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CAROL SUMMERS

Mission Boys, Civilized Men, and Marriage: Educated African Men in the Missions of Southern Rhodesia, 1920–1945*

This paper examines what marriage may have meant to African men within the Christian elite of Southern Rhodesia. Using mission and government sources, it argues that domestic, Christian marriage was important to elite African men as a way of allowing them to achieve adulthood while remaining in good standing with mission sponsors who generally objected to or feared indigenous ideas of patriarchal male adulthood. Tracing life histories of two American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions ministers, one who succeeded in remaining within the mission system and one who left, blacklisted, it explores how domestic, Christian marriage defused many of the missions' suspicions of elite African men, while providing a way to acquire the economic, social and political power associated with full adulthood within the local context.

In segregated Southern Rhodesia, settler, government, and mission observers frequently perceived African men's power as fundamentally dangerous to white-led development. Settlers complained when Africans sought recognition, whether as senior men or as "mission boys." Government officials became irritated with senior men they viewed as old troublemakers and lost patience entirely with younger men who threatened headmen's and messengers' authority. Mission observers were explicitly manipulative in their relationships with senior non-Christian men and, despite missions' reliance on African evangelists and teachers to spread networks of mission Christianity beyond the white-run mission stations, missionaries tended to regard African Christians as either objects of pity or, if powerful, potential threats. This article will—in an admittedly speculative fashion—explore how some African men used Christian marriages to educated women to establish identities for themselves as powerful, relatively independent Christian men. Not just as mission boys.

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For African men tied to missions, achieving social maturity could be difficult. Maturity in the colonial Zimbabwean context tended to be rooted in material, social, and political characteristics. An adult man had his own home, farm, cattle, and tools and worked for himself, rather than handing over wages to a father or patron. An adult man was married with children, and his wife or wives deferred to his authority and worked on his land. As he and his family paid *lobola* (bridewealth) to acquire a wife and begin his family, received *lobola* for daughters as they married out, and helped a son to assemble *lobola* to marry and begin a new generation, the man became a patriarch tied into a social network of families who gave and received *lobola*. An adult man had his own pass, paid his own taxes, and spoke for himself before headmen and paramounts, rather than being spoken for in his absence by an authoritative father, teacher, or government official.

Teachers who pursued this relatively agrarian model of adulthood could be highly successful in the early years of mission activity in colonial Zimbabwe. Lorenzo, for example, earned money for teaching and evangelization while developing a farm, building a house, and establishing himself in local politics. He acquired enough maturity to reject missionaries' efforts to transfer him to a new field and direct the labour of his wife and children.¹ And Frank Sixubu, a South African immigrant evangelist, bought a 600-acre farm near Salisbury, established a private location and employed dozens of people in minding his farm, cattle, and interests, giving him an uncontested status as an important man.²

But though early missionaries had no choice but to rely on such men, they tended to distrust their initiative, drive, and success. Whether it was Jesuit missionaries remarking suspiciously on Lorenzo's "houses" or American Methodist missionaries publicly declaring that they had considered how much authority could be safely entrusted to African church leaders, and had concluded the answer was not much,³ missionaries tried to maintain control and oversight over all activities of their African employees. And they assumed, accurately or not, that their employees were not local notables, but servants detached from specific communities who could be moved from post to post. Regardless of African evangelists' ages, missions viewed them as employees subject to white missionaries' paternal control, not as fathers and patriarchs.⁴

By the 1920s and 1930s, though, missions were beginning to acknowledge, prodded by government demands for more efficient teaching and by their

1. Lorenzo rejected a proposed movement from his "cozy nest" at Mkaya to a white-supervised school post saying, "who would put up his houses? [notice the plural]." J. H. Seed, to Fr Superior, 30 November 1927, Jesuit Archives, Harare (hereafter cited as JAH), Box 126/4.

2. Frank Sixubu, testimony before the Native Lands Commission, 1925, National Archives of Zimbabwe, Harare (hereafter cited as NAZ), ZAH 1/1/1.

3. Informal discussion, reported in Minutes, 1st Session East Central Africa Missionary Conference, 16–25 November 1901, Old Mutare Archives, Old Mutare, Zimbabwe.

4. After pointing out Lorenzo's reluctance to move, the priests went on to assure themselves that they could get around this. Or see Olive Lloyd's observations of mission life, especially the "Copy of letter from priest Elfric (native priest) to Demonstrator Benjamin, August, 1934," NAZ, Hist MSS, ANG 16/11/1, in which Elfric Matimba rejected the demonstrator's assumption of any government-granted authority to reallocate the plots he and his wife had farmed.

home committees' efforts at economizing, that the success of their activities relied on effective African teachers, preachers, and evangelists. Effectiveness, though, required the missions to accept new levels of independence and authority on the part of African men. Effective mission training had to produce, not permanent dependency, but the possibility of mature, successful civilized, adulthood.

Under pressure from the government and home committees, reluctant missions such as the Anglicans and Roman Catholics began to fall into line. After years of pro forma discussion, the Anglicans at their 1924 meeting explicitly discussed educational policy (as opposed to mere evangelism).⁵ By the 1926 meeting, the missionaries had a policy, albeit a minimal one.⁶ The new policy granted pay increments to acknowledge every increment of piety and evangelical status. Rewards for academic achievement were less systematic, demonstrating the mission's primarily evangelical concerns. Policy changes which favoured trained teachers faced stiff opposition from missionaries who complained that the new teachers were less concerned with faith than the older, less educated men had been.⁷ By 1930, Jesuit missions, too, were complaining that they had fallen to the rear of the educational movement, noting that they had few effective teachers, and that too many of the more educated teachers, standard V and above, were more trouble than they were worth, refusing moves because of poor health conditions in reserves, rejecting "Chizezuru" language schooling in Manyikaland and modelling their teaching on "white" teachers, rather than on indigenous models.⁸

As all missions, desperate for funds, worked to meet increasing government demands, they complained of government inspectors' interference, of government requirements that demanded skilled work at unskilled pay, and of the government's emphasis on academic and industrial over evangelical and religious values.

But while missions protested administrative regulation and, on occasion, flatly mocked the pretensions of government school inspectors, they recognized them as legitimate. They protested to each other, to their families back at home, and through channels in the administration. The administration, though, however unjust it might on occasion appear, clearly was able to make rules for its territory.⁹

The period from the end of the First World War through the Second World War was, however, a period where the missions created a class of Christian men who were to challenge mission authority in far more threatening ways than the government's educational policy had attempted. During this period,

5. Missionary Conference, Bulawayo, 18–19 September 1924, NAZ, Hist MSS, ANG 1/4/5/1.

6. Conference of Missionary Priests, 4–7 1926, Penhalonga, NAZ, Hist MSS, ANG 1/4/5/1.

7. Report of the Director of Missions 1936, and discussions in synods throughout 1930s, NAZ, ANG 1/1/19, vol. 2.

8. See O'Hea to Brown, 13 February 1930, Box 195/3; Collingridge to FS, 14 February 1930, Box 124/3; O'Hea to Rev. Father, 20 March 1930, Box 195/3; O'Hea to Brown, 11 September 1930, Box 195/3; O'Hea to "Lord", 5 March 1934, all from JAH, Box 23.

9. See, for example, Olive Lloyd's correspondence during the mid-1930s, NAZ, Hist MSS, ANG 16/11/1.

education was one of the most tumultuous aspects of mission activity in Southern Rhodesia. Students struck for a variety of reasons. Teachers struck. Parents kept children from mission schools in favour of alternatives. Communities fought (sometimes violently) over control of the local schools. Mission educational development programs brought missions into direct conflict with government officials.¹⁰

Within this context, dynamic, energetic, increasingly well-educated African men had opportunities. Missions needed teachers and ministers at outstations. Missions could not function without educated staff at central institutions. And missions also wanted Africans to take over administrative work such as supervising the boarding houses and administering mission farms and enterprises.

But missionaries' suspicion of Africans' power or success remained. African teachers who commandeered student labour, staked out extensive personal or school farms in land-poor regions, demanded higher salaries, sought skilled pay for sideline handicrafts, and sold school produce at a profit, violated mission and government rules. Teachers who reinterpreted evangelical teachings to an African context, holding to *lobola*, supporting ideas of multiple wives, and rejecting missionaries' definitions of morality and Christian family life violated mission rules. Even teachers who were in some way too uppity—who allowed untrained men to join the preaching on Sunday, who demanded wage increases, who rejected reassignments, or who simply talked back and left the mission society which had trained them in favour of another which paid better wages—were problems. And missions justified draconian responses to relatively minor problems by pointing to major problems—sexual abuse of pupils and congregation members, explicit Zionist or political activity, and financial misconduct. Father O'Hea, a Jesuit priest, made the connections between all sorts of misconduct clear when he denounced pupil unrest and teachers' political activity in 1930 in a letter to a colleague, complaining:

Unfortunately, to my way of looking at it, they are treated FAR too softly. I wouldn't give that chap [who had threatened to leave if demands not met] a chance of giving up—I'D FIRE HIM AT THE TOE OF MY BOOT. Close his school and give a jaw to the Christians who were any good round about it letting them see that such Bolshies brought nothing but trouble and unhappiness. The older people see this like a shot . . . NOTHING but a rod of iron is any use for these people . . . they are utterly blinded by the most foolish vanity.¹¹

Father O'Hea, like some of his colleagues, was relatively outspoken on the issue of mission discipline, linking basic economic demands to political dangers, generational upheaval and the age-old problem of adolescent vanity. But it is nearly impossible to read through mission archives without becoming aware of widespread mission suspicion and fear of mission employees. Whether one is more impressed by vitriolic statements like O'Hea's, the

10. Carol Summers, "Educational Controversies: African Activism and Educational Strategies in Southern Rhodesia, 1920–1934," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 20 (1994): 3–25, and "Walking Alone in Front: African Teachers in the Rural Schools of Southern Rhodesia, 1920–1945" (paper presented at annual meeting of the History of Education Association, October 1995).

11. O'Hea to Brown, 11 September 1930, JAH, Box 195/3.

direct violence of the DRC missionary Orlandini who blinded the recalcitrant father of one truant pupil, or by the actions of a missionary who habitually gave his teachers instructions through the window as they stood on the porch outside his home, evidence rapidly accumulates of the tensions in the relationships between missionaries and mission servants.¹²

I

Despite missions' tension between need for African servants and fear of them, missions expanded during the 1930s and 1940s as they took responsibility for the education (not just the evangelization) of the African population. Missionaries and African church leaders continued to be able to work together because African men developed some effective strategies for coping with mission concerns, strategies that were more complex than just obedience and deference. These men worked to develop a model of legitimate African male authority within the white-ruled society of Southern Rhodesia.

Elsewhere, I have examined how men used their educated status to demand respect as professionals, and how men used patronage ties to government and missions as ways of fighting for scarce resources.¹³ Here, I want to examine another of the most effective tools available to men who wanted authority and respect within the mission context: companionate marriage with a respectable, skilled, Christian woman and the establishment of a recognizably Christian domestic life. In the past, historians looking at prominent African Christian leaders have tended not to notice their interactions with their wives. If the wives are indeed mentioned, they tend to be viewed as leaders of women's prayer unions.¹⁴ Barbara Moss's work has highlighted these prayer unions as a vital part of African Christianity, but while her studies have recovered a history of women's activity, a new emphasis on African women's church organizations has not overturned the impression that the mission-run church was centred around men and male leadership.¹⁵

In his study of the Samkange family, Terence Ranger challenged the assumption that the men who were to become nationalists emerged as individuals: He put a 1929 picture of the Samkange domestic family on the cover, husband in suit and clerical collar, wife in long dress and stylish hat, son in suit, and baby on mother's lap.¹⁶ Ranger's work, combined with other works on African women's roles in the expansion of mission churches, their

12. See Summers, "Educational Controversies."

13. See Summers, "Walking," "Educational Controversies," and "Demanding Schools: The Umchingwe Project and African Men's Struggles for Education in Southern Rhodesia, 1928–1934," *African Studies Review* 40 (1997): 117–39.

14. For example, C. J. M. Zvobgo, *A History of Christian Missions in Zimbabwe, 1890–1939* (Gweru: Mambo, 1996).

15. Barbara Moss, "'And the Bones Come Together': African and Missionary Expectations," *Journal of Religious History* 23 (1998): 108–27.

16. T. Ranger, *"Are We Not Also Men": The Samkange Family and African Politics in Zimbabwe, 1920–64* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1995), paperback cover. This cover photo makes a rhetorical point, though the uncropped photo (29) shows a larger family which includes Thompson Samkange's less stylish mother.

experiences of economic change, and the centrality of women to administrative initiatives, re-emphasizes how central women were to the experiences of the African Christian community of men and women.¹⁷ But his narrative of Thompson Samkange's rise in the Wesleyan mission nevertheless discusses Grace Samkange primarily in her role as mother to Thompson's children and foster-children.

What I want to argue here, however, is that strategic, successful marriage was critical for African men as a way of not only achieving adulthood, parenthood, and success within African communities, but also of managing missionaries' fundamental discomfort with the autonomy of individual African educated men. Drawing on insights from Ranger's study, and from other work within Zimbabwe and elsewhere on the meanings of marriage, it is possible to ask a new set of specific questions regarding how African men used Christian domestic marriage to defuse suspicions of mission and government superiors while pursuing a modified form of patriarchal power and authority.¹⁸

The idea that Christian domestic marriage provided a safe new model for African men's authority is not new. It is rooted closely in what contemporaries said they worried about, and how they proposed to deal with their problems. Government officials, after all, were uncomfortable with "mission boys" precisely because they were cut loose from traditional family structures, and therefore, as individuals, harder to discipline and control than family men linked through webs of kinship. In reconnecting the severed man to a newly constituted Christian family, the teacher, evangelist, or clerk was again limited, needing housing, land, and wages, and subject to government administrative control. Missionaries, too, saw Christian marriage as critical to solving their problems with dangerously powerful African men. In early years, they hoped that marriage would prevent teachers' sexual misconduct as wives would keep their husbands at home. This failed.¹⁹ But missionaries consistently justified women's education because educated men needed educated brides if the men were not to revert in dangerous ways to earlier practices. Women, less threatening than men, were seen as a critical means through which the mission could maintain control over African men even as, by necessity, those men acquired increased autonomy and authority.

While it is fairly easy to locate evidence of officials' and missionaries' hopes that Christian marriage would facilitate control over African men, it is

17. See, for example, Elizabeth Schmidt, *Peasants, Traders and Wives* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1992), and Diana Jeater, *Marriage, Perversion and Power* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).

18. See, for example, Dane Kennedy, *Islands of White* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1987); John Pape, "Black and White: The Perils of Sex in Colonial Zimbabwe," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 16 (1990): 699–720; and, on marital strategies, Kristin Mann, *Marrying Well* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

19. For example: "It has been hoped that as more and more married teachers were employed this problem might become less acute, but the experience of the past few years tends to indicate that male married teachers are as prone to fall as the single ones." Report of Primary Schools for 1949, 15.6 vol. 9, 2:5, American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions Archives, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge MA, U.S.A. (hereafter cited as ABC).

much more difficult to find evidence that African men deliberately developed marriage strategies to allow themselves to achieve success within the mission institution. Men clearly married for reasons which were not merely institutional or economic, but also personal.

Yet regardless of men's consciousness of marriage as a way of managing their relationship with the missions, successful marriages appear in the various life histories as central to educated men's ability to remain in good standing with their mission sponsors as they became increasingly powerful and vocal in local Christian communities. Marriage, indeed, sometimes seems to be a more critical factor than the individuals' ability, deference, or local reputation. In a context with few educated, domestically skilled, eligible African women, winning one of the few represented one form of achievement. And with that achievement, a man acquired a partner who would help him defuse many different types of criticism and difficulties. Ranger's discussion of Thompson and Grace Samkange's marriage illustrates this well as he describes Grace Samkange as an underrated source of Thompson's success: she cultivated a family which incorporated clients in search of an education; established herself as a Ruwadzano leader; and eventually built a family farm in a newly opened Native Purchase area, a farm which provided the Samkange family with security and status essential in its increasingly tense interactions with mission and administration.

II

Ranger's study of the Samkange family draws upon a unique private archive to reconstruct relationships within the small class of elite Christian Africans. His methodology works particularly well with the rich sources held by the Samkanges. His life-history approach can also, however, be used on skimpier material to explore the argument that African men's marriages were key to their ability to combine mission approval and community power. American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions materials, which provide reasonable records of the lives of two leading African Christians, one who succeeded in remaining in the mission and one who left, can be examined for insights into how men's marriages shaped their interactions with the mission during the tensions of the 1930s.

One of the men who pursued a marital strategy most effectively was the Reverend Hohoza Dube. According to his 1934 autobiographical statement, Dube initially ran away from the rural school near his home. Only after Simbini Nkomo, the first local man to go to America for school, visited Dube's home to recruit did Dube finally start attending regularly, and progress from the rural school to Mount Silinda Institute. In 1909 he went south for six years of study beyond what was available at Mount Silinda. With a South African teaching certificate, he returned to teach at Mount Silinda in 1915. In 1918, he married his first wife, Kokiwe. Possibly in search of higher wages to support an expanding family, he left the mission for a South African school

in 1922. But by 1929 he was willing to return to Mount Silinda to attend a new Bible school designed to train the board's first generation of African ministers. The school began with seven men. Three completed it: Dube, Frank Dzukuso, and Magodi Sigauke.²⁰

While Dube was in Bible school, his wife Kokiwe died. With four children to care for, it is perhaps unsurprising that he promptly remarried. His new wife, Daisy Hlatywayo, proved critical to his ongoing success. Dube later described his first wife as "kind and good to us. She was a good adviser of mine." Daisy Hlatywayo's role, however, extended beyond kindness and domestic advice.²¹

Dube himself was one of the best educated local Africans employed by the mission in the early 1930s. But the missionaries who commented on him were not particularly impressed. In his early years, they had complained about students who only wanted to go to Natal to study, rather than working for the mission. And as he completed Bible school, the missionary-in-charge summed him up as not phenomenal and hinted that Dube and Frank Dzukuso were only ordained because of local pressure for African leadership of the two central churches at Silinda and Chikore.²² The best that mission commentators had to say about him was that he was reasonably steady.

After marrying Daisy Hlatywayo, however, Dube's status within the mission community rose dramatically. Part of this was purely the prestige involved in becoming Daisy's husband. Daisy Hlatywayo was a phenomenon within the American board mission—a woman constantly pointed to as an ideal African woman. Born to the first local couple married by Christian rites, she attended Mount Silinda all the way up to standard VI, becoming one of the first women in the country to achieve certification. After teaching at several schools, she went to Hope Fountain in 1929 for training as a home demonstrator. After training in health work and domesticity, she began work at Mount Silinda in January 1931. In July, she married Dube.²³ After her marriage, in addition to raising his children and their own, she administered a complex household full of foster-children staying with her for their education, and continued to work as a demonstrator, doing midwifery, health demonstrations and dispensary work, and talking about domesticity to mothers' groups.²⁴

Married to Daisy, Dube began to receive more favourable comments from missionaries. Shortly after his marriage, he was ordained in a ceremony apparently postponed until he could be ordained as a married man.²⁵ By the end of

20. Hohoza Dube, in Mabel Larkins Hack to friends, 8 May 1934, ABC, 15.6 vol. 4, letters 1933–4.

21. Dube, sketch, Hack to friends, 8 May 1934 ABC, 15.6 vol. 4.

22. Mount Silinda Church and Evangelical Work Report 1930, ABC, 15.6 vol. 2, item 138.

23. Daisy Hlatywayo Dube, sketch, Hack, ABC, 15.6 vol. 4.

24. Note that I am not arguing that Daisy Hlatywayo Dube's success and drive allowed her husband to succeed. Her *role* was what was critical to his success. Daisy herself was regarded by missionaries as less energetic and effective than some of the other educated women of the mission, such as Mary Nkomo Mhlanga.

25. Mount Silinda Church and Evangelistic Work, 1930, ABC, 15.6 vol. 2, item 138.

1931, missionaries were impressed by Dube's success as chaplain and head of the boys' boarding department. At a mission with poor boarding facilities, a minimal diet, and a history of strikes, he aired grievances by coordinating a student debating society while simultaneously teaching the students that, despite weevils and insufficiently fine meal, "we should learn to eat what is not quite good sometimes" rather than engaging in disruptive strikes.²⁶

By the end of 1932, his second year as chaplain, his superior reported:

Hohoza Dube . . . is directly responsible for conduct and the schedule in the Boarding Department, and though lax in some details is strong of character. His easy, happy-go-lucky way with the boys has produced a wholesome atmosphere and degree of contentment hitherto unknown in the Boys' Boarding in the past.²⁷

The missionaries might see him as happy-go-lucky. Dube himself, however, was conscious of his role as paterfamilias. In his own report, he explained how he had made students attend to homework by reminding them of their families' sacrifices in sending them to school. And he attributed the absence of food strikes to his efforts to tell students that weevils provided extra meat in their diets.²⁸

By the mid-1930s, the Dube family was prominent in the mission community. They managed interactions with European missionaries: the Reverend Dube administered the Boys' Boarding Department, and Daisy continued to work as a home demonstrator. While Dube taught boys to eat weevils cheerfully, Daisy supervised as every standard VII girl spent at least an hour a week in her home, learning domesticity by doing housework.²⁹ And Daisy opened her home to visitors, inviting missionaries' wives to observe her domestic demonstrations. Kenneth, the family's oldest son, sped through school with the speed of a European, creating a crisis when he completed standard VII by age thirteen. As a successful family, the Dubes also managed their connections with the community of African Christians. Dube was the Silinda church's pastor as well as the school's chaplain. As head of the Silinda Christian community he explained mission rules and regulations to anxious parents and facilitated discussions between parents and missionaries on such tense concerns as *lobola* and polygyny.³⁰

Married to Daisy, Hohoza Dube went, in the eyes of missionary observers, from being a pushy young man who was in the ministry for what he could extract, to a trusted Christian leader who performed a difficult job effectively and listened willingly to mission advice.³¹

26. Curtis, Annual Report of the Boys' boarding dept of Mt Silinda, June 1931, ABC, 15.6 vol. 2, item 46.

27. W. L. Kincheloe, Boy's boarding dept report of Mt Silinda Institute 1931-2, ABC, 15.6 vol. 2, item 61.

28. H. M. Dube, "Annual Report, Boy's Boarding Department [Mt Silinda] for year ending Dec. 1932," ABC, 15.4 vol. 2, item 60.

29. Report of Domestic Science Dept Mt Silinda for year ending December 1932, ABC, 15.6 vol. 2.

30. Annual Report—Boys' Boarding Department [Silinda] June 1936, 15.6 vol. 2, item 97, and Minutes 52d annual Meeting . . . 7 July 1945, ABC, 15.6 vol. 8, folder 1:3.

31. Annual Report of Church and Evangelistic Work Mount Silinda Circuit 1934, ABC, 15.6 vol. 2, item 149.

In his actions, however, Dube continued to pursue opportunities as the leader of the Silinda church. By 1940, as more and more men had been ordained, and the disadvantages of being directly under mission supervision increasingly outweighed the prestige of being Silinda's chaplain, Dube pushed for a transfer. And he did so with a firm sense of what he was entitled to, asking not only permission to move, but that the mission build him a suitable house. The missionaries rejected the idea of the mission building his house for him. But it accepted his desire to move away from direct missionary supervision into the centre of an African Christian community.³²

By the early 1940s, Hohoza and Daisy Dube were prosperous, prominent, and respected by mission and African community alike. When Dube wrote and spoke at conventions in the mid-1940s, he did so as a prominent spokesman of the African Christian community. And the mission responded by developing and clarifying regulations rather than objecting to his meddling. Dube's marriage and position allowed him not only to continue as a minister of the American board, rather than being defrocked in scandal like so many others, but to take initiative in the mission community, hold his own land, head a complex family of sons, daughters and clients, and circumvent the suspicion with which the mission often greeted African success and initiative.

Frank Hlabati Dzukuso, who attended Bible school and studied for the ministry alongside Hohoza Dube, was far less successful in walking this narrow path. Instead, his life history provides an indication of why so many educated, ordained, employed men left mission service.

Dzukuso volunteered for a new Bible school in 1921 at the American Board's Chikore station, three years after the previous class's graduation. Though Mount Silinda, the board's teacher-training and industrial education facility, was turning out qualified teachers regularly, the mission's evangelical education system was more halting, suffering major problems of recruitment and retention. The previous class, the missionary reported, had had a dubious record: two graduates died, one took a second wife, one definitely went crazy, another was "reported not sound of mind," one sinned in a way which prevented him from working effectively even after repentance, six had secular work, and the mission employed only six as evangelists, teachers or both. Facing that history of two-thirds attrition over only three years, the mission was disappointed in the crop of prospective students, noting that at least one could not write at all. Dzukuso himself began with some education at Chikore, the American board's secondary station.³³

The missionary's report stated both his feeling of the students' inadequacy for the task, and his own inability to do anything about it: though he

took unusual trouble to present the ideal for the ministry and so for the evangelist, in order that the students might have a clear understanding what is expected of them in the ministry. I do not feel sure that any of them realize fully the responsibility

32. Semi-Annual Meeting of East Africa Mission, 29 December 1940; Marsh to Board, 4 January 1941; Report of Primary Schools for 1945, all from ABC, 15.6 vol. 8.

33. Report of the Bible School, March–May of 1921, ABC, 15.4 vol. 35, item 183.

and privileges of this work. Some of them I fear still are in the class simply that they may get good money without too much sacrifice on their part.³⁴

A mere lecture, however, could not transform men of dubious literacy into the qualified ministers to which the mission aspired. So even as Chikore's academic schools finally began to improve, the Bible school moved to Mount Silinda, the mission's academic centre, in the hope that this would facilitate recruitment of more academically qualified men.³⁵ After the move, the mission worked to further tighten standards by insisting that only those promising to complete a three-year course should be admitted to the Bible school and that these men should be helped by being offered self-help—mission jobs, including teaching work—during their tenure as students.³⁶ During 1922, the Bible school dwindled to four students. Dzukuso, one of the four, was probably the student who, in his second year, “while an earnest preacher is not likely to ever be very useful to the Mission work as he cannot be induced to study.”³⁷ And the school continued to suffer dramatic attrition as pupils left, were expelled, or sought work as teachers rather than further study.

By 1926, Dzukuso had graduated as an evangelist with enough teacher training to be appointed back to Chikore central station to replace a formerly model teacher who “fell into adultery with a girl teacher living in his house.”³⁸ This began a pattern for Dzukuso of moving up as the mission chose him to replace superiors who stepped outside mission regulations. In 1927, Chikore and Mount Silinda were dynamic places as the mission debated again, amidst strong pressure from African parents, the issue of *lobola* and parental control over marriage, and mission enthusiasts began a series of revival meetings which stirred up spiritual enthusiasm even as people increasingly voiced their irritation with legalistic mission rules.³⁹ Dzukuso, like most mission employees, was in the middle of the controversy as he benefited from the new positions opened by those expelled from the mission, worried about parents' loss of *lobola*, and was irritated by regular movement from one station to another.⁴⁰

New mission taxes for schools and more restrictions on school access added to these tensions. An evangelical committee from South Africa complained that church seemed to be attended by mission employees and schoolchildren, lacking any community support. By the early 1930s, this tension was beginning to break out in the form of Zionist activity, particularly at Chikore. Chikore's pastor, Munyaya Sibisi, was variously described as lacking control, letting anyone preach, having Zionist leanings, and rejecting mission suggestions. In his place, the congregation (under pressure from the

34. Report of the Bible School, March–May of 1921, ABC, 15.4 vol. 35, item 183.

35. Dysart to ABC, 3 October 1921, ABC, 15.4 vol. 35, item 11.

36. Minutes, 13 December 1921, ABC, 15.4 vol. 35, item 15.

37. Bible School Report, July 1922, ABC, 15.4 vol. 35, item 184.

38. Report of Ireland Home, Chikore, June 1926, ABC, 15.4 vol. 35, item 146.

39. Minnie Tontz to friends, 1 October 1927, ABC, 15.4 vol. 42, item 474.

40. Dzukuso may have been at Mutema as the station was transformed into one of the flagbearing outschools of the American board, where one of the early female Jeanes teachers, Mary Nkomo (later Mhlanga), worked diligently to promote domesticity and health in ways celebrated by her mission supervisors. Ivy Craig to friends, 24 January 1932, ABC, 15.6 vol. 1, item 206.

white missionary supervisor) decided to call Dzukuso.⁴¹ Dzukuso had been teaching at Mutema's, a school and church which had previously experienced Zionist activity, but which had calmed down during his time there.⁴² The missionary-in-charge considered Dzukuso a major improvement at Chikore as his appointment led to the withdrawal of several men with Zionist tendencies and "a very marked improvement in the spirit and loyalty, and in attendance."⁴³ For Dzukuso, this was an advance in pay and prestige: teachers earned about £2 a month, pastors £40 a year. And as teachers became common, ordained pastors were more unique and prominent than teachers.⁴⁴

During the late 1930s, trouble between the mission and its ministers and teachers grew, producing turmoil in the annual meetings of teachers and ministers. The mission unilaterally cut wages in response to declining government grants, leading to both individual protests from demonstrators and a teachers' strike. As the minister of the Chikore church, Dzukuso held one of the most prominent positions available to an African in the American board mission. And he extended his influence beyond the specific mission through participation in the Native Christian Conference, an ecumenical organization which paralleled the Southern Rhodesia Missionary Association and spoke for the educated Africans of the country. Before 1937, he had become a regional secretary of the NCC.⁴⁵

Dzukuso's first marriage and first wife fail to appear in missionary records.⁴⁶ Nor was his wife mentioned as one of the African women who invited visiting white missionaries into their homes during evangelical visits. Without firm evidence, only speculation is possible. Dzukuso may have been married before he began his education and work toward the ministry. If so, his wife lacked the education and qualifications her husband managed to acquire. Or Dzukuso may have married during his education. But if he did so, the marriage was not to one of the women named as mission protégés.

Dzukuso's break with the mission began in 1936 when he challenged mission rules by accepting *lobola* for his daughter. Missionaries complained that this was not good for those who thought that ministers should demonstrate a willingness to sacrifice for their beliefs.⁴⁷

Dzukuso rapidly progressed from challenging mission rules by accepting *lobola* to breaking a far more serious regulation. He initially asked for and received a three-month leave from the mission in 1936 and, when scheduled to return, informed the mission that he had paid *lobola* for a second, younger,

41. Rev. Frank Hlabati Dzukuso's name was written in various ways, but I am reasonably confident they all describe the same man. J. Marsh to Board, 20 September 1935, item 144, and Memo on meeting of executive committee of the association of churches of the east Africa Mission, 14 September 1935, item 145, ABC, 15.6 vol. 1.

42. Annual Report of Kraal Schools, Mount Silinda Circuit, 1933 (June 1934), ABC, 15.6 vol. 2, item 76.

43. Chikore Station Report for 1935, ABC, 15.6 vol. 2, item 19.

44. Memo on meeting of executive committee of the association of churches of the East Africa Mission, 14 September 1935, ABC, 16.6 vol. 1, item 145.

45. Minutes, 9–13 January 1938, ABC, 15.6 vol. 1, item 300.

46. Ivy Craig to Board, 14 July 1932, ABC, 16.6 vol. 1, item 217.

47. John Marsh to friends, 3 March 1936, ABC, 15.6 vol. 4, item 192.

wife. The head of the Chikore circuit reported Dzukuso's "fall" more in sorrow than in anger:

His failure upset again the work of the church . . . Rev. Dzukuso's failure is not the only one due to this temptation. Our church treasurer, our church scribe, and a member of executive committee of the church association have all been overcome in the last year and a half by this same temptation. The history of this mission would certainly be different if so many of its leaders had not fallen, and were not still falling, overcome by the allurements of this old custom. The loss has been not only of the leaders for their example has influenced many others to turn back or else not to become Christians at all.⁴⁸

But though missionaries could understand the temptations and pressures which brought Dzukuso to marry a second wife, they could not forgive his choice. The mission wrote to the Native Christian Council advising it to strip Dzukuso of his position as regional secretary.⁴⁹ And even years later, the mission blacklisted him, blocking him from establishing a legal school or church in another area.⁵⁰

Dzukuso's departure was the act of a man who had decided to pursue the traditional patriarch's role and enjoy the traditional rewards—accepting *lobola* for his daughter, taking a second wife, and establishing his own farm—rather than merely working for the mission on its terms. After years in the mission, however, this traditional pattern of patriarchal power was out of reach. Dorothy Marsh describes his "defection" from the mission as a sad matter not for the political and evangelical reasons her husband noted, but for the aftermath as Dzukuso's first wife left him and went to become a housekeeper in a settler's home in Chipinga and Dzukuso, trying to persuade her to return home, sat on the employer's doorstep for days until the police chased him off.⁵¹ Dzukuso went on, after leaving the mission, to become a prominent leader in the African Congregational Church, a Zionist church which became known as the "old people's church" as it systematically rejected mission regulations to the point that, M. L. Daneel has argued, "traditional practices were incorporated virtually at random."⁵²

III

Dube and Dzukuso, one man who managed to succeed within the mission structure and another who failed, do not by themselves provide enough evidence for definitive statements on what allowed some men to manage missionaries' distrust of African authority while others fell afoul of missionary regulations and ended up expelled and blacklisted. But, particularly when Dube and Dzukuso are looked at against the background of their time, a time when

48. Chikore Church and Evangelistic Work [June 1937], ABC, 15.6 vol. 2, item 165.

49. Chikore Church and Evangelistic Work [June 1937].

50. 47th annual meeting of the East Africa Mission, 3 September 1940, ABC, 15.6 vol. 8.

51. Dorothy Marsh to friends, 20 March 1937, ABC, 15.6 vol. 5, item 309.

52. M. L. Daneel, *Old and New in Southern Shona Independent Churches*, vol. 3 (Gweru: Mambo Press, 1988), 331.

an astoundingly high proportion of prominent Africans within the American board system ended up leaving the mission, they suggest some patterns.

If African men wished to remain in good standing with the mission, they had to demonstrate a variety of traits, some of which were only marginally related to academic qualifications or strength of character. They had to listen to missionaries and defer to mission instructions. They had to accept their social, economic, and political inequality with whites. They had to demonstrate willingness to make economic sacrifices in the name of faith. And they had to either follow a restrictive set of regulations which constrained everything from beer-brewing, concerts, and child labour to marriage, or successfully conceal their violations from the missions.

The problem for African men was that filling all these requirements ate directly at their sources of authority and adulthood. If a man simply followed these rules he would remain, regardless of age, a mission dependant or, in local terms, a mission boy. Deference, sacrifice, and failure to establish marriage ties through *lobola* were antithetical to local celebrated concepts of patriarchal power.

Marriage to a good wife, however, offered select men a way around the restraints, a way to proceed from boyhood to civilized manhood while blunting mission criticism. With Christian marriage to an educated woman, a man formed the nucleus of a new social unit. In so far as educated women were scarce and presumed to be capable of saying yes or no to a husband, it was a unit where he was selected.⁵³ And with the household which rapidly accumulated around educated Christian men, he became a family patriarch, holding authority both over his wife, who was trained as his adviser and manager, and over the people who came to live with them. Unmarried female teachers frequently lived in the houses of married teachers while working as assistants in outschools. Nephews, nieces, cousins, and siblings might arrive to live in a house closer to a good school. Boarders might stay, working for their keep. And children of the house were almost certain to arrive quickly. Within this household, then, which could rapidly become as complex as some polygynous households and could rival missionary establishments for size, the husband acquired a realm of authority that the mission accepted. And it was a realm of authority which fit into more "traditional" community norms of what it took to become an important man, with clients and household.

Such a household also constituted a transformation of a man into economic adulthood. In terms of cash, most missions paid married male teachers more than unmarried men. And marriage brought additional prerequisites. Dube's insistence that the mission provide them with a house followed a pattern of the mission (or the community in the case of a teacher of an outschool) providing a married teacher with a house. Unmarried teachers were often

53. Perhaps acknowledging the shortage of eligible educated women, male students at mission schools supported expansion in girls' education, but opposed Europeans' efforts to employ educated African women. See Summers, "If We Can Educate the Native Woman . . .": Debates over the schooling and education of girls and women in Southern Rhodesia, 1900-1934," *History of Education Quarterly* 36 (1996): 449-71.

expected to board with families, or to live in dormitories with students. For married teachers, however, missions accepted the need for a home. The home was more than simply a building. With marriage, men were less subject to relocation by missions who otherwise sometimes shuffled teachers between schools every year. And married teachers were able to claim land for a garden and, in some cases, a farm.⁵⁴

A wife such as Daisy Hlatywayo Dube, or one of the other educated women who the mission praised, brought additional benefits. Daisy and the other home demonstrators trained at Hope Fountain continued to work after their marriages, bringing in substantial government salaries to contribute to family finances which could be strained by efforts to manage on mission funds alone. Within the American board, an educated woman who was not a home demonstrator could nevertheless often continue work as a teacher after marriage, working as an assistant teacher.

In addition to her salary, an effective wife transformed her husband from a wage servant of the mission to the head of an economic enterprise which included a home which could be run for profit, a garden, and possibly a farm. Daisy Dube's home was thoroughly staffed by standard VII girls learning domesticity, and she may have received gifts and other benefits from accepting scholars into her home as boarders. And as for agriculture, teachers on mission farms were preferentially allocated farms by mission land managers, and though teachers were technically barred from marking off more than five acres in a reserve for a school and teachers' demonstration garden, violations were so common that missionaries informed of the regulations tended to assume that they meant that the school could have five acres, the teacher five acres, and any evangelist, or possibly even the wife, another five.⁵⁵ Regardless of acreage, successful market farming in Southern Rhodesia required labour, and often labour beyond the household. Unmarried teachers who forced students and their parents to work on school plots and then sold the proceeds or allowed the mission to do so were clearly in violation of government regulations prohibiting teachers to round up forced labour. But married teachers required student and parent labour in the guise of development projects and extension education. Missionaries commented approvingly on a wife "bossing up the school gardens near the house," even when parents might disapprove and official regulations make such child labour technically illegal.⁵⁶

Marriage was also critical in allowing men a way out of constant deference to the mission. It often brought physical distance from the missionaries as the married man became eligible for new posts as head teacher of an outschool, for which married men were preferred. And even for the Reverend Dube,

54. See, for example, Ranger, "Are We Not Also Men," 53–7.

55. See, for example, correspondence in NAZ, S1542/S2.

56. Louise Torrence to friends, 1 February 1929, 15.4 vol. 2, item 504, ABC. On the unpopularity and legal status of such labour, see Summers, "Educational Controversies," "Giving Orders: Controversies Over Africans' Authority in Development Programs in Rural Southern Rhodesia 1928–1934," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* (forthcoming), and "Demanding Schools."

marriage meant that his household increasingly became its own centre rather than merely an appendage of the missionaries. White missionaries were reluctant to allow African families, no matter how elite, to occupy homes built for white missionaries.⁵⁷ This forced a spacial and social segregation which may have been demeaning but, given white reluctance to abandon demands for deference, may have offered African ministers more psychological space.⁵⁸

Removal from the central mission station to new, African centres, tended to come with age and with the establishment of increasingly self-governing African churches. And distance offered more than simply psychological space: It facilitated concealment of dubious activities from mission view. Perhaps some of the African church leaders really did have nothing to conceal.⁵⁹ At least some, however, considered the distance an opportunity. In the Methodist Church, this could take the form of organizing concerts.⁶⁰ In the Dutch Reformed Church, this often involved coordinating labour gangs of school-children, hired out to make money for the teacher through Kwayira dances.⁶¹ In the Salvation Army and among the American Methodists, revivals were popular.⁶² For at least some men—notably the Reverend Dzukuso and his colleague the Reverend Edward Pahla—this new freedom facilitated the move from mission authority into Zionist activity.

Some Zionist beliefs and activities could be concealed for years, often producing tensions, as Dzukuso experienced within the Chikore church when he was called in to settle the Zionist problems. And, increasingly, the missions accepted a certain degree of African church governance. Mission governing committees in America and Britain pushed for the Africanization of the churches, and, reluctantly, missionaries began to permit the establishment of Native Teachers' Conventions, the Native Missionary Conference, the Native Christian Conference, and teachers' unions.

Missionaries, however, insisted on their familial regulations and second wives were harder to conceal than beer-brewing. Missionaries' attention to the domestic life of their protégés, however, meant that a properly married man, who lived a domestic life with a wife who managed his household effectively, could believe nearly anything he wished, cultivate clients, and establish a farm and resource base, achieving a psychological and economic freedom within the constraints of mission life.

57. See, for example, the controversy over whether Rev. Thompson Samkange and his family would be allowed to occupy a mission house of the Wesleyan mission in Kwenda. Ranger, "Are We Not Also Men," 26.

58. Psychological space is, admittedly, a vague concept. Novels, however, convey clearly the way in which people in this society shrank, confined, within contexts where white expectations ruled. See Tsitsi Dangaremba's powerful novel, *Nervous Conditions* (London: Women's Press, 1988).

59. This seems to be Ranger's opinion of Rev. Samkange. Hohoza Dube, also, appears to have either abided faithfully by mission regulations or done a stunningly good job of not getting caught.

60. See Carol Summers, "Tickets, Concerts and School Fees: Faith, Finance and Mission Churches in Southern Rhodesia during the 1930s" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for the Sociology of Religion, August 1996).

61. See Summers, "Educational Controversies."

62. See NAZ complaints file on S. A. activity. American Methodist revivals were enthusiastically recorded in the annual journal, held at the Old Mutare Archives.

IV

To date, research on missionary activity and colonialism in Southern Rhodesia has effectively demonstrated how missions educated women and promoted domesticity to develop a new Christian class.⁶³ And research has examined how women saw missions as places of opportunity and escape from unwanted marriages or excessive workload.⁶⁴ Scholars have even examined how women developed marriage strategies, campaigning for different forms of marriage, and pursuing elite-forming marital connections not merely for themselves, but also for their children.⁶⁵ But little work has focused on what opportunities marriage to mission-approved, educated women provided for men. Kristin Mann's study of the transformation of marriage in Lagos, Nigeria, from a model of familial alliances to one of individuals choosing domestic partners, has encouraged examinations of marriage not as a stable institution, but as a centre of individuals' and communities' attempts to cope with the challenges of establishing and maintaining elite status in a colonial, changing world. Mann's study raises questions not merely about women's strategies, but also about men's concepts of marital success.⁶⁶ Within the radical constraints of Southern Rhodesia's segregated society, Mann's questions regarding the creation of a new Christian elite become transformed, leading to an exploration of the ways in which men's marriages produced not merely success, or demonstrable power, but survival and accommodation to the restrictions of a racially conscious official and missionary bureaucracy.

This article, in a preliminary way, has pointed to the ways in which strategic marriage addressed the principal tension within Southern Rhodesia's Africanizing missions of the late 1920s through the 1940s, between missionaries' fear and suspicion of Africans' authority, and their need for newly authoritative Africans to staff the expanding mission structure. Through successful marriage, a man was rendered safe.

Missions' vehement insistence on marriage regulations, beyond their emphasis on any other type of mission rules, demonstrated their commitment to this type of family and form of domestically based control. After 1930, missions increasingly pursued a form of progress which emphasized not individual achievement and charisma of the sort that led to embarrassing scandals, but instead forms of progress promising safe domestic peace.

Yet successful companionate, domestically oriented marriage was more than just a mission strategy for restricting African men. It also provided the African men with crucial social and economic resources. And it limited the costs to respect, autonomy, and adulthood, for men, of working within the mission sphere.

63. For examples, see Schmidt, *Peasants, Traders*; Ranger, "Are We Not Also Men"; Tsuneo Yoshikune, "Black Migrants in a White City: A History of African Harare, 1890-1925" (PhD diss., University of Zimbabwe, 1990); and Carol Summers "'If We Can Educate . . .'"

64. Schmidt, *Peasants, Traders*, 103-54.

65. See Ranger, "Are We Not Also Men," and Mann, *Marrying Well*.

66. Mann, *Marrying Well*, 92-127.