

WHITE AFRIKANER ZIONIST PIETER LOUIS LE ROUX (1865-1943)

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Abstract

B Sundkler, G Oosthuizen and others have written about P L le Roux, who was sent by Andrew Murray to serve as a DRC missionary among the Zulus in Wakkerstroom. In 1903 he left the DRC to join a church of dubious reputation which affirmed the believer's baptism and (divine) faith healing. He was hounded out of the church and mission house but continued to pastor some 400 Zulu members who left with him. He had a profound influence on African evangelists who became leaders of the Zionist movement in South Africa. This paper will investigate some of Le Roux's motivations for leaving the DRC and later directions that he took in the Apostolic Faith Mission. It raises questions regarding the prophetic witness of a person who has had a major influence on the direction of the Church in South Africa. Many of these deserve further research and study.

1 INTRODUCTION

We cannot do better than start with a glimpse of Le Roux's home life, written by his son from direct experience.

At home, services for the black people were held in one of the large rooms attached to the stable. Here we attended our first Sunday school with the black children ... At this time Dad was more or less permanently at home and the village records show that he served on the Village Council from 1909 to 1913, having served as a deputy-mayor for some time. It was during a Council meeting one evening that the village's curfew bell, which was rung at nine o'clock to give notice to the black people to be indoors, was rung at eight o'clock. Dad drew a fellow councillor's attention to this occurrence. The bell had been rung early to enable the police to arrest the natives who were holding a prayer meeting in our stable. When the men tried to leave the premises, they found the police waiting for them and they reported the matter to mother in the house. The curfew rule was that any native accompanied by a white person would not be arrested and Mother was, therefore, obliged to accompany these men to their places of employment and the native location outside the village to prevent their being

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arrested. This was, of course, a form of persecution to which we were constantly being subjected (Andrew le Roux: undated 14-15).

The above incident reveals something of the character and determination of Mrs Le Roux (called Janie in family circles), who was considered by some to have married beneath her. She was the daughter of a wealthy farmer and influential public figure, yet she had chosen to marry a young DRC missionary working among the Zulus. While the focus of this paper is on the life and influence of Pieter Louis le Roux, it should be taken for granted that he and his wife operated as a team and worked together all their lives. In the early years they were missionaries together in Wakkerstroom in the DRC, and then he was an elder and she an evangelist in the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church in Zion. Finally, although separated for long periods, they served in the AFM, he as President until the time of his death in 1943.

2 AIM, METHOD AND SOURCES

The aim of this article is to give a brief overview of the life of Pieter Louis le Roux during the early years of the twentieth century when the phenomenon of Pentecostalism arose in South Africa. The article will examine some questions relating to the part played by P L le Roux and his involvement in the origins of the Zionist movement.

Some research questions have been asked about Le Roux's success among the Zulus as a Dutch Reformed Church missionary in the town of Wakkerstroom.

- Why did he leave the DRC and associate himself with such a strange "sect", sometimes called *die wederdopers* (re-baptisers)?
- Why did he leave the Zulu church and spend most of his time with the AFM?

Other questions have been raised and should be examined in another paper – for example,

- Why did the AFM develop into a white-dominated church when it started out as a multiracial church?
- In what respects did P L le Roux exercise a prophetic witness in South Africa at the beginning of the twentieth century?

2.1 Sources and method

Some of the sources have been published material. This includes early records from authors like Sundkler (*Bantu prophets in South Africa*, first published in 1948 and subsequently revised in 1961). Others are articles written as recently as 2007 – one by Eugene Botha entitled *The New Reformation: The amazing (sic) rise of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement in the 20th century*. Allan Anderson, too, has written extensively on the origins of Pentecostalism in South Africa and the role played by Le Roux.

Secondly, this paper has drawn on unpublished family records and photographs kept in various places. It has also relied on some oral traditions passed down from one generation to the next.

3 LIMITATIONS OF THIS PAPER

It is a pity that this paper could not have been written fifty years ago or at any time in between, as there are now few people left who met or knew Le Roux. The author's mother – P L le Roux's last remaining daughter-in-law, the wife of his youngest son Martin – died in 2007 at the age of 91.

Isak Burger's book *Die geskiedenis van the Apostoliese Geloof Sending 1908-1958* is in Afrikaans and now out of print. This has limited the findings in many ways, as Burger was for many years President of the AFM and took a keen interest in recording the major events and also an analysis of the directions taken by the AFM.

It appears that in this country in the recent past there has been more interest in the charismatic movement than in classic Pentecostalism. African Pentecostalism and the Independent Churches are presently being widely researched and written about. As is often the case in history, not much has been recorded about the African evangelists who frequently did significant work but were not recognised by the historians of the time. Allan Anderson has tried to reverse this trend by giving recognition to these pioneer leaders.

Official archives at the AFM College in Johannesburg were not available for consultation: I was told that at present archival material relating to Le Roux was in cardboard boxes that are to be moved to a new location and could be consulted "in about six months' time". *Die Trooster/The Comforter*, the official magazine of the AFM, contains many articles written by Le Roux and these will hopefully be released once the move of the archives has taken place.

4 THE EARLY YEARS

Pieter Louis le Roux was an eighth-generation son of ancestor Gabriel le Roux who came to the Cape with his brother Jean as teenage Huguenot orphans who had escaped from persecution in France. They arrived at the Cape in 1688 and Gabriel acquired a farm near the present day town of Paarl. Pieter Louis was born on the farm Groenberg in the Wellington district in 1865. After completing his schooling under the well-known educationalist J Stucke he taught at his old school for six months and then registered at the University of Cape Town, where he was awarded a diploma for a degree called the Intermediate Bachelor of Arts. He married Aletta van der Merwe who, with her child, died in childbirth. Le Roux then entered the Huguenot Seminary in Wellington to be trained as a missionary and was there ordained by his mentor and minister, the Reverend Andrew Murray. He wanted to serve as a missionary in Nyasaland but was turned down by a doctor on account of a weak stomach. He was then sent to work among the Zulus in Natal. He spent

some time with Dr Dalziell of the Presbyterian Mission near Greytown, where he learnt the Zulu language. In 1893 Le Roux married Adriana Josina van Rooyen, daughter of a prominent farmer and member of the Natal Parliament. The Reverend Andrew Murray came all the way to Ladysmith from the Cape to commission Le Roux for the “laying on of hands”. One of Le Roux’s grandsons, Pierre Louis le Roux, has written a book (1996), *Geskiedenis van die voor-en nageslagte van Pieter Louis le Roux vanaf 1669 tot 1996*. In it he notes that the young missionaries did not receive much support from the local DRC Church but continued their work nonetheless. Le Roux (1996:41) writes that within a seven-year period there were 2000 Zulu members in the church established by Le Roux and his wife.

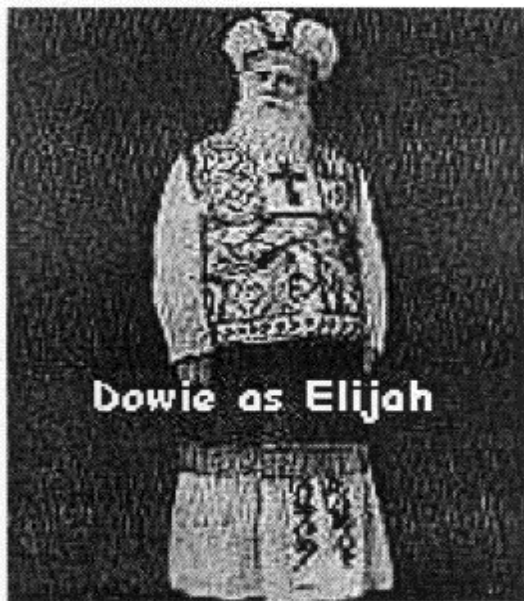
It should be noted that Le Roux’s theological position had been deeply affected by his long association with the Reverend Andrew Murray. Murray himself belonged to the pietistic evangelical wing of the DRC and was a frequent speaker at Keswick conferences. He was aware of revivals and great awakenings in America and England. He had also had the experience of observing prayer meetings in which there was extraordinary interest and participation by many people, especially young people. Mouton (1982:25) records that on one occasion in the Hex River Valley there was chaos in a prayer meeting with a great deal of crying, weeping and calling out to God. Murray felt uncomfortable and ordered the meeting to come to order. The people ignored him. He expressed his conviction that God was a God of order and that the cries, loud prayers and lack of discipline amounted to “disorder”.



The Le Roux crest linking Pieter Louis le Roux with his Huguenot ancestors

Mouton (1982:25) traces the history of revivals in the nineteenth century and their influence on the DRC in South Africa. The mainstream of the DRC took an opposing view and tried to prove that it was unscriptural to pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless Murray engaged in evangelistic meetings in various towns in the Cape. He observed that these meetings stimulated mission awareness and action. Sundkler (1976:17) notes that Murray had a weak throat and voice and had visited various centres of faith healing in Europe. Here he was healed and restored and as a result, in 1884, he wrote a book about divine healing entitled *Jesus the physician of the sick*. In addition, Le Roux came upon a booklet written by Murray in Dutch, called *Divine healing*. At about the same time he read the paper *Leaves of healing* which emanated from John Alexander Dowie's Christian Catholic Church in Zion City near Chicago.

Space does not permit any detailed discussion of Dowie, who reigned as "First Apostle" in his church. Dowie referred to himself as "Elijah the Restorer" and preached restoration truth. Sundkler writes that the main teaching of this church was divine healing, triune immersion and the conviction that the second coming of Christ was "near at hand". Oosthuizen (1987:8) refers to the "sad declining years of Dowie" and his disastrous New York Visitation which turned out a humiliating fiasco. It also crippled the church financially. What had actually gone wrong with Dowie is still a matter of speculation: he had, after all, started a church which was to have great influence in many parts of the world and especially among Blacks in Southern Africa.



Dowie in his robes as "Elijah the Restorer"

Le Roux also consulted a friend named Johannes Buchler (a missionary from Switzerland) who had established a Zion Church in Johannesburg. Sundkler notes (1976:19) that "they referred to themselves as 'Zion' for the same reasons as their friends at Wakkerstroom: they sang the lively *Zions Liedere*"

or Songs of Zion. This was a Dutch hymnbook with Moravian origins. Buchner visited Le Roux in Wakkerstroom in 1897 and they agreed that they were correct in their convictions about healing in their age. Oosthuizen (1987:35) refers to Le Roux's accusation that the churches had discarded the gospel of divine healing. He alleges that doctors fill up their patients with "all kinds of medical muck". He argues further that the Bible translation into Zulu distorts the meaning of scripture.

So far has this thing gone, that in the translation of the Bible into the Zulu tongue, influenced as it was by medical missionaries, the translators have not scrupled to change the expression "Gifts of Healing" to make it read "gifts of Treatment," suggesting to the Christian native that the practice of medicine is the gift of the Holy Spirit meant for the healing of disease (Oosthuizen 1987:35).

5 THE BREAK WITH THE DRC

In 1897 Le Roux wrote to Andrew Murray about Buchler and asked for advice about him, as he himself and his wife had decided not to use medicines any more. A major problem was that the local Missions Committee, made up of Boer farmers, totally opposed his teaching of this doctrine to the Zulus. Murray exercised his pastoral skills in writing to Le Roux, saying that "[h]eavenly wisdom was needed here." He asked Le Roux: "If you would promise to exercise the utmost care in this matter and not to make it a subject of public preaching, would not the (Wakkerstroom) Committee be satisfied?" (Sundkler 1976:21). Sundkler, in a footnote, quotes Le Roux's personal notes in response jotted down on the envelope from Murray, where he writes among other points: "My sin – I have been obeying men more than God." Le Roux also consulted five of his younger colleagues in the DRC in other parts of the country, asking their advice on this issue. In general it seems that they cautioned him not to upset the status quo. The local Missions Committee also pleaded with him not to cause a crisis by preaching this position to the Zulu people.

A crisis of another kind soon engulfed Le Roux and his family. His son Andrew in his family memoirs relates the incident, which is corroborated by Sundkler (1976:23). This involved their third child, Jossie, who contracted diphtheria when she was very small. The parents refused to call a doctor, but she appeared to be dying. The local doctor, Dr Brugman, threatened a charge of neglect if she were to die. It seemed hopeless, and the child was expected to die. Sundkler (1976:22) quotes Mrs Le Roux's account of what happened. "Charles Sangweni replied, "*Meneer*' (Mr Le Roux) is like Peter who looked at the waves and not at Lord Jesus. Come let us pray again." Sangweni sat there, praying day and night, and the little girl recovered. For the Le Roux couple this was a sign, and in October 1900 he submitted his resignation to the Missions Committee.



The Le Roux family in about 1921, with grown-up elder children

All these events naturally occurred within a social and historical context. The events described above took place in the middle of the Anglo Boer War. Le Roux acted as a chaplain to both British and Boer forces, crossing enemy lines on horseback to conduct funerals. President Kruger had left for Europe in the hope of finding support for the cause of the Transvaal Republic. The local Missions Committee insisted that Le Roux could not resign at that time but should at least wait until the war was over. Sundkler reviews some of the correspondence between them from that time and points out that, increasingly, Le Roux was adopting the positions of Dowie's church in Chicago with particular reference to healing, the use of tobacco and the rejection of infant baptism. Sundkler (1976:23) observes that in 1901 Le Roux wrote to the General Secretary of the DRC in Johannesburg that he would never again baptise a child. He also mentioned that the eating of flesh was against the Scriptures and therefore sinful. This is the only reference to not eating meat that has emerged in research; it has not been supported by any other source. After these statements he realised that he would be cutting ties with family and friends and that this would inevitably cause great pain to all concerned. He wrote, "I am in heart and soul Afrikaner and this makes it that much harder" (Sundkler 1976:24).

Finally, when the war was over, Le Roux resigned formally from the DRC (for the second time) in March 1903. The consequences of this step were severe and far-reaching. The family were evicted from the mission house and found that no one in the town would offer accommodation to the outcasts. Their possessions were removed and deposited on the street. Andrew le Roux comments that before nightfall an English person in the town (and an atheist at that) offered them a neglected house further up the street. Later a farmer let them use an abandoned ghost house, so called because a tramp had been found dead in the house; it was therefore considered to be haunted. Andrew le Roux (nd:9) writes:

Dad had no income at that stage and the family virtually lived on mealie meal porridge and pumpkin ... At first Mother would not send the children to the local school because of the persecution to which they would be subjected. Mother gave the children tuition at home, but in 1905 the eldest boys, Danie and Gert were sent to school.

In 1904 Daniel Bryant came to South Africa as a missionary on behalf of John Alexander Dowie and the Christian Apostolic Church, which he had founded and established in Zion near Chicago in 1896. Bryant arrived in Durban and was met by Le Roux. Shortly afterwards Bryant and his wife came to visit the new group, which had been established at Wakkerstroom. Sundkler quotes Bryant who, in the October 8 edition of *Leaves of healing*, wrote an account of this meeting and of the baptism of about 141 people. Sundkler (1976:38) continues,

This was the first baptism for Africans in South Africa. Their Jordan was the Snake River at Wakkerstroom. The immersion took place next to the bridge leading into the village. Le Roux and his wife stood there in the water to the waist, waiting their turn, and were then immersed three times, baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Crowds of Europeans and Africans watched from the bridge as Bryant, in his black gown, standing to his waist in water immersed the faithful.

Sundkler was mistaken in calling this the Snake River, which actually flows on the other side of the mountain. It is generally known as the Wakkerstroom, although the plaque erected to mark this bridge as a national monument calls it the Martinus Wessel Stream. The inscription reads:

OLD ROAD BRIDGE

The erection of this bridge was commissioned by the Government of the Zuid-Afrikaansch Republiek as a result of a petition by the inhabitants of the Wakkerstroom District. It was designed by the ZAR's Dept of Public Works under the direction of S.W. Wierda and completed by A. Klute in 1893. On 24 May 1904 the first Black Zionists in South Africa were baptized here in the Martinus Wessel Stream by D. Bryant. Proclaimed 1984 (National Monuments Council).



The bridge over the river at Wakkerstroom

On 31 July 1904, Bryant ordained P L le Roux as an elder and Mrs Le Roux as an evangelist in Pretoria. It appears that Bryant had to return to the United States for ten months in 1906. He left the church in Johannesburg in the care of Le Roux and gave him sweeping instructions about being in charge “of all the work in South Africa”. The Johannesburg church seems to have consisted of about sixty members and was fairly chaotic, but Le Roux saved the situation and brought some form of order (Sundkler 1976:42).

6 PENTECOST COMES TO ZION

It is not possible in this paper to trace the events that emanated from Azusa Street in Los Angeles in 1906, except to note that the revival services which started there under the aegis of William Seymour had repercussions in South Africa as well as other parts of the world. One of the people involved was John G Lake, who had been a member of Zion but became disillusioned with Dowie. He arrived in South Africa with two colleagues, Tom Hezmalhalch and A Lehman. This was when Pentecost came to South Africa. The group soon took over the Zion chapel in Doornfontein, where there were reports of some of the liveliest healing services in South Africa. Buchler was not convinced, but Le Roux joined the new movement because he personally had had an extraordinary experience of the Holy Spirit. Sundkler believes that for Le Roux the decisive difference between Zion and Pentecost was the speaking in tongues. This meant that he would have to leave Zion in order to be part of the Apostolic Faith Mission, where there was a strong belief in tongues. Many Africans were not prepared to part with the name Zion. For the AFM there seemed to be an easy solution: it was simply suggested that the African section should retain the name Zion and that they be considered the Zion branch of the AFM. In 1913 Lake left South Africa and Le Roux took over as President of the AFM in 1914, retaining that position until his death in 1943.



A Zionist in the town returning from worship in 2007

Documents in the possession of the family indicate that their denominational membership took time to change. On the birth certificate of Le Roux's youngest child Martin, in 1910, his occupation is given as "Minister" with, in brackets below it, the word "Zionist". One might have thought that by 1910 this would be reflected as "AFM". At the marriage of this son in 1939, which was conducted by Le Roux, the marriage certificate indicates that the denomination of the minister is Apostolic Faith Mission.

7 EVALUATION

About a hundred years have passed since the events described in the pages above. Some writers have rather uncritically extolled the growth of the Pentecostal movement and suggested that it has a glorious future. Researchers like Peter Wagner and others believe that there have been three waves of the Pentecostal phenomenon, the first being the original Pentecostal experience of 1906 in Azusa Street, the second the charismatic movement of the 1960s, and the third taking place in the last decades of the twentieth century. According to Botha (2007:305) it is at this period that there was "spectacular growth worldwide ... Pentecostalism is today the fastest growing and most vibrant version of the Christian faith and has taken the world by storm in the hundred years since the Azusa Street revival under Charles Seymour". Botha suggests (2007:296) that this is a second Reformation "that has had an even greater impact on the church in general than that of the earlier Reformation".

Such statements form a stark contrast to the humble origins of the founders, who were something like the early Christians – poor, uneducated and on the margins of society. Seymour's work among a mixed group of poor people emerging from slavery is well known. These people came out of the holiness and revivalist traditions which were sweeping America and England.

Yet what happened to the AFM in the latter half of the twentieth century, when it became a fervent supporter of the Apartheid government? It was with horror that the world learnt of AFM pastor Frank Chikane being tortured by a white policeman who was a member of the very same church. Nico Horn, a former pastor in the AFM, raises pointed questions and looks for reasons to account for such critical changes. Why did this movement, which cared for the poor and which was opposed to the state engaging in war, encourage its young men to fight dreadful bush and township wars? Horn (2006:228) draws attention to Hollenweger's thesis that the nonracialism of the initial period (was) "the real miracle and the most significant development in spirituality rather than the phenomenology of speaking in tongues". An eyewitness of the Azusa Street revival commented, "the color line was washed away in the blood".

Horn analyses the shift in the AFM and notes the rise of the New Order and the Nationalists and their gradual infiltration into positions of leadership. He quotes Die Burger, which reported G R Wessels (Gerrie) claimed that he was the only supporter of the National Party on the AFM Executive in 1937. He was later to become Vice-President of the AFM and a National Party senator in the Nationalist government. Horn (2006:244) believes that "the long struggle of white Pentecostals to gain status and power in society may shed some sociological light on the theological issue".

Although it occurred much later, there was a strong reaction against the trend within the AFM to become involved in (Nationalist) politics. This resulted in a split in the ranks and the formation of Die Pinkster Protestante Kerk (The Pentecostal Protestant Church) in 1958. These developments fall outside the scope of this paper.

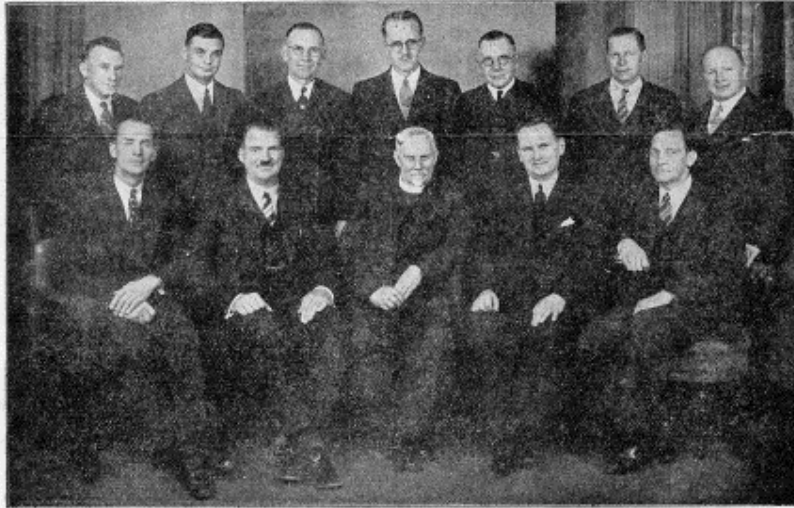
DIE UITVOERENDE RAAD
1939—40.THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
1939—40.

Photo by J. A. Simpson.

Standing L.—R. : Bros. W. H. Plaat, G. R. Wessels, A. P. Visser, A. J. Schoeman, J. G. Henning,
B. Opperman, H. A. de Vries.Sitting L.—R. : Bros. M. H. Wright, G. Vermeulen, P. L. le Roux, D. J. du Plessis, A. W. W. F.
Preller.

Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper.

Geregistreer aan H.P.K. as nuusblad.

Photograph from Die Trooster/The Comforter in 1939

G Wessels was a member of the New Order who moved the AFM in the direction of Nationalist policies

8 CONCLUSION

The Pentecostal Wynand de Kock (2000:115) reminds readers that the first-generation Pentecostals “were living on the edge. Socially deprived as they were and voiceless ... they nevertheless remained willing to take risks for God”. He goes on to show that the Pentecostal revival began during a time of “great socio-political upheaval”. Diamonds were discovered in 1866 and gold in 1886, resulting in huge social and political tensions which eventually precipitated the Anglo Boer War. In the course of Le Roux’s lifetime he lived through four devastating wars – the First and Second Anglo Boer Wars and the First and Second World Wars.

What was the prophetic role of Le Roux? How significant was his contribution to the history of the Church in South Africa? What theological reflection can be offered on this DRC missionary, who left his church and Afrikaner background to throw in his weight with the poorest and most despised religious groups? As noted above, this caused him to be vilified by former colleagues and by the major churches. According to Anderson (2000:57), Sundkler “points out the extremely significant fact that the Zion converts of le Roux and his associates were the source out of which ‘eventually the whole series of Zionist churches have emerged’”. According to Anderson (2000:69), Zionist historian Lukaimane mentions that Engenas Lekganyane (founder of the Zion Christian

Church) and Le Roux knew each other well and that Lekganyane received his preaching credentials from Le Roux. Anderson (2000:57) also draws attention to Oosthuizen's comment that "at least eighty percent of the African indigenous churches in 1987 have Zion added to their names".

Earlier in this paper it was mentioned that Le Roux and his wife worked together among the Zulu people. Writing in the *Biographical dictionary of Christian missions*, Oosthuizen (1998:np) makes the point that "the hallmark of *their* work was the education of outstanding African evangelists and leaders such as Daniel Nkonyane, Muneli Ngobese, and Elias Mahlangu. Their influence on the Zion Church movement in southern Africa was decisive because of the quality of such leadership". Two comments should be made in this regard. The first is to the way in which Le Roux influenced local African leaders, who went on to form powerful independent movements which in many respects have outstripped their "mainline" counterparts. Whether he could have "contained" these churches within the AFM or maintained strategic alliances with them is a matter for further research. There is also the question of what caused the AFM's multicultural origins to be replaced by a White supremacy. Hopefully more can be written on this topic later.

A second comment on the significance of Le Roux's ministry is the fact that he recognised and encouraged his wife's gifts and her role in mission work, particularly as he was away from home for protracted periods. This feature predates many rather paternalistic debates about women in ministry that have persisted (in some circles) to the present day. This perspective is demonstrated in the early records of the AFM, where women played important parts as ministers and leaders. This feature also was eroded over time and male-dominated leadership has become the norm in AFM structures.

A further challenge is to examine from a theological rather than a purely sociological perspective the events that occurred during the emergence of the Pentecostals and Zionists in South Africa and beyond. Albert Miller examines Pentecostalism as a social movement and follows Niebuhr's church-sect model as well as the denomination as a form of church. Much has been written to suggest that Pentecostalism can largely be accounted for by the social disorganisation and deprivation theories. Miller (1996:111) argues that Robert Mapes Anderson has expressed some untested views: "There is no doubt ... that material and social deprivation plus animistic religious outlook combined to predispose most of the recruits to the early Pentecostal movement." Miller (1996:113-114) refutes this assumption and quotes Luther Gerlach, who asks the question:

What, we can wonder, would happen if our scholarly paradigm was based on or at least admitted the existence of God, spirit forces, or the like? If an informant explains his religious behaviour and the growth of the religious movement as the Will of God, the typical anthropologist smiles knowingly and searches for the "real reason" ... And if he observes informants actually having a religious experience ... he becomes certain that this tells us much about their "real world" problems. If the "subjects" of his study are North Americans, but are members of a racial minority group or have not

yet made it into “the middle class”, then he explains their behaviour as a consequence of deprivational disorganization. And if they are “normal” middle class in all but religious behavior, then he explains their behavior as a consequence of personality defect.

This paper has tried to prove that Le Roux and his associates, some of whom were colourful and eccentric characters, discovered a totally new paradigm of Christian experience which has made a profound impact on the Church in Southern Africa and beyond – particularly with regard to the use of spiritual gifts and healing.

The importance of healing cannot be dismissed as peripheral. Indeed Andrew Walls sheds new light on the way in which healing is experienced in Africa, which may account for the pivotal role played by Le Roux in his stance on healing as early as 1904.

Walls (1996:117) writes,

In traditional Africa, healing was usually performed in a religious context; the time and manner in which medical missions developed prevented (in most areas) a smooth transition from the old religion of healing to the new. It was the independents who made the logical connection: If the Christian was to trust Christ and not entreat the old Powers, should he not trust Christ for all the things for which he once entreated the Powers? But there is again nothing here that is incompatible with the life of the older churches. What the independents have done time and again is to challenge the half-Christian who goes to church respectably, but then in secret, and with guilty feelings, goes off to the diviner to seek the cause of sickness and the way of healing. The earthiness of African life demands that African salvation be as solidly material as biblical salvation.

It could be argued that Le Roux discovered the twin yearnings of the human heart for wholeness and healing in Africa, as well as a new dimension of spirituality that encouraged and developed the gift of tongues in private devotion as well as communal worship. This paper suggests that Le Roux was 100 years ahead of the church of his time.

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