this transitive meaning, the United Sates was, of course, by definition the 'developed' nation. This development comprised a focus on individualism and commerce at the expense of cultural indications such as education, health, music, and the arts. Because of these parameters, development would become synonymous with modern, and modernization would mean becoming Western.

With the creation of the United Nations, which is the ninth phase in Rist's analysis, the introduction of the developed/underdeveloped dialectic into international relations was intended to call forth action. Developed nations were called upon to assist underdeveloped nations to develop, meaning to become 'like them.' To achieve this aim, the United Nations created international institutions and offered development aid to underdeveloped nations.

According to Rist, this way of proceeding changed the whole concept of development. From Aristotle to the Enlightenment, 'development' was understood as a natural progress. Now underdevelopment was understood as the natural state of a nation, a state that needs to be pushed, aided and assisted to overcome its natural tendencies so that a nation can become developed. This binary opposition of development/underdevelopment represented a new secular faith where the economy of salvation was at play. In this sense, suffering shows that there is a problem, and the good news is that one can develop. Subsequently, through hard work and effort, suffering can be overcome and an era of happiness will dawn.

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[10]Ibid.

[11]Ibid., 74.

The Cold War was the tenth stage in the propagation of the myth of development. According to Rist, both liberal capitalism and the Marxist ideology of progress won allies in third world countries. They did this by offering development aid as incentives to these countries to choose an ideology to adopt for their own progress. The irony of the matter, mused Rist, was that little difference existed between liberalism and Marxism in their ideologies of progress and development. Both are rooted in the Enlightenment assumption of an endless linear progression towards a golden age.

From the Cold War tension, third world countries would regroup and would attempt to define development from their own perspective. During the Bandung Conference of 1955, for example, Asian and African leaders introduced a critical note against both American and Russian imperialism. Yet they adopted the same development ideological approach, both Western liberal capitalism and neo-Marxism. Asian and African leaders saw development as a primal necessity and economic growth through industrialization as a way to achieve it. According to Rist, the leaders of the third world countries, instead of changing the core ideology of development, simply succumbed to its myth by not challenging the foundation of its nature.

It was during this time that Walt W. Rostow, an economic scholar from the Chicago school of thought, wrote his *Stages of Economic Growth*. Far from Rist's myth contention, Rostow pulled together all of the proceedings of philosophical and political ideology of growth and identified five different stages of development. The first is the traditional or underdevelopment stage. At this stage, a society develops social structure within limited production functions, based on pre-Newtonian science and technology and on pre-Newtonian attitudes towards the physical world. It is a stage where productivity and technologies are limited because potentialities that flow from modern science and technology are either unavailable or not regularly and systematically applied. According to Rostow, the lack of potentialities constitutes a ceiling on the level of attainable output

per head that incline traditional societies toward agriculture.[12] With agriculture comes a hierarchical society where family and clan connection plays a major role. These societies are also characterized by a feudal system where power resides in the hands of landlords and owners.

Moreover, the value systems in societies of the traditional or underdevelopment stage are geared towards what Rostow called "a long-run fatalism." He defined it as the idea that the realm of possibilities is limited from generation to generation. A grandchild's opportunities, for example, would be no greater than those available to his grandparents.

Rostow's second stage, the preconditions for taking off, is a stage where the process of transition takes place. It is a transition from the discarding of traditional apparatus to the embryonic formation of modernity. The ideology, at this stage, is not only that economic progress is possible, but that economic progress is a necessary condition for some other purpose, judged to be good, be it national dignity, private profit, the general welfare, or a better life for the children.[13]It is a stage where new methods of modern manufacturing enterprise appear and where people in private economy or government are willing to mobilize savings and to take risks in pursuit of profit or modernization.

The take-off stage, the third in Rostow's stages of development, is a stage where growth becomes the normal condition of a society. In this sense, the old blocks and resistances to steady growth are overcome and the forces making economic progress expand begin to dominate the society. Moreover, the rate of effective investment and

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[12]Technology understood in the western concept versus technology that is inherent to any traditional society.

[13] Walt Whitman Rostow, "The Five Stages of Growth" in *Development and Underdevelopment: The Political Economy of Global Inequality*, 2nd Edition, eds. Mitchell A. Seligson and John T. Passé-Smith (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998), 11.

savings rise from 5 percent of the national income to 10 percent or more. New industries expand and a large proportion of the resulting profits are reinvested in new plants; this new class of entrepreneurs expands as well and directs the enlarging flows of investment in the private sector. New techniques of exploiting unused natural resources are developed, agriculture is commercialized and farmers are prepared to accept the new methods and changes these methods bring to their way of life.[14]

The fourth stage in Rostow's analysis is the drive to maturity. This stage occurs some time between forty and sixty years from the take-off stage. The drive to maturity is characterized by the capacity of the economy to move beyond the original industries, which powered its take off, and to absorb and to apply efficiently over a very wide range of its resources, if not the whole range, the most advanced fruits of modern technology.[15] Moreover, it is a stage where the values and institutions of traditional societies are overcome; the entrepreneurship spirit and major investment in railways and other infrastructures, for example, rise from 10 to 20 percent of GNP.[16]

The fifth and the last stage is the age of mass consumption. At this stage, income per head rises, individuals gain a command over consumption to the point of transcending basic food, shelter, and clothing; the change of structure in the work force changes and increases, not only the proportion of urban to total population, but also the proportion of the population working in offices or in skilled factory jobs.

Moreover, the society ceases to accept the further extension of modern technology as an overriding objective. Through political processes, increased resources are allocated to social welfare and security. These resources are directed to the production of

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[14] Rostow, 13.

[15] Rostow, 14.

[16] Rist, 98.

consumer's durables and to the diffusion of services on a mass basis. Consumer sovereignty reigns.[17]

Rostow considered these five stages as a natural and linear progress of development. In his view, no country can develop without passing through these stages. In this sense, the gap between poor and rich countries, for Rostow, are defined by the stage in which a country resides. Rostow envisioned, however, this gap disappearing as all countries progress through the later stage of consumption.

Viewed from Rist's myth contention, Rostow's optimistic and picturesque view of development, what Rist called "the marvelous fresco of humanity marching towards greatest happiness", comes short of addressing collateral damage that results from the linear equation of progress. There is certainly a down side that is often ignored in development approaches as the one Rostow advocates. For example, while modern technology increases the goods on the market, it suppresses indigenous knowledge or the old "know-how". While consumers are free to choose from a huge range of cars, for example, pollution puts them off walking down the road.[18]

Moreover, development as linear progress does not promote human or social capabilities. It promotes the idea of one-way traffic where the market is the only road sign. It was in the intention of challenging this notion that Rist delineated the myth of development. His efforts were geared to short cut the pretext of expanding the realm of commodity. According to him, by short cutting the realm of commodity, people would be able to organize their own existence.[19]

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[17]Rostow, 14.

[18]Rist, 98.

[19] Michael Cowen, *Book Review, "The History of Development from Western Origins to Global Faith", Gilbert Rist,* Canadian Journal of African Studies, Vol 32, No 1(1998), 240-244.

It was in this context that the economist Amartya Sen moved away from the emphasis on linear growth towards issues of personal well-being, agency and freedom. Sen defined development in the context of human capability. According to him, capabilities are the ability to live well across all spheres of life and to accommodate material and mental aspects of development in addition to many substantive freedoms not directly covered by opulence.[20] Development, in this sense, focuses on the freedoms generated by commodities, rather than on the commodities in their own right. Sen defined freedom as both the processes that allow free actions and decisions, and the actual opportunities given to people.[21] This freedom finds its ground within economic incentives that challenge unfreedoms.

In this scheme, for development to take place, unfreedoms, such as tyranny, poor economic opportunities, systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities, intolerance and over-activity of repressive states, need to be removed. Making this point, Sen wrote,

> Unfreedom…can make a person a helpless prey in the violation of other kinds of freedom…and can breed social unfreedom, just as social or political unfreedom can also foster economic unfreedom.[22]

In this binary of freedom and unfreedoms, social and human development happens concurrently with economic development, causing Sen to argue that human development should be the standard by which any economic growth is measured. In turn,

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[20]David Clark, "Sen's Capablity Approach and the Many Spaces of Human Wellbeing". *Journal of Development Studies*, 41: 8, 17, 1339-1368. Nov 2005.

[21]Ibid., 17.

[22]Ibid., 8.

human development needs to be accessible to all, not only to wealthy nations, argued Sen. He asserted,

> The quality of life can be vastly raised, despite low incomes, through an adequate program of social services. The fact that education and healthcare are also productive in raising economic growth adds to the argument for putting major emphasis on these social arrangements in poor economies, without having to wait for 'getting rich' first.[23]

Apart from Sen, the liberation theologian Gustav Gutierrez tackled development as capability-freedom as well. Framing it with the bedrock principle of "preferential option for the poor", Gutierrez drew from the context of the socio-economic and political context of Latin American, and defined development as freedom/liberation of the oppressed. It is a freedom grounded on the reign of God, or God's redemptive and liberating presence in history, he argued.[24] Through Jesus, God's reign is authoritatively and efficaciously proclaimed. Accordingly, the liberation of the mystery of the cross frees the oppressed people from their social and economic woes and empowers them to uplift their social environment. In this sense, it is only in liberation, contended Gutierrez, that development finds its true meaning.[25]

Gutierrez elucidated this argument in his *Theology of Liberation*. He contended that liberation expresses the aspirations of oppressed peoples and social classes by addressing the conflictive aspect of economic, social and political process.[26] Moreover, in liberation, mused Gutierrez, human kind assumes conscious responsibility for its own destiny. This conscious responsibility is rendered possible by the liberation that Jesus offers.[27] Because Christ liberates from sin, understood as the ultimate root of all

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[23]Ibid., 49.

[24] Ibid.

[25]Ibid., 24.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid, 24.

disruption of friendship, injustice and oppression, argued Gutierrez, liberated individuals are capable of empowering themselves and uplifting their social and economic environment.[28] This uplifting is what he meant by development.

Similar to Gutierrez, David Martin, having observed the upsurge of religious movements and independent churches in global society, argued that there is a new phase of capitalism in which culture/religion is increasingly recognized as a key variable having attributes such as responsibility, discipline and trust. These attributes, according to Martin, bring a new trend of economic development, impacting economic conduct of individuals and societies toward work and consumption, a new education ethos and violent rejection of traditional *machismo*.

Observing this upsurge among the Pentecostals or the Evangelical Protestants in Latin America, for example, Martin argued that it results in a spiritual renewal stemming from inner transformation or conversion: a new man or a new woman in a new society. This act of faith in a God who is concerned for the weal and woes of the poor and the marginalized of the society, and who offers them an assured and holistic salvation, is a total liberation of the physical and spiritual world, argued Martin.[29]

Martin's analysis of the Pentecostals or the Evangelical Protestants in Latin America underscores the idea of the desecularization theory and the role of religion in growth and economic development. Many scholars who had argued the secularization theory have found themselves embracing the notion of the world today being essentially religious and subsequently undermining their long standing argument that modernization leads necessarily to a decline of religion both in society and in the minds of

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[28] Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation, History, Politics, and Salvation* (New York: Orbis Books, 1973), 24.

[29] David Martin, "Latin America: A Template?" in *Pentecostalism: The World Their Parish* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 71-82.

individuals.[30] Moreover, Martin's use of a neo-Weberian relationship between religion and economic development puts religion, as a non-economic variable, once again in the forefront of economic development of developing nations. The great number of people flocking to independent churches and religious movements in the Global South constitute capital. If this human capital is coupled with trust, motivation, discipline and responsibility, a real social development can take place.

Regardless of the approach, development is entrenched in people's minds. This entrenchment has acquired a quasi-religious flavor and a certain amount of institutional and political momentum that easily crushes the doubters and dissidents by its self-evident truth: Silence! We are developing.[31] Another reason for this entrenchment is that most people would prefer to be 'developed' rather than 'underdeveloped.' In this sense, people colour, in those broad terms, the notions of development and underdevelopment with widely divergent content ranging from material plenty to cultural vibrancy. However, the desire for things to progress, get better, grow, and 'develop' seems to be embedded quite deeply in the human psyche.[32]

Development entails the expansion of economic growth and progress that preserves the core identity of individual cultural values. In other terms, human values or human capabilities take precedence over any economic growth or progress schema. This development does not necessary follow a linear schema. In this sense, the unique socio-ethical character of individual societies makes it prejudicial to expect all societies to follow a linear schema of development. Development should have and maintain a cultural

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[30]Peter Berger, *The Desecularization of the World*, 9.

[31]Joseph Ki-zerbo, "Silence! We are developing*" in The Post Development Reader,* eds Majid Rahnema and Victoria Bawtree (Cape Town: David Philip, 1997), 88.

[32]Steve DeGruchy, *"*Editorial*," Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 110(July 2001): 2.

flavor that capitalizes on human freedom and dignity. Yet, the notion of development remains one of the ambiguous terms of our modern lexicon.

Theories of Development

In the aftermath of War World II and the wave of independence of African countries, mainly in the 1960s, two major theories of development emerged: modernization and dependency. Along with these theories came adjacent theories: classical economic, neo-classicism, and neo-liberalism. This section of the chapter attempts to address the core values of the above theories and their application in the global society.

Modernization Theory

The ground of its emergence resides in the social scientists' academic questioning of the centrality of institutions and constitutions. These scientists thought that the rise to power of Stalin and Hitler put faith in institutions and constitutions to test. They argued that if great social and political organizations that had characterized the Western world since the sixteenth century could give rise to fascists and totalitarian regimes, then the Western world needed a new "*ordre du jour*."

This new "*ordre du jour*" consisted of drifting away from social and political organizations to emphasize human behavior and how best to organize society.[33] Referring to this drift, John Rapley contended that these social scientists started a new revolution by trying to replace philosophy with science.[34] Rapley went on to assert the

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[33]John Rapley, *Understanding Development, Theory and Practice in the Third World* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996), 16.

[34]Ibid.

goal for these academics was to observe, compare and classify human behavior in the hope of making general inferences and not an analysis of the society per se.[35]

Moreover, argued Rapley, it was this philosophy that led one school of social scientists to believe that the success of development of the Western world could be duplicated in the third world. They saw, in underdevelopment, a stage through which to pass and they recommended a new prescription for third world countries that consisted of embracing a new system of cultural values and capital development.

In addition to recommending a new set of cultural values, some social scientists' schools of thought also recommended the building up of industries in the third world. Industrialization was, for them, a key to the creation of capitalism mentality. Accordingly, they suggested a transfer of Western knowledge to third world countries in the creation of manufacturing industries. This new prescription has come to be known as modernization theory.

Among the proponents of modernization theory are Rostow, Alex Inkeles and David Smith. Rostow's analysis in his *Stages of Economic Growth*, for example, was the "gospel" of the modernist theoreticians. For their part, Inkeles and Smith capitalized on Rostow's first stage of economic growth, traditional or underdevelopment, and applied it to sub-Sahara African countries. Inkeles and Smith argued that Africa fits perfectly the place where tradition rules. They viewed creativity lacking in African societies and where traditional authorities, especially elders and religious leaders, dictate the course of life in these societies.[36]

Because of this predicament, Inkeles and Smith assumed that the social and cultural structures of African societies do not permit individuals to be creative and

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[35]Ibid., 16.

[36]Alex Inkeles and David Smith, "Becoming Modern*" in Development and Under-Development* , Mitchell A. Seligson and John T. Passé-Smith, eds., (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998), 214.

ingenious. Furthermore, lack of individual freedom in these societies, they argued, constitutes a serious handicap in the process of achieving aims of development.[37]

Inkeles and Smith also contended that development cannot take place without the infrastructure of modern institutions. They believed that modern institutions generate a radical change in attitudes and values. These institutions, however, need to be administered by people who can accept and discharge responsibility without constant close supervision.

The same people need to be capable of subordinating the special interests of one's parochial group to the goals of the larger organization. They also need to be flexible and imaginative in the interpretation of rules. According to Inkeles and Smith, many of the developing countries, including those of sub-Sahara Africa, lack people with these qualities.

Critics of modernization theorists reject their dichotomous analysis of tradition/modernity. These critics believe that categories such as tradition and modernity are not clear cut, and that the preservation and re-affirmation of traditionalism is a crucial aspect of modernizing societies.[38] More and more, global theorists are embracing the notion of *modernities* rather than modernity. In this sense, modernity or modernization is not the sole explicit form of Western enterprise. There is, however, the prevalence of peculiar *modernities* that exist in the global society.[39]

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[37]Ibid.

[38]Frik De Beer and Hennie Swanepoel, *Introduction to Development Studies (*Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 2003), 38.

[39] Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 12.

Dependency Theory

The ground of early dependency theory is the Marxist idea of class structure. This dependency entails the first world striking alliances with the dominant classes of the third world countries. Once these alliances are established, the dominant classes of third world countries hold on to their dependent capital assets by derailing any substantial progress that otherwise could threaten and undermine their well-being. These dominant classes would instead keep their countries underdeveloped rather than threaten their dependent profit. This strategy obviously enriches them at the expense of the rest of the population.

Paul Baran observed this dynamic between the first and third world countries. In his book, The *Political Economy of Growth*, he pointed out that the first world economy, in a need to preserve its bourgeoisie, ends up destroying the capitalism economy of the third world countries.[40] According to Baran, the first world bourgeoisie forms an alliance with what he calls "traditional landed elites." These traditional landed elites then become the only source of providing raw materials. Instead of investing any return generated from this operation, the elites spend it on ostentation rather than on the investment that would otherwise accelerate growth.[41] The result is the draining of resources at the expense of the local economy. In draining these resources, local capitalism cannot operate and therefore becomes non-existent.

This state of affairs led Andre Gunder Frank to assert that development and underdevelopment are two sides of the same coin.[42] This metaphor suggests that first world countries take away surplus from third world countries to enrich themselves and ensure a ready market for their finished goods and a cheap supply of raw materials for

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[40]Paul Baran, *The Political Economy of Growth* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1957), 12.

[41]Rapley, *Understanding Development*, 18.

[42]Andre Gunder Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1967), 17.

their factories.[43] The result is the third world economy is suffocated and cannot function on its own.

Walter Rodney, in his book, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, embraced this line of reasoning and identified a pattern of Western capitalist exploitation in the underdevelopment of Africa. Rodney wrote:

> The question as to who, and what, is responsible for African underdevelopment can be answered at two levels. First, the answer is that the operation of the imperialist system bears major responsibility for African economic retardation by draining African wealth and by making it impossible to develop more rapidly the resources of the continent. Second, one has to deal with those who manipulate the system and those who are either agents of unwitting accomplices of the said system. The capitalists of Western Europe were the ones who actively extended their exploitation from inside Europe to cover the whole of Africa.[44]

This same pattern of exploitation is found in Samir Amin's studies on the country of Cote d'Ivoire. In studying Cote d'Ivoire economic patterns, Amin discovered that a social class of what he called "planter bourgeoisie" were actually agents of and accomplices to this Western capitalist system of exploitation. The members of this social class were advancing their private agenda and had little interest in advancing development in their country. These bourgeoisies were content to be parasites living off the availability of foreign capital.[45]

Neither moral economists nor social science economists use culture as a variable in the formulation of their theories. Dependency, as well as modernization theory, was solely the domain of capitalist formulation. What counted were profit and competition

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[43]Ibid.

[44]Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa (*Washington: Howard University Press, 1982), 27.

[45]Samir Amin, *Le development du Capitalism en Cote d'Ivoire* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1967), 185.

that eventually led to a mass exploitation of the wretched. It comes as no surprise then that when agents of dependency and modernization theories encountered the cultural and religious paradigm of African people, their tendency was to ignore and discredit it.

Classical Economic Theory

The term classicism has been defined both narrowly and broadly. In a narrow sense, it is the domain of aesthetics, art, literature and architecture. It finds its origin in Greek and Roman civilizations. In a broader sense, it has come to represent a school of thought that applies to the social sciences, including political economy.

In economics, classicism characterizes a school of thought in which the fundamental assumption is that individuals behave as rational maximizers. People are self-interested and know best what they want and how to get it.

With this assumption comes the argument that the most productive economy is one in which individuals are allowed the greatest freedom to engage in activities they choose and to reap the full benefits of their investment. Classicists also believe that if individuals are left to pursue their narrow self-interests, society as a whole benefits. Society suffers if individuals are compelled to pursue collective interests.[46]

Moreover, classicists have argued against government regulation and taxation. For classicists, taxing the rich hinders the most well off and reduces initiation and innovation. They believe that a free market economy enables individuals to pursue their self-interests. In their view, command economies slow progress and curtail individual initiative. Classicists have one and only one cardinal rule: the less state, the better.[47] However, with classicism came neo-classicism and neo-liberalism.

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[46]Rapley, *Understanding Development*, 56.

[47]Ibid., 55.

Neo-Classicism and Neo-Liberalism

Neo-classicism showed a resurgence in the Western political economy theory of the 1970s. Its revitalization occurred with Margaret Thatcher's election as Prime Minister in Great Britain. With Thatcher in power, neo-classicism introduced a similar yet different twist of classicism that relegated the role of the state and predominantly emphasized individualism. This new twist was called classical liberalism. This liberalism found an audience in people such as Friedman and Hayek, social Darwinism economists who saw in liberalism the salvation of a modern economy.

According to classical liberalism, if people have maximum freedom, they realize their potential and pursue activities in which they do their best. In doing so, they become more responsible and self-reliant.[48] For example, people take responsibility for building social institutions such as families, churches and communities that will look after the elderly, the weak and the poor. Classical liberalism rejects the role of the state in the creation of these social agencies. If the state creates social agencies, many people will fail to maximize their potential. [49]

Thatcher, who came to be a student of Hayek, embraced classical liberalism theory and implemented it in Britain. Thatcher did not see any other alternative. In fact, she came to be known for the acronym TINA, "**T**here **i**s **N**o **A**lternative." Thatcher saw in classical liberalism a fight between survival and death. It was a fight where competition was the golden rule.

Susan George used the biblical metaphor of separation between sheep and goats to point out how competition is central to classical-liberalism. She contended that

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[48]Ibid., 58.

[49] Ibid.

competition not only separates sheep from goats, it also separates the men from the boys, and the fit from the unfit. Competition allocates all resources with the greatest possible efficiency.[50] The result of this belief in Britain, for example, was an unprecedented level of unemployment and an enlargement of the gap between rich and poor. This classical liberalism later found its way to African development initiatives.

In Africa, classical liberalism was reinforced by the belief that it was not, after all, detrimental to culture. Supporting this view, Bauer, in his studies among West African traders, concluded that farmers can act as rational utility-maximizing individuals if given opportunities.[51]

If Africans are not utility maximizers, argued Shultz, it is not because of their culture but because of the role of the state. According to Shultz, in Africa, the state set up so many barriers that freedom of ingenuity was almost impossible. Referring to farmers' experience, for example, Shultz wrote,

> when peasant farmers invested little time and capital in their farms it was not because their cultural values or backwardness led them to ignore the market, but rather that government policies deprived them of capital and kept returns on agriculture so low that it was neither possible nor worthwhile for them to become thrifty entrepreneurs.[52]

Classical liberalism has also dictated its beliefs to international organizations. For example, in one of its publications, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) argued that African farmers make their decisions based on the profit gained from the type of

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[50]Susan George, *A Short History of Neo-liberalism, Conference on Economic Sovereignty in a Globalising World*, Bangkok, March 1999.

[51]Rapley, 59.

[52]Ibid.

farming they operate. In some cases, profit determines whether to engage in fish farming, farm crops or no farming at all.[53]

Not all scholars, however, have shared this assertion. Emma Crewe, for example, in her book, *Whose Development? An Ethnography of Aid*, rejected the profit contention and argued that it is a view that is not reflected in Africans farmers' 'calculation'.[54] Crewe contended that it is true that there is an element of calculation, but this is based not on profit but on a pre-defined set of parameters and a stock of knowledge that is partial, fragmentary and provisional.[55] According to Crewe, there is no reason to expect that material or cash gain are the most important motivators in African farmers' decisions.[56]

Many other critics shared Crewe's rejection of classical liberalism as it is applied to Africa. Some went as far as to argue that classical liberalism theory undermines the culture of Africa in a way that propagates Western hegemony and is therefore alien to African culture. The same critics contended, as well, that it is imperialistic to implement alien Western values and pretend that it is in the interest of African people in order for them to develop.

The economist James Scott subscribed to this line of reasoning. According to Scott, Africans are more likely to operate in what he calls an "economy of affection" rather than an economy that maximizes utility.[57] He defined the economy of affection as family and community obligations taking precedence over self-interest and advancement. Because Africans are more likely to act within the framework of the economy of

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[53]ALCOM 1992a:16

[54]Emma Crewe and Elizabeth Harrison, *Whose Development? An Ethnography of Aid* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1998), 37.

[55]Ibid.

[56]Ibid.

[57]James C. Scott, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), 23.

affection, he contended, the parameters of classical economic theory are not relevant in their context.[58]

Scott noted a clear-cut dichotomy between the Western and the African economical mindset. Because of this dichotomy, he recommended that Westerners not expect Africans to act like them when it comes to being utility maximizers. Africans just do not operate the way Westerners do, according to Scott.

Jean Francois Bayart, a French scholar, observed in Scott's discourse a disguised agenda that promoted the status quo of Western culture being the normative power to set the standard of judging other cultures. Bayart, therefore, rejected Scott's economy of affection theory and advocated, in turn, the unique character of individual cultural identity in the practice of the culture's beliefs. Referring to corruption in Africa, for example, Bayart argued that it is not a bad thing but merely part of the political practice in Africa. For Bayart, corruption is just the way Africans settle the question of who gets what and it works pretty well.[59]

Referring to the same state of corruption in Africa, Chukwunyere Kamalu contended that in a culture where there is scarcity of jobs, no welfare system and few breadwinners, the individual is forced to choose not between right or wrong but between evil and lesser evil. He asked, "When the well-being of the family depends on the ability of a single breadwinner, which is the greater evil; a dishonest transaction or a hungry family?"[60]

Bayart, Kamalu and others, in this school of thought, have been under attack for endorsing a sort of fatalism, an admiration for abuse of power and an escape from

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[58] Ibid.

[59] Jean Francois Bayart, *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly* (Longman: London, 1993), 15.

[60] Chukwunyere Kamalu, *Foundations of African Thought, A Worldview Grounded in the African Heritage of Religion, Philosophy, Science and Art* (London: Karnak House, 1990), 133.

personal responsibilities in African countries.[61] They also have been criticized for using generalizations and applying them to the diverse cultures found in Africa.

Regardless of such criticism, the Western essence of classical liberalism struggled to find its niche in Africa. New programs, initiatives and projects then needed to be instigated. While these new initiatives have brought some kind of "oxygen" to the African developmental discourse, they still, however, operate in the model of old school theories centering on the market-driven principle.

Development Initiatives

The United Nations Millennium Declaration

Five months prior to the Millennium assembly, Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the United Nations, presented a report titled "*We the People: The Role of the United Nations in the 21st Century"* to the 191governmental members of the United Nations. In this report, Annan appealed to members of these governments to pursue ways and means to uplift over one billion people living in extreme poverty. Annan asserted,

> I call on the international community at the highest level — the Heads of State and Government convened at the Millennium Summit — to adopt the target of halving the proportion of people living in extreme poverty, and so lifting more than 1 billion people out of it, by 2015. I further urge that no effort be spared to reach this target by that date in every region, and in every country.[62]

With this goal in mind, a Millennium Summit was convened from September 6-8, 2000, to further discuss the document. At the end of the summit, a declaration called the Millennium Declaration was adopted.[63]

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[61]Colin Leys, "Confronting African Tragedy", *New Left Review* 204 (1994), 37.

[62]Kofi Annan, *We the People: The Role of the United Nations in the 21st Century*, United Nations, 2000, # 73.

[63]UN Press Release GA/9758 of Sept 8, 2000.

The declaration report raised many challenges facing our global society including extreme poverty, pandemic disease, environmental harm, war and civil conflict and proposed avenues for meeting these challenges through global cooperation and action.[64] As related to the special needs of Africa, in paragraphs 27 and 28, the report declares:

> 27. We will support the consolidation of democracy in Africa and assist Africans in their struggle for lasting peace, poverty eradication and sustainable development, thereby bringing Africa into the mainstream of the world economy.
>
> 28. We resolve therefore:
>
> • To give full support to the political and institutional structures of emerging democracies in Africa.
>
> • To encourage and sustain regional and subregional mechanisms for preventing conflict and promoting political stability, and to ensure a reliable flow of resources for peacekeeping operations on the continent.
>
> • To take special measures to address the challenges of poverty eradication and sustainable development in Africa, including debt cancellation, improved market access, enhanced Official Development Assistance and increased flows of Foreign Direct Investment, as well as transfers of technology.
>
> • To help Africa build up its capacity to tackle the spread of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and other infectious diseases.[65]

While the report suggests several ways to address the vital issues facing Africa, it seems to suggest that globalization in its best form is the way to proceed. In fact, paragraph 73 of the summit report reads:

> Expanding access to the opportunities of globalization is one. Those countries that have achieved higher growth are those that have successfully integrated into the global economy and attracted

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[64]Jeffery Sachs, *The End of Poverty, Economic Possibilities for Our Time* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2005), 211.

[65]*United Nations Millennium Declaration*, September 8, 2000, http://www.un.org/millennium

> foreign investment. Over the past 25 years, Asia has grown at an annual rate of 7 per cent and Latin America at 5 per cent. The countries that have been largely left out of globalization have fared the worst. That includes substantial parts of sub-Saharan Africa.

Similarly, Article 5 of the declaration asserts:

> We believe that the central challenge we face today is to ensure that globalization becomes a positive force for all the world's people. For while globalization offers great opportunities, at present, its benefits are very unevenly shared, while its costs are unevenly distributed. We recognize that developing countries and countries with economies in transition face special difficulties in responding to this central challenge. Thus, only through broad and sustained efforts to create a shared future, based upon our common humanity in all its diversity, can globalization be made fully inclusive and equitable. These efforts must include policies and measures, at the global level, which correspond to the needs of developing countries and economies in transition and are formulated and implemented with their effective participation.[66]

Thomas Friedman echoed this when he asserted that in every case in which a poor nation has worked its way up to a more or less decent, or at least dramatically better, standard of living, this change has taken place via globalization by producing for the world market rather than trying for self-sufficiency.[67] Friedman went on to say that poor countries, such as Kenya and Zambia, have fallen behind in the globalization age, not because globalization failed them, but because they failed to put in place even the minimum political, economic and legal infrastructure to take advantage of globalization.[68] In globalization, Friedman found the salvation of poor countries including those of Africa.

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[66]Ibid.

[67]Thomas Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (New York: Anchor Books, 1999), 363.

[68]Ibid., 356.

Despite its good faith, globalization, with its market-driven orientation where competition and access to market is the cardinal rule, ends up alienating the socio-cultural values of the dispossessed people. This alienation happens because globalization comes with the mighty power of capitalism dictated by developed countries.

This leads to a substantial imbalance of power in globalization. Pointing out this imbalance, Rex Honey, a professor at the University of Iowa, contended that one criticism of globalization has been that countries such as the United States insist on free market policies for others but maintain the right to subsidize its farmers and steel industry.[69] Ignacio Ramonet, a French author, called this state of affairs "a new totalitarianism." This totalitarianism gives all powers to the market, he argued.[70]

A development that is solely market driven does not give much credit to individual traditional beliefs and cultural values. This is why I question the good faith of globalization. I contend that globalization, in its narrow sense of economics, does not do justice to particular cultural systems of developing countries that encompass their socio-ethical character, religious and traditional beliefs.

New Partnership in African Development (NEPAD)

NEPAD was conceived and developed in concert with several African heads of states including President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal and Olesegun Obasandjo of Nigeria. NEPAD is defined as a comprehensive, integrated development plan that addresses key social, economic and political priorities for Africa. It includes a commitment by African leaders to African people and to the international community to place Africa on a path of sustainable growth, accelerating the integration of

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[69]Rex Honey, *"*An Introduction to the Symposium: Interrogating the Globalization Project*", Transnational Law and Contemporary Problems* vol 12, No 1 (Spring 2002), 9.

[70]Ignacio Romonet, *A New Totalitarian* in *Global Issues*, Robert M. Jackson, ed (Guilford: McGraw-Hill Companies, 2002), 85.

the continent into the global economy. NEPAD calls on the rest of the world to partner with Africa in its development.

In its stated principles and objectives, NEPAD endeavours to:

-Ensure African ownership, responsibility and leadership

-Make Africa attractive to both domestic and foreign investors

-Unleash the vast economic potential of the continent

-Achieve and sustain an average gross domestic growth rate of over 7 percent per annum for the next 15 years

-Ensure that the continent achieves the agreed International Development Goals (IDGs)

-Increase investment in human resource development

-Promote the role of women in all activities

-Promote sub-regional and continental economic integration

-Develop a new partnership with industrialized countries and multilateral organizations based on mutual commitments, obligations, interest, contributions and benefits.

-Strengthen Africa's capacity to lead its own development and to improve coordination with development partners.

-Ensure that there is a capacity to lead negotiations on behalf of the continent on major development programs that require coordination at a continental level

-Ensure that there is a capacity to accelerate implementation of major regional development cooperation agreements and projects already approved or in the pipeline

-Strengthen Africa's capacity to mobilize additional external resources for its development.[71]

As stated in its goals, NEPAD proposes, by 2015, to:

-Promote accelerated growth and sustainable development. To achieve this, members will enroll all children of school age in schools; make progress towards gender equality by empowering women and eliminating gender inequalities in schools; reduce infant and child mortality ratios by two-thirds; reduce maternal

[71]www.nepad.org

> mortality ratios by three quarters; increase access to reproductive health services and reverse the loss of environment resources.
>
> -Eradicate widespread and severe poverty.
>
> -Halt the marginalization of Africa in the globalization process by implementing national strategies for sustainable development and reverse the continent's brain drain. According to NEPAD, these goals can be achieved in an environment where conditions for sustainable development are created and when working on sectoral priorities and mobilizing of Africa's resources.[72]

As a new initiative for the development of Africa, NEPAD has received mixed reviews. Some observers have praised it as a realistic "homegrown" plan to accelerate development and combat poverty across Africa.[73] Joseph Diescho, for example, went as far as calling it the best hope for Africa.[74]

While perceiving NEPAD in these terms, Diescho was cautious in asserting that the way forward for NEPAD would be better paved if all African countries who are members of the African Union would undertake a consciousness-raising program within their own constituencies and inform their citizens.[75] His concern was that NEPAD was established not in consultation with the African people but with heads of state. He also questioned the use of the term of partnership versus cooperation when it comes to defining Africa's relationship with the G8, given that this project was financed by the G8. For him, "partnership" evokes equal footing while "cooperation" connotes the notion of a donor and a receiver. According to Diescho, Africa is still on the receiving end.

By suggesting the consciousness-raising program, Diescho also called attention to the disunity within the African continent. He contended that one of the weaknesses that

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[72]Joseph Diescho, *Understanding the New Partnership for Africa's Development* (Windhoek: Namibia Institute for Democracy, 2002), 14.

[73]Diakonia Resource Center, *Un-blurring the vision, NEPAD, An Assessment of he New Partnership for Africa's Development* (Durban: South African Council of Churches, 2002), 5.

[74]Diescho, 65.

[75]Ibid.

NEPAD faces is the problem of unity. For Diescho, present leaders of Africa do not share a common interest compared to African leaders at the time of independence. Today African leaders are more self-serving, running the economies of their countries "into the ground" as they siphon off national treasures for their personal accounts, often offshore, he argues.[76]

While Diescho praised NEPAD, there are groups that have criticized it. The South African Council of Churches, for example, reproached NEPAD for not learning from previous experiences of development and alienating the same people they are trying to help with a hurtful economic strategy. In its report on NEPAD, the South African Council of Churches asserted,

> Its (NEPAD) economic strategy is discredited by the harsh impact on the poor in African countries that have already adopted similar policies. It pretends to be unaware of the severe negative social impact that rapid privatization of basic and social services has on impoverished communities in Africa. It fails to address the underlying power relations that constrain Africa's development. It does not provide a decisive mechanism to repair the persistent damage done to individuals, families, whole societies, and environments in Africa's history.[77]

In the same line of reasoning, the Council singled out the failure to create an alternative to market-driven development. It asserted:

> NEPAD fails to offer any alternative to the dominant market fundamentalist development model that places unquestioning faith in uncontrolled, private sector led, rapid economic growth as the answer to the problem of rampant poverty, despite the evidence that this strategy in fact deepens poverty, increases unemployment, and widens inequality in the short and medium term, while making national economies extremely vulnerable to speculative capital and market sentiment.[78]

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[76]Diescho, 49.

[77]Diakonia Resource Center, *Un-blur vision*, 8.

[78]Ibid., 21.

The result of this strategy is that the immediate needs of the poor are unmet in exchange for some uncertain end in the distant future.[79]

It is precisely in this context that I see NEPAD following in the footsteps of Western market-driven capitalism. As previously argued, market-driven capitalism gives no consideration to individual cultural values and traditional beliefs. I find it ironic that a project such as NEPAD, which claims to be purely African, fails to incorporate the socio-ethical context and cultural values of the people it is trying to uplift and instead appeals to the old school of Western market-driven development theory to address the continent's under-development issues.

Tony Blair's Commission on Africa

In his effort to launch the Commission on Africa, Tony Blair, the former British Prime Minister, declared:

> I fear my own conscience on Africa. I fear that judgment of future generations, where history properly calculates the gravity of the suffering. I fear them asking: how could wealthy people, so aware of such suffering, so capable of acting, simply turn away to busy themselves with other things?[80]

Blair's statement was the moral rationale under which he embarked on the process of addressing major problems facing Africa. This moral imperative of our time, as he called it, was also justified on the grounds that by uplifting Africa, the Western world can build its own peace and prosperity. In this regard, Blair uttered,

> To tackle the instability, conflict and despair which disfigures too much of Africa and which can fuel extremism and violence, is to help build our own long term peace and prosperity and it can be done.[81]

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[79]Ibid.

[80]Tony Blair in *New Africa* (April, 2005): 13.

[81]Ibid.

This double agenda of arguing for economic development based on moral imperative and the need for security underpins a document known as the Commission for Africa. This Commission was a comprehensive economic plan that addressed a variety of issues facing the African continent. Referring to growth and poverty reduction, for example, the commission stated:

> Africa is poor, ultimately, because its economy has not grown. The public and private sectors need to work together to create a climate which unleashes the entrepreneurship of the peoples of Africa, generates employment and encourages individuals and firms, domestic and foreign, to invest. Changes in governance are needed to make the investment climate stronger.[82]

The commission went on to say,

> Growth will also require a massive investment in infrastructure to break down the internal barriers that hold Africa back. Donors should fund a doubling of spending on infrastructure, from rural roads and small scale irrigation to regional highways, railways, larger power projects and Information and Communications Technology (ICT). That investment must include both rural development and slum upgrading, without which the poor people in Africa will not be able to participate in growth. And policies for growth must actively include - and take care not to exclude - the poorest groups. There should be particular emphasis on agriculture and on helping small enterprises, with a particular focus on women and young people. For growth to be sustainable, safeguarding the environment and addressing the risks of climate change should be integral to donor and government programs.[83]

On the conceptualization level, this economic plan took into account the socio-ethical and traditional beliefs of the African people. This is not new, however. Previous theories and initiatives such as the Brandt Commission of 1980, the 1996 World Commission on Culture and Development and the 2001 World Summit on Sustainable Development and the New Partnership in African Development have tried to do the same thing. Their impact, however, on the growth and development of Africa has been small or

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[82]Our Common Interest, Report on Commission for Africa. Available at www.commissionforafrica.org.

[83]Ibid.

non-existent. The difference between these and Blair's Commission resides in the fact that culture, in previous theories and initiatives, was defined as a subject of what Sen calls, "comparative indifference."[84]

The Blair Commission, in contrast, valued culture and built a framework of development around it. Pointing out the importance of culture in development in Africa, the Commission used a concrete case of civil war in Somalia to make the point:

> Civil war plunged Somalia into a condition of such chaos that the state, as an organism of government, could be said no longer to exist. Provinces became anarchic and autarchic, with warlords ruling whatever territory their forces could command. To the north of the country, however, the area known as Somaliland has shown signs of calm and modest but ordered prosperity. The warlords elsewhere have abolished the influence of the Tol, the country's traditional courts of tribal elders. Somaliland has not just retained the Tol, but has elevated it to the status of the second chamber of parliament. The Tol is a clan-based system of justice, which places responsibility for crimes not on individuals but on the whole of their clan. A complainant with a grievance can go before the Tol and demand compensation not just from the perpetrator of the wrong but from that person's entire clan. The result is that potential miscreants are kept in check not by the law but by their own clan.[85]

For the Commission, the elevation of the Tol to an instrument of government as a check on the democratically elected house was a key component in the relative stability of Somaliland. For the Commission, a hybrid system, with its mix of African and other systems of governance, was one that clearly worked.[86]

Furthermore, the commission argued that the inattention to culture in policymaking explained the failure of so many development initiatives in Africa over the years.[87]

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[84]Amartya Sen, "How does Culture Matter?", *in Culture and Public Action*, Rao, V and M Walton, eds, (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2004.

[85]*Commission on Africa*, 121.

[86]Ibid.

[87]Ibid., 122.

The Commission was not without its critics, however. One of these critics, Cameron Duodu, reproached the commission for what he called "lack of a clear policy on trade." Duodu argued that the rich countries have benefited from over 100 years of dictating, unilaterally, to Africa, the price at which African products - such as cocoa, coffee, tea, gold, diamonds, copper, uranium, tin bauxite, iron, sugar, jute and rubber - will be sold. These rich countries also have dictated the prices at which their products are sold to Africa.[88]

For Duodu, the rich countries must create a fund, directly levied on the profits of commodity traders in the rich countries, from which African countries can draw capital to establish factories and thereby add value to their commodities before exporting them.[89] Duodu further suggested that what Africa needs is a real cartel along the lines of OPEC to take control of the prices of its products.[90] For Duodu, Blair's Commission came up short in this entrepreneurship.

There have been several other criticisms regarding this Commission. However, on the cultural level, the Commission deserves praise for its initiative to validate the intrinsic cultural values and traditional beliefs of the people it was trying to uplift. Unfortunately, the Commission's efforts to uplift Africa were curtailed by the London bombing in July 2007 and later by Tony Blair's departure from office. As with previous development initiatives, Tony Blair's Commission for Africa went down in history as another failed attempt to bring sustainable development to Africa.

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[88]Cameron Duodu, *Africa, Your Destiny is in Your Hand* in *New Africa* (April 2005, vol 439), 18.

[89]Ibid.

[90]Ibid., 15

CHAPTER III

INDIGENOUS RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS AND EMERGENCE OF AFRICAN INITIATED CHURCHES IN SOUTH AFRICA

Introduction

Beginning in the seventeenth century, the Western elites (travelers, colonial administrators, missionaries and merchants) eager to promote the Western epistemology, civilization and their so-called "moral superiority", used religion as a barometer to assess the moral, intellectual, biological and spiritual status of Africans. In this sense, they were more inclined to deny that religious systems existed when Africans were in a mode of resistance and tended to discover religious systems whenever they were in total control of land and its people. As David Chidester put it, the discovery of religious systems among African people depended upon colonial conquest and domination.[1]

This chapter elucidates the frontier, imperial and colonial construction of African religious systems through the cycle of denial/discovery. In it, I argue that the mission enterprise in South Africa was entangled with the colonial construction that promoted Western hegemony and created a dissonance with many Blacks. It was out of this dissonance that African Initiated Churches emerged as a cultural resistance and radical expression of symbolic systems. The Zion Christian Church is one example of this emergence.

Historical Patterns of Indigenous Religious Systems in Africa

The Western endeavour of conquest and domination was executed in two different phases, frontier and imperial/colonial.[2] The Frontier phase, defined as a human

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[1]David Chidester, *Savage Systems: Colonialism and Comparative Religion in Southern Africa,* (Charlottesville, University Press of Virginia, 1996), 19.

[2]Ibid., 2.

science of local control, extended from the beginning of the seventeenth century to the end of nineteenth century. During this phase, the "lack of religion" among Africans was equated with the absence of defining human features, such as the institution of marriage, a system of law, or any formal political organization.[3] This lack of religion led the Western elites to believe that Africans were simply sub-human, primitive brutes and savages. This undervaluing of Africans created a myth of superiority in the Western epistemology. This is what Edward Said, in his book, *Orientalism,* called "positional superiority."[4]

"Positional superiority" is a hegemony in which certain cultural forms predominate over others in a binary relationship of power and domination.[5] By positioning themselves higher, the Western elites believed that they had the power to and a monopoly on setting rules of social, scientific and anthropological engagement and defining the indigenous in light and terms of European cultural values and knowledge.[6] This resulted in the classification of Africans as subjects of research alongside the flora and fauna and ranking them as 'nearly human', 'almost human' or 'sub-human', depending on whether they possessed a 'soul' and could be 'offered' salvation, and whether or not they were educable and could be offered schooling.[7]

Being reduced to the category of sub-human, Africans had no recognizable human rights or entitlement to the land in which they lived.[8] As such, they could be

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[3] Chidester, *Savage Systems*, 14.

[4] Edward Said, *Orientalism,* (New York: Vintage Books, 2003), 7

[5] Ibid.

[6] Denys Hay, *Europe: The Emergence of an Idea, 2nd ed.* (Edinburg: Edinburgh University Press, 1959).

[7] Ibid, 60.

[8] Ibid,14.

exterminated, both in the sense of being driven from their land and being slaughtered, because biblical commandments against theft or murder did not apply to nonhumans. This was the argument of one of the seventeenth -century English theologians, Lancelot Andrewes. Andrewes put it this way, "God had given the earth to humans and not to sheep or deer."[9] Similar to Andrewes, the British philosopher Thomas Hobbes contended that human beings had no moral or legal obligations to animals because to make covenants with brute beasts as he put it, is impossible.[10] Furthermore, the Rev Robert Gray, in 1609, made the assertion that the earth was possessed and wrongfully usurped by wild beasts or by brutish savages, which by reason of the godless ignorance and blasphemous idolatry are worse than beasts.[11] This was how Africans were perceived at the end of the seventeenth century due to the so-called absence of religion among them.

In the eighteenth century, the meaning of the absence of religion among Africans shifted from the status of beasts or animals to the status of *fetishism*.[12] According to Chidester, this transition was the result of the expansion of mercantile trading networks in the Atlantic and the Pacific.[13] At the time, the assumption was that because they lacked religion, Africans were incapable of organizing relations among human beings or relations between humans and materials objects. While on one hand, they overvalued trifling objects such as a bird's feather, a pebble, a bit of rag or a dog's leg by treating them as fetishes, on the other hand they undervalued trade goods.[14] This alleged inability

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[9]Chidester, *Savage Systems*, 14.

[10]Ibid.

[11]Ibid., 15.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Ibid.

to assess the value of material objects became the defining feature of Africans' ignorance, childishness, capriciousness.[15]

Furthermore, the resistance of Africans to participate as labourers in the expanding colonial economy made them a people without religion. In the Western elites' view, industry was contingent upon religion. In this context, they linked African lack of industry and their refusal to cooperate in the colonial endeavours as a lack of discipline that could be associated with the absence of religion. It is here that they invented the notion of "lazy savage" and began to apply this term to the Africans. To change this status and make Africans productive labourers, Western elites believed that Africans had to be converted to a "gospel of work" that encompassed productivity and division of labour.[16]

During the early nineteenth century, the lack of religion had come to represent Africa as both an empty space and an obstacle to conquest, colonization, and conversion.[17] At the time, Africans were depicted as lacking civilization and morality. Writings of prominent Western explorers and philosophers expressed this view. Stanley Livingstone, for example, in one of his diaries wrote:

> We come among them (Africans) as members of a superior race and servants of a government that desires to elevate more degraded portions of the human family. We are the adherents of the benign, holy religion and by mere consistent conduct and wise patient efforts become the enjoinders of peace to a hitherto destructed and downtrodden race."[18]

In a similar way, David Hume wrote:

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[15]Ibid.

[16]Ibid., 16.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Jaques Maquet, *Power and Society in Africa* (London: Word University Library, 1971), 242.

> I am apt to suspect the Negroes…to be naturally inferior to whites. There never was a civilized nation of any other complexion than white, nor even individual eminent either in action or speculation. No ingenious manufactures amongst them, no arts, no sciences. On the other hand, the most rude and barbarous whites, such as the ancient Germans, the present Tartars, have still something eminent about them, in their valor, form of government, or some other particular. Such a uniform and constant difference could not happen, in so many countries and ages, if nature had not made original distinction between these breeds of men.[19]

Because of these caricatures, the humanistic elites in Europe felt that it was their moral duty to bring civilization to the Africans through colonization. They believed that colonization was one of the duties incumbent upon great nations, a duty which they could not evade without failing in their mission and falling into moral dereliction.[20] To fulfill this mission, humanistic elites thought colonization would have to be accompanied by commerce and Christianity. This new mission of colonization, commerce and Christianity came to be known as the Three C's Theory.

Social scientists argued that the Three C's Theory was grounded in the assumption of racial superiority resulting in the invention of anthropological categories such as "race" and "tribe". By inventing these categories, argued Lamin Sanneh, European humanistic elites conveyed the notion that Africans were a people without history or knowledge of history.[21] "Race" and "tribe" are not self-applied designations, mused Sanneh; they are imposed in all their dense meaning and take on the cultural meaning of a people with no historical record, as specimens of nature, unrefined by discipline, struggle and self-control.[22]

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[19]David Hume, *Essay and Treatise* (1768). 152n.

[20]Charles Gide, "Conference Sur le Devoir Colonial [1897],"in Aubry, *The Domination of France in Indochina, West Africa and Madagascar*, 78.

[21]Lamin Sanneh, *The African Transformation of Christianity* (Phoenix: Arizona State University, 1998), 2.

[22]Ibid.

In addition to the invention of the anthropological concept of "race" and "tribe", the Three C's Theory gave room to an antithesis concept of "higher culture" and "lower culture," with the Western culture being the former and the Africans' the latter. Chinua Achebe saw an example of this antithesis in Joseph Conrad's classic novel *Heart of the Darkness*. According to Achebe, when Conrad wrote, "going up that river was like traveling back to the earliest beginnings of the world, when vegetation rioted on the earth and the big trees were kings," he was using a racial and cultural category to contrast civilization to barbarism. Conrad's contrast of two rivers, the Thames, in England, and the Congo, in Africa, is revealing in that like the Congo River that was still in its darkest time, the Thames, once one of the darkest places on earth, had conquered its darkness, contended Achebe.[23] In his own novel *Things Fall Apart,* Achebe delineated Western hegemony and its misjudgment of African religious and moral values. He wrote,

> Does the white man understand our custom about land? How can he when he does not even speak our tongue? But he says that our custom is bad; and our own brothers who have taken up his religion also say that our customs are bad. How do you think we can fight when our own brothers have turned against us? The white man is very clever. He came quietly and peaceably with his religion. We were amused at his foolishness, and our clan can no longer be like one. He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart.[24]

Thus, Livingstone's, Hume's, and Conrad's caricatures of Africans were the *modus operandi* of colonial administrators and missionaries who saw their task as teaching principles of morality and bringing civilization to Africa. To fulfill this task required the conquest of the Africans' land and the discovery of their religion.

During the Imperial Period, which extended from 1850 into the mid-twentieth century, religion was discovered among Africans. The Western elites, in their quest for

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[23] Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* (New York: Double Day, 1959), 176.

[24] Ibid.

control and domination, no longer viewed religion as a coherent and integrated system, a criteria used previously to exclude Africans' religious systems, but as a vehicle of collecting data for the expansion of control over the entire expanse of humanity. FD Maurice, a humanistic theoretician of the time, expressed this view. Maurice asserted that knowledge about religion reinforced a global control over the entire expanse of human geography and history.[25] The same view would also be used by the Western elites to rationalize a linear evolution of humanity associated with scientific disciplines such as anatomy, genealogy and morphology.

For example, Georges Curvier, a Swiss comparative anatomist, developed a scale to evaluate the perfection of the intellectual and moral core of a person. Curvier gauged the proportion of the mind-cranial area to that of the face to reveal the degree of dependence of an organism upon external sensations. His assumption was that the size of the cranium determined the development of reason and self-control.[26] Using this premise, Curvier classified African cranial development as similar to what he called "monkey tribes" and depicted them as in the permanent state of barbarism. He wrote,

> The negro race is confined to the south of Mount Atlas. Its Characters are, black complexion, woolly hair, compressed cranium, and flattish nose. In the prominence of the lower part of the face, and the thickness of the lips, it manifestly approaches to the monkey tribes. The hordes of which this variety is composed have always remained in a state of complete barbarism.[27]

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[25]Chidester, *Savage Systems*,17.

[26]Jean and John Comaroff, *Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism and Consciousness, Vol. 1* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 100.

[27]Ibid, 101.

Figure 6 1810 Exhibition Poster for Hottentot Venus

Source: **www.westminster.gov.uk/libraries/archives,** 2007

Curvier would further extend his erroneous anatomic premise by presenting, before the Academie Royale de Medecine in France, the dissected labia of a young African woman named Baartman, also known as the Hottentot Venus. Baartman, a Khoisan woman from the Western Cape, was the main attraction at public spectacles in both England and France for over five years. Brought to Europe in 1810 as a human exhibition by an English ship's surgeon, Baartman was presented naked, in a cage, to show her steatopygia or enlarged buttocks.

When she died at the age of twenty-six, her body was dissected and her genitals continued to be exhibited. An analysis of her genitals gave room to some pseudo-scientists to argue on the so-called "primitive sexuality" of African women. After analyzing the nature of Baartman's dissected labia, Curvier concluded that Baartman's oversized primitive genitalia was physical proof of the African women's "primitive sexual appetite."[28]

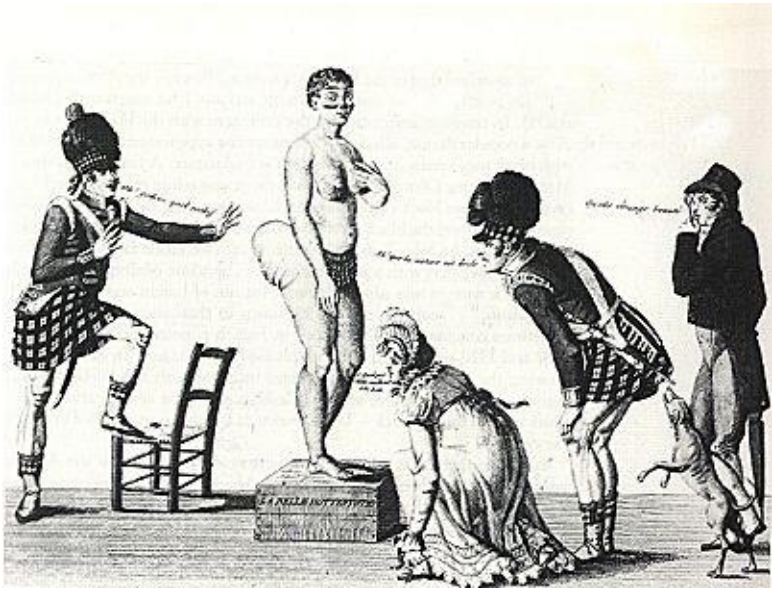

Figure 7 The Hottentot Venus

Source: zar.co.za/images/bio/baartman/saartjie.jpg, 2007

Genealogically, the Western elites contended that indigenous religions or paganism were derived from ancient sources, especially from the religion of ancient

[28]Ibid.

Israel. This derivation was, however, degenerative. In their view, African religious systems were debased and wretched.[29]

Morphologically, the elites established formal or functional affinities between religions. They believed that forms and functions of religion could be compared without assuming any necessary cultural contact or historical connection between the people compared.[30]

Indigenous Religious Systems in South Africa

There are several illustrations of how the cycle of denial/discovery of religious systems among South African societies was carried out. Among the Hottentots (khoikhoi) of the Cape Colony, for example, the absence or presence of religion was correlated with expanding boundaries of a contested frontier.[31] Chidester argued that between 1600 and 1654, the Hottentots were classified as lacking any religion. When a European settlement was established among them, they were thought to have acquired religion. They lost it again when the colony expanded between 1685 and 1700 and regained it in the 1770 when the colony grew to encompass the entire cape region.[32]

Among the Xhosa-speaking people of the Eastern Cape, the same notion of denial or discovery of religion was applied, depending on the level of control held by the colonial power. Consequently, between 1779 and 1878, the Xhosa-speaking people were reported to have no religion at all. In fact, they were called *Kafir*, a derogatory term that connoted the idea of "unbeliever." A London Missionary Society representative JT van

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[29] Chidester, *Savage Systems*, 3.

[30] Ibid., 18.

[31] Ibid., 69

[32] Ibid.

der Kemp, for example, after examining the cultural practices of the Xhosa, concluded that they did not have any religion. He wrote,

> If by religion we understand reverence of God, or the external action by which that reverence is expressed, I never could perceive that they (Xhosa) had any religion, nor any idea of the existence of God.[33]

Kemp came to his conclusion after observing the Xhosa interact with an anchor from a ship that had wrecked at the mouth of the Keiskamma River. Kemp observed that the Xhosa displayed what he called "a peculiar, superstitious awe" before the anchor. They regarded it with strange mixture of fear and respect, avoiding contact but saluting it when they passed. [34] Kemp wrote,

> There lays, near the mouth of the Keiskamma, an old anchor, belonging to a ship which was lost on the coast. Chachabee [Rharhabe, d. 1782], who governed this country about the year 1780 ordered a piece of this anchor to be cut off; the Caffree, who was employed in this work, died soon after. The accident was enough for this people to take in their heads that the anchor had the power of punishing every one who should treat it with disrespect, and also some dominion over the sea. In order to reconcile it, it has been honoured with a peculiar name, and when a Caffree passes by, he salutes it.[35]

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[33]Ibid., 75.

[34]Ibid.

[35]Ibid.,76.

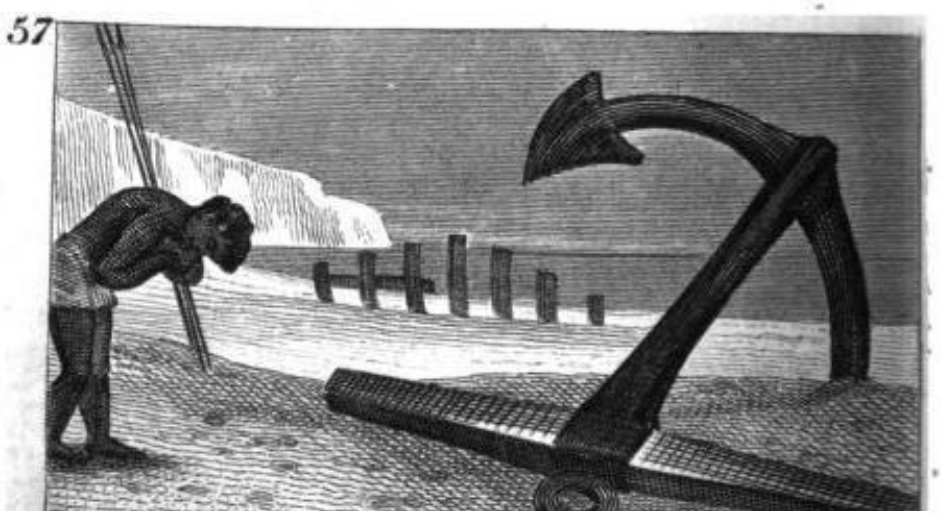

Figure 8 Illustration of Shipwrecked Anchor

Source: Chidester, David, Savage Systems, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1996), 76.

The Xhosa-speaking people were found to have religion around 1820 when the British settlers were placed on the contested frontier of the Eastern Cape as a buffer between the Xhosa and the colonial town of Grahamstown.[36]

Among the Zulu, the same pattern of denial or discovery of religion was also established. In 1689, a group of survivors of the Stavenisee, shipwrecked in the Natal area in eastern South Africa, recorded that after spending more than two years among the Zulu, they were unable to discover the slightest trace of religion.[37]

Similarly, in 1836, a nephew of a British merchant, Nathaniel Isaacs, denied the idea of religion among the Zulu. Isaacs wrote,

> The Zoolas have no idea of a Deity, no knowledge of a future state. They cannot comprehend the mystery of creation; they ignorantly conceive themselves to spring from reeds, as in a windy day the clashing of these supposed genii of the mud they aver to be like the noise produced by the collision of human voices. They sacrifice to

[36]Ibid., 95.

[37]Ibid., 119.

> their departed friends, whom they conceive to be in existence and living with the issetator. If they are indisposed, the inyanger, or doctor, will attribute it to the "Spirit of their progenitors", or "Issetator", when a cow will be killed as a sacrifice, and a speech made to invoke the spirit to relieve the patient.[38]

Furthermore, Isaacs argued that the King of the Zulu, Shaka, himself was ignorant of any notion of deity. Recalling his conversation with the King, he wrote,

> He (Shaka) had no idea of religion, no symbol by which anything like a knowledge of a Supreme Being could be conveyed.[39]

For Isaacs, the grossest state of ignorance on what he called the "sublime subject" pervaded King Shaka.[40] As King Shaka lacked this sublime subject, so did his people, argued Isaacs. Any form of spiritual practice among the Zulu was no less than a practice of superstition. He called the Zulu, "the most superstitious creatures on the face of the earth."[41]

The discovery of religion among the Zulu began to emerge when talk of annexation of Natal as a British colony was underway and when trade between the two nations was flourishing in 1843. In this context, a British missionary, Allan Gardiner, who had lived among the Zulu at the time of King Dingane, recognized the presence of religion and subsequently the belief in a supreme being among the Zulu. Narrating his encounter with a group of Zulu prisoners taken from Port Natal to Dingane's kraal, Gardiner wrote:

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[38]Irving Hexham, *Texts on Zulu Religion, Traditional Zulu Ideas about God*, (Queenston: E. Mellon Press, 1987), 40.

[39]Ibid.

[40]Chidester, *Savage Systems*, 120.

[41]Ibid.

> From the conversation that I have had with the prisoners during the period of halting, it appears that they have always had some indistinct idea of Supreme Being. Nonha's words, in reply to some inquiries on this point, were these-"we always believed that there was an *Incosi-pezula* (a great chief above) who, before there was a world, came down and made it; he made men; and we knew also that there were white men."[42]

With the discovery of religious systems among the Zulu, Gardiner was paving the way for the annexation of Natal as a British colony. This would eventually take place with the arrival of missionaries and colonial administrators. Missionaries and colonial administrators upheld the Western hegemony by promoting a policy of racial division and alienation. Many African Initiated churches emerged as resistance to this divisive policy and as a need to freely express their religious cultural systems.

Mission Churches and the Emergence of African Initiated Churches (AICs)

In a letter sent to his superintendent in October 14, 1892, Mangena Mokone wrote,

> Dear Sir,
>
> I hereby give you notice that at the end of this month I will leave the Wesleyan Church ministry and serve God in my own way. It is no use to stop me for I won't change. If you like, I can pack up all I've got and leave tomorrow morning before breakfast.
>
> Your grumbling servant
>
> Mangena Maake Mokone[43]

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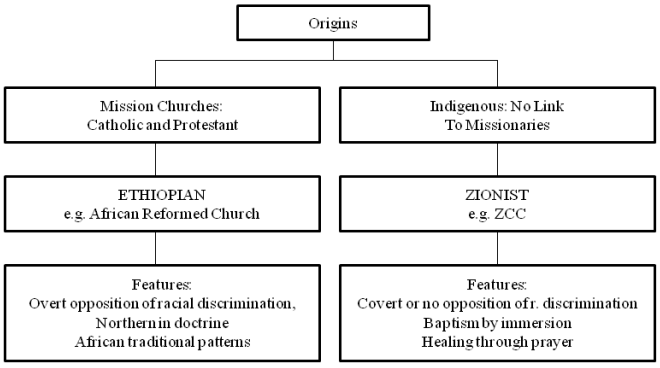
[42] Hexham, 67.

[43] CC Saunders, *Tile and the Thembu Church: Politics and Independency on the Cape Eastern Frontiers in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Cape Town: The Abe Bailey Institute, 1971), 514.

The dissatisfaction of Mangena with the Wesleyan Mission Church was a trend that swept Black South Africans and subsequently led to the formation of African Initiated Churches (AICs) at the turn of the twentieth century. Although there are several reasons for the emergence and growth of African Initiated Churches, the failure of mission churches to address the socio-political, economic and spiritual needs of their members coupled with the harsh experience of a displaced urban proletariat aggravated by a racially stratified society are important variables of the mass exodus of Black South Africans to Initiated Churches.[44] Furthermore, the need to find an identity in a disarticulated world of colonial and neo-colonial White hegemony caused Black South Africans to flock to African Initiated Churches as a radical expression of cultural resistance.[45]

Table 4 The Origins of the African Initiated Churches and Their Features



Source: Mosupyoe, Boatamo Yvonne, PhD Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, CA, 1999.

[44]Jim Kiernan, "The African Independent Churches" in *Living Faiths in South Africa*, eds Martin Prozesky and John DeGruchy (New York: St Martin's Press, 1995), 118.

[45]Jean Comaroff, *Body of Power, Spirit of Resistance, the Culture and History of South African People* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985), 194.

Disenfranchised with mission churches, Black South Africans, at the turn of the century, had three choices. They could be members of the wholly Black mission churches under the control of the White missionaries and their boards located overseas. They could choose to be members of a multiracial denomination with White leadership, Europeans customs, discriminations and paternalism or they could also leave both the mission and multiracial churches and initiate their own.[46] Many chose the latter resulting in the formation of three main types of AIC: Ethiopian, Apostolic and Zionist. Observing this trend, the Church of Scotland missionary journal in its editorial of June 1906 wrote,

> During the past dozen years, the South African Mission Field has unhappily witnessed a number of secessions of Native Church members. Some of these have been from churches with both European and Native members. Others have been from Churches where the membership was entirely Native; so that these secessions have not been entirely due to racial feeling. Various reasons have been given by the seceders for the course they have followed. Most frequently the alleged cause has been difficulty of working together, a feeling of being curbed, or overshadowed, or otherwise restricted in the exercise of their activities, or a lack of mutual trust and confidence. In some cases these reasons have no doubt been sincerely believed and acted upon. In others they have been a mere pretext, cloaking less worthy motives. The number and extent of these secessions call for earnest consideration, if for no other reason that the danger they constitute to the Native church.[47]

While the editorial warned that the formation of Initiated Churches was a danger to the Native Church and subsequently to the whole missionary enterprise, Black Christians joined AIC as a reaction to the mission churches' agenda that did not favor their cause and did not allow them to freely articulate their religious expressions from their cultural systems experience. Black Christians felt that they could not express freely

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[46]John and Steve DeGruchy, *The Church Struggle in South Africa*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 40.

[47]Francis Wilson and Dominique Perrot(eds), *Outlook On a Century: South Africa, 1870-1970* (Lovedale: Lovedale Press and Spro-cas, 1973), 375.

their emotions and feeling in singing, dancing, shouting and crying, as they would love to do.[48] They felt that they were compelled into a religio-capitalism system where White missionaries were first to secure the proper interest of their sending churches rather than uphold the spiritual, socio-economic and political aspirations of Africans.

Mission churches were so captive to their cultural expressions that they had come to believe that giving room to African religious expression was a deviation and a threat to their core existence and witness.[49] White missionaries were so infused in the standards of the Victorian middle-class and therefore did not think beyond the Western-controlled and paternalistic relationship with their Black counterparts.[50] Consequently, they became less sensitive to African culture. They took a hard line against cultural issues such as circumcision, *lobola* and polygamy. White missionaries saw these issues as incompatible with the Christian message and therefore needed to be discarded. They preached what David Bosch called "superficial, impoverished gospel".[51] It was a gospel that did not touch on many facets of the life or struggle of the African. This inability to be relevant to the struggle of the Africans, argued Bosch, created a vacuum that was then filled by the prophetic and Pentecostal movements.[52] David Barrett called this same attitude of inability for concern as absence of "brotherly love." [53] For Barrett, as missionaries

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[48]Paul Makhubu, *Who are the Independent Churches* (Braamfontein: Skotaville Pub, 1988), 19.

[49]John deGruchy, *The Church Struggle in South Africa* , 45

[50]Adrian Hastings, *The Church in Africa, 1450-1950* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 362.

[51]David Bosch, *Transforming Mission, Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2006), 214.

[52]Ibid.

[53]David Barrett, *Schism and Renewal in Africa* (Nairobi: Oxford Univ Press, 1968), 154.

lacked brotherly love, so they failed to understand "Africanism" and to distinguish the good elements in African religions and culture from the bad.[54]

Missionaries also imposed restrictions on the ordination of African clergy. They created a paternalistic system where Black leaders were classified as assistants and rarely as ministers. The few who were ordained were fashioned as an inferior group, both educationally and in status.[55]

For African Christians, the way out of this status quo was to initiate their own churches where they would no longer be supervised by White missionaries. The following extract from the testimony of the Rev. Samuel Jacobus Brander, the Rev. Joshua Mphothleng, and Stephen Nquato of the Ethiopian Church in Zion, before the South African Native Affairs Commission, in October 1904, illustrates how diligent it was for Africans to initiate their own churches:

> Q. Who do you represent?
>
> A. I represent the Ethiopian Catholic Church in Zion
>
> Q. What is that?
>
> A. It is an organization which we have commenced lately since we resigned from the A.M.E Church.
>
> Q. Are you the head of it?
>
> A. Yes.
>
> Q. What were you belonging to before?
>
> A. To the A.M.E Church

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[54]Ibid.

[55]Adrian Hastings, *The Church in Africa*, 364.

Q. And before that?

A. We belonged to the Church of England before we joined the A.M.E Church

Q. Why did you leave that Church and start your own?

A. When we found that we could not get ahead, Makone and myself came together to raise the Church of Ethiopia, and later on we joined the A.M.E Church of America, because we found at the time that it would go better if we joined the American Church, as they had education and other things better than we had. We considered that it would be better for us to join them, so that they could help us, being coloured people themselves.

Q. What was your object in leaving the A.M.E Church and starting a Church of your own?

A. We left on account of the promises they gave us when we joined them not being kept.

Q. During the six years you were a minister of the American Church, did you receive any grants from America at all?

A. Not one.

Q. Was there any political teaching in the Church during the six years you were a member of it?

A. Not to my knowledge.

Q. Have you in the Church that you have just lately started no white supervision whatever?

A. No.

Q. What is your object in starting a Church independent of the white man and of white control; seeing that your first attempt at that was a failure, what is the reason that you made a second attempt?

A. We have not seen that we have become a failure as yet.

Q. Did you not say you made a mistake by joining the A.M.E Church?

A. In joining the American Church we thought that, as they were our own colour, they would help us up, but we found that helped us down, and they took all the best positions without telling us a word, sending men from America.[56]

While missionaries' attitude toward Black Christians was a non-negligible parameter in the formation of AICs, it did not solely account for their growth after the missionary connection was broken.

Growth of African Initiated Churches in South Africa

The harsh social conditions of millions of Black South Africans and their need for identity in a colonial and neo-colonial White hegemony are important factors in the growth of AICs. From a handful of adherents at the turn of the century, AICs grew to become the largest single Christian group in South Africa making up 32.6 % of all South Africans Christians and 38% of all Black South Africans with a total membership of 14,541,969.[57] According to Stats South Africa, 1 out 11 South Africans is a member of AIC. The following table illustrates the disparity in terms of percentage and numbers of adherents.

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[56]John DeGruchy, *The Church Struggle in South Africa*, 42

[57]Stats South Africa, 2001

Table 5 African Initiated Churches in 1996 and 2001

	Church	*Affiliates*	*% of Total Population*	*% of All Christians*
	ZCC	3,854,898 (4,971,931)	9.5 (11.09)	12.8 (13.91)
Zionist	Other	2,136,728 (1,887,147)	5.3 (4.21)	7.1 (5.28)
ZCC	Engenas	12, 905		
	Nazaretha	454,765 (248,825)	1.1 (0.56)	1.5 (0.70)
Nazarite	Other	22,525	0.1	0.1
Apostolic	Other	3,077,789 (5,627,320)	7.6 (12.56)	10.2 (12.56)
Apostolic	St. John	217,601	0.5	0.7
African Apostolic	Other	12,702		
	Ethiopian	474,258 (1,150,102)	1.2 (2.57)	1.6 (2.57)
	Ethnic	35,529	0.1	0.1
	Other AIC	229,037 (656,644)	0.6 (1.47)	0.8 (1.84)
Baptist	Other	139,777	0.3	0.5
	Total AICs	10,668,515 (14,541,969)	26.3 (32.45)	35.3 (36.84)
African Christians	Total South	30,058,742 (35,750,641)		74.1 (79.77)
African Population	Total South	40,583,639 (44,819,774)	100	

Source: Stats South Africa, 2001.

The bulk of AICs' members came from impoverished rural reserves' dwellers and urban townships' migrant workers. With millions of them marginalized, disfranchised and living in conditions aggravated by a racial stratified society, AICs' primary concern was to alleviate the impoverished conditions of workers by attempting to transcend their sense of deprivation and inadequacy and meeting their social and religious needs.[58] Marthinus Daneel delineated this religious concern from the AICs by asserting,

> The Independent Churches' real attraction for members and growth derive from their original, creative attempts to relate the good news of the gospel in a meaningful and symbolically intelligible way to the innermost needs of Africa. In doing so they are in a process of and have to a large extent already succeeded in creating truly African havens of belonging.[59]

The racially dominated South African society created an environment where poverty and degradation existed side by side with modern cities and a developed mining, industrial and commercial infrastructure. With an economy built on systematically enforced racial division, towns and cities were divided into townships without basic infrastructure for Blacks and well resourced suburbs for Whites.[60] It was an environment where cheap labour policies and employment segregation concentrated skills in White hands. Workers were poorly equipped for the rapid changes taking place in the world economy. Small and medium-sized enterprises were underdeveloped. The informal sector and "survival sectors" including many of South African's women workers were underpaid and exploited.

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[58]Ibid.

[59]Marthinus Daneel, *Quest for Belonging: Introduction to a Study of African Independent Churches* (Gweru: Mambo Press, 1987),101.

[60]Ibid.

Workers in the mining industry, the pillar of the South African economy, were considered sub-human. Unskilled with little or no training at all, they earned low wages compared to the capital production of the mining industries. They had temporary contracts which made them vulnerable to any entrenchment. They were stripped of human rights and dignity. Separated from their families and living under inhuman social conditions, they were confined to hostels and compounds. Johnson, describing the living conditions of those mining workers, stated,

> The compounds range from the relatively small (30-50 men), run by schools, for example, to the great mine compound, housing 10.000 men or more. It is these latter that the migrant repairs from the bowels of the earth, to rooms usually unadorned by tables, chairs or electrical light. They are the dormitories in which as many as 24 workers may sleep, in double-decker concrete bunks. Defecating is also normally a communal activity, with lavatories allowing place for as many as 20 men to sit side by side.[61]

The fact of living far away from families led to the deterioration of values and the dysfunction of many families. Alan Paton in his novel "*Cry, the Beloved Country*" criticized the government for a "*laissez faire*" policy on the socio-economic conditions of the mining workers. Paton wrote:

> It was permissible to allow the destruction of a tribal system that impeded the growth of the country; it was permissible to believe that its destruction was inevitable. But it is not permissible to watch its destruction, and replace it by nothing, or by so little, that a whole people deteriorates, physically and morally.[62]

As Paton remarked, the consequence of this policy was devastating in those hostels and shantytown that emerged around the mining areas. Promiscuity, prostitution,

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[61]RW Johnson. *How Long Will South Africa Survive* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press), 183.

[62]Alan Paton. *Cry, The Beloved Country*, 146.

crime, rape, violence, drunkenness, all these vices were the result of the apartheid policy towards mining workers.

Any changes in working conditions were always oriented toward the interest of mining industries. For example, when new technologies were introduced, more machines were used underground rather than human beings. Even when new approaches to managing capital production and recruitment were institutionalized, it was all about maximizing production at the expense of the workers. For example, when the price of gold rose in 1973, no effort was made to raise wages. Those who benefited from it were the handful of educated workers concentrated in the White community. The bulk of the workers saw their social conditions unchanged.

Under Apartheid, human capital was used for profit. The dignity of mining workers was always at stake. As in any capitalist industrial enterprise where surplus value is extracted from workers in exchange for wages, the highest priority for the mining industries or mining houses was production, not the dignity of human beings. In fact, to use Marx's term, for the apartheid regime, mining workers were simply an industrial reserve army for capital production.

It comes as no surprise that under these conditions AICs were an appealing social and religious institution where disfranchised and marginalized individuals found solace, identity and a sense of community. Jean Comaroff contended that under these conditions, AICs served as a radical expression of cultural resistance. In her book, *Body of Power, Spirit of Resistance*, she depicted the emergence and growth of AICs as a radical cultural resistance of those dispossessed by colonialism.[63] According to Comaroff, this resistance took place in a dialectical interaction between indigenous social forms and elements of

[63]Jean Comaroff, *Body of Power*, 166.

more general currency in the culture of colonialism that resulted in the construction of cultural symbolic system and rituals.[64]

By constructing symbolic systems and rituals, AICs reformed the world in the image they created and re-established a dynamic correspondence between the self and the structures that pervaded it.[65] Subsequently, cultural symbolic system and rituals served as the line of attack to domesticate and subvert the structure of colonial society. In so doing, they represented a tangible identity of power that established coherence upon a disarticulated word.[66] Through words, objects and gestures, the AICs canalized diffuse power in such a way as to alter the state of bodies physical and social.[67]

It was in ritual healings, prophecies, holy sites, social networks of support, and job creation where AICs became a safe and ordered haven of spiritual power and purity.[68]

This power and purity was not only a resistance to White colonial and neo-colonial hegemony but also to other Blacks living in rural reserves and urban townships. In the perspective of AICs, argued Chidester, townships were an arena of evil forces, a chaotic world where indiscriminate socializing of workers and the indiscriminate use of the powerful medicines and techniques of sorcery lived side by side.[69]

In townships, there was a cosmological world of constant battle between good and evil. In this cosmology, the disfranchised and the marginalized define social realities in the frame of witches, evil spirits and other mystical agents. Diseases, for example, are not

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[64]Ibid.

[65]Ibid., 198.

[66]Ibid., 254.

[67]Ibid., 198.

[68]Kiernan, *The African Independent Churches*, 87.

[69]Chidester, *Religions of South Africa*, 139.

biological immune deficiencies but acts of evil powers that wander in the cosmos. Any anomie of human existence including poverty, racial injustice, entrenchment, promiscuity and alcoholism are seen as works of evil spirits enticing human beings. To keep this social reality at bay, a superior power needs to confront it. This power is found in bishops, prophets and in some circumstances church members. Through healing rituals, these super agents control the world of chaos and evil forces. The following example illustrates this point. A man whose house was haunted by an evil spirit (*tokoloshe*) and cried for help, tells his story as follows:

> During the night while we were asleep, the tokoloshe would come and walk on the roof, make strange noises in the kitchen and we would be unable to sleep. The house would be very hot as if there were more than five heaters in each room. We decided to call the *Bazalwane* (prophet) to come and help us. They held a church service at our house and prayed, binding the spirits, but still the *tokoloshe* came that same night. So I went back to report that the *tokoloshe* was still visiting us. They decided to have a time of fasting, praying and seeking the will of God, and set aside three days to fast and pray. On the fourth night, they came back to my house and held another service. This service was quite different, I felt that God was with them, I sensed the presence of the Holy Spirit and I was convinced that something was going to happen that day. They prayed and prayed. The *tokoloshe* used to come at about half past twelve. They prayed until two or three o'clock in the morning. The *tokoloshe* did not come that night. The next night they came to pray with us and then left. The *tokoloshe* disappeared, and we have never had trouble again.[70]

In many other examples, the unemployed, the sick, barren women, or the demon possessed were healed by prayer. Allan Anderson recorded a story of a woman who told how she was healed from a serious heart disorder which a medical practitioner had said needed surgery.[71] The woman asked fellow members of her church to fast and pray with her for a week. Afterward, she felt well. However, when the symptoms returned three to

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[70]Anderson, *Zion and Pentecost*, 272.

[71]Ibid.

four weeks later, she became angry at the devil and had to take a 'step of faith'. She stopped taking her blood pressure tablets. The morning after making this decision, two Christians came to her with a 'message from God' saying that she was completely healed. She claimed that she had not taken any tablets since.[72]

These examples underline the function ritual healings play by standing in contrast to the culture of the perceived world, the disarticulated world. For the disfranchised and marginalized, this world is not the real world. The real one is the world of healing. Critics may characterize this belief system as an escapist one. Nevertheless, in the eyes of the disfranchised and marginalized, it is the real world. This healing world is not eschatological; it takes place in the here and now. It keeps chaos at bay and re-establishes order, identity and a sense of community. Describing the function of ritual healing in these societies, Adam and Moodley asserted,

> The rituals of healing place the needy in a circle of touching, caring fellows and make up for the lack of costly Western Medicine. Yet it would be wrong to view the mass movement as a mere mutual aid society. Like the spreading cults in Western Societies, the disciplined enclaves provide community, a sanctuary from abuse, and a temporary refuge from outside hostility. Menial tasks are sanctified and bestowed with meaning. By viewing the world around them with pity, 'God's troops' strengthen their self esteem. The moral absolutes elevate their followers from a downtrodden existence into a position of superiority, with a monopoly on truth and salvation.[73]

Healings function as well as a metaphor for a church's capacity to cure people of what Franz Fanon has called 'the colonial syndrome.' In this sense, healings restore self-confidence and reaffirm human dignity. [74]

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[72]Ibid., 292.

[73]H. Adam and K. Moodley, *South Africa without Apartheid: Dismantling Racial Domination (*Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 201.

[74]Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 2004), 182.

Similar to Fanon, Comaroff saw in ritual healings an expression of protest and reconstruction. By being healed, an individual is incorporated into the community. Healing is a process of re-socialization - the reproduction of the collectivity as a product of individual rebirth.[75] Rather than harmonizing, healing stands in contrast to surrounding socio-cultural ground. It reforms the "natural" qualities of the given world and draws upon a power that is in competition with existing hegemonies.[76] The Zion Christian Church as an African Initiated Church stands as an illustration of this dynamic of healing power and identity.

The Zion Christian Church (ZCC)

As discussed in Chapter I, ZCC emerged in the 1930s and grew considerably during the apartheid era. Due to the socio-political conditions imposed on Blacks, ZCC became a haven and an alternate community for those away from their homeland. To navigate this socio-political environment, the practice of ritual healing became a mechanism of liberation and protection.

In its ritual, ZCC uses healing symbols such as water, cords, church badges, sanctified sticks, pieces of wood, cloth, tea, coffee, copper wire, pricking needles, papers, smoke, sand and salt. Most of these symbols serve as protective agents against the power of evils and a powerful mechanism of integration in the community. Sprinkling with 'blessed water', for example, is one of the well known healing methods among ZCC members.

The healing properties of this water come specifically from 'living water' or water from rivers, seas, oceans and thunderstorm rain. Once this living water is gathered, it is prayed over by a prophet, but in some circumstances, church members are encouraged to

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[75]Ibid., 228.

[76]Ibid., 229.

pray for the water themselves. After the blessing, the healing potion is used within the household for drinking, washing and cooking or ingested in large quantities to induce vomiting. Vomiting is believed not only to remove physical sickness but spiritual defilement as well.[77] Moreover, water as a symbol of cleansing and purification washes away evil forces, sickness and ritual pollution.

The same blessed water is also used to welcome visitors and as protection against misfortune and sorcerers. It also used to obtain employment or an abundant harvest. It can also be sprinkled on food, houses and schoolbooks. Water can also be sprinkled on cars, even being stored in the radiator as protection from accidents.

This water is also used as a 'gate test', where it is sprinkled at the church's gate as a way to detect evil spirits and ensure the spiritual purity of those entering the service. Chidester sees in this water a way for ZCC members to be purified from the contaminated world of the townships before building up a reservoir of spiritual power.[78] ZCC expands its practices of water to include blessed teas and coffees. The tea for example is called *tea ya bophelo* (tea of life). It is used for healing purposes.

Many other healing rituals are practiced as well. Cords, which are worn on different parts of the body, procure healing and keep evil at distance. Cords are different colours, revealed by the ancestors to a prophet.[79] When a sick person approaches the prophet, ancestors are capable of revealing the precise colour of cord the sick person should buy and wear. The sick person must bind the cords in places where she/he has the most pain. There is a story of a woman who had been suffering from pain in her legs. She

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[77]Allan Anderson, *Zion and Pentecost*, 294.

[78]Chidester, *Religions of South Africa*, 139.

[79]Anderson, *The Lekganyanes and Prophecy in the Zion Christian Church*, 306.

went to see the prophets, who prayed for the water in which she plunged her feet and the cords fastened around her legs. It was reported that she was healed.[80]

Appealing to ancestors in the process of healing is of particular interest because it reflects the essence of African epistemology. It is an epistemology that was constantly denied to Africans because their religions were so-called worship of ancestors and animism. Responding to this caricature eventually became the agenda of many first generation African religious studies scholars such as Idowu, Gabriel Setiloane, Okot p'Bitek , Joseph Owalalu and John Mbiti. Mbiti, for example, in *African Religions and Philosophy*, strongly rejected both the concept of worship of ancestors and animism. He contended that Africans undeniably know that they do not worship the departed. Rather, they are involved in a communal relationship and this is not worship. For Mbiti, it was blasphemous to describe these acts of family relationships as 'worship.'[81] Moreover, for Mbiti to see African religions in terms of 'ancestors worship' is to isolate a single element, which in some societies is of a little significance, and to be blind to many other aspects.[82] What Mbiti said about ATRs can also be applied to AICs. There is clear relationship between the ancestors and the people, at least healing rituals among ZCC seem to confirm it. Ancestor influences are recognized and they are clearly part of the cosmology of rural reserves and urban township dwellers.

While healing rituals, such as sprinkling of water, wearing of cords and others, serve as a sort of remote control to the chaos of life, ZCC members believe that the power of these healings rests solely on faith alone. Alluding to the importance of having faith in these healing rituals, one ZCC member said,

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[80]Ibid.

[81]John Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, (Oxford: Heinemann Educational Books, 1990), 12.

[82]Ibid.

> I believe that one can be healed or delivered by the use of symbolic objects - I believe that with all my heart. Even though I cannot explain how it happens, one thing I know is that people have troubled us at my place many times. After taking perhaps a cord or some water, we find that no further trouble occurs, and we are delivered in that way. Sorcerers are afraid of a person who prays - so when you pray for an object like a cord, or you pray for water and sprinkle it around your house - when the sorcerers come they just see the glory of God. They find you with the cords that have been prayed for. I know these people are afraid to prayer. How the power is transferred from the cord or the water to the place that is paining, or how the water scares the sorcerers away from your place - that I cannot really explain, but it works![83]

Conclusion

The construction of African religious systems emerged as the result of mercantile capitalism in northern Europe during the sixteenth century. At the time, knowledge about the people of Africa and their religions served as a strategy of conquest and domination. In an effort to conquer and dominate Africa, the Western elites invented the African "primitiveness" or "disorder," as well as the subsequent means of its exploitation and methods for its "regeneration."[84] As subjects of research, Africans were classified and ranked as 'nearly human', 'almost human' or 'sub-human.' This social process of dehumanization took different forms and permeated the missionary enterprise to the point of alienating Black members who had converted to Christianity. Thus, African Initiated Churches emerged out of this context as a need to find an identity, an identity formed and forming as an expression of cultural resistance to the Western elite hegemony. In this sense, their symbolic systems and rituals subverted the colonial society and constructed a world of bodies physical and social.[85]

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[83]Anderson, *Zion and Pentecost*, 299.

[84]Vincent Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 20.

[85]Jean Comaroff, *Body of Power, Spirit of Resistance*, 198.

CHAPTER IV

SOTERIOLOGY IN THE CHRISTIAN TRADITION AND THE ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH (ZCC)

Introduction

The notion of soteriology, from its Greek etymology *soter,* encompasses religious and theological processes that religious traditions, mostly theistic, establish in order to provide salvation or the certainty of the after life, eternity, to their adherents. In the Christian tradition, for example, soteriology requires the belief in the redemptive work and ministry of a God figure, Jesus Christ. This belief is an act of faith that manifests itself in the works of spirit. African Initiated Churches, including the Zion Christian Church, because of their historical ties to European/North American Christianity, define salvation along these lines, but through processes of syncretization and purification, construct a contextual salvation with African traditional cultural elements that fit the spiritual aspirations of their adherents for self-identity and economic empowerment.

This chapter delineates the Christian traditional models of salvation and the ZCC soteriological predicament and their impact in the socio-political context of South Africa. In it, I contend that among the Christian traditional models of salvation - substitution, satisfaction, moral influence and *Christus Victor*- the latter was the ground for political legitimation for the Afrikaners of the Dutch Reformed Church and delegitimation and economic empowerment for the Black South Africans of the African Independent Churches including the ZCC.

I argue this by first reinstating the soteriology predicament of African Traditional Religions (ATRs) as salvific and equally valid to the Christian soteriological apparatus by appealing to John Hick's soteriological criterion that is grounded on the notion of Ultimate Reality and saintliness morality. Second, I elucidate on the historical context of each of the Christian soteriological traditional models and their implication in the

stratified racial divisive society of South Africa. Third, I construct the ZCC soteriogical apparatus through a process of "syncretization" and "purification" that draws from ATRs' soteriological apparatus and the Christian salvation traditional model of *Christus Victor*.

Re-instating ATRs as "World Religions" on the Religious Soteriological Criterion

The Notion of High Deity/Ultimate Reality

If religion is defined as the concern of the ultimate reality and intrinsic to the socialization processes, the African people, as gregarious creatures, certainly had religions. However, the validity of their religions and their moral fabric, as of any non-Christian religion, was sanctioned using the Christian putative normative status. In effect, it was the normative rule that to become 'a world religion', one has to meet Christian-like features such as fundamental transcendent reference, programmatic reflexivity, differentiation, organization and voluntarization.[1]

Moreover, if they deemed to become religions, non-Christian religions were classified as religions of lower status than Christianity. The African Religions, for example, were given derogatory names such as primitive, animism, *juju*, worship of ancestors and *fetishist*. As religions of lower status, they were considered *preparatio evangelica* or forerunners to Christianity.[2] In this sense, they were judged not to contain a soteriological predicament. As they lacked a soteriological predicament, African Religions were, therefore, considered to be non-committal and fundamentally amoral.[3]

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[1]Peter Beyer and Lori Beaman, eds., *Religion, Globalization, and Culture* (Boston: Brill, 2007), 172.

[2]Kwame Bediako, *Theology and Identity: The Impact of Culture upon Christian Thought in the Second Century and Modern Africa* (Oxford: Regnum Books, 1992).

[3]Ronald M. Green, "Religion and Morality in the African Traditional Setting, *"Journal of Religion in Africa,* vol 14 (1983): 3.

However, with a modern understanding of the globalized world, the Christian putative normative status has been questioned and abandoned. To be considered as a 'world religion', one no longer needs to meet Christian-like features.[4] There is a universal model gaining reality through concrete particularizations where no one religion can claim to serve as the clear and dominant standard for any other. This has been argued on sociological as well as on theological and philosophical grounds. While scholars such as Roland Robertson, John Meyer, Immanuel Walleinstein, Niklas Luhmann, Jose Castella and Peter Beyer are proponents of the sociological school of thought, others such as John Hick champion the theological and philosophical approach that refutes the Christian putative normative status.

In his soteriological criterion, for example, Hick delineated the construction of salvific particular religious expressions as global uttering of religious global systems. Moreover, he validated any global religious transcendental apprehension as authentic in its own particular religio-cultural context. Accordingly, he argued that if salvation is defined as a gradual transformation from natural self-centeredness to a radically new orientation centered in God and manifested in the fruit of Spirit, then it takes place in *all* major religions.[5]

According to Hick, the global religious transcendental apprehension is structured either by the concept of deity, which presides over the theistic traditions, or by the concept of the absolute, which presides over the non-theistic traditions.[6] This results in human apprehension producing experienced divine personae such as Yahweh, the Heavenly Father, Allah, Vishnu, Shiva and metaphysical impersonae such as Brahman,

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[4]Beyer, *Religion, Globalization, and Culture*, 173.

[5]John Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion: Human Responses to the Transcendent* (London: Yale University Press, 1989), 10.

[6]Ibid., 14

the Tao, Dharmakaya, and Sunyata to which human beings orient themselves in worship or meditation.[7]

Hick contended that this act of worship and meditation is found in *all* great religious traditions and embodies different perceptions and conceptions of, and correspondingly different responses to, the Real.[8] He defined the Real or Ultimate Reality as a non-exclusive, neutral and a non-imperialistic term that is different from the notion of the Supreme Being or God. For Hick, the notion of Supreme Being is subject to misunderstanding and is linguistically imperialistic to non-Christian religions. The Real, however, is a generic name that is affirmed in the varying forms of transcendent religious beliefs and that abandons the notion of exclusive property of any one tradition.[9]

It was by appealing to Immanuel Kant's philosophical principles that distinguish explicitly between an entity as it is in itself and as it appears as perception that Hick constructed his Real/Ultimate Reality. Kant argued that the properties of something as experienced depend upon the mode of intuition of the subject; this object as appearance, however, needs to be distinguished from itself as object in itself.[10] Out of this postulation, Kant drew two principles, the noumenon and the phenomenon. The noumenal world exists independently of our perception of it and the phenomenal world is that same world as it appears to our human consciousness.[11]

Corollary, the noumenal Real, for Hick, is thought of and experienced by different human mentalities, forming and formed by different religious traditions, as the range of

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[7]Ibid.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Ibid.

[10]Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (Boston: Bedford, 2003), 266.

[11]Ibid.

gods and absolutes, which the phenomenology of religion reports.[12] Moreover, the noumenal Real is postulated by human kind as a pre-supposition, not of the moral life, but of religious experience and the religious life, whilst the gods, the mystically known Brahman, Sunyata and so on, are phenomenal manifestations of the Real occurring within the realm of religious experience.[13] In other terms, Hick constructed two fundamental expressions in the apprehension of the Real, the postulated presence of the real to the human life, of which it is the ground, and the cognitive structure of our consciousness, with its capacity to respond to the meaning or character of our environment, including its religious character.[14]

Subsequently, it is in relation to different ways of being human, developed within the civilizations and cultures of the earth, that the Real, apprehended through the concept of God, is experienced specifically as the God of Israel, or as the Holy Trinity, or as Shiva, or as Allah, or as Vishnu or *uNkulunkulu.*

It is in relation to yet other forms of life that the Real, apprehended through the concept of the Absolute, is experienced as Brahman, or as Nirvana, or as Supreme Being, or as Sunyata.[15] Because of this apprehension that exceeds the scope of human thought, argued Hick, the reality of what we call God needs to move beyond the anthropomorphic god figure of the theistic piety. In this sense, the distinction between the Real per se and the Real as humanly known occurs within *all* the global religious traditions.

Viewed from the perspective of the global religious world systems, Hick's analysis suggests that the apprehension of the Ultimate Reality occurs within the framework of religious particularization - the socio-cultural peculiarity of human

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[12]Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion*, 242.

[13]Ibid.,243.

[14]Ibid., 244.

[15]Ibid., 245.

experiences - and as such negates the universal Real as normative. In this sense, *uNkulunkulu*, for example, a high deity in the Zulu religious tradition, appears as particularization of the apprehension of the Real in the global religious society. This particularization, forming and formed through syncretic processes, is no lesser than the Supreme Being/God of Christianity.

Unfortunately, early missionaries and anthropologists never saw in *uNkulunkulu* an equal to the Supreme Being/God of Christianity. For them, *uNkulunkulu* was not particularization of the Ultimate reality but the projection of the Supreme/ God of Christianity. This flawed assumption was constructed on the ground of economic need. In effect, as they gained land and needed labour to participate in the mercantile economy, missionaries and anthropologists turned to the quest of finding affinities between their religion and the African people. They believed that finding affinities with African religions was an effective method to transfer and impress upon the corresponding feature of the African religions the Christian meaning.[16] In this sense, they understood *uNkulunkulu* as the African expression of the Supreme/God of Christianity.

Moreover, missionaries and anthropologists were convinced that finding affinities with ATRs was a convenient way to facilitate the announcement of the Christian gospel to the Africans and convince them that Christianity was not a foreign religion, rather a religion that suited their religious systems.

Rosalind Shaw called these attempts to establish affinities, "residual categories." According to her, they entailed implicit negative discrimination.[17] Shaw contended that African religions, in these attempts, were defined in contrast to "great religious systems", and were accorded a positive evaluation solely on the basis that they had contributed

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[16]Jim Kiernan, "African Traditional Religions in South Africa", 15.

[17]Rosalind Shaw, "The Invention of African Traditional Religion" *Religion* 20 (1990): 341.

historically to and overlapped with the latter.[18] In this sense, mused Shaw, the "primal" category, meaning African religions, was given greater solidity by the ascription to it of certain features, which render the religious forms in question as if they were more alike than they are, and at the same time as closely overlapping with, but nonetheless essentially inferior to, Christianity.[19]

Accordingly, argued Shaw, once those categories were distinguished from "great religions" in a relationship of binary opposition, "primal religions" were thus re-assimilated to them in a relationship of what she called "subordinate resemblance."[20] This binary opposition of "traditional/world religion", according to Shaw, is one variety of what Vincent Mudimbe called "ideologies of otherness" where the invention of traditional religions was, in fact, a function of the wider invention of residual categories within traditional religious studies.[21]

In Shaw's analysis, the missionary apprehension of *uNkulunkulu* as a projection of the Supreme Being/God of Christianity is an example of a residual category. This has been attested throughout the history of the Zulu traditional religion. In 1853, for example, John William Colenso, the Anglican Bishop of Natal, contended that although the Zulu people did not know their Supreme Being, they nevertheless had two names to refer to him: *uNkulunkulu* and *uMvelinqangi*.[22] According to Colenso, *uNkulunkulu* was the Zulu name for the Christian God and as such he recommended it be adopted by all missionary bodies. Similar to Colenso, the German philologist, Wilhem Bleek, on the

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[18]Ibid.

[19]Ibid.

[20]Shaw, "The Invention of African Traditional Religion," 342.

[21]Ibid.

[22]John W. Colenso, "The Diocese of Natal." *The Monthly Record of the Society of the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts* 4(November 1853): 241.

basis of linguistic evidence and despite finding no evidence of worship of *uNkulunkulu*, contended that the term *uNkulunkulu* approximated the Christian concept of God.[23]

Some scholars, however, resisted the construction of the residual category. George Champion, for example, although not denying the presence of an ultimate deity among the Zulu, questioned, however, its affinity to the Christian Supreme Being. Writing to Francis Owen, an Anglican priest, Champion expressed,

> The Zulu have no word in their own language to express the sublime object of our worship. The word use in Caffre land and which has been introduced here by Europeans, and hence known to some of the Zoolous is Uteeko, or as the Missionaries were it Utixo, but it has a harsh and difficult click in it, and has no meaning being a word of Hottentot extraction. The word Ukulunkulu , a real Zoolu word with an emphatic signification 'the great, great' is objected to by our American friends as a suitable name for the great God, on the ground of its being applied by the natives to a certain ancient chief, whom they suppose to have sprung from a reed, and concerning whom they believe various other things inconsistent with a Deity. It is also the name of certain worm which makes a covering for itself with grass. They recommend therefore the introduction of the Hebrew name Elohim, which is easy of pronunciation, besides possessing other obvious excellencies [24]

Despite the uncertainty of the term, *uNkulunkulu,* as a residual category, became entrenched in the missionary scholarship and had come to represent the dominant school of thought. Outsiders, Africanists and insiders, first generation African theologians, propagated this notion all over Africa. Placid Tempels, for example, was of the opinion that 'God' in ATRs is the same deity as that presented in Christianity, that divinities and spirits are mediums linking 'God' to humans and that 'God' was, at the most, pronounced

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[23]WH Bleek, "Researches into the Relations between the Hottentots and Kafirs." *Cape Monthly Magazine* 1(1857): 199.

[24]George Champion, The *Journal of An American Missionary in the Cape Colony, 1835 (*Cape Town: South African Library, 1968),

as a vital force.[25] Similarly, E.G. Parrinder attributed the concept of "God" among African traditional religions.[26]

For his part, John Mbiti was convinced that Africans do not worship a God different from the Western Christian God. In effect, he found similar natural, moral, intrinsic, eternal and ethical attributes of the Christian God in the deities of many African communities. For Mbiti, the God of the Bible has been at work in Africa and is the same deity known and worshiped by Africans.[27] Moreover, for him, missionaries did not bring God to Africa but God brought missionaries to Africa.[28] Tempels', Parrinder's and Mbiti's perception of the God of the Bible being one and the same as the African ultimate deity was shared by many other African theologians including but not limited to Kenynatta, Idowu, Nyamiti, Setliloane, Mushete and Mulago.

These scholars, in their theological construction, were more attuned to address African religions in Western Hellenic garments. As p. Bitek put it, they dress up African deities with Hellenic robes and parade them before the Western world.[29] They studied ATRs in light of Christianity and as such were committed to "Christian theology" as an ideological driving force or 'propaganda', even 'apologetic' of Christian mission. In this sense, their theological efforts were centered more on the in-culturation of African

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[25]Placide Tempels, *Bantu Philosophy* (Paris: Presence Africaine,1959), 46.

[26]EG Parrinder, *African Traditional Religion* (London: Hutchinson, 1954), 33.

[27]John Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion* (Oxford: Heinemann Educational Books, 1991), 40.

[28]Ibid.

[29]Okot p.Bitek, *African Religion in Western Scholarship* (Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, 1971), 80.

Christianities. They were involved in what David Westerlund called "the Christianization of ATRs" [30]

For both outsider and insider scholars, ATRs as religious systems could not have been constructed apart from the Christian putative normative status. Thus, they invented a residual category as a fundamental transcendent reference in the image of monotheist Christianity. It is as if to say, ATRs are religions as long as they have a God who is ultimately transcendent, both present in the world and yet beyond comprehension, a God who is ultimately unrepresentable and invisible, supra-empirical and spiritual, in short a Christian God.[31]

Some other scholars rejected this approach of residual category and attempted to re-instate the Zulu high deity and subsequently ATRs, in their own right, as authentic African religions. Afro-centric scholars, for example, were determined to construct ATRs as intrinsically rooted in African cosmogony. In her construction of the Zulu deity, for example, Ana Maria Ferreira went as far as tracing *uNkunlunkulu* back to the Kemic concept of the Egyptian cosmogony. She argued that the concept of One Supreme God governing African cosmogony was inconsistent with spiritual values and ethical responsibilities of the human being in Africans' holistic sense of oneness of humankind and nature.[32] For her, the idea of deity or what she called "the meaning of oneness of humankind with nature" is traced to the Kemic concept of Ma'at which was understood as the balance and harmonious order of creation where the spirit and matter are

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[30]David Westerlund, *African Religion in African Scholarship: A Preliminary Study of the Religious and Political Background* (Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell International, 1985), 89.

[31]Beyer, *Religion, Globalization, and Culture*, 172.

[32]Ana Maria Ferreira, "Reevaluating Zulu Religion: An Afrocentric Analysis," *Journal of Black Studies*, vol 35, no. 3 (January 2005): 347.

inseparable.[33] Thus, she attributed the origin of the Ngunis, the ethnic group from which the Zulu descended, to Egypt via the Red Sea corridor and Ethiopia.[34] According to Ferreira, like the Egyptians, Africans believed that the fundamental principle of creation was the equilibrium of opposites, a perfectly established energy, whose force regulates the universe.[35] This harmony that pre-exists chaos is translated into Ma'at, the organizing principle of human society, the creative spirit of phenomena and the eternal order of the universe.[36]

These cosmological and ethical concepts, according to Ferreira, were recreated through oral tradition, narratives of creation, passed generation to generation, symbolizing the spirit of the ancestors considered to be the guardian of an individual's quest for the generative force of cosmic harmony.[37] In this sense, she located *Ukulunkulu, Unkululu,* or *O(n)kulukulu* as emerging from narratives of creation from different Zulu ethnic sources as one consistent concept of a First Creator.[38]

The problem with Afro-centric scholars, such as Ferreira, is her entanglement with the Egyptian civilization. Afro-centrists cannot envision African Religious systems of sub-Sahara Africa without any implicit or explicit connection to the Egyptian civilization. These scholars tend to talk of Africa as if there is not a cultural demarcation between the North and South. My contention is that the geographical and cultural demarcation between these two regions gives rise to different apprehension of the idea of

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[33]Ibid., 355.

[34]Ibid.

[35]Ibid., 356.

[36]M.K. Asante, *Kemet, Afrocentricity, and Knowledge* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 1990), 84.

[37]Ferreira, Reevaluating Zulu Religion, 358.

[38]Ibid.

deity. In this sense, to argue that everything African needs to evolve from the Egyptian civilization is revisionist.

Non-Afro-centric scholars, such as Irving Hexham, have attributed the idea of *uNkulunkulu* to social institutions of Zulu traditions. Hexham shared the view that the idea of *uNkunlunkulu*, in the Zulu mythology, referred to the first ancestor, the one who had created the nation by giving it its basic technology. It was an idea that did not have any implications of deity, mused Hexham.[39] For him, it was only after the Europeans heard the natives refer to *uNkulunkulu* as the "old one", the one who had given the tribe its beginning, that they started to co-opt it for their own theological discussions and explanations of the Zulu. It was only then that the word gradually came to be used by the Zulu with connotations of deity attached to it.[40]

In a similar way, Henry Callaway attributed the notion of *uNkulunkulu* as the first ancestor, the old-old one as in the use of great in great-great-grandfather, without any transcendental attribute.[41] According to Callaway, *uNkulunkulu* was not eternal or immortal. He was a being who had existed in the past and, as part of that existence, had made those who formed the first group of people. *uNkulunkulu* had been created before he gave people's ancestors doctors, diviners and medicines[42] In this sense, argued Callaway, *uNkulunkulu* was a common term used in each household, family and lineage of the Zulu. It was not a fixed one and could belong to several families.[43]

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[39]Irving Hexham, "Lord of the Sky-King of the Earth: Zulu Traditional Religion and Belief in the Sky god", *Studies in Religion* 10 (1981): 273.

[40]Ibid.

[41]Henry Callaway, *The Religious Systems of the Amazulu* (Springvale: Springvale Mission Press, 1970), 17.

[42]Ibid., 40.

[43]Ibid.

Whether *uNkulunkulu* originated from the Egyptian civilization, as Ferreira has argued, or was constructed from contact with Europeans, as Hexham has contended, and that it did not, at first, carry the idea of transcendence, as Callaway has argued, its validity as high god, or deity was, however, subjected to denial/discovery discourse instituted by the Western colonialists, missionaries and anthropologists. In effect, it was common for the Europeans to deny the notion of deity when it was against their agenda and to discover it when it favored their colonial enterprise. In other terms, the Europeans invented a theory of the "otherness" where indigenous people were seen as subjects of conquest and not as fellow humans.

High Deity and Moral Agency

It was argued that high deity in non-Christian religions was not the principal spiritual and moral agency directly affecting human life, making therefore these religions non-committal and fundamentally amoral.[44] High gods in African Tradition Religions, for example, were regarded as morally distant and non-active moral retributors. This so called moral indifference of the supreme creator god and the absence of a retributive eschatology have led some observers to conclude that ethical concerns were not central to ATRs.[45]

These observers failed to note that in ATRs, the maintenance of essential moral norms is performed by spiritual agents of much lower standing: ancestors, living chiefs as practitioners of politics and spiritual acts, and spirits of nature or ghosts. This morally vital work is carried out amidst the affairs of living members of the community, and

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[44]Ronald M. Green, "Religion and Morality in the African Traditional Setting," *Journal of Religion in Africa*, vol. 14 (1983): 4.

[45]Ibid.

reward and punishment, though mediated by spiritual entities, occur within this life.[46] In the Zulu's cosmogony, for example, this hierarchical attribution is represented as follows:

Figure 9 Zulu Cosmological Hierarchy

In this cosmological hierarchy, the high god is the supreme authority who is morally good. Ancestors are dead individuals, who while alive, did good within the community. Their attribute as ancestors is, in fact, a reward for their community involvement while they were alive. They are the moral guardians as well as enforcers of communities' apparatus such as customs and rituals. Their presence and conduct impinges the life of the common Zulu. Individuals, who have lived in non-conformity to the rules and regulations of the community by committing immoral acts, upon their death

[46]Ibid., 11.

become Spirits of nature. They wander in the Zulu cosmogony and are responsible for evil acts and causing harm to the common people. This interrelationship between humans and spiritual beings reveals a moral content that shows the degree to which the Zulu religion is shaped by moral concerns.

Missionaries and Western elites, by failing to observe this moral presence of the religio-societal dynamic among ATRs' practitioners, propagated their paternalistic notion of ATRs being fundamentally amoral. They treated Africans as savages without any moral ability, and reduced them to the status of beasts and animals. Hick's postulation of the presence of saints as moral agents in global religious systems, however, challenges these paternalistic assumptions that were grounded on the Christian putative normative status.

For Hick, by virtue of the soteriological criterion, individuals in global religious systems are saved/liberated, and as such, have moved from self-centeredness to Reality-centeredness. In other terms, these individuals produce the fruit of saintliness that is found in theistic as well as non-theistic religions. The presence of saints in these religious systems underpins the notion that morality is not exclusive to Christianity. It also challenges the notion of the moral superiority of Christianity over other religious traditions.

Arguing along these lines, Hick contended,

> I have not found that people of the other world religions are, in general, on a different moral and spiritual level from Christians. They seem on average to be neither better nor worse than are Christians.[47]

Moreover, he wrote,

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[47]John Hick, "A Pluralistic View" in *Four Views on Salvation in Pluralistic World*, eds Dennis Okholm and Timothy Phillips (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House,1996): 39.

> The move from Christian inclusivism to pluralism, although in one way seemingly so natural and inevitable, sets Christianity in a new and to some an alarming light in which there can no longer be any a priori assumption of overall superiority. Today, we cannot help feeling that the question of superiority has to be posed as an empirical issue, to be settled (if indeed it can be settled) by examination of the facts.[48]

Hick's own encounter with people of different faiths in England led him to establish that good and evil are incommensurable. In effect, after factually observing and reading historical accounts of people of faiths other than Christianity, he concluded that the virtues and vices seem to spread more or less evenly among human beings, regardless of whether they are Christians or Jews, Muslims, Hindus or Buddhists.[49] In this sense, morality appears as a function of human nature that generates the invisible dimension of moral value, argued Hick.[50]

Based on Hick's factual observation, one can only conclude that the Christian putative moral norm does not stand. There is not such a thing as moral superiority of Christianity over non-Christian religions. Each religion carries a moral function that is intrinsically related to the socio-religious systems of a given society. In the Zulu religion, for example, it is in the apprehension of the Ultimate Reality or *uNkulunkulu* that individuals measure their moral acts. The presence of saints, including the ancestors and the living chiefs, in the Zulu religion sanctions what Kant called "the deep structure of universal moral and religious reason." This deep structure of moral consideration reveals the interpersonal relationships of the common people within themselves and with living chiefs, spirits of nature, and ancestors. The Zulu constantly live in a moral dynamic with

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[48]John Hick, *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness: Towards a Pluralistic Theology of Religions* (Maryknoll: Orbis Book 1987), 23.

[49]Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion*, 98.

[50]Ibid.

one another and with deities. On this consideration alone, it is difficult to dismiss this interpersonal moral dynamic and label it as inferior to Christianity.

Christian Traditional Models of Salvation and the South African Socio-Politico Context

The notion of salvation is entrenched in the very essence of the Christian religion. In effect, since its establishment in the first century A.D., the Christian church has been the "mission church", carrying out the proclamation of salvation throughout the world.[51] It was the Apostle Paul, throughout his mission trips to the Greco-Roman world, that started to propagate the preaching of salvation by grace, through faith, in Jesus Christ. This salvific message entails belief in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is by accepting that Jesus died on the cross and raised from the dead that one's sins are forgiven and one is subsequently saved from eternal damnation. The Christian faith articulates this soteriological predicament in one of these four distinct but not exclusive theories: substitution, satisfaction, moral influence and victory or *Christus Victor*.

Substitution theory reconciles both the holiness of God in judgment and his love in pardon. The theory argues that it is by providing a divine substitute for the sinner that God forgives the sinner and condemns the substitute. Simply put, in substitution theory, God, who is righteously angry with sinful humans, punishes sin in his righteousness. In this sense, Jesus, who is by essence innocent, acts as the substitute and bears the due penalty for the sins of human kind. Referring to this stipulation, Charles Cranfield wrote,

> God, because in his mercy he willed to forgive sinful men, and, being truly merciful, willed to forgive them righteously, that is, without in any way condoning their sin, purposed to direct against

[51]Leslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989),121.

> his own very self in the person of his Son the full weight of that righteous wrath which they deserved[52]

Indeed, because of Adam and Eve's disobedience to God's precepts, humanity at large deserved God's wrath. God, in his righteousness, could not let this disobedience go unpunished. Failure to do so would have undermined his intrinsically just nature. Thus, to maintain his attribute as a just God, sin had to be punished and paid for. But He is not only a God who demands justice; He is also a God of love. How then could He express simultaneously His holiness in judgment and His love in pardon? It is by providing a divine substitute for the sinner, so that the substitute would receive the judgment and the sinner the pardon.[53]

The perfect substitute to undertake this endeavour was his begotten son Jesus Christ. Jesus could not, however, satisfy this demand as only God in nature or as only human. If he is substituted as God alone, this would have simply undermined the historical incarnation. If he is substituted as Christ –human -alone, this would have made him a third party between God and us.[54] Therefore, he has to undertake this endeavour as fully God and fully human. By having these two attributes in him, Jesus was in a uniquely qualified position to represent both God and man and to mediate between them.[55]

One problem with this theory is that it relies heavily on the Pauline theology of the depravity of humanity. Augustine later developed this Pauline thought in his own theological discourse of the original sin. In Paul's as well as in Augustine's assumption,

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[52]C.E. B Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans. International Critical Commentary* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1974), 217.

[53]John Stott, *The Cross of Christ* (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1986), 134.

[54]Ibid., 156.

[55]Ibid.

one has to accept that he or she intrinsically inherits the Adamic nature and is in need of reconciliation with God. If one rejects this premise, the theory does not stand.

Another problematic in this theory is that it does not explain how salvation is applied to the peculiar social-cultural context of those who live in a deprived dysfunctional society as victims of sins of injustice and discrimination. The theory does not, for example, address how these victimized people offend God's justice and earn His wrath.[56] These shortcomings suggest that substitution theory is heavenly and it has little to do with the Kingdom of God here and now. However, if accepted, substitution theory encourages individuals into a personal piety but quiescent religion which has no emphasis on social responsibility.[57]

Indeed, in the stratified racial divisive society of South Africa, the pre-occupation for most Black South Africans was not on whether they inherited the Adamic nature and needed to escape the wrath of God but it was on how God rescued them from poverty, racial discrimination, social and political injustice. In a sense, Black South Africans need a God who liberates and empowers them. Substitution theory, in this sense, does not address this social concern.

The second soteriological predicament is satisfaction theory. The underlying assumption in this theory is that the death of Christ provides the grounds for "satisfaction" and the basis by which God is enabled to forgive sin. Since the time of the Church fathers, many theologians attempted to suggest what satisfaction really meant. Some suggested that satisfaction was in relation to the devil. Others thought that satisfaction was of the law. However, the dominant trend was attributed to the eleventh-century theologian Anselm of Canterbury. In his treatise *Cur Deus Homo* ("Why God

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[56]Ronald Nicolson, *A Black Future? Jesus and Salvation in South Africa* (London, SCM Press, 1990), 112.

[57]Ibid, 115.

became Man"), Anselm rejected the patristic ransom theories and argued that what man owed to God was the only debt that needed to be repaid. Satisfaction was not of the devil or the law, rather that of God's honor and justice. In a complex set of theological discourse, Anselm laid out his arguments as follows:

1. God created humanity in a state of original righteousness, with the objective of bringing humanity to a state of eternal blessedness
2. That state of eternal blessedness is contingent upon human obedience to God. However, through sin, humanity is unable to achieve this necessary obedience, which appears to frustrate God's purpose in creating humanity in the first place.
3. In that it is impossible for God's purposes to be frustrated, there must be some means by which the situation can be remedied. However, the situation can only be remedied if a satisfaction is made for sin. In other words, something has to be done, by which the offense is caused by human sin can be purged.
4. There is no way in which humanity can provide this necessary satisfaction. It lacks the resources which are needed. On the other hand, God possesses the resources needed to provide the required satisfaction.
5. A "God-man" would possess both the ability (as God) and the obligation (as a human being) to pay the required satisfaction. Therefore, the incarnation takes place, in order that the required satisfaction may be made, and humanity redeemed.[58]

Anselm's satisfaction theory has been criticized as a theory that rests on the notions of inherited guilt and transferred guilt. According to his critics, arguing that

[58]Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology, An Introduction*, 3rd ed (Malden: Blackwell Publisher, 2001), 420.

humanity inherited guilt from Adam and Eve, as it was the case with substitution theory, undermines the notion of individual responsibility. For these critics guilt is a psychosocial projection, whose origins lie not in the holiness of God but in the muddleheadedness of human nature.[59] Thus, individuals should be accountable for their personal moral actions.

As far as the notion of transferred guilt is concerned, critics contended that it was not moral for one human being to bear the penalties due for another, and therefore they rejected the idea of vicarious satisfaction. Theologians such as G. S Steinbart and Adolf von Harnack argued along these lines. Other critics have gone as far as asserting that in satisfaction theory, the human role is reduced to an entirely passive one. They contended that there is little room for human endeavour or for developing human mutually forgiving human relationship. Salvation in this case is purely the idea of personal reconciliation with God.[60]

Moreover, these same critics also argued that satisfaction theory entails the idea of a retributive justice. It is retributive justice because for God to forgive sin, he must either punish or demand justice. These scholars did not think that the notion of retributive justice was viable in the context of the South Africa stratified racial divisive society. According to them, what was needed though was a justice that was concerned not with retribution but with reform, a justice that was aware that individuals are not always responsible for their actions and that they are influenced by many social factors. Ronald Nicolson, one of the critics, vividly expressed this view when he wrote,

> What is needed is a very different concept of justice, a justice which is aware that our behavior is governed not so much by unalterable embedded natural principles or divine fiat which we

[59]Ibid., 423.

[60]Nicolson, *A Black Future*, 115.

> either obey or disobey, thus deserving reward or punishment, but by social conditioning, parental upbringing, the effects upon us of the behavior of others. We are not responsible for our own decisions. We are influenced in our behavior by many factors beyond our consciousness or control. What is needed is not so much payment for our sins, as new insights into our own behavior and that of others, help in changing our present behavior, encouragement to mutually forgive and rebuild.[61]

The third soteriological predicament is the subjective or moral influence theory. Moral influence soteriology entails the idea that God through the cross demonstrates his love for humanity. This theory dates back to the Church fathers and it was well immersed in the writings of theologians such as Augustine of Hippo or Clement of Alexandria. But it was during the medieval era that the theory took a new twist, especially in the writings of Peter Abelard. Abelard delineated the subjective impact of Christ's death as a sacrifice for human sin. According to him, the purpose and cause of the incarnation was that Christ might illuminate the world by his wisdom and excite it to love of him.[62] Moreover, for Abelard, Jesus, the Son of God, took our nature to teach us, by both word and example, the love of God for us. Abelard wrote,

> Love is increased by the faith we have concerning Christ because, on account of the belief that God in Christ has united our human nature to himself, and by suffering in that same nature has demonstrated to us that supreme love of which Christ himself speaks: "Greater love has no one than this" (John 15:13). We are thus joined through his grace to him and our neighbor by an unbreakable bond of love…Therefore, our redemption through the suffering of Christ is that deeper love within us which not only frees us from slavery to sin, but also secures for us the true liberty of the children of God, in order what we might do all things out of love rather than out of fear-love for him who has shown us such grace that no greater can be found.[63]

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[61]Nicolson, *A Black Future*, 114.

[62]McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 426.

[63]Peter Abelard, Exposito in Epistolam ad Romanos (New York: Herder, 2000), 2

Abelard's subjective soteriology reverberated in the writings of the eighteen-century theologians, who downplayed the role of the cross per se, and argued that the cross had meaning only as long as it demonstrated the love of God for humankind. This view was held by theologians such as G.S Steinbart, I.G Tollner, G.F Seiler and I.G Bretschneider. Alister McGrath summed up their views as follows:

1. The Cross has no transcendent reference or value; its value resides directly and solely in its impact upon humanity. Thus the cross represents as "sacrifice" only in that it represents Christ giving up his life.
2. The person who died upon the cross was a human being, and the impact of that death is upon human beings. The impact takes the form of inspiration and encouragement to model ourselves upon the moral example set us in Jesus himself.
3. The most important aspect of the cross is that it demonstrates the love of God toward us.[64]

What came out of this soteriological predicament was that Jesus was seen more as a martyr rather than a saviour. For people like F.D Schleiermacher, the Steindbart et al. school of thought moved the death of Christ from the religious spectrum to purely moral value. For Schleiermacher, Christ did not die to make or endorse a moral system; he came in order that the supremacy of the consciousness of God could be established in humanity. [65]

Later, the British theologian Hastings Rashdall would take the moral influence theory one step further. Rashdall saw, in Jesus' words, life and death, the moral ideal

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[64] McGrath, 427.

[65]Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith* (Edinburgh: T&T. Clark, 1928), 429.

necessary for the salvation of humanity. For Rashdall, Jesus' example of love could not have failed to excite our own response of penitence, conversion and commitment to God in return. In other words, for Rashdall because Jesus was crucified on the cross by others, because he was preaching a message of truth and love, this act alone should amend our hearts and moved us to penitence.[66]

Critics such as Nicolson called Rashdall's version of the moral influence theory hopelessly over-optimistic regarding human capabilities.[67] Nicolson wondered whether the amendment of the human heart can reach the perfection that satisfies God's just demands and purposes.[68] He also wondered whether God takes, at face value, human amendment and forgives the past without satisfaction and demands of justice being met.

Moreover, according to Nicolson, subjective theory as Rashdall argued, falls short in addressing how Jesus' death on the cross shows us God's love. For Nicolson, if God's love is shown primarily through the death of Jesus, then one must ask whether God can die or even whether God can suffer.[69] For him, these questions are not addressed in Rashdall's version of the theory. Nicolson found solace, however, in Jurgen Moltmann's theology of hope, which for him, made a compelling case of addressing the essence of how Jesus' death on the cross shows us God's love. For Nicolson, Moltmann's theology of hope takes into account poverty and political oppression, which Jesus endured, as a way of showing God's love and concern for those who are rejected and oppressed. Stipulating his theology, Moltmann wrote,

> By his suffering and death, Jesus identified himself with those who were enslaved and took their pain upon himself. And if he was not

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[66]Nicolson, 136

[67]Ibid.

[68]Ibid.

[69]Ibid., 140.

> alone in his suffering, nor were they abandoned in the pains of slavery. Jesus was with them.[70]

Moreover he wrote,

> [The cross] is set up in the cosmos to give future to that which is passing away, firmness to that which is unsteady, openness to that which is fixed, hope to the hopeless, and in this way to gather all that is and all that is no more, into the new creation.[71]

If Moltmann is right in what he says, argued Nicholson, then the kind of hope he proposed is the one that brings

> liberation from political impotence, from fatalism, from a feeling inferiority in the face of this world's governing powers, from low self-esteem, from hopelessness about being able to effect change, and from death itself with its associated fear of transitoriness.[72]

This hope was embraced by many religious and liberation movements in the stratified divisive society of South Africa.

The fourth Christian soteriological predicament is victory theory, also known as *Christus Victor.* At the core of this theory lies the idea that the atonement is a cosmic drama in which God in Christ does battle with the powers of evil and gains the victory over them.[73] This victory is over sin, death and the devil. In this sense, *Christus Victor* theory departs from both the "objective" or "legal" view that is associated with Anselm in

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[70]Jurgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God: The Cross of Christ as the Foundation and Criticism of Christian Theology* (New York: Harper& Row, 1974): 48.

[71] Ibid., 279.

[72] Nicolson, 147.

[73]Gustav Aulen, *Christus Victor: An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Idea of Atonement* (New York: McMillan, 1969), 22.

which Christ's death is viewed as a reconciling act to the Father and the "subjective" or "moral" view, associated with Abelard, where Christ's death is a transforming and inspiring act for humanity.

With the publication of his book, *Christus Victor* in 1930, Gustav Aulen was credited with bringing this theory back to prominence. In effect, while *Christus Victor* was a theory embedded in the Christian tradition since the church fathers, with the advent of the enlightenment, it started to lose its grip in the theological circles. The Enlightenment refuted the theory on the assumption that the resurrection of Christ was not rational enough and to talk about victory over death was absurd. The Enlightenment also dismissed the theory because it was believed that it entailed pre-modern superstition notions such as the existence of a personal devil in the form of Satan and the domination of human existence by oppressive or satanic forces of sin and evil.[74]

These arguments were challenged, especially by Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis insights. With Freud, it was believed possible that the human subconscious could be invaded by external forces. Moreover, the horrors of World War I showed the dark side of individuals, and proved that evil powers were no longer an abstract concept of the pre-modern time but present realities with which societies must contend. With Gustav Aulen's *Christus Victor*, the meaning of the victory of Jesus on the cross became a theory to be reckoned with.

As a soteriological theory, *Christus Victor* is biblically centered and attuned to specific circumstances of a specific people. Both the Old and New Testament talk about sin, death and the devil. In the Old Testament, for example, God's victory is manifested in the way He steps in to rescue his people from enemies and oppressors. The story of Genesis 3, where God delivers his people from bondage in Egypt, is but one of the dramatic scenes of God's victory over his enemies. In the Gospels, Jesus is shown as

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[74]McGrath, 417.

having authority over demons. In Mark 3:27, it says, for example, that Jesus has tied up the "strong man." Paul in the Epistles talked about Jesus breaking the tyranny of sin, law, flesh and powers.

Critics of the *Christus Victor's* theory argue that it is a theory that does not offer a rational explanation on how the forces of evil are defeated through the cross of Christ. The same critics also question the imperative of the Cross. They question the importance of the cross rather than some other manner to defeat the powers of evil. Other critics have gone as far as delineating human passivity because the theory stresses only God through Jesus as the initiator and the accomplisher of the victory of the powers of evil. For these critics, because everything turns around God, the theory gives room for human passivity.

Regardless of these critics, the essence of *Christus Victor* as a soteriological theory has been of a great appeal to different people for different reasons. In the stratified racial divisive society of South Africa, for example, *Christus Victor* served as a tool of legitimation of Apartheid for Whites and served as well, a tool of delegitimation and empowerment for Blacks. Each of these social groups managed to be selective in their readings of the theory to advance their respective agenda. The case of the Dutch Reformed Church is a typical illustration.

Salvation and the Dutch Reformed Church

Nicholson argued that *Christus Victor* theory provides a tempting rationale for Christians to sacralize their struggle against their enemies.[75] The Afrikaner nation was greatly influenced by it in their struggle against British and Black South Africans. In the *Christus Victor* theory propagated by the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC), the Afrikaners found their so-called identity as a victorious and chosen people. They expressed it

[75] Nicolson, 121.

through literature, especially poetry, and through a neo-Calvinism interpretation of the double predestination. Moreover, in *Christus Victor*, the Afrikaners found a mobilizing factor to build a nationalist sentiment.

S du Toit, using the pen name of Totuis, interpreted the suffering and trials of the Afrikaners as well as their hope for the future in many of his poems. In his poem *By Die Monument* (At the Monument) published in 1908 to fund the proposed monument of the Afrikaners who died in the British Empire's concentration camps, Totuis described the effect of these concentration camps using three different perspectives, *Die Kind* (The Child), *Die Vrou* (The Mother) and the *Die Man* (The Man). Totuis wrote,

> Her child slept with this sweet thought:
>
> When I awake help will arrive from the Lord
>
> The Mother received with eager hand
>
> Her rations at last- but the child was dead.[76]

This excerpt reflects both the despair and hope of the Afrikaners at a time when the British took both children and parents away from their homes to concentration camps. The irony in this part of the poem, argued Hexham, is that the same ox-wagon, which had enabled the trekker family to settle their land, becomes a symbol of oppression by taking the family to the prison.[77]

In the second part of the poem, Totuis emphasized the continuous agony of *Die Vrou* (The Mother) giving her reactions to the tragedy of the internment. As in the first

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[76] S. du Toit, 1961, Vol. Viii, 83.

[77] Irving Hexham, *The Irony of Apartheid: The Struggle for National Independance of Afrikaner Calvinism against British Imperialism* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1981), 34.

part, the second part tells the story of a young thorn tree growing beside a road. A large wagon runs over it and bends it without destroying it. Being damaged but not destroyed, the tree starts to grow again. As the tree heals and grows, the scar caused by the wagon remains.[78]

Hexham thought that the message in this section of *By Die Monument* was a metaphor for both the Afrikaners and the British, the wagon being the latter and the thorn tree being the former.[79] It is also a message of forgiving and forgetting. After what the Afrikaners went through under the British, they are called to forgive but not to forget. To forget will only negate their divine calling as a victorious and God chosen people.

The final section of the poem, *By Die Monument*, reflects the returning of a father to his ruined farm to find his family dead,

> The Kraal wall is rebuilt
> the old hand helps again
> but oh! the pain within
> the grief old, yet ever new.
> "My shepherd," he sighed, "has returned,
> My cattle also;
> only my wife and child stay away,
> and they will come no more."[80]

By telling the story of suffering in concentration camps, Totuis aimed to mobilize his people, the Afrikaners, and foster their nationalism sentiment by discovering their common heritage and suffering under the British Empire.

In 1909, Totius published another poem titled *Potgiester's Trek*. This poem is an epic monument to the Voortrekkers. Potgiester was a pioneer trekker who came to

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[78]Ibid.

[79]Ibid.

[80]S. du Toit, 1961, Vol. VIII, 183.

represent, in the eyes of the Afrikaners, the image of a leader with strong religious convictions. In fact, the Potgiester's trek was seen as a religious pilgrimage for freedom from the oppressive British rule.[81] *Protgiester's Trek* translates the resilience of the Afrikaners, their faith in God and in the future and their ability to endure hardship and persevere. In *Potgiester's Trek*, the common theme of suffering and hardship as a distinctive character of the Afrikaners' identity under the umbrella of God's providence and victorious call is once again emphasized. The poem begins with a historic backdrop of the Afrikaners,

> Darkest Africa! Centuries old,
> a wild world! I see your gloomy picture,
> your endlessly vast savage coasts;
> surrounded by storms; seething; inhospitable
>
> But wait! Who comes? Spreading light?
> on your southern borders: Light is moving! Commanding-
> the trekker with his rifle, his wagon and Book,
> in your interior he seeks his freedom[82]

These lines suggest a typology with the biblical figure. As Abraham in the book of Genesis chapter 2 verses 1-2 was called to leave his country of Ur and go to an unknown land, so Potgiester was called to leave the secure western coast to go to the interior of the country. The poem also suggests the Afrikaners were the precursor to a dark and uncivilized world. It portrays the Afrikaners as the people of Israel, chosen to lead the rest of the pagan world to civilization and faith. The following lines uttered this assertion,

> But see! The world becomes wilder;
> the fierce vermin worsen,

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[81]Hexham, 36.

[82]S. du Toit, 1961, Vol. VIII, 187.

stark naked black hordes,
following tyrants.
How the handful of trekkers suffer,
the freedom seekers, creators of a people.
Just like another Israel,
by enemies surrounded, lost in the veld,
But for another Canaan elected,
led forward by God's plan.[83]

The reenactment of the Trek had become a meaningful ritual that mobilized the Afrikaner nationalist sentiment and provided a religious legitimation to their cause. In 1938, for example, there was a reenactment of the Trek that set off from the Jan van Riebeeck statue in Cape Town and finished in Pretoria. Chidester told the story of how this trek was received as it proceeded on its journey,

> Popular enthusiasm for the ox-wagons was so great, however that eventually nine wagons were outfitted to trek around the country, visiting nearly 500 locations thorough South Africa. Dressing up as Voortrekkers, Afrikaners welcomed the wagons with great enthusiasm. The wagons were regarded with a kind of religious fervor as Afrikaners sacred symbols. People flocked to touch them, to obtain grease form their wheels, and even in some cases to baptize babies and perform marriages next to one of the ceremonial Voortrekker ox-wagons. Wherever the wagon stopped was declared holy ground. Local organization in towns and villages sprang up to organize festivities when the wagons arrived. When the wagons reached their destinations-at Monument Hill in Pretoria and Blood River in Natal- they were welcomed by torch processions, camp meetings, and an intensely religious enthusiasm.[84]

The third and last Totuis' poem is *Ragel* (Rachel). *Ragel* tells the story of a mother who is not ashamed or frightened by her destiny, who is always ready to offer herself and her children for their people and Fatherland.[85] It is a story of Afrikaner

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[83]Ibid., 199.

[84]Chidester, *Religions in South Africa,* 195.

[85]S. du Toit, 240.

women who forcefully resisted when the British Empire used brutal tactics of starvation by cutting any means of food supply, and internment by sending them to concentration camps. As in previous poems where the incarnation of a biblical figure embodied the poem, in *Ragel,* Totius explicitly sees a parallel between the biblical Rachel and the Afrikaner women. Totius wrote,

> Thus I think, Rachel,
> of your lot and will
> recall your suffering,
> your greatest grief,
> cruelly taken by surprise,
> as long as the world remains.
>
> Thus I think of
> the Rachels of my land
> who without home or house
> were cruelly surprised- burnt
> out of their homes,
> pushed out into the veld.[86]

The myth of *Ragel* is manufactured in light of ever present forces of chaos incarnated in the British and the Africans.[87] Due to this ever present chaos, the myth of the story of *Ragel* becomes an appropriation of the Afrikaner women's story. It becomes a story that comforts them and brings them hope to look for the future. Furthermore, it becomes a story of a suffering servant. Like Israel suffered for the sake of salvation of the whole, so are the Afrikaners. The following lines express better this suffering servant predicament,

> A voice is heard in Rama
> wailing and loud lamentation,
> Rachel, the mother of Israel, over
> her children- they are no more

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[86]Ibid.

[87]Hexham, 40.

So groaned Rachel's ghost
but see, today Rachels
living Rachels, who weep
at the endless children's graves.

A voice is heard all over,
weeping and wailing bitterly;
Rachel, suffering Mother, weeps over
her children- they are no more.[88]

Far more than moving works of art, Totuis' poems, *By Die Monument, Potgiester's Trek* and *Ragel,* are profound statements of national identity and political intent based upon a faith in the future, God's providence and victorious call. To foster the national identity, Afrikaners needed to be mobilized. Subsequently, they invented myths that corroborated their history of suffering and faith in a God who liberated them and led them to the Promised Land. Having their eyes on the prize, the Afrikaners could not tolerate any elements of chaos that would detour them from this divine call. The British Empire and the Africans were such elements of chaos to be kept at bay because they were poised to destroy the social order.

To maintain the social order and keep both the British and the Africans at bay, Totuis, in his mythology, manufactured a prophet figure projection – Abraham (the biblical), Potgieter (the typology), an imagined community (Afrikaner broederbond) and a suffering servant type (Rachel – *Ragel* - Israel). All of this helped the Afrikaners to mobilize and enhance a nationalistic sentiment. As Hexham put it, Totuis' poetry represents "the psalm to national deliverance, an interpretation of history that makes the past bearable and subsequently the irrational pattern of the past events fit into a divine scheme which removes their arbitrary appearance and eternally legitimates them.[89]

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[88]S du Toit, 268.

[89]Ibid.

Apart from myths manufactured in poetry, the Afrikaner's nationalism sentiment was also built upon myths grounded on the DRC's distortion of the neo-Calvinistic doctrine of the sovereignty of God and double predestination that subsequently led to the institutionalization of the myth of Apartheid.[90] The DRC's neo-Calvinist connection can be traced back to the theologian and statesman, Abraham Kuyper, whose influence was neo-Calvinist Groen Van Prinsterer.

A schism caused Van Prinsterer to break away from the Calvinist Church and create a new church in Holland, the Separated Christian Reformed Church. Determined to wage war against the liberal stand of the Calvinist revival, Van Prinsterer saw, in this liberalism, a threat to Calvinist principles that would lead to atheism and revolution.[91] Under the banner, "In isolation is our strength", Van Prinsterer fought to promote his brand of Calvinism and stop the spread of liberalism. Unfortunately, Van Prinsterer died without implementing his vision. It was Kuyper, being strongly influenced by Van Prinsterer's Calvinistic ideology, who turned it to an all-embracing philosophy and lifestyle.[92] Kuyper contended that God created the cosmos as a multitude of circles of life, each circle characterized by its own nature and tasks, free and independent of each other.[93] In this sense, education, art, economics, and family life are spheres through which God operates directly. This has come to be known as the theology of "sphere sovereignty." Kuyper saw God's common grace operating in various dimensions of life to the point of constituting the ground for a Christian nationalism.

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[90]DeGruchy, *The Church Struggle in South Africa*, 69.

[91]Ibid., 6.

[92] Ibid.

[93] G J Schutte, "The Netherlands: Cradle of Apartheid?" *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol 10, no 4, 1987.

Having this philosophy in mind, Kuyper would go on to found the Free University of Amsterdam where eventually many Dutch Reformed theologians, including D.F Malan would train. D.F Malan studied in the Netherlands during the time that Kuyper's neo-Calvinistic "sphere theology" was at its greatest influence. After his studies, he returned to South Africa with the conviction that the Afrikaners had to organize themselves separately in all walks of life. Malan contended that like the Dutch neo-Calvinists, the Afrikaners' strength lay in separate cultural, religious and political institutions. Later, he would propound the theory that God had ordained separate nations, each with a unique destiny.[94]Malan made every effort to live out this conviction.

In 1915, after the revolt of the Afrikaner generals against the pro-British government of the Union of South Africa, Malan was one of the DRC church leaders who drafted a statement aligning the church with the Afrikaner resistance to British nationalism. The statement declared,

> The church has a special calling with regard to the Afrikaner people. The church sees it as its duty to be nationalistic, to guard the specific national interest, and to teach the people to see the hand of God in its own history and to keep alive an awareness of its national calling and purpose.[95]

Malan was also one of the leaders who pleaded with the government to reprieve one of the rebel leaders as he faced a death squad. As the government refused to give clemency, Jopie Fourie, the rebel leader, was executed by the firing squad. His execution turned him into a martyr in the eyes of the Afrikaner nationalists.

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[94] Dunbar Moodie, *The Rise of Afrikanerdom: Power, Apartheid, and the Afrikaner Civil Religion* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 70.

[95]J.A. Loubser, *The Apartheid Bible: A Critical Review of Racial Theology in South Africa* (Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman, 1987), 22.

After the revolt, the DRC formed an alliance with the National Party of J.B. Hertzog who had supported the rebels against the ruling government of Jan Smuts' South African Party. For about nine years between 1924 and 1933, Hertzog's National Party had a majority in parliament. When Hertzog joined Jan Smuts to form a government under the United Party, D.F. Malan and other Afrikaner nationalists saw it as a sign of betrayal and decided to form their own "Purified" National Party.

In 1938, on the day of the covenant that celebrated the vow to God that had been made by the Voortrekkers, Malan addressed the Afrikaners by appealing to their nationalist sentiment. Malan declared, "Here at the Blood River, you stand on holy ground." They (Voortrekkers) received their task from God's hand, "They gave their answer. They made their sacrifices. There is still a white race."[96] The reference to the "white race" was a racist declaration for a political purpose not only to mobilize the Afrikaners but also to stimulate their understanding of the religious calling. This racialism would become the hallmark of the National Party when it came to power in 1948. With a complex network of racial separation, exclusion and domination, the National Party of D.F. Malan, with a religious legitimation derived from the Dutch Reformed Church, would rule South Africa under the umbrella of what has come to be known as Apartheid. The theology of apartheid, with her sources, norms, traditions, rituals and myths, would proclaim what Chidester calls, "a racialist gospel of salvation that attempts to justify the political policies of the National Party.[97]

Through DRC synods, councils, commissions, and Afrikaners academics and theologians, Apartheid was manufactured in a very skillful way. In 1942, for example, Gerhardus Eloff , one of the Afrikaner nationalists and a member of the Broadeland, declared,

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[96]Chidester, *Religions in South Africa,* 196.

[97]Ibid.

> The preservation of the pure race of the Boervolk must be protected at all costs in all possible ways as a holy pledge entrusted to us by our ancestors as part of God's plan with our People. Any movement, school, or individual who sins against this must be dealt with as a racial criminal by the effective authorities.[98]

In 1947, Professor E. P. Groenewald, one of the New Testament scholars of the DRC, in his studies of the theological ground of Apartheid arrived at the following conclusions:

1. Scriptures teach the unity of mankind
2. The History of the tower of Babel (Genesis 11) teaches us, however, that when people came together to "preserve the unity of mankind" it was God himself who, according to his sovereign will, created the "separateness" of people, establishing not only "separate peoples" (nations), but also separate geographical area and boundaries for each.
3. The event in Babel is underlined by Pentecost (Acts 2) and in Acts 4:17.
4. In a separate paragraph entitled " It is God's will that separate peoples should remain in their separateness,"
5. If a nation guards its separateness (and therefore its purity of blood), it will enjoy the blessings of God.
6. Galatians 4 teaches us that the strong (the whites) have a responsibility to the weak (the blacks). In order to organize this relationship properly, two things are necessary. One is "responsibility in love" of white toward black; the other is the exercise of authority and piety. In other words, whites have the duty to exercise their love toward blacks - that is authority, because blacks are the subjugated

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[98]Ibid., 197.

people. Blacks, in turn, should honor and respect whites for doing so - that is piety. "It may be expected," the immature people shall subject itself willingly to the authority placed over it.[99]

In a similar way, in the same year the Federale Sendingraad (Federal Missions Council) of the DRC declared,

> DRC policy amounts to the recognition of the existence of races and nations as separate units foreordained by God. This is not the work of human beings. Accordingly the DRC considers it imperative that these creations be recognized for the sake of their natural development through which they could fulfill themselves in their own language, culture and community. Although God created all nations out of one blood He gave each nation a feeling of nationhood and a national soul which had to be recognized by everyone.[100]

The same commission would later argue that the best way in which Whites and non-Whites could co-exist was by way of a system of apartheid in which each group developed separately and in its own sphere.[101] This statement is a clear reminder of Kuyper's sphere theology that permeates the DRC academia, *intelligentsia,* clergy, nationalists and politicians.

In 1950, a conference of the Federal Mission Council convened to address what was called the "native problem." The conference adopted resolutions separating churches, schools, residential areas, and territories for racially defined groups.[102] The conference

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[99]F. E O'Brien Geldenhuys, *In Die Stroomversnellings: 50 Jaar Van die N.G Kerk* (Cape Town: Trafelberg, 1982), 27.

[100]NGK: Federale Sendingraad-notules, 1947, 137.

[101]Herman Giliomee and Lawrence Schemmer, *From Apartheid to Nation-Building* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1990), 34.

[102]Chidester, *Religions in South Africa*, 199.

argued that the distinctive development of racially defined groups in separate territories was consistent with divine Purpose and Destiny and that the pattern set by the DRC to create separate churches for racially defined groups be extended in South Africa to a total territorial separation. The conference used the emergence of the African Independent Churches as a positive result of its religious policy of 'distinctive' or separate. To implement this policy, the conference called on D.F. Malan's government to implement total segregation in all aspects of South African life.[103] Malan's government would go on to implement the relocation of Black South Africans to the Native reserves through passing laws, resettlement acts, amendment to land acts and even forced removal of large populations such was the case of Sophiatown in Johannesburg and district six in Cape Town. It is believed that the government relocated about 3.5 million people in the interest of separate development.[104]

In 1956, the Afrikaner Bureau of Race Relations (SABRA) and the Dutch Reformed Church joined efforts to organize a Volkskongress (Peoples Congress). In their resolution to the question of separate development, the congress declared,

> A policy of integration will inevitably give rise to increasing racial tension and racial conflict and will eventually lead to the annihilation of the national existence of one or both groups. The Congress is convinced that the only acceptable policy, and a policy which is also practically possible, is a policy which is based on the principle of separate development, which must provide for the existence of separate communities in their own territories where each community will have the opportunity of full self expression and development, and will be assured of a free existence and of the right of self-determination.[105]

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[103]Ibid.

[104]Laurine Platsky and Cherryl Walker, *The Surplus People* (Johannesburg: Raven Pres, 1985), 5.

[105]Cecil Ngcokovane, *Demons of Apartheid: A Moral and Ethical Analysis of the NGK, N.P and Broederbond's Justification of Apartheid (*Johannesburg: Skotaville, 1989), 155.

Ironically, this congress took place just a year after the "Congress of the Peoples", a coalition of political movements opposing the government's racial policies, drafted what is known as "Freedom Charter". It declared that South Africa belonged to all who live in it, Black and White. Inventing and re-inventing its stance on Apartheid, the DRC would continue to lend her sacralized power to the government for many years. The sophisticated twist came, however, in her General Synod of 1974.

In this Synod, the DRC adopted the document, *Human Relations and the South Africa Scene in the Light of Scripture,* which defined a sophisticated approach to justify Apartheid. It no longer relied on traditional policies or what scholars and clergy said, not even on the biblical narrative of the curse of Ham, nor did the DRC transpose the "people of God" motif from Israel onto the Afrikaner volk. The DRC instead turned to the creation narratives and the proto-history of Genesis 1-11.[106] Out of this conference emerged two themes. On one hand, the synod declared that the Scriptures upheld the essential unity of mankind and the primordial relatedness and fundamental equality of all peoples. On the other hand, it stated, "ethnic diversity is in its very origin in accordance with the will of God for the dispensation."[107] Although the conference recognized the diversity of people as relative to their underlying unity, it did not hesitate to declare that the Bible made a provision for the regulation of the coexistence of various peoples in one country on the basis of separate development. Because it was the Church's prerogative to ensure that diversity did not in turn lead to estrangement, the conference warned against "the modern tendency to erase all distinctions among peoples."[108]

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[106]DeGruchy, 69.

[107]Ibid., 70.

[108]Ibid., 49.

The DRC, instead of repudiating Apartheid, once again gave the government a divine sanction. It was as if the government and the Church reached a point of no return. This point of no return is what Berger called "alienation." Alienation appears in the realm of "theodicies." On this stage of religious legitimation, individuals refuse to re-appropriate the social order and self when confronting anomalies of suffering, injustice and death. Individuals treat these forces as objects confronting them to the same degree as laws of nature.[109] To eliminate alienation, an individual must step outside of the social order and directly confront the chaotic world for what it is. It is only then she/he can live an authentic life. Accordingly, individuals live authentically, only in moments where they are without the comforting shelter of any form of legitimation.[110]

This was not the case with the Apartheid regime. They would go on to create, in the name of separate development, mythical homelands where every Black South African would be a citizen. They created the Xhosa nation of the Republic of Transkei, the Tswana nation of the Republic of Bophuthatswana, the "Venda" nation of the republic of Venda and another "Xhosa" nation of the Republic of Ciskei. The irony of the matter is that these independent states would themselves appeal to religious legitimation and *Christus Victor* soteriological predicament to justify their *raison d'etre.* Many of their people would flock to independent churches for personal victory over the powers of evils including poverty, injustice and malefic influences.

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[109]Peter Berger, *The Sacred Canopy, Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (New York: Anchor Books, 1990), 86.

[110]Ibid., 52.

Soteriology and the Zion Christian Church (ZCC)

Salvation in the ZCC departs from the European/North American soteriological predicament and African Traditional Religions (ATRs). Through processes of "syncretization" and "purification", the ZCC deconstructs these soteriologies to construct a "pure" salvation that forges the identity of its adherents and empowers them economically.

The construction of the social new or "purities" is never a *tabula rasa* approach, argued Peter Beyer.[111] According to Beyer,

> When we generate the social new, we never start with a *tabula rasa*, a clean slate upon which we write what we will. We always work with what is already there. We dissolve elements and conceptual resources out of their previously prevailing meaning contexts, and recombine them anew in what then appears as an original form.[112]

For Beyer, "new purities" are generated from the positive judgment of syncretisms rather than their negative counterpart that give room to "impure."[113] Using syncretism, in its negative sense, missiologists and missionaries described African Independent Churches as impure and inauthentic. They saw in syncretism a degenerative stage that forfeited the essence of Christianity and as such, they thought that it was their moral obligation to warn the mission churches of the "dangers of syncretism" or "syncretistic tendencies." Bengt Sundkler, a Swedish missionary who lived in South Africa and Tanzania and later became the first Lutheran Bishop of Bukoba in Tanzania, saw in African Independent Churches a threat of a return to heathenism. Sundkler wrote,

> The deepest cause of the emergence of Independent churches is a nativistic syncretistic interpretation of the Christian religion….the syncretic sect becomes the bridge over which Africans are brought

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[111]Peter Beyer, "At the Crossroads of Identity and Difference: Historical Dimensions of Religio-Cultural Syncretisms in the Context of Globalization", 10.

[112]Ibid.

[113]Ibid., 5.

> back to heathenism- a viewpoint which stresses the seriousness of the whole situation.[114]

In a similar way, G.C. Oosthuizen characterized African Initiated Churches as forms of "post-Christianity" which easily bridges back to nativism.[115] This colonial judgment of values was seen as a powerful example of means used, by religious elites, to oppose unauthorized religious production, argued Andre Droogers.[116] There is certainly an asymmetric power relation between the Europeans/North Americans and the Africans. This asymmetry of power is what Edward Said called "position superiority."[117] Positional superiority is a hegemony in which certain cultural or religious forms predominate over others in binary relationship of power and domination.[118] In this sense, by positioning themselves on a higher level, European/North American missiologists and missionaries believed that they had the power and monopoly to set rules of theological discourse and anthropological engagement and to define indigenous in light and terms of Europeans cultural value and knowledge. To put it differently, Europeans/North Americans, with their effective social power in the colonial circumstances of the time, were the ones who got to judge what was "syncretic" and subsequently a "false" Christianity of which to be aware.[119]

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[114]Sundkler, *Bantu Prophets in South Africa*, 297.

[115]G.C. Oosthuizen, *Post Christianity in Africa: A Theological and Anthropological Study* (London: C. Hurst and Co, 1968), xi.

[116]Andre Droogers, "Syncretism: The Problem of Definition, the Definition of the Problem", in J.Gort, H. Vroom, R Fernhout and A.Wessels, eds, *Dialogue and Syncretism: An Interdisciplinary Approach* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B.Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1989), 16.

[117]Edward Said, *Orientalism*, 7.

[118]Ibid.

[119]Beyer, "At the Crossroads of Identity and Difference: Historical Dimensions of Religio-Cultural Syncretisms in the Context of Globalization", 16.

Syncretism in its pejorative or negative sense would, however, be challenged. As the global worldviews started to shift away from the colonialist enterprise, concepts such as religion and culture were more and more defined in their universalization. It was no longer the language of a culture or a religion but the language of religions and cultures. As Beyer put it, "there was religion, but it appeared in real social life only as religions." Similarly, there was culture that realized itself as cultures.[120] As a consequence of this shift, syncretism was flipped over and its objective sense started to emerge. The argument became that syncretism permeated every religious, cultural and identity formation and it was, therefore, inevitable.

In this context, instead of labeling African Initiated Churches as forms of "post-Christianity" which easily bridge back to nativism, as Oosthuizen had argued, AICs were then understood as forms of expression of the Christian faith that were contingent on the social context of their adherents.[121] This recognition allowed AICs to co-exist in their own right along side mission churches from whom they constructed their "purities."

To construct its "purities," ZCC deconstructed, for example, the European/North American classic Christian salvific theory of *Christus Victor* argued by Gustav Aulen. As I previously argued, the underlying assumption in *Christus Victor* is that the atonement or soteriology is a cosmic drama in which God in Christ does battle with the powers of evil and gains the victory over them.[122] This victory is over sin, death and the devil.

ZCC re-interpreted the *Christus Victor* biblical narratives of the Jewish milieu and first century Christians through processes of "recognizing" and "undoing" by broadening the meaning of victory over sin, death and evil to include the social reality of the chaotic

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[120]Ibid., 4.

[121]L. Pato, "The Independent African Churches: A Socio-Cultural Approach," *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, 72 (1990): 26.

[122]Gustav Aulen, *Christus Victor* (SPCK): 22.

world of Black South Africans; a chaotic world where indiscriminate socializing of workers and the indiscriminate use of the powerful medicines and techniques of sorcery live side by side;[123] a cosmological world of constant battle between good and evil where the disfranchised and the marginalized define social realities in the form of witches, evil spirits and other mystical agents. It is a world where diseases are not biological immune deficiencies but acts of evil powers that wander in the cosmos; a world where any anomie of human existence, including poverty, racial injustice, entrenchment, promiscuity and alcoholism to name but a few, are seen as works of evil spirits enticing human beings.

In a survey conducted in Soshanguve, one of the townships of Pretoria, Allen Anderson observed that salvation among ZCC members was defined along the lines of mission churches' soteriogical syncretism and African traditional and cosmological beliefs. To be saved meant to believe that there is a powerful God who delivers individuals from sin, death and the devil, in the biblical sense of the terms, and a God who frees individuals from cosmic powers, witches influences, curses and misfortunes.[124] A person who claims to be saved in this church has the *certitudo salutis* that she/he is invincible to misfortunes and evil powers. This *certitudo salutis*, according to Anderson, is grounded in some kind of manifestation: *glossolalia*, dreams, faith healing and prophecy.[125]

In the summer of 2006, I conducted a survey among ZCC members in Atteridgeville, a Black township of Pretoria, where I found that ZCC members had diverse versions of what it means to be saved. However, similar to Anderson, what was common among these versions was a reference to a healing power as an expression of

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[123]David Chidester, *Religions of South Africa* ,139.

[124]Allan Anderson, *Zion and Pentecost*, 239.

[125]Ibid.

salvation. One of the members, a 52-year-old male marketing accountant, told me that he was saved because he was baptized, healed and kept strict respect of the church rituals. Another member, a 32-year-old male student at the local University, when asked the question, "How certain are you of your salvation", answered that he followed what is said by the church elders and he had an inner strength and patience in the face of adversities. Salvation, as understood by these participants, revealed a broadening of Christian classic salvific articulation of *Christus Victor* and was contextualized or "purified" into the social and cosmology context of the ZCC.

The processes entailed in the broadening of imported Christian soteriological construction, according to Jean Comaroff, are an expression of a radical cultural resistance of the dispossessed by colonialism.[126] This resistance, argued Comaroff, takes place in a dialectical interaction between indigenous social forms and elements of more general currency in the culture of colonialism that results in the construction of cultural symbolic systems and rituals.[127] In this sense, by constructing symbolic systems and rituals, ZCC reformed the world in the image they created and re-established a dynamic correspondence between the self and the structures that pervades it.[128] Cultural symbolic systems and rituals serve as the line of attack to domesticate and subvert the structure of colonial society. In so doing, they represent a tangible identity of power that establishes coherence upon a disarticulated world.[129] Through words, objects and gestures, the ZCC channelizes diffuse power in such a way as to alter the state of bodies, physical and social.[130] Comaroff's analysis suggested that ZCC's soteriological processes of

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[126]Jean Comaroff, *Body of Power, Spirit of Resistance*, 166.

[127]Ibid.

[128]Ibid., 198.

[129]Ibid., 254.

[130]Ibid., 198.

syncretization and purification counterbalance the asymmetry of power that exists between the European/North American and the Africans.

Not only does ZCC "recognize" and "undo" European/North American classic soteriological syncretism, but also African Traditional Religions' (ATRs) soteriological construction. In the cosmology of ATRs, particularly among the Bantu living in South Africa, the *Ngunis,* the *Zulus* as the most known ethnic group, the *Mpedi,* the *Tswana,* the *Venda,* the *Sotho* and many others groups, salvation is defined in terms of acceptance into the community. The community establishes rules and regulations that each member is required to obey and respect. Because these laws are divinely handed down, any violation is an attempt to disturb the security, harmony and peace of the community. It is here that the concept of *uBuntu* is known to permeate African traditional societies. *uBuntu* entails the existential philosophy that "I exist not because I think", but "I exist because we are." Desmond Tutu, referring to *uBuntu* stated,

> Africans have this thing called *uBuntu,* the essence of being human, it is part of the gift that Africa will give the world. It embraces hospitality, caring about others, being willing to go the extra mile for the sake of others. We believe a person is person through another person, that my humanity is caught up, bound up and inextricable linked in yours. When I dehumanize you, I inexorably dehumanize myself. The solitary human being is a contradiction in terms and, therefore, you seek to work for the common good because your humanity comes into its own community, in belonging.[131]

In ATRs, salvation, understood as acceptance into the community, does not entail the notion of an atoning figure. There is, however, a belief in the realm of a spirit-power and its effects upon the physical and spiritual dimensions of human existence.[132] This

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[131]Mukanda Mulemfo, *Thabo Mbeki and the African Renaissance* (Pretoria: Actua Press, 2001), 58.

[132]Kwame Bediako, *Jesus in African Culture* (Accra: Presbyterian Press, 1990), 10.

kind of belief has led some African scholars such as Kwame Bediako to equate Jesus Christ to the spirit-power. Bediako went as far as to call Jesus Christ the greatest ancestor.

The belief in *uBuntu* and a spirit-power permeates Africans' traditional societies including those of the ZCC members. However, ZCC, in its soteriological construction, has managed to "syncretize" and "purify" these beliefs and generate a new narrative of what it means to live in harmony and peace in the community and on how to contextualize the notion of spirit-power. By "syncretizing" and "purifiying", *uBuntu* and spirit-power, ZCC constructs a soteriogical predicament that encompasses the notion that a respect for the rules of the church is a dimension of salvation and that any attempt to violate these rules is an attempt to upset the harmony of the community and is therefore punishable by exclusion from the community. Furthermore, ZCC members are called to live by a strict moral code outside the boundary of the ZCC community and to constantly wear the badge with the five-point star as a reminder of their adherence to the community of fellowship.

This syncretic salvation that deconstructs both the European/North American and ATRs' syncretic soteriologies and that liberates ZCC members from the cosmic chaos under which they live becomes then the motivational energy for their identity and economic conduct, impacting their worldviews and lifestyles. Because they are saved/liberated, ZCC members' personal and economic circumstances change. With a salvific ethic and a message of temperance, hard work and thrift, the ZCC stimulates an economic drive toward self-realization. Allan Anderson recalled an example of a couple who were haunted and could not find peace and economical viability until they joined the ZCC. After joining the ZCC and subsequently finding salvation/liberation, this couple

was freed from evil misfortunes and was able to become utility maximizers and provide for both their immediate family and the community at large.[133]

Based on a survey conducted in Edendale, a township near the metropolis of Durban, which focused on the relationship between independent churches and economic development, Robert Garner concluded that religious beliefs and practices have an impact on the overlapping categories of lifestyle and worldview.[134] Capital or economic development is understood not only as the complex bulk of technical methods and institutions that regulate and facilitate production, circulation and distribution but also as a social and economic system that enhances the expansion of economic growth and progress. Determinants of this expansion include economic variables such as land, labour and capital as well as non-economic parameter such as religious beliefs.

In the case of the ZCC, *certitudo salutis* enforces personal moral values necessary in the building up of capital and economic development. ZCC members are, for example, known for their communal and personal purity. These values are grounded in the belief that salvation purifies the whole person, who in turn is called to live in harmony within her/himself and the community. To maintain this personal and communal purity, each member of the church wears a badge made of black cloth with a silver star inscribed with "ZCC", that identifies members of the church as a people set apart.[135]

Because of their moral ethic and syncretized African traditional notion of *uBuntu*, ZCC members become an army of potential employees who, once hired, use their economic self-realization to better the social life of their communities. At no cost does self-realization serve as an individualistic egomania. It is always tethered to community

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[133] Allan Anderson, *Zion and Pentecost*, 275.

[134]Robert Garner, "African Independent Churches and Economic Development", 82.

[135]David Chidester, *Religions of South Africa*, 137.

goals.[136] In fact, it is as Jim Kiernan put it, "an engine room that generates the small surpluses that become community parcels to be distributed as largesse on occasions of individual crisis."[137] There is a firm expectation of sharing and mutual support among ZCC members. In a time of need, a member relies on the community to rally to the relief of her/his problem and to pool whatever resources are available, spiritual and material, to ease his/her burden.[138] Those who better themselves to the point of giving more are rewarded with tangible recognitions in church rank and offices.

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[136]Jim Kiernan, "African Independent Churches and Modernity" in *Engaging Modernity: Methods and Cases for Studying African Independent Churches in South Africa*, ed. Dawid Winter (Westport: Praeger, 2004), 54.

[137]Ibid.

[138]Ibid.

CHAPTER V

SOTERIOLOGY AND CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE ZION CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Introduction

If capital development is understood not only as the complex bulk of technical methods and institutions that regulate and facilitate production, circulation and distribution but also as a social and economic system that enhances the expansion of economic growth and progress, non-economic parameters such as religious beliefs certainly determinate its formation. In the ZCC, for example, the very notion of salvation/liberation stems from personal and moral traits necessary in capital production. A saved/liberated person in ZCC not only adopts an ethos of hard work and discipline, but as well a moral ethic of sobriety, obedience and being law abiding. By placing their faith in God and believing that they are saved/liberated from the influences of evil powers that entice human beings, ZCC's adherents not only adopt moral values compatible with capital production but carry as well the moral obligation to share and maintain the harmony of the community. Since no one can share without possessions, capital production, in this sense, becomes a moral duty.

Historians of economic thought such as Adam Smith and Max Weber have argued on the intersection of religion and capital production. In their analysis, they delineated categories of thought and behavior where religious belief fosters an environment for capital production to take place. Among these categories are the legitimacy of the capitalist economy, trust and cooperation, lifestyle and worldview. In recent scholarship, economists such as Barro and McCleary have delineated the impact of religious belief in economic growth by using variables such as the belief in the afterlife and church

attendance.[1] According to them, the belief in hell, for example, fosters economic growth while church attendance depletes resources that could otherwise be used effectively.[2] This chapter elucidates on these variables and applies them in the socio-economic context of ZCC. Thus, the chapter contends that the ZCC soteriological predicament - salvation/liberation - legitimates the market economy by bestowing upon it a theological and ontological meaning. Moreover, the same soteriology prompts moral traits and capital incentives such as trust and cooperation and promotes new worldviews and lifestyles favorable to capital production.

My analysis follows a model similar to the study Garner conducted among two AICs, the Twelve Apostles Church of Christ (TACC) and the Golden Christian Society in Zion (GCSZ). In his quest to determine the socio-economic circumstances of these two churches, Garner found that the degree of capital involvement in these churches depended on the values and beliefs they promoted. Because they had ambiguous beliefs, Garner dismissed their impact on capital production. In fact, he went as far as questioning whether any AIC is good for capital production. My study among ZCC, however, yielded a different result. The ZCC soteriology apparatus favored capital production, becoming then one of the success stories of the intersection of religion and capital development in southern Africa.

The Legitimacy of the Capital Economy in the ZCC

The underlying assumption in this variable is the notion that religion has the power to legitimize and delegitimize social constructions, including the market economy, by bestowing upon its values and institutions an ultimate ontological status that locates

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[1]Robert Barro and Rachel M. McCleary, "Religion and Economic Growth across Countries", 772.

[2]Ibid.

them within a sacred and cosmic frame of reference. [3] In this sense, religion is the most prevalent and effective form of legitimation and delegitimation because it effectively relates the precarious reality constructions of empirical societies with ultimate reality.[4]

Thus, the ZCC, for example, legitimates the market economy using theology to sanction the pursuit of well being and capital production as a divine calling. This calling is manifested among its adherents by their participation in the market economy. ZCC members acquire private property. They compete in labour markets, are involved in credit markets, use free trade and some technical specialization for capital production. For ZCC members, participation in capital production is a visible sign of the inner belief of salvation. It is also visible proof that a saved person is victorious over evil forces that entice human beings including evil forces of entrenchment, poverty and diseases. In this sense, a saved person is the one freed, by his/her trust in God, from any evil control and ready to embark in capital production.

This belief among ZCC is grounded on the theological re-interpretation of the *Christus Victor* biblical narratives of the Jewish milieu and first-century Christians and the broadening of the meaning of victory over sin, death and evil. In ZCC soteriological apparatus, this reinterpretation and broadening entails the belief that there is a powerful God who delivers individuals from sin, death and the devil, in the biblical sense of the terms, and a God who frees individuals from cosmic powers, influences of witches, curses and misfortunes, in a social and anthropological sense.[5] As a result of this, a person who claims to be saved in the ZCC has, therefore, the *certitudo salutis* that she/he is invincible to misfortunes and evil powers. Because she/he is saved/liberated from evil forces, she/he embraces an ethos and moral values worthy of her/his calling.

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[3]Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, 33.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Allan Anderson, *Zion and Pentecost*, 239.

Figure 10 Star of Lekganyane as displayed on a ZCC uniform

Source: Willy Mafuta, 2007, Pretoria

It is this moral ethic that has come to distinguish ZCC members from the general population and that has made them be known as hard working, disciplined, obedient, sober, and fiscally responsible and law abiding.[6] To maintain their peculiar identity, ZCC members wear a badge made of black cloth with a silver star inscribed with "ZCC." I remember on one occasion, in Pretoria, I walked into a jewelry store and the salesman behind the counter was a ZCC member. It was easy to recognize his khaki uniform and his badge with the silver star. I started the conversation with him regarding his faith and religion. When questions turned to business, his manager made sure to mention to me that she hired him because he was a member of ZCC and as such he was honest and hard

[6] Ibid.

working. While this distinction has helped them in the labour market, other Black South Africans regard ZCC members with a suspicious eye. They are accused of being secretive and apolitical.

Regardless of these charges, the ZCC soteriological ethos and its impact on economic conduct is a non-negligible phenomenon in the South African society. It is, in fact, a micro-reflection of what has been happening on a greater scale in the Global South. With the upsurge of religious movements and independent churches in the Global South, new ethos toward consumption is emerging, making social scientists and theologians revisit the impact of religious beliefs on individuals' economic conduct.[7] Religious beliefs in the Global South are fostering a new ethic of consumption and capital production. In the terms of David Martin, the Global South is witnessing a new phase of capitalism in which culture/religion is increasingly recognized as a key variable having attributes such as personal responsibility, discipline and trust.[8]

In his studies among the Pentecostals in Latin America, for example, Martin observed an upsurge of a spiritual renewal that resulted in inner transformation or conversion of individuals. He called this phenomenon "a new man or a new woman in a new society."[9] The Protestant Church in Latin America has been preaching a message of salvation and family responsibility that is geared primarily toward the male. Once he is converted, he rejects the *machista* life and becomes an utility maximizer, contributing to the well-being of his family, his church and his country. According to Martin this moral transformation is similar to what was called in eighteenth-century Britain "Reformation of Manners."[10] During the "Reformation of Manners" in Britain, individuals were

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[7] David Martin, *Pentecostalism: The World Their Parish* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Inc, 2002), 71.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

grounded in a network of mutual responsibilities and obligation within the family as well as the community.[11]

Martin's observation in Latin America is similar to what has been happening among the ZCC. The ZCC, in its soteriological predicament of *certutis saludos* and *Christus Victor*, prompts its adherents to an inner transformation, self-identity and economic empowerment. By placing their faith in God, ZCC members discover a liberating force that empowers them both morally and economically. Because they are saved/liberated, they are no longer under the enticement of evil powers and therefore they are able to compete in the labour force; they embrace a new ethos and moral ethic, making them an army of potential employees; they aspire to better their personal life and the life of the community. All of these manners of transformation account for economic production, accumulation and consumption.

Some scholars, however, have questioned the premise of this market-driven tendency among ZCC. Critiques of this category have gone as far as arguing that Zionist members tend to treat economic success with skepticism.[12] Others have contended that there is a form of false consciousness or a passive response to the ineluctable spread of capitalist structures among Zionists.[13] This thesis is of a different opinion to the two arguments presented above. My assumption is that ZCC members are engaged in the pursuit of temporal needs and capital production as a moral imperative and a sign of social acceptability. ZCC members compete, produce, and consume, thus making them utility maximizers. As such they do not fall into a form of escapist pie-in-the-sky theology where material rewards are in heaven.

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[11]Ibid.

[12]Jim Kiernan, *The Production and Management of Therapeutic Power in Zionist Churches within a Zulu City* (New York: Edwin Miller Press, 1990), 42.

[13] Robert Garner, "African Independent Churches", 85

This view is shared by scholars such as Van der Merwe. In his quest to determine the reasons people join and stay ZCC members, he argued that while therapeutic needs were the major reasons people join and stay in ZCC, pragmatic needs that include help in finding work or improving work conditions (more pay), the need for prosperity, protection and security in daily life and in work were non-negligible factors.[14] In his analysis, he found that pragmatic needs accounted for 21.1% of the reasons people remained members, second only to therapeutic needs. Those pragmatic needs are met in a framework of a salvific message of hope, temperance and trust.[15] Van der Merwe represented ZCC needs in the following order:

Table 6 Analysis of Reasons People Remain Members of the ZCC

Table 1	
Therapeutic:	39.2%
Pragmatic:	**21.1%**
Religious:	13.6%
Magic:	13.3%
No Specific Need:	13.1%
Social:	9.7%
Moral:	4.2%
Traditional/Cultural:	1.4%
Leadership	0.8%
Political	0.6%

[14] Ibid.

[15] G Van der Merwe, "The Motivations and Needs of Members of the Zion Christian Church" in *Religion Alive, Studies in the New Movements and Indigenous Churches in Southern Africa*, ed. GC Oosthuizen (Cape Town: Hodder & Stoughton, 1986), 126.

Table 2	
Question 1: Why did you become a member of ZCC?	
Therapeutic	46.7%
No Specific Need	18.9%
Pragmatic	**13.3%**
Religious	7.8%
Social	6.7%
Question 2: Why do you remain a member of the ZCC?	
Therapeutic:	42.2%
Pragmatic:	**23.3%**
Magical:	20.0%
No Specific Need:	13.3%
Social:	7.8%
Question 3: Why do you attend the festivals of the ZCC? What do you get out of them?	
Therapeutic:	34.4%
Pragmatic:	**31.1%**
Social:	20.0%
Religious:	14.4%
Magical:	13.3%
Question 4: What does the leader of the ZCC mean to you?	
Therapeutic:	33.3%
Religious:	27.8%
Pragmatic:	**16.7%**
Magical:	14.4%
No Specific Need:	8.9%

Source: G Van der Merwe, "The Motivations and Needs of Members of the Zion Christian Church" in *Religion Alive, Studies in the New Movements and Indigenous Churches in Southern Africa*, ed. GC Oosthuizen (Cape Town: Hodder & Stoughton, 1986), 126

The presence of pragmatic needs second to therapeutic ones among ZCC members certainly substantiates the argument that ZCC members are engaged in the pursuit of capital production in the here and now. They do not treat economic success with skepticism and they do not have a form of false consciousness or a passive response to the ineluctable spread of capitalist structures as some scholars have argued. This is shown in their beliefs and behavior. For example, a 48-year-old ZCC member said, when asked why he attends a ZCC festival, "I want my business to prosper. I want my taxis to be blessed so that people would make use of them and want to ride them."[16] For this ZCC member, his business was contingent on his faith in God. Because he places his faith in an omnipotent and compassionate God, who in turn gives him an assured salvation, a total liberation of the physical and spiritual enticement, he finds enough motivation to engage in capital production and pursue economic success.

I found the same motivation toward capital production in a series of interviews I conducted in the summer of 2007 in Atteridgeville, a township of Pretoria. ZCC members in Atteridgeville are engaged in capital production to the same degree as those ZCC members in Van der Merwe's studies.[17] ZCC members in Atteridgeville compete in labour markets; they are involved in micro-credit finances and free trade and they strive to better their life with some form of economic specialization. A 50-year-old hairdresser named Vincent, for example, mentioned to me that since he joined the ZCC, his business has been thriving and as a result he wanted to open more beauty salons and have a bigger store where cosmetics would be sold. Vincent attributed his economic success, particularly, to the ZCC soteriological predicament. He believed that ZCC salvific ethic not only frees him from the influence of evil powers that wage war against him but also

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[16] Van der Merwe, "Motivations and Needs of Members of the Zion Christian Church", 129.

[17] 50 household were interviewed, from unemployed, college students, housewives and small business owners.

equips him to foster a climate of capital production and the pursuit of better opportunities.[18]

Another businessman, Moses, gave credit to the teaching of the church and faith in God. When responding to the question whether ZCC empowers members economically, Moses referred to a financial network called the *Lessedi Fund*. It is a fund that aims to provide business opportunities and marketing skills to those ZCC members who are interested in becoming small business owners. The existence of the *Lessedi Fund* for business opportunities among ZCC members corroborates once again the assumption that ZCC engages in capital production and market economy and does not prohibit its members from it. As Hennie Pretoriius and Lizo Jafta put it, "Its (ZCC) spiritual life is not separated from its successful business enterprises, the two conceived together as facets of the wholeness of Christian life."[19]

This is to say that the ZCC soteriological ethic encourages members to better their social life and acquire material possession provided as Moses, a ZCC small business owner, put it, "they are obtained via a proper channel."[20] What Moses meant is that material possessions must have been purchased legally and not be obtained fraudulently. I had the following conversation with Moses:

> Question: In terms of material things, what is the church's understanding? Does the church allow you to have whatever you want? Or are there any restrictions in terms of what you can have as a member of the ZCC?
>
> Response: There is no limit to what you need to have. If for example you want to buy a house in the suburb, it is up to you, as long as you have the money to do so. You can also drive whatever

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[18] Interview conducted in Atteridgeville, Summer 2007.

[19] Hennie Pretorius and Lizo Jafta, "A Branch Springs Out": African Initiated Churches in *Christianity in South Africa: A Political, Social, and Cultural History*, ed Richard Elphick and Rodney Davenport (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997, 211.

[20] Interview, Atteridgeville, Summer 2007.

you want, provided you get it with proper channels. The church does not allow stolen goods or crooked things, you see.

Question: Do you have any idea in terms of percentage, how many members of ZCC are well off?

Response: Yeah. I would say quite a number of our members are. Some of them are in high positions in government.

Question: Suppose you want to buy a car, do you perform certain rituals? Do you have to pray for the car? How does it work?

Response: Well sometimes you ask for guidance. Am I doing the right thing, am I buying the right car? And all of that, you see.

Question: To whom do you talk?

Response: You can always tell a priest. You see. You can tell him that I've seen a car, I want to buy it and all of that , you see. Here are the requirements of the car and I ask blessing from God that it turns to be a good car that must sustain me, and my family and all that, you see.

My interview with Moses illustrates that the market economy apparatus is not an alien concept to ZCC. ZCC adherents pursue temporary needs, might it be a purchase of a car or the need to live in affluent areas or to even purchase private property. These needs are not prohibited; they should, however, be acquired within the framework and spiritual guidance of the Church. Critics of ZCC have argued that while the vast majority of ZCC members are poor and bound to the polity of the church, the hierarchy of the church, however, enriches itself and creates very limited opportunities for the rest. Critics in this category would have argued that capital production in ZCC is solely the domain of the church hierarchy and not of the millions of ZCC members. My thesis does not dispute the validity of this argument. However, what critics have failed to observe is that the idea of capital production transcends social classes, especially in the African context, where production is a moral duty and a sign of social acceptability. On this ground alone, rich or poor both are engaged in capital production. At no point, however, does my argument

condone the abuse of power or exploitation that has been observed in the ZCC. In fact this exploitation is itself a manifestation of capital engagement in this church. If they were not engaged in capital production, exploitation would have not taken place. Yet, there should be a moral limit to any form of exploitation.

While it has been documented that the hierarchy of ZCC, including the Bishop, his family and his close associates, live a luxurious life, capital production as moral duty and a sign of social acceptability in the ZCC is spread across the board. The ethics of salvation/liberation applies to all ZCC members without exception. To be a ZCC member is to believe that Jesus Christ is Lord and Saviour and that the Bishop is the representative of the church guided by the Holy Spirit from God, from Jesus Christ through the mediation of ancestors.[21] From this belief follows moral obligation and strict obedience to the polity of the church. Both the elites and the grassroots ascribe to church moral obligation and are in need to social integration.

Apart from individual members engaging in capital production, the ZCC itself as an entity recently embarked on a joint adventure with a major phone distributor/network, Vodacom, and two premier major soccer teams, the Orlando Pirates and the Kaizer Chiefs. ZCC joined assets with all these businesses to form a phone distribution company known by the acronym of ZOK (ZCC, Orlando Pirates and Kaizer Chiefs). Alluding to this joint adventure, Rev Emmanuel Motolla, a ZCC church leader, declared,

> The ZOK initiative has the blessing and full support of His Grace Right Reverend Bishop Dr. Barnabas Lekganyane. The Bishop holds a firm belief that unless the majority of the working class people in our country are provided with opportunities to participate in the economy, our country's past will not be properly healed.[22]

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[21]Boatamo Yvonne Mosupyoe, *How Women in the Zion Christian Church of South Africa Mediate Patriarchy and Non-Sexism in their Social Development*, PhD Thesis, (Berkeley: University of Califoria, 1999), 33.

[22] Vodafone, January 31, 2005.

Rev Motolla went on to say that what the Bishop meant was to emphasize that one of the main objectives of ZOK was to assist in the creation of new jobs.[23] In the ZCC theology, the ZCC has the moral obligation to assist those in need including finding ways to create jobs for them. As I have previously argued, this attitude is part of the ZCC *modus operandi* as saved people.

Thus, the pursuit of capital production among ZCC is a contrary opinion to those scholars such as Jim Kiernan and Matthias Mohr, who have argued that Zionist members tend to treat economic success with skepticism.[24] Likewise, it is also a counter argument to what scholars such as Garner have advocated that there is a form of false consciousness or a passive response to the ineluctable spread of capitalist structures among Zionists.[25] Capital production in ZCC as well challenges the notion that ZCC members are locked in an economy of subsistence or survival.[26]

While the participation of ZCC in capital production entails competition, profit and consumption - utility maximization - ZCC members are called to supersede self-interest to the interest of the community. The interest of the community challenges the neo-classical assertion of self-interest being the determining moral value of the market, if indeed it considers it as value in this sense.[27] According to this line of reasoning, all human economic transactions are geared toward the self first. Neo-classicists believe that people act as utility maximizers for the sole purpose of meeting one's personal

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[23] Ibid.

[24] Kiernan, "The Production and Management of Therapeutic Power", 42.

[25] Robert Garner, "African Independent Churches", 85

[26] Matthias Mohr, *Negotiating the Boundary: The Response of Kwa Mashu Zionists to a Volatile Political Climate* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1997), 47.

[27] Donald Frey, The Good Samaritan and Bad Economist: Self Interest in Economics and Theology, 293, in *Cross Currents, The Journal of the Association for Religion and Intellectual Life* (Fall, 1996), 293.

satisfaction. Neo-classic proponents see altruism as an anomaly that needs to be overcome because it leaves the self worse off.[28] Neoclassicist assertions have always been questioned. Some scholars find in it a threat to the greater good and recommend it to be abandoned. Economists, such as Philip Wogaman, while giving credit to the individual's value of capitalism, point to what he called "faulty understanding of human nature", that it conceals.[29]. Other scholars such as Adam Heschel recommended that one transcends self-interest for the sake of the Holy. Self-interest leads humanity fundamentally astray mused Herschel.[30] Theologically, self-interest is considered the central feature of fallen human nature, therefore potentially disruptive of human community.[31]

Armed with the notion of salvation as social acceptability, a saved person in ZCC must supersede self-interest to the interest of the community. ZCC members are of the belief that a saved person pursues God's calling by keeping the betterment of his/her social environment within the community at large in mind. At no cost does self-realization serve as an individualistic egomania, argued Kiernan. It is always tethered to community goals.[32] According to Kiernan, self-realization is an engine room that generates the small surpluses that become community parcels to be distributed as largesse on occasions of individual crisis.[33] In a time of need, a member relies on the community

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[28] Ibid., 296.

[29] Philip Wogaman, *Economics and Ethics: A Christian Inquiry* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 20.

[30] Abraham J. Heschel, *God in Search of Man: A Philosophy of Judaism* (New Harper: Harper and Row, 1966), 34-35.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Jim Kiernan, "African Independent Churches and Modernity" in *Engaging Modernity: Methods and Cases for Studying African Independent Churches in South Africa*, ed. Dawid Winter (Westport: Praeger, 2004), 54.

[33] Ibid.

to rally to the relief of her/his problem and to pool whatever resources are available, spiritual and material, to ease his/her burden.[34] The presence of numerous social associations in their midst is a testimony of this belief.

Apart from the rejection of self-interest, the ZCC's pursuit of capital production is not in the image of 'health and wealth' prosperity theology. Prosperity theology argues that God rewards faithful Christians with good health, financial success and material wealth. For the prosperity theology, God wants believers to prosper not only spiritually, but in marital life, child upbringing, profession, business and every area of life, all of this because of Christ's victory over sin and all forms of human misery.[35] Prosperity theology also argues that God's blessings are based on the principles or laws of 'sowing and reaping', that is, blessing comes through blessing. Moreover, prosperity theology argues that in order to be blessed, one needs only to have the so-called "positive confession".[36]

ZCC soteriology does not exclude the belief that God is the source of temporal needs including wealth, health, employment, secure family life, and personal fulfillment. But ZCC refutes the notion that positive confession, tithes and offerings are a prerequisite for God to intervene and make one to prosper. In fact, ZCC soteriology apparatus challenges the whole notion of what it means to prosper. Prosperity, in the view of the ZCC, is understood as trusting God's salvific power in order that evil barriers of poverty, sickness, entrenchment are overcome and that one can better his/her life. This understanding rejects the prosperity theology rationale of giving as a means of blessing. ZCC adherents give for community build up. Giving is a moral obligation for anyone

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[34] Ibid.

[35] Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics, Current Development within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana* (London: Brill, 2005), 223.

[36] Ibid., 211.

who wants to belong to the fellowship of believers. Giving is social acceptability, and a person who does not give willingly or who does not engage in any effort of capital production in order to share is subject to exclusion.

Coincidently this African traditional belief transpires in most of the AICs across the continent. Among Kimbanguists, the second largest AIC in Africa, Buakasa Tulu observed that the moral obligation to give is a belonging mechanism that one strives for the concern of the community and to prove that she/he is not the enemy. Buakasa wrote,

> The moral obligation to give is synonymous with living itself and its opposite is, clearly, in the refusal to give. Those who refuse to give are not merely socially ostracized and placed beyond protection; they are also real enemies of society for they expose it to the danger of death. If refusal to give is refusal for identity with others (since giving implies relations with others) then by the same token it is a kind of killing, since living is essentially "being with" others.[37]

In the African anthropology, giving or sharing represents the human being as essentially an order within an order - an order which is a relation of being and living in the world, implying a life received, shared and fully entered into.[38] Moreover, Africans are of the belief that each person must work and come to the aid of his or her community including parents, family members, people of the village, friends, and acquaintances whenever a problem arises. Production, in this sense, becomes a means of social security, mutual aid and a channel of social communication as well as a way to maintain peace and harmony in the community and prevent hostilities.

ZCC "syncretizes" and "purifies" this African traditional belief of sharing and makes it a fabric of its soteriological predicament. In this sense, for a saved person,

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[37] Buakasa Tulu Kia Mpansu, "The African Tradition of Sharing" in *Ecumenical Review*, Vol. 38, no. 1 (1986), 387.

[38] Ibid.

capital production becomes the means of sharing for the interest of the community. This *modus operandi* explains why the ZCC, with millions of poor and uneducated people, can afford, for example, to build a vast compound at their pilgrimage site in Moria, without any foreign assistance in comparison to their mission churches' counterparts. A ZCC member knows that no one can share without possessions and that sharing is a moral obligation that keeps the community at peace.

Creation of Trust and Cooperation

The premise in this economic variable is that religion can be instrumental for fostering the moral value of trust among people of shared faith and spiritual experiences.[39] In effect, trust is paramount to human relationship and market behavior. Without it, no market economy can properly function and the very existence of social and economic institutions is threatened. Moreover, lack of trust hinders the free circulation of capital. In this context, religion serves as the catalyst in the formation of social institutions based on trust and allows capital to freely circulate. Thus, the ZCC with its soteriological apparatus fosters a bond of trust among its adherents resulting in the creation of social and economic institutions that include but are not limited to mutual and funeral funds, small businesses, savings clubs and a network of job training.

ZCC constructs these networks of trust from the broader framework of the syncretic soteriology predicament of the African traditional notion of *uBuntu. uBuntu* connotes the notion that one is because one belongs. By "syncretizing" and "purifying" *uBuntu,* ZCC generates a new narrative and meaning where respect for the rules of the church is a dimension of salvation and that any attempt to violate these rules is an attempt to upset the harmony of the community and is therefore punishable by exclusion from the community. In this sense, *uBuntu* becomes the bond from which trust stems. It is under

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[39] Garner, "African Independent Churches", 94.

these bonds of trust and cooperative behavior that ZCC has built up a network of social and economic associations. One of these economic associations is the "*Lessedi Fund."*

The Lessedi Fund

Lessedi Fund is a mutual fund that aims to provide micro-loans to those members of the church who, based on their skills, qualify to start a small business. I had the following conversation with a ZCC local businessman regarding the fund.

Figure 11 Brother Moses, ZCC Businessman

Source: Willy Mafuta, 2007, Pretoria

Question: Brother Moses, please tell me how does the Lessedi Fund work in ZCC?

Response: The Lessedi fund was founded by our bishop in 1986. The main objective is to empower members of the ZCC, particularly the self-employed and the business people. We gathered every Wednesday at our regional branches and on the seventh week we gather regionally and on the eight week we gather at Moria as a chamber of all regions of the ZCC. We go there for the purpose of empowering ourselves. Getting some lectures and some guidance. There are speakers from various regions. We get a lot of inputs from these people. In short, the *Lessedi* fund is to empower us in the areas of skills development within the area of developing businesses and all that.

Question: What does the word Lessedi mean?

Response: *Lessedi* in literal terms means brightness but the fund is called Lessedi,

Question: Do you contribute toward the fund?

Response:

Yes we do contribute towards the fund. Men contribute R10.00 a month. Women contribute R5.00 a month. Then we put them together through the coffers of the Church whereby it goes to our head office whereby decisions are made over it and all and to see how the money has been dispatched and allocated to the various structures of the church but the main purpose is to empower .

Question:

Suppose you have someone who wants to start a business. What is the process does she/ he have to go through? Does she/he have to apply for the funds? How does it work?

Response:

The person applies for funds through the necessary structures. Let me say, if you stay in Atteridgeville, for example, it means that you've got to approach the Atteridgeville church, then they will forward your application to the regional office and the regional office will forward it to the headquarters.

Question: Can an outsider apply for this fund or is it restricted to members of ZCC?

Response:

No, it should be a member of the church. The person has to show some capacity of management and other skills required to run a business.

Kganya Group

Another social and economic network that ZCC put in place is the Burial Society. The Church owns an insurance company called *Kganya* which means star, the ZCC symbol. *Kganya* group, as it is called, offers financial insurance as well as organizational support to families of ZCC members by paying a lump sum to the beneficiary at the time of accident or death of any contributing member. The idea for the *Kganya* group came in 1989 when problems of disbursement started to emerge among local ZCC Burial Societies. When ZCC members left one local chapter and settled in a different region, they lost any money they had accumulated in the old chapter and had to begin paying premiums to the new local from a balance of zero. Wanting to homogenize the system to all ZCC churches, *Kganya* was born. With a premium of R23.00 a month, every ZCC member contributes to the insurance at a local level and the fund is deposited at the *Kganya* head office. The premium is collected by a committee set by each local church. In most cases it includes the minister of the church as well.

In addition to collecting premiums, the committee also helps members submit claims by filling out forms and sometimes transporting the forms to *Kganya*'s head office. The committee also mediates conflicts among family members who are disputing the beneficiary of the claim. To track the contribution of its members, *Kganya,* in partnership with First National Bank, issues Card Account. For those members who are unable to contribute to the insurance fund or those whose policy lapses due to a prolonged hospitalization are eligible for the ZCC Discretionary Fund. This fund, in most cases, covers the cost of the funeral.

Manyano

Manyano are associations of women who serve as a mutual fund or a co-operative lending society. These groups permeate the ZCC hierarchical and gender structure. In Manyano, women find a voice and become active participants in a micro-economic development. They share information regarding job openings and they pool their money together allowing each member a share on a rotating system. *Manyano* uses the economic principle of groups known as *stokvels.* The word *stokvel* is believed to be a distortion of the word "stock-fair". English settlers used this word to define their rotating cattle auctions in the Eastern Cape in the early 19th century. It is argued that at these auctions, group of African farmers probably pooled their financial resources together to give each other opportunities to buy good cattle.[40] Grounded on this concept, *stokvels* would develop and become small-scale saving clubs or credit unions through which women made financial resources available for projects they could otherwise not afford. Members enter into an agreement to pay a fixed sum of money into a common pool on a weekly or monthly basis. The amount collected is then given to members on a rotating basis. *Manyano* groups use this rotating principle as a micro-economic tool to better their lives and those of their immediate families. *Manyano* also serves as a grass root fundraising network where money collected helps the Church be financially solvent, independent and innovative in initiating community projects such as building construction. Women in ZCC find in these tools a mechanism of survival and a place where they are taking control of their lives.

Lifestyle and Worldview

The assumption in this variable is that religion enforces personal moral values that have direct economic benefits for the individual and that contributes to aggregate

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[40] Beverly Haddad, "Theologizing Development", *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, Vol. 110 (July 2001), 14.

growth.[41] From this stand point, ZCC members are well known for their peculiar lifestyle and religious practices that rather than hindering capital growth actually favor it.

Lifestyle

A well-known life style among ZCC is their moral code. In effect, ZCC requires a strict moral code from its members, thus making the society at large recognize them as hardworking, disciplined, obedient, sober, and fiscally responsible and law abiding. All of these traits account for capital production. ZCC constructs these moral traits by "syncretizing" and "purifiying" both the notion of *uBuntu* (humanness), such was in the case of the bond of moral obligation argued previously, and the meaning of healing ritual.

uBuntu connotes the notion that one is because one belongs. By "syncretizing" and "purifying" *uBuntu*, ZCC generates a new narrative where a strict moral code becomes a dimension of salvation and that any attempt to live otherwise is simply a violation against church polity and its theological belief. Because of this new narrative, ZCC members live by a strict moral code in and outside the boundary of the ZCC community. This moral ethic has distinguished them from the rest of the population and has made them become an army of potential employees who, once hired, turn to be utility maximizers.

To live out to this "calling," ZCC members wear a silver-star badge, known as the "Star of Lekganyane", attached to a strip of black cloth on their clothing as an intrinsic identity to the world. The very notion of a badge, agued Comaroff, is associated with a particularly Western form of identity marking: It is the product of a proliferated set of achievable "roles" and "statuses," which may "be pinned" on to the person through a composite of external signs rather than as intrinsic capacities of his or her being.[42] By

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[41] Garner, "African Independent Churches and Economic Development in Edendale", 83.

[42] Comaroff, *Body of Power*, 242.

wearing the “Star of Lekganyane”, ZCC reconstructs the Western world in its own image by re-interpreting the meaning of a star in its ethno-cultural context. In this sense, the star represents in a very tangible way Lekganyane’s power. The star also serves as a reminder of ZCC adherents as set apart members in a disarticulated world.

Not only do they wear the “Star of Lekganyane” but men wear also khaki jackets and trousers, and white boots and women wear a daffodil-yellow tunic and bottle green skirt and head scarf. The wives of office bearers wear bright blue tunics. These uniforms

Figure 12 ZCC Women in Blue Uniform

Source; Freddy Mafuta, 2009, Johannesburg

represent the re-appropriation and re-creation of cultural religious symbols in the peculiar image of ZCC. Thus, the men’s khaki uniform recalls both the dress of British Imperial troops and the uniform of modern South African civil servants representing a warrior and a servant. ZCC re-appropriates this symbolic system in its own image where adherents are seen as warriors as well as servants of the bishop. The white boots represent

the symbolic control, power over evils of everyday life.[43] In fact, these boots are used in a stamping ritual known as "praising with the feet" (go bina ka dinao) where evil is stamped underfoot.[44] The entire outfit including the khaki uniform and the white boots account for a particularization character of the ZCC as a religious and social institution where its members distinguish themselves in their ethic and religious apparel.

One of the ZCC members, when asked why companies prefer them, he declared, "the companies trust us because there is so much trouble caused by drinking and stealing, and those things don't happen in our church."[45] This rationale points to a neo-Weberian stand where religion enforces personal moral traits resulting in what has come to be known as "the spirit of capitalism." The impact of a moral work force in South Africa is huge. Forty-seven percent of all Black South Africans are affiliated with African Initiated Churches and one in every eleven South Africans is a member of ZCC. This means millions of ZCC members contribute directly or indirectly to the South African economic and capital production. Not only do they bring the necessary labour required for the economy to flow but they bring a distinct work ethic needed for capital to grow.

Apart from being particularized in their ethos, ZCC members are known for their attendance at church activities. ZCC members flock overwhelmingly to their meetings either during week days or over the weekend. They spend several hours in community fellowship, singing, and dancing. This inclination toward church attendance has made some economists wonder whether it does not cause resources to drift away from areas where they could have been used in a different manner. Harvard Scholars Barro and McCleary have argued along this line of reasoning. In their cross country empirical

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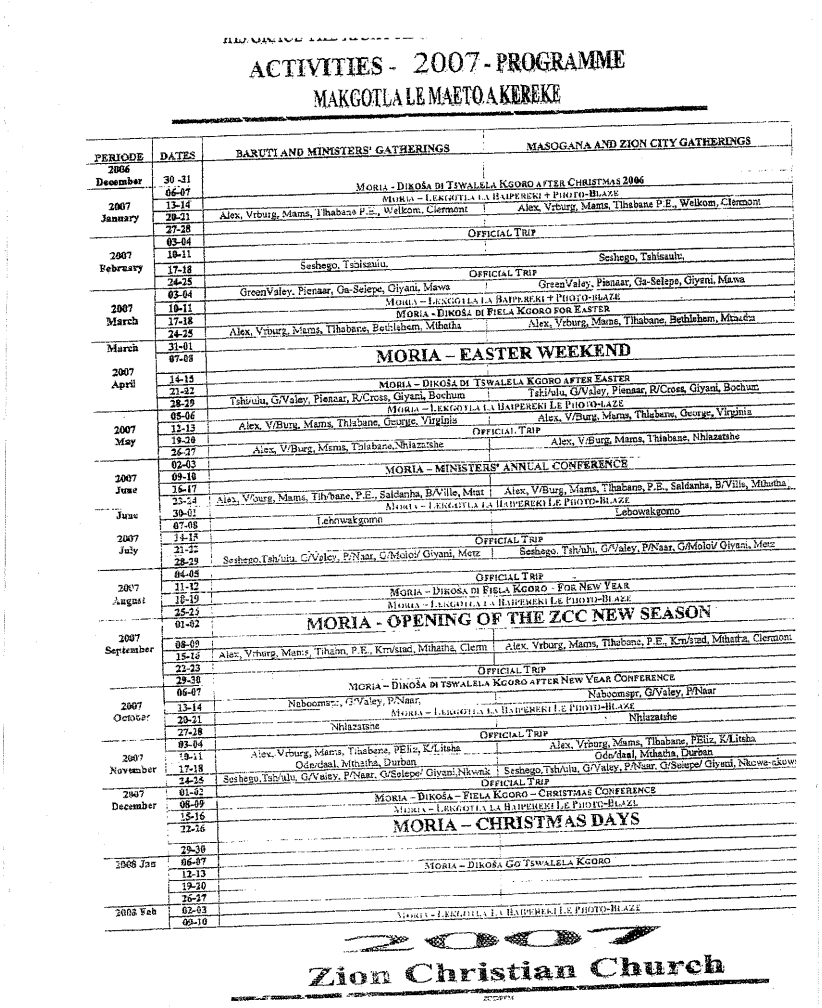
[43] Comaroff, *Body of Power*, 245.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Bill Keller, "A Surprising Silent Majority in South Africa," The New York Times, April 17, 1994, 5.



ACTIVITIES - 2007 - PROGRAMME

MAKGOTLA LE MAETO A KEREKE

PERIODE	DATES	BARUTI AND MINISTERS' GATHERINGS	MASOGANA AND ZION CITY GATHERINGS
2006 December	30 -31		
	06-07	MORIA - DIKOŠA DI TSWALELA KGORO AFTER CHRISTMAS 2006	
2007 January	13-14	MORIA – LEKGOTLA LA BAIPEREKI + PHOTO-BLAZE	
	20-21	Alex, Vrburg, Mams, Tlhabane P.E., Welkom, Clermont	Alex, Vrburg, Mams, Tlhabane P.E., Welkom, Clermont
	27-28	OFFICIAL TRIP	
2007 February	03-04		
	10-11		Seshego, Tshisaulu,
	17-18	Seshego, Tshisaulu,	OFFICIAL TRIP
	24-25		GreenValley, Pienaar, Ga-Selepe, Giyani, Mawa
	03-04	GreenValley, Pienaar, Ga-Selepe, Giyani, Mawa	
2007 March	10-11	MORIA – LEKGOTLA LA BAIPEREKI + PHOTO-BLAZE	
	17-18	MORIA - DIKOŠA DI FIELA KGORO FOR EASTER	
	24-25	Alex, Vrburg, Mams, Tlhabane, Bethlehem, Mthatha	Alex, Vrburg, Mams, Tlhabane, Bethlehem, Mthatha
March	31-01		
2007 April	07-08	MORIA – EASTER WEEKEND	
	14-15		
	21-22	MORIA – DIKOŠA DI TSWALELA KGORO AFTER EASTER	
	28-29	Tshilulu, G/Valey, Pienaar, R/Cross, Giyani, Bochum	Tshilulu, G/Valey, Pienaar, R/Cross, Giyani, Bochum
	05-06	MORIA – LEKGOTLA LA BAIPEREKI LE PHOTO-BLAZE	
2007 May	12-13	Alex, V/Burg, Mams, Tlhabane, George, Virginia	Alex, V/Burg, Mams, Tlhabane, George, Virginia
	19-20	OFFICIAL TRIP	
	26-27	Alex, V/Burg, Mams, Tlhabane,Nhlazatshe	Alex, V/Burg, Mams, Tlhabane, Nhlazatshe
	02-03		
2007 June	09-10	MORIA – MINISTERS' ANNUAL CONFERENCE	
	16-17		Alex, V/Burg, Mams, Tlhabane, P.E., Saldanha, B/Ville, Mthatha,
	23-24	Alex, V/burg, Mams, Tlh/bane, P.E., Saldanha, B/Ville, Mtat	MORIA – LEKGOTLA LA BAIPEREKI LE PHOTO-BLAZE
June	30-01	MORIA – LEKGOTLA LA BAIPEREKI LE PHOTO-BLAZE	Lebowakgomo
	07-08	Lebowakgomo	
2007 July	14-15		OFFICIAL TRIP
	21-22		Seshego, Tsh/ulu, G/Valey, P/Naar, G/Molo// Giyani, Metz
	28-29	Seshego,Tsh/ulu, G/Valey, P/Naar, G/Molo// Giyani, Metz	
	04-05		
2007 August	11-12	OFFICIAL TRIP	
	18-19	MORIA – DIKOŠA DI FIELA KGORO - FOR NEW YEAR	
	25-25	MORIA – LEKGOTLA LA BAIPEREKI LE PHOTO-BLAZE	
	01-02	MORIA - OPENING OF THE ZCC NEW SEASON	
2007 September	08-09		
	15-16	Alex, Vrburg, Mams, Tlhabn, P.E., Krvstad, Mthatha, Clerm	Alex, Vrburg, Mams, Tlhabane, P.E., Krvstad, Mthatha, Clermont
	22-23		OFFICIAL TRIP
	29-30		MORIA – DIKOŠA DI TSWALELA KGORO AFTER NEW YEAR CONFERENCE
	06-07		Naboomspr, G/Valey, P/Naar
2007 October	13-14	Naboomspr, G/Valey, P/Naar,	MORIA – LEKGOTLA LA BAIPEREKI LE PHOTO-BLAZE
	20-21	MORIA – LEKGOTLA LA BAIPEREKI LE PHOTO-BLAZE	Nhlazatshe
	27-28	Nhlazatshe	OFFICIAL TRIP
	03-04		Alex, Vrburg, Mams, Tlhabane, PEliz, K/Litsha
2007 November	10-11	Alex, Vrburg, Mams, Tlhabane, PEliz, K/Litsha	Gde/daal, Mthatha, Durban
	17-18	Gde/daal, Mthatha, Durban	Seshego,Tsh/ulu, G/Valey, P/Naar, G/Selepe/ Giyani,Nkowk
	24-25	Seshego,Tsh/ulu, G/Valey, P/Naar, G/Selepe/ Giyani,Nkowk	OFFICIAL TRIP
	01-02		MORIA – DIKOŠA – FIELA KGORO – CHRISTMAS CONFERENCE
2007 December	08-09		MORIA – LEKGOTLA LA BAIPEREKI LE PHOTO-BLAZE
	15-16		MORIA – CHRISTMAS DAYS
	22-16		
	29-30		
2008 Jan	06-07	MORIA – DIKOŠA GO TSWALELA KGORO	
	12-13		
	19-20		
	26-27		
	02-03		
2008 Feb	09-10	MORIA – LEKGOTLA LA BAIPEREKI LE PHOTO-BLAZE	

Zion Christian Church

Figure 13 ZCC Activities for Year of 2007

Source: Atteridgeville, Pretoria

studies of economic growth, they contended that a high level of church attendance deflates economic growth for the reason that "greater attendance signifies a larger use of resources by the religion sector - resources that could have been used toward commercial activities."[46]

The net effect, however, according to Barro and McCleary, is not that church attendance may depress economic growth but an increase in attendance leads to stronger

46 Barro and McCleary, "Religion and Economic Growth", 772.

beliefs which in turn affect economic performance.[47] The belief in the after-life, especially the belief in hell, in their view is more potent for economic growth than is the prospect of heaven. Moreover they consider church attendance a proxy for the influence of organized religion on laws and regulations that affect economic incentives.[48] In the final analysis, Barro and McCleary delineated a chain reaction whereby church attendance affects religious beliefs, which in turn affects individual traits and aggregate economic outcomes.[49] This analysis substantiates the premise that ZCC soteriological apparatus encourages its members' moral traits of honesty, diligence, thrift and openness to others. Subsequently, these traits affect capital production both on a micro and macro level of the South African economy. Reinforcing the idea of church attendance and moral behavior, a ZCC member uttered,

> 'We sing and dance vigorously, which is good for health, We encourage our people to eat well—more vegetable, roughage and dairy products, no pork. We don't smoke. We don't drink. So naturally they get healthy. We encourage thrift, hard work and devotion to family. So naturally they get richer. We keep our members very busy, especially on the weekend, so they have very little time for mischievous things."[50]

For this ZCC member, to attend church activities keeps them out of trouble and forges their utility maximizer capacity.

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[47] Ibid.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Bill Keller, "A Surprising Silent Majority in South Africa", 5.

Worldviews

Among ZCC worldviews is the belief in healing rituals. The ZCC consciousness embodies the belief that spirits navigate between this world and the other-world. In this sense, the present world is the battle-ground between good and evil. Social reality, for example, in this world, is defined in the form of witches, evil spirits and other mystical agents that prey on individuals. Diseases are not biological immune deficiencies but acts of evil powers that wander in the cosmos. Any anomie of human existence, including poverty, racial injustice, entrenchment, promiscuity and alcoholism, is seen as works of evil spirits enticing human beings.

Therefore, to keep this social reality at bay, a superior power needs to confront it. This power is found in healing rituals. Healing rituals are, as Ngubane put it, responses to "pollution" which is viewed as a socio-cultural force that increases susceptibility to illness, and creates misfortune and poor luck.[51] In healing rituals, super agents such as the bishop, prophets and, in some circumstances church members control the world of chaos and evil forces.

There have been debates, however, as to whether healing rituals impede or favor socio-economic development. AICs scholars such as Oosthuizen and Turner agreed that healing rituals are a positive contributing factor in the build up of socio-economic enhancement. Oosthuizen contended that AICs facilitate the establishment of civil society institutions to aid small business operators, with the provision of premises and equipment. Furthermore, he believed that AICs promote small businesses, acting as institutional clients of the small business, and providing omnipresent support in the forms of prayers and healing.[52]

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[51] Harriet Ngubane, *Body and Mind in Zulu Medicine, An Ethnography of Health and Disease Nyuswa-Zulu Thought and Practice* (London: Academic Press, 1977), 78.

[52]Oosthuizen, *African Independent Churches and Small Businesses. Spiritual Support for Secular empowerment, NERMIC Report*, 31.

According to Oosthuizen, the positive impact of AICs lies in the fellowship, mutual discussion of problems, and healing procedures which give their adherents the spiritual and physical refreshment and empowerment.[53] AICs act as a broker to overcome and negotiate the dualisms generated by the juxtapositions of modern industrial and post-industrial society with the known world of traditional society, mused Oosthuizen.[54] Oosthuizen's view is held across the ZCC main stream. ZCC's healing rituals negotiate the visible and invisible powers. In healing rituals, members come to terms with what is out of order; the community bonds, resolves conflict and improves health and the quality of life.[55] One example of this is found in the following narrative of a rural area man named Kolobe who moved to town and was introduced to ZCC:

> When Kolobe arrived four years ago in Alexandra, the densely populated black township adjoining Johannesburg, he was 33. The township was a confusion of tribal ways and city manners, impersonal and often violent. He found pickup work on a construction crew and rented a shack in the congested, reeking slum that sprawls like a precinct of Calcutta along the Juskei River. Before long, he was convulsed by some kind of food poisoning. An acquaintance took him to the Zion Christian Church, where the congregants prayed over him and splashed with blessed water. It reminded him of the witch doctors he used to visit back home. He felt better. More important, for the first time since he arrived in the township, he felt like he belonged.[56]

The sprinkling of 'blessed water' is one of the well known healing methods among ZCC members. Water, which is usually prayed over by a prophet and in some

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[53]Oosthuizen, "Indigenous Christianity and the Future," in *Religion and social transformation in Southern Africa*, 163.

[54]DeGruchy and Germond, *Review of the Literature on the Social Contribution of African Initiated Churches (AICs) in South Africa*, 29.

[55] Linda E. Thomas, "African Indigenous Churches as a Source of Socio-Political Transformation in South Africa", *Africa Today*, Vol. 41 no. 1, (1st Qtr, 1994), 42.

[56] Keller, "A Surprising Silent Majority in South Africa", 5.

circumstances by a church member, is used as a healing potion in itself or in large quantities to induce vomiting. Vomiting is believed not only to remove physical sickness but spiritual defilement as well.[57] Moreover water as a symbol of cleansing and purification washes away evil forces, sickness and ritual pollution. It is not every kind of water that is considered to have a healing formula. It is usually what is called 'living water' or water that runs from the sea, oceans, or rivers or is rain from a thunderstorm. Once collected, the water is prayed over and is ready to be taken home and sprinkled. In some cases, this healing water is drunk or used for bathing.

The same blessed water is also used to welcome visitors and to protect them against misfortune and sorcerers. It is also used to obtain employment, ensure an abundant harvest and even for cooking. The water is also used as a 'gate test' where it is sprinkled at the church's gate as a way to detect evil spirits and ensure the spiritual purity of those entering the church for the service. Chidester saw in this water that is sprinkled at the gates a way for ZCC members to be purified from the contaminated world of townships before building up a reservoir of spiritual power.[58]

Water can also be sprinkled on cars, even being stored in the radiators, to protect against accidents. It can also be sprinkled on food, houses and schoolbooks. While in most cases water used has been prayed over by the prophet, in some circumstances church members are encouraged to pray for water themselves. The ZCC expands its practices of water to include praying for tea and coffee. The tea is called *tea ya bophelo* (tea of life). It is mostly used for healing purposes. During my visit in the ZCC compound in Atteridgeville, I was amazed to see group of 5 or 6 people sitting together and drinking tea.

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[57] Allan Anderson, *Zion and Pentecost*, 294.

[58] Chidester, *Religions of South Africa*, 139.

Other healing rituals are practiced such as cords worn on different parts of the body to procure healing and keep evil at distance. Cords are different colours and believed to be revealed by the ancestors to a prophet.[59] In this sense, when a sick person approaches the prophet, ancestors are capable of revealing the precise colour for the sick person to buy and wear. The sick person must bind the cords in places where she/he is in the most pain. There is a story of a woman who had been suffering from leg pain. She went to see the prophets who prayed for the water into which she plunged her feet and had cords fastened around her legs. It was reported that she was healed.[60]

Other forms of healing rituals are dancing and singing. In this regard, Comaroff depicted how these rituals are conducted. She wrote,

> Congregants gather at midday under a tree alongside the roofless church and, when sufficient have assembled, the "outside" of the portion of the service begins, men and women forming separate, adjacent circles in a spot where two patches have been worn bare in the scrub grass. The women commence by clapping and stamping, several wearing Tswana foot-rattles. The hymns are from the Z.C.C collection, *Songs of Zion.* A favorite for commencing the service is:
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | Sione Sione | Zion Zion |
> | Re kopa thata | We ask for power |
> | Re tlile-kwa-go wean | We have come to you |
> | Wena o botshabelo | You are our refuge! |
>
> The women begin to shuffle round in a circle and execute solo or paired maneuvers in the center. The short hymn is repeated in several harmonic variations; individual women might dance up to others, clap their hands before them and lead them from the circle to secluded consultation. This indicates that one has received a vision offering insight into the personal circumstances of the other.
>
> The male circle simultaneously shuffles and sways to a distinct hymn, its movement being in no way coordinated with that of the women. The pace and excitation of the male dancers continually increase, the regular thud of boots welding the contrasting images

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[59]Anderson, "The Lekganyanes and Prophecy in the Zion Christian Church", 306.

[60]Ibid.

> into a single whole. By the time the minister breaks into the refrain that is the rallying call of the "soldiers of Zion," the dancers have reached a close coordination, and the performance moves from a statement of problem to a display of collective physical resolve
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> | | |
> |---|---|
> | Tsogang batlhambani | Wake up soldiers |
> | Ntwa e simologile | The war has begun |
> | Morena ke Yo | Here is the Lord |
> | Loso ke lo | Here is the death |
> | Ke boifa fa ke le bona | I am afraid when I see it |
> | Badira boshula batataela basia cowards | The evil ones tremble with the |
> | Thata le kopanyo | Strengthen and unity! |
>
> The dancers move to form pairs and take turns in running into the center of the circle, bringing down their feet with a resounding thud in time to the music. The rest move on the spot, swaying, swinging their arms and lifting their feet in seeming parody of a military march. Individuals break this formation intermittently by moving back and forth and leaping into the air with staffs outstretched, then sinking to their haunches.[61]

Comaroff saw these healing rituals of dancing and singing as expression of protest and recreation, a protest against the structures of domination and a recreation or recharging to oppressive toil.[62] Moreover she saw in healing rituals a process of re-socialization - the reproduction of the collectivity as a product of individual rebirth.[63]

For their part, Adam and Moodley saw in healing rituals a sanctuary from abuse and a temporary refuge from outside hostility. This is to say that in rituals, ZCC members find a community of acceptance where they are resourced and re-energized to face the social reality of the present world. In this sense, healing rituals serve as the first line of attack to domesticate and subvert the structure of the world of evil spirits. Through words, objects and gestures, the ZCC channelizes diffuse power in such as way as to alter the state of bodies physical and social.[64] To respond to the pressure of spiritual powers

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[61] Comaroff, *Body of Power,* 245.

[62] Ibid., 248.

[63] Ibid., 228.

[64] Ibid., 198.

and meet temporal needs of its members, the ZCC navigates unambiguously between the two worlds. While on one hand the spiritual protects, purifies and serves as a remote control to keep at bay social deviations, temporal needs on the other hand are met through a motive energy drawing from a theological ethics of self-help and self-improvement for the interest of the community. With a salvific ethic and a message of temperance, hard work and thrift, the ZCC stimulates capital production among its adherents.

Another worldview that ZCC gives a new narrative is the belief in ancestral land. ZCC members have managed to desacralize their cosmos by revering nature without the individual being at the mercy of the environment but rather as free and responsible to it, reversing the general African belief of creating sacred spaces that, in some cases, preclude migration and exploitation for economic endeavour.[65] Salvation/liberation has led the ZCC members to desacralize their world and move from being tied to their ancestral land and its sacred powers and places to spread far and wide according to their choice and ambitions.[66] One is amazed to see how ZCC churches are flourishing all over South Africa. They are being erected everywhere and are not confined to sacred places given by tradition and determined by the spirits. According to Harold Turner, this contingency brings along openness and responsibility, which are important virtues in economic development.[67]

Required pilgrimages to Moria, the ZCC holy site, are another worldview that ZCC dearly embrace. These pilgrimages have become one of the sources of capital generated for economic development. ZCC members flock to Moria at least three times a year. These pilgrimages are in the image of the Old Testament biblical tradition where

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[65] Ibid.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.

people of God journey at regular intervals to their holy place to celebrate festival times.[68] These pilgrimages brought literally hundreds of thousands of people mostly dressed in the ZCC colours of khaki, gold and green. During these pilgrimages, ZCC members meet the bishop and obtain his blessings, especially through the sacrament of communion, and receive healing and deliverance.

Moria is not only the spiritual center of the Church but also its economic powerhouse. Those who attend these pilgrimages bring with them cash and spend it, purchasing blessed items and groceries to take home. The Church also collects freewill offerings. The money collected, amounting to millions of Rand, is invested in social and development programs that not only benefit church members but also surrounding communities. The economic success of these pilgrimages has led church and civil authorities to develop Moria into a local equivalent of the Vatican City in Rome or Mecca in Saudi Arabia.

The very notion of giving (*Koleka)* in ZCC carries a meaning of self-detachment for the interest of the community. In other words, giving/sharing becomes the vehicle through which the individual regains control over the self and contributes to the fund of power of the collectivity.[69] Moreover in *Koleka,* the dramatization of social bonds in the interweaving of individuals occurs. *Koleka* reinforces the transient climax of spiritual integration that is achieved by the healing process, with a consolidation of formerly dispersed substance. The diffusion of divine Spirit (water) of the body of Zion is replicated in the controlled circulation of money.[70]

Capital production in ZCC stems from the "syncretization" and "purification "of the African traditional notion of *uBuntu*. ZCC in its soteriological apparatus has managed

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[68]Anderson, "The Lekganyanes and Prophecy in the Zion Christian Church", 297.

[69] Comaroff, *Body of Power*, 236.

[70] Ibid.

to re-appropriate and purify the notion of *uBuntu* in its own image. In this sense, *uBuntu*, generates a new narrative and meaning where respect for the rules of the church is a dimension of salvation and that any attempt to violate these rules is an attempt to upset the harmony of the community and is therefore punishable by exclusion from the community.

CONCLUSION

Are AICs a template for capital production and development in sub-Sahara Africa? The ZCC soteriological predicament certainly makes an empirical case for it. By virtue of their understanding of salvation/liberation, ZCC's adherents not only adopt an ethos of hard work and discipline but also a moral ethic of sobriety, obedience and being law abiding. It is in the belief that they are saved/liberated from the evil powers that entice their social and spiritual environment that ZCC members engage in capital production as primarily a matter of sharing and maintaining the harmony of the community.

This salvation is not a passive adaptation but rather an active response resulting in transformation of manners that are embedded in the core of the African traditional belief of *uBuntu* where an individual is defined in a collective existential term, "I am because you are." ZCC soteriology broadens this religio-cultural belief by a process of "syncretization" and "purification," that is, it re-appropriates *uBuntu* from the African traditional culture and incorporates it into its soteriological apparatus as authentic and pure. In this sense, the respect for the church polity, doctrine and traditions becomes a dimension of salvation and any attempt to violate these rules is an attempt to upset the harmony of the community and therefore punishable by exclusion from the community.

uBuntu also challenges the very notion of self-interest in the pursuit of capital production. Rather than engaging in self-accumulation, profit and consumption, ZCC members supersede the self for the community's enhancement. In this sense, producing and sharing become a moral obligation that each member has to fulfill. Failure to pursue this commitment minimizes one's salvation and threatens the very essence of the community.

Apart from *uBuntu*, ZCC also re-interprets the religio-cultural practice of healing rituals, mainly as a protective mechanism against the odds of the visible and invisible

world and against evil powers that attempt to disrupt societal stability. Healing rituals are incorporated in the Christian soteriological notion of *Christus Victor* and are given a new meaning of victory over sin, social disorder, sickness, unemployment and many others social and spiritual disturbances, thus becoming a protective measure. ZCC broadens the notion of *Christus Victor* to include freedom from the enticement of evil powers that disrupt social realities. It is then through ritual healing that this freedom is obtained.

As I discussed in Chapter Five, there are several rituals practiced in the ZCC. One of them is the well-known ritual of the sprinkling of water. In this ritual, ZCC members find freedom and comfort that they are protected. This gives them the motivation to take on the evil of social chaos and engage in capital production.

From the belief of *uBuntu* and the practice of ritual healings stem a work ethic and moral values that have made ZCC adherents into an army of preferred employees in South Africa. The same belief and practice have also given room to a network of social and economic associations that have been a great catalyst of empowerment both spiritually and economically. Because they are empowered, ZCC members invest the fruit of their labour into the church, in particular, and into the South African society in general.

Because of its socio-political context, the notion of empowerment in ZCC is important. It is in fact at the core of its theological and socio-economic apparatus. As argued in Chapter Three, ZCC emerged in the 1930s and attained its growth during the apartheid era. The apartheid regime created structures that disadvantaged Black South Africans and invented unjust laws to control the influx of Blacks to cities and relegate those already in cities to townships. Among these laws are the 1950 Group Areas Act and the 1954 Resettlement Act. These laws created overpopulated townships with little or non-adequate housing. Migrant workers, for example, were forced to stay in hostels without running water or electricity. These poor social conditions of Blacks turned

townships to infested places where crimes thrived. In fact, these townships were, to borrow a term from Chidester, an arena of evil forces.[1]

It was under these desperate economic, political and spiritual circumstances that ZCC became a catalyst of empowerment. Its "syncretized" and "purified" soteriology motivates its members to feel spiritually secure enough to engage in capital production and through healing rituals defuse evil powers that wage war against human beings. Unemployment is seen as both a spiritual pollution and an economic factor. As such it needs to be overcome both ritually as well as by engaging in the labour market. ZCC promotes job creation among its members and has in place networks of job training and referral.

ZCC's involvement in temporal affairs brings a sense of competence, achievement, mutual support and self-improvement and provides as well a sense of belonging, dignity and stability.[2] This involvement and its positive impact on its members have been seen by many social scientists and theologians as a new resurgence of the relationship between religious values and capital production. This resurgence is bringing a new twist towards work and consumption and results in the transformation of manners. My thesis is constructed along this line of reasoning. It has argued that the poor of the Global South through a message of salvation/liberation are empowered both spiritually and economically. This empowerment is challenging the status quo of mission churches and the way capital production and development have been undertaken in this part of the world.

In recent scholarship, this line of reasoning has been argued by scholars such as JNJ Kritzinger, Christoff Pauw, Oosthuizen, Garderner and Buakasa. Kritzinger, for

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[1] Chidester, *Religions of South Africa*, 139

[2] DeWet "Social Change, Resistance and Worldview of a Community in the Transkei" in *Afro-Christianity at the Grassroots*, G.C Oosthuizen (Leyden: E.J Brill, 1994), 160.

example, in his studies on the impact of financial networks known as *stokvels*, a micro-finance investment strategy that helps raise funds, has delineated how ZCC has used this network to the point of becoming financially independent and innovative in initiating community projects. This success among ZCC has led Kritzinger to recommend that mission-initiated churches adopt a "more indigenous form of fundraising to become financially self-supporting and more culturally recognizable and relevant to their surrounding communities.[3] Adopting this *modus operandi*, argued Kritzinger, reinforces the assertion that in desperate economic and political circumstances, religio-cultural values and patterns of behavior inform and sustain human communities.[4]

Others scholars such as Pauw have argued on the positive impact of AICs in general and Zionist types including ZCC in particular. Pauw argued that Zionist-type churches have become powerhouses that provide strategy for communities to develop and maintain identity in changing socio-economic contexts and to cope in new and practical ways with the economic vicissitudes of modernized living.[5] These churches also create a new commonality and help their adherents to develop a new integrated worldview to replace the disintegrating traditional worldview.[6]

Similar to Kritzinger, Pauw also recommended that mission churches reconsider their methods and theories and as he put it, "learn from their brothers and sisters in the independent churches to theologize anew from below."[7] Pauw also dismissed what he

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[3]JNJ Kritzinger, "African Cultural Resources in the Struggle against Mammon: The Challenge of Stokvels to the Mission of the Church," *Mission Studies,* Vol.XIII-1&2, (1996): 109.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Christoff M. Pauw, "Traditional African Economies in Conflict with Western Capitalism," *Mission Studies,* vol. XIV (1997): 216.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Ibid.

called "sophistication and expertise of mainline churches in South Africa."[8] According to him, mainline churches have not succeeded in meeting the needs of their people and the communities within which they serve as effectively as many of the African Independent churches.[9]

Apart from ZCC, the trend of the positive impact of AICs in social and economic capital is observed as well in the largest AIC in sub-Sahara Africa, Kimbanguism, also known the Church of Jesus Christ on Earth by the Prophet Simon Kimbangu.

Kimbanguism, which is estimated to have over 4 million members across several countries including the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Congo, Gabon, the Republic of Central Africa and Zambia, is a powerhouse for capital production and economic development.

Through a set of religio-cultural values that include the notion of sharing, Kimbanguists build socio-economic networks that have allowed them to engage in capital production. Moreover, they have created communities with a vast range of possibilities for sharing, mutual aid, cooperation and security.[10] *Nnsinga mia nkalu* (calabash creepers) is the metaphor for this array of connection. *Nnsinga mia nkalu* entails the idea of calabash creepers being interwoven, tangled and interlaced. As they are connected, so are people in the community. This connection allows each member to be an active participant of the society and eventually shares the fruit of his/her labour. Armed with this religio-cultural belief, Kimbanguists have been able to build churches, residences, reception centers, welfare centers, roads, bridges, and plantations, thus becoming utility maximizers for capital production in their own right.

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[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Mpansu, "The African Tradition of Sharing"in *Ecumenical Review* 38 (1986), 386.

The success of AICs, including the ZCC and Kimbanguism, in social and economic capital has caught the attention of many European/American development agents who have traditionally used the Western neo-classic approaches to development in sub-Sahara Africa. Historically, sub-Sahara Africa has been a field of diverse development theories and initiatives. From theories such as modernization and dependency with their satellites classicism, neo-classicism, liberalism and neo-liberalism to initiatives such as United Nation Millennium Declaration, African Growth and Opportunity Act, New Partnership in Africa Development and the Blair Commission on Africa, sub-Sahara Africa has seen the landscape of her development discourse broadened yet with few results.

These theories and initiatives that are grounded in the image of the Western market-driven society follow an economic trend that maximizes the individual performance. In this sense, the individual thinks, eats and talks the language of production and competition in order to maximize personal profit and consumption. This economic trend is traced back to the so called "Chicago School of Thought" where it was believed that crafting the Western economic and development model in Africa was the *sine qua non* for her to join the club of the developed. But nearly half a century later, Africa is still at the bottom of the development ladder. In fact, according to the Human Development Index, the ten poorest countries of the world are all located in sub-Sahara Africa. [11] This status quo triggers new voices to start questioning the European/American putative normative status that surrounds the conceptualization and implementation of these theories and initiatives.

A closer look at their conceptualization, for example, suggests that fundamental aspects of African religion/culture have never been the prime concern. In fact, in the pursuit of their agenda, old theories and new initiatives have ignored the intrinsic values

[11] http://www.eoearth.org/article/Human_Development_Index

of African beliefs and traditions. This attitude has been justified on several assumptions. One of the longstanding assumptions is that traditional beliefs propagate a lethargic state of mind. Writings of people such as WW Rostow, Alex Inkeles, David Smith and many others continue to propagate this erroneous assumption. Another assumption has been based on racial superiority. It was believed in certain academic milieu that nothing good could come out of Africa.

Outstanding scholars of the eighteenth century who pioneered this idea including Hegel and David Hume did not hesitate to label African culture as lacking moral values, history, arts, and sciences. One would think that this belief has been buried, but unfortunately, it is still present and alive in some Western scholarship. Hegel's and Hume's school of thought is followed today. Those who subscribe to it view in African traditional beliefs a primitive, backward, and static character. This, eventually, has led some development theorists and agents to dismiss African religion/cultural beliefs in the equation of economic and development discourse.

In recent years, however, the landscape of the African development discourse has witnessed resurgence in the paradigms of development theories and initiatives. This resurgence takes into account culture/religion as a variable in capital production. It is in this context that this thesis has argued that the African people have a particular heritage of values, beliefs, practice, and culture. If these cultural values are not allowed to stand on their own right, and if they are ignored in the formation of capital production, more harm than good would continue to be done to African people. Rejecting the *tabula rasa* approach that many in the West have long adopted, this thesis has argued that for effective development to take place in Africa, one has to turn to the intrinsic values and socio-ethical character of the African traditional religio-cultural beliefs as they are "syncretized" and "purified" in African theological discourse.

As it is "syncretized" and "purified", ZCC soteriological apparatus prompts personal moral traits necessary in capital production. A saved/liberated person in ZCC

not only adopts an ethos of hard work and discipline but also a moral ethic of sobriety, obedience and being law abiding. By placing their faith in God and in believing that they are saved/liberated from the influences of evil powers that entice human beings, ZCC 's adherents not only adopt moral values compatible to capital production but carry as well the moral obligation to share and maintain the harmony of the community. Since no one can share without possessions, capital production, in this sense, becomes a moral duty.

Without a doubt, the upsurge of religious movements and independent churches in the Global South is bringing a new twist to world economic development not anticipated by many theologians and social scientists. With a syncretic and purified soteriology geared toward the liberation of the whole person, religious movements and independent churches of the south are preaching to their adherents, mostly the poor and the marginalized, a message of faith in an omnipotent and compassionate God who is concerned for their weal and woes and who offers them an assured and holistic salvation. By placing their faith in God, the poor and marginalized people are discovering their true selves and are saved/liberated.[12] This assured salvation (*certitudo salutis),* which is a total liberation of the physical and spiritual world, becomes, in turn, the motivational energy for social and economic capital.

The ZCC soteriological predicament stands at this juncture. ZCC has managed to deconstruct the European/North American and African Traditional Religions soteriologies to construct a "pure" soteriology that is relevant to the socio context of its adherents. ZCC deconstructs these soteriologies by broadening the classic Christian soteriogical theory of *Christus Victor* in her notion of sin, death and the devil and the African traditional soteriological notion of *uBuntu* and the practice of ritual healing. The "purity", or holistic salvation, generated out of these processes serves as grounds for identity and economic empowerment of its adherents. One can only be amazed at how

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[12]Allan Anderson, *Zion and Pentecost*, 275.

ZCC members are empowering themselves economically and subsequently contributing to the South African economy.

With a holistic salvation that centers on healing, personal integrity and spiritual power, ZCC members have been able to achieve considerable success in the labour market by becoming an army of potential employees. They have also distinguished themselves in their work ethic, where they are seen as hardworking, disciplined, obedient and sober. Empowering its adherents economically through a religious soteriology, the ZCC has become an example of a trend that is shaping the Global South and is reviving the interest of social scientists and theologians to further investigate the impact of religious and theological formulations on the economic conduct of individuals.

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