

**The Transition from the Africa Inland Mission to the
Africa Inland Church in Kenya, 1939-1975**

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A thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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1 March 2017

Abstract

This thesis examines the relationship between the Africa Inland Mission (AIM) and the Africa Inland Church (AIC) in Kenya between 1939 and 1975. AIM began laying plans for an African denomination in Kenya in 1939 and established the Africa Inland Church in 1943. The mission did not clearly define the nature of its relationship with the church it founded. The arrangement was informal, and evolved over time. In addition, the relationship between the AIM and the AIC between 1939 and 1975 was often troubled. African independent churches were formed in the 1940s because of dissatisfaction over AIM policies. The mission opposed devolution in the 1950s, even when other mission societies were following this policy in preparation for independence in Kenya. AIM continued to resist a mission church merger in the 1960s and did not hand over properties and powers to the church until 1971.

The study will focus on how the mission's relationship with the church it founded evolved during this period. It will consider how mission principles and policies created tension in the relationship with the church it founded. First, it will examine how mission policy contributed to significant schisms in the 1940s, giving rise to African independent churches. Second, it will look at how AIM interpreted and responded to post-war religious, political and social changes in Kenya. Third, it will explore the reasons for AIM's rejection of a proposed mission-church merger in the late 1950s. Fourth, this study will investigate mission motives for resisting increased African pressure for devolution after independence in Kenya. Fifth, it will consider what happened to the mission and the church in the aftermath of a mission-church merger in 1971.

I, F. Lionel Young III, declare that this thesis has been completed by me and that the work that it embodies is my creation and has not been included in another thesis.

F. Lionel Young III, 1 March 2017

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Acknowledgements

There are a number of people that I would like to thank for the gracious assistance I received on this project. My advisor and mentor, David W. Bebbington, Professor of History at the University of Stirling, has provided able guidance throughout the course of this study. His expertise on global Evangelicalism was invaluable for this project. Phia Steyn at the University of Stirling provided significant help on the African side. Staff members at the Billy Graham Center Archives in Wheaton offered knowledgeable assistance throughout my research, especially Keith Call, Bob Schuster, and Katherine Graber. Members of the Henry Martyn Centre in Cambridge (now the Cambridge Centre for Christianity Worldwide), especially Emma Wild-Wood and Jesse Zink, were gracious with their time. Staff members at the Oxford Centre for Missions Studies (OCMS) were very cooperative, offering a place to consult hard-to-find secondary works on mission studies. Ben Knighton, tutor in African studies at OCMS, provided expert advice during my stay in Oxford. Tom Houston, who pastored Nairobi Baptist Church in the 1960s (and was a friend to several AIM missionaries), spent several days with me at OCMS to talk about the project.

The African Inland Mission International Archives in Nottingham, closed to persons outside the mission community, were made available for research through the kind permission of Andrew Chard, the European director of the mission. I was granted unfettered access to mission records, and the AIM staff welcomed me with English hospitality during several extended stays. Many of the records of the AIM in Nairobi are difficult to access as they are dispersed in colonial papers in the Kenya National Archives (KNA). Richard Ambani, who began working as an archivist at KNA in 1964, though now retired, happily gave his time to assist with finding sources on the mission. Several retired

AIM missionaries who served in leadership positions with AIM in the 1960s and 1970s provided oral interviews at the Africa Inland Mission Retirement Center in Minneola, Florida. Richard Gehman, Roy Entwistle, Roger Coon, Dorothy Hildebrandt and Jonathan Hildebrandt shared invaluable information that has been used in the thesis.

The Lilly Foundation provided generous funding through their Clergy Renewal Program, allowing me to do important research during stays in Cambridge and Nottingham in 2012. The elders and congregation I serve at Calvary Church in Valparaiso, Indiana, have approvingly allowed me to work as both pastor and scholar. This project would not have been possible without their support. I want to give personal thanks to Tony and Rosas Mitchell who provided accommodations for me during extended stays in Scotland. My executive assistant, Emily Johannes, manages the constant demands on my time so that I can do the work I feel most called to do. Tracy Hillwig and Gabe Johannes provided technical assistance. Tim Peters created the maps for the thesis. My wife Stacy has been extremely supportive during the many days and weeks I have spent away from home and has been a constant source of encouragement during the entire project. I hope this work will contribute to a better understanding of the history of missions as well as the remarkable growth of the Christian faith in the non-Western world.

F. Lionel Young
Nairobi, Kenya
February 2017

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Abbreviations

AACC	All-Africa Conference of Churches
ABCS	African Brotherhood Church and Schools
ACCS	African Christian Church and Schools
AEAM	Association of Evangelicals in Africa and Madagascar
AEO	Africa Evangelical Office
AHC	American Home Council (of the Africa Inland Mission)
AIC	Africa Inland Church
AIM	Africa Inland Mission
AIPC	Africa Independent Pentecostal Church
AOC	Africa Orthodox Church
BGC	Billy Graham Center
BHS	British Home Council (of the Africa Inland Mission)
CAM	Central American Mission
CIM	China Inland Mission
CNEC	Christian Nationals Evangelism Commission
CCC	Central Church Council (of the Africa Inland Church)
CCK	Christian Council of Kenya
CFC	Central Field Council
CMS	Church Missionary Society
CSM	Church of Scotland Mission
ECWA	Evangelical Churches of West Africa
EFMA	Evangelical Foreign Mission Association

GFF	Gospel Furthering Fellowship
GNCA	Good News Church of Africa
KAU	Kenya African Union
KANU	Kenya African National Union
KFC	Kenya Field Council
KNA	Kenya National Archives
NAE	National Association of Evangelicals
IC	International Council (of the Africa Inland Mission)
ICCC	International Council of Christian Churches
ICOWE	International Congress on World Evangelism
IMC	International Missionary Council
NCKK	National Council of Churches of Kenya
PMC	Philadelphia Missionary Council
RVA	Rift Valley Academy
SIM	Sudan Interior Mission
SAGM	South Africa General Mission
STC	Scott Theological College
SVM	Student Volunteer Movement
WEF	World Evangelical Fellowship
WCC	World Council of Churches

'In humble dependence upon our God we have moved steadily forward,
no doubt in our blindness making mistakes, for we are still human.'
--Peter Cameron Scott (1867-1896)

1

Introduction

The Africa Inland Mission (AIM) was founded in 1895 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In 1943 AIM formally established the Africa Inland Church (AIC) in Kenya and in 1962-1966 it helped create the Association of Evangelicals in Africa and Madagascar (AEAM). The AIC became one of the largest Protestant denominations in Kenya, and the AEAM was dedicated to the diffusion of Evangelicalism throughout the African continent.¹ Several Evangelical notables were members of the AIM mission community, including Arthur T. Pierson (1837-1911)², Reuben A. Torrey (1856-1928)³, Charles E. Hurlburt (1860-1936)⁴,

¹ David B. Barrett, *Schism and Renewal in Africa: An Analysis of Six Thousand Religious Movements* (Oxford:

² R. N. Shuff, 'Pierson, Arthur Tappan', in *Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals*, Timothy Larsen, David Bebbington and Mark Noll, eds. (Leicester, UK: Inter-Varsity Press, 2003).

³ W. V. Trollinger, Jr., 'Torrey, Reuben Archer', in *Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals*.

⁴ Robert T. Coote, 'Hurlburt, Charles E', in *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions*, Gerald H. Anderson, ed. (New York: Simon & Schuster Macmillan, 1998).

C. T. Studd (1860-1931)⁵, Harry A. Ironside (1874-1951)⁶, Oswald J. Smith (1889-1996)⁷ and Philip S. Henman (1899-1986).⁸ AIM comprised people of faith from Australia, Canada, South Africa, the United Kingdom and the United States who were united around common Evangelical commitments that transcended nationhood and denomination. Given the mission's important role in the spread of Christianity in Africa during the twentieth century, it is remarkable that the only published histories of AIM are hagiographical accounts written by former missionaries or mission-published narratives used largely for promotional purposes.⁹ In addition, the history of the mission and the church it founded in Africa has garnered little scholarly attention. This study is an attempt to fill part of this lacuna. The thesis will focus on AIM's resistance during decolonisation to merge with the church it established. It will explore the relationship between the mission and the church within the larger context of transatlantic Evangelicalism.

This study covers the history of the AIM beginning in 1939, when a carefully prepared memorandum from the British Home Council was circulated among missionaries in the Colony of Kenya encouraging the establishment of an African denomination. The thesis concludes in 1975, a few years after the mission finally handed over its property and powers to the church in Kenya and the same year that the African church held a celebration

⁵ J. J. Bonk, 'Studd, C. (Charles) T. (Thomas)', in *Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals*.

⁶ T. Gloege, 'Ironside, Henry ('Harry') Allen', in *Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals*.

⁷ D. A. Goertz, 'Smith, Oswald Jeffrey', in *Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals*.

⁸ David J. Jeremy, 'Henman, Philip Sydney', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Volume 26 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

⁹ The historical accounts on the mission will be discussed in the introduction below, with a more thorough review of the significant materials in the conclusion.

in Nairobi marking its '80th anniversary'.¹⁰ It was also the year in which the World Council of Churches (WCC) held its Fifth Assembly in the city of Nairobi, an attestation to the rapid growth of Christianity on the African continent in the twentieth century.¹¹ The period 1939-1975 allows for an evaluation of the relationship between the mission and the church before and after independence in Kenya. The timeline also calls for a consideration of some of the changes that were taking place within Evangelicalism during the 1940s through the 1970s while it was simultaneously being transmitted to the non-Western world. This chapter will provide a brief introduction to the larger background for the thesis, along with a discussion of the relevant literature. An orientation to the thesis will be provided that will include an explanation of the delimitations of the project, a brief introduction to the land and people of Kenya, as well as notes on names and places. A concise survey of the mission from its inception in 1895 will be given with reference to developments that impinge on the history of the mission for the period 1939 to 1975. An excursus is also provided on the complex organizational structure of the mission. The final portion of this chapter will discuss the sources that were used for this project and provide an overview of the contents of the following chapters.

¹⁰ The AIC frequently marked the arrival of AIM missionaries in 1895 as the year when its church was established in Kenya.

¹¹ Ernest W. Lefever, *Amsterdam to Nairobi: The World Council of Churches and the Third World* (Washington D.C.: Ethics and Public Policy Center of Georgetown University, 1979), 40-44.

Background and Relevant Literature

The Africa Inland Mission was an Evangelical mission society, influenced by American and British Fundamentalism in the twentieth century, carrying out its work during decolonisation in East Africa. The history of the AIM is therefore intertwined with transatlantic Evangelicalism, the American and British Fundamentalist movement(s) and Protestant missions in Africa during the colonial and post-colonial periods. The mission's relationship with the church it founded was directly affected by its identity as an Evangelical mission, the influences of American and British Fundamentalism, and the transition from mission to church during decolonisation. Over the past twenty-five years, these subjects have received fresh treatment by historians and provide new directions for exploring the relationship of the AIM with the church it established in Africa.

Transatlantic Evangelicalism

The founding members of the Africa Inland Mission were card-carrying members of the Evangelical movement. As this study will demonstrate, the mission zealously guarded its Evangelical identity in the twentieth century and this directly influenced its relationship with the African church it established in Kenya. Evangelicals found theological direction in the works of the German reformer Martin Luther (1483-1546) and the French theologian John Calvin (1509-1563). They are particularly inspired by the lives and legacies of the New England theologian Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), the English clergyman John Wesley (1703-1790) and the British revivalist George Whitefield (1714-1770). The historiography of Evangelicalism over the past twenty-five years has been dominated by David Bebbington's ground breaking study *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* first published in 1989. Bebbington's work identified four central

traits of Evangelicalism: *conversionism*, the belief that lives need to be changed; *biblicism*, a striking emphasis on the Bible as God's word; *activism*, the call for all believers to engage in gospel work; and *crucicentrism*, the belief that Christ's death is essential for reconciling man to God.¹² Bebbington's taxonomy is now cited *de rigueur* in both the scholarly and popular literature on the movement.¹³ The 1994 publication *Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles and Beyond, 1700-1990* fleshed out Bebbington's quadrilateral in a global context over a period of nearly three centuries. The central argument put forward in these essays is that Evangelicalism is held together by 'a consistent pattern of convictions and attitudes' although it has been characterized by transatlantic and interdenominational diversity since its inception in the early eighteenth century.¹⁴ Evangelicalism is, therefore, a multinational religious movement dispersed in a variety of Protestant denominations of nearly every stripe.

The standard history of global Evangelicalism is the series of monographs published by InterVarsity Press under the title 'A History of Evangelicalism: People, Movements, and Ideas in the English-Speaking World' (2004 –). In volume one, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys* (2004), Mark Noll covers the birth and early development of the Evangelical movement in the eighteenth century. Noll asserts that while there are difficulties in 'controlling the subject' of such a diverse

¹² David W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (Grand Rapids: MI: Baker, 1989), 1-19.

¹³ Timothy Larsen, 'The Reception Given *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain* Since Its Publication in 1989' in Michael A. G. Haykin and Kenneth J. Stewart, eds., *The Emergence of Evangelicalism: Exploring Historical Continuities* (Nottingham: Apollos, 2008), 21-36. For a recent example of its use in pop-culture publications, see Aaron Cline Handbury, 'The Evangelicals', *Relevant Magazine*, Issue 81 (May/June 2016), 44-45.

¹⁴ Mark A. Noll, David W. Bebbington and George A. Rawlyk, eds. *Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and Beyond, 1700-1990* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 6.

movement, 'it is still possible to present a coherent history of evangelicalism'.¹⁵ He argues that Evangelicalism 'should never be looked upon as a hard-edged, narrowly defined denomination'.¹⁶ It is instead a movement of Christians who hold to 'a set of defining beliefs and practices' and are related to each other through 'a large network of churches, voluntary societies, books and periodicals, and personal networks'.¹⁷ In *The Expansion of Evangelicalism: The Age of Wilberforce, More, Chalmers and Finney* (2007), John Wolffe covers the history of Evangelicalism during the first half of the nineteenth century. He argues that Evangelicals maintained their diversity in the nineteenth century, but they also 'maintained an underlying sense of shared spiritual identity' and sought to express this in the formation of networks, mission societies and associations like the Evangelical Alliance (1846).¹⁸ Bebbington covers the second half of the nineteenth century in *The Dominance of Evangelicalism: The Age of Spurgeon and Moody* (2005). He describes some of the causes of Evangelical variety, which include factors like geography, denomination and class, while also arguing that there persisted in the nineteenth century 'strong evangelical bonds' that held the movement together.¹⁹ He also shows that the late nineteenth century was an era in which Evangelicalism became the dominant form of religion in the English-speaking world. Geoffrey R. Treloar covers the first half of the twentieth century in *The Disruption of*

¹⁵ Mark A. Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003), 20.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 21.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 19-21.

¹⁸ John Wolffe, *The Expansion of Evangelicalism: The Age of Wilberforce, More, Chalmers and Finney* (Downers Grove, IL: InverVarsity, 2007), 246.

¹⁹ David Bebbington, *The Dominance of Evangelicalism: The Age of Spurgeon and Moody* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 52-81.

Evangelicalism: The Age of Torrey, Mott, McPherson and Hammond (2016). Treloar argues that the eighteenth-century 'evangelical tradition' was carried forward into the nineteenth century and that it 'intensified during the *fin de siècle* years'.²⁰ Evangelicalism during the first half of the twentieth century is therefore marked by continuity with the previous two centuries, even though the movement endured a period of 'disruption' during the Modernist-Fundamentalist controversies and the onslaught of two world wars. Brian Stanley's *The Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism: The Age of Billy Graham and John Stott* (2013) provides a treatment of the spread of global Evangelicalism during the second half of the twentieth century. He gives prominence to the work of Evangelical mission societies, not only for the spread of global Evangelicalism in the twentieth century, but also for what he calls the 'increasingly multidirectional nature of evangelical internationalism'.²¹ Stanley's contribution to the series also situates the movement in the transatlantic revivals of the eighteenth century, held together by common Evangelical traits, but carried forward by Evangelical Christians and diffused in the non-Western world through the work of Evangelical mission agencies. He identifies the International Congress on World Evangelism (ICOWE) held at Lausanne in 1974 as the event at which it became clear that 'evangelicalism was now a multicultural global community that included a large and rapidly growing sector that was neither white nor affluent'.²² AIM's desire to protect its Evangelical identity in Kenya had direct implications for its relationship with the church it established. The mission was not a denomination, but it functioned in some ways like a

²⁰ Geoffrey R. Treloar, *The Disruption of Evangelicalism: The Age of Torrey, Mott, McPherson and Hammond* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2016), 6.

²¹ Brian Stanley, *The Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism: The Age of Billy Graham and John Stott* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2013), 61.

²² *Ibid.*, 155.

denomination, as it increasingly diffused its 'brand' of Christianity to the non-Western world.

Douglas Sweeney's 2005 monograph *The American Evangelical Story: A History of the Movement* provides a survey of American Evangelicalism from the seventeenth century to the late twentieth century. Sweeney's work may be considered the American counterpart to Bebbington's study on the history of Evangelicalism in Britain (stylistic variations notwithstanding). He builds on Bebbington's taxonomy and shows the strong correlation between the Evangelical impulse to evangelize the world and the modern global missions movement. Sweeney puts it simply: 'Evangelicals care about nothing more than evangelizing the world'.²³ His work ties together Bebbington's quadrilateral, arguing that Evangelicals believe the Bible (biblicism) teaches that lives need to be converted (conversionism), that the cross (crucicentrism) is the means of this conversion and that all Christians should actively work to take this news to the nations (activism). As such, these inherited convictions gave rise to 'unprecedented numbers of people engaged in missions abroad, with the backing of an unprecedented evangelistic network'.²⁴ AIM inherited these Evangelical convictions, and its determination to remain focused on 'evangelizing the world' even as conditions evolved in Kenya created difficulties for the mission.

American and British Fundamentalism

Fundamentalism was a movement that arose within the Evangelical movement as a response to the rise of theological changes in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century

²³ Douglas A. Sweeney, *The American Evangelical Story: A History of the Movement* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 79.

²⁴ Sweeney, *The American Evangelical Story*, 24, 79-106.

Protestantism. Fundamentalists became increasingly concerned over the growing acceptance of Darwinian evolution, the application of the historical-critical method to biblical interpretation (causing some to question the Bible's reliability) and the shift from evangelistic work to what became known as the Social Gospel. 'Liberal' theologians worked to create a progressive Protestantism that was in step with modern times, while conservative Evangelicals criticized this agenda and laboured to defend the 'fundamentals' of the faith.²⁵ These controversies created a rift in Protestantism during the early twentieth century, dividing clergymen, laypersons, denominations and mission societies in the United States and the United Kingdom. This background is important because AIM board members, mission officials, and missionaries from Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States were significantly influenced by the debates of the Modernist-Fundamentalist Controversies and this is reflected in mission policy.²⁶ Fundamentalist leaders like A. C. Dixon (1854-1925) and R. A. Torrey (1856-1928) were board members of AIM during the first quarter of the twentieth century. Dixon and Torrey co-edited *The Fundamentals* (1910-1915), a series of essays published by a cross-section of Evangelical leaders who were opposed to theological liberalism. Harry A. Ironside, a prominent North American Fundamentalist, was elected to serve as the president of the American Home Council of the AIM between 1942 and 1947.²⁷ Most AIM missionaries during the first half

²⁵ Garry Dorrien, *The Making of American Liberal Theology: Imagining Progressive Religion, 1805-1900* (London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001).

²⁶ James Alan Patterson, 'The Loss of a Protestant Missionary Consensus: Foreign Missions and the Fundamentalist-Modernist Conflict' in Joel A. Carpenter and Wilbert R. Shenk, eds., *Earthen Vessels: American Evangelicals and Foreign Missions, 1880-1980* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 73-91.

²⁷ A discussion on the involvement of early Fundamentalist leaders in the AIM can be found in Bernard K. Nzioka, 'Education Among the Akamba People, 1895-1970: An Investigation of the Educational Policies of the

of the twentieth century received their training at Fundamentalist Bible colleges and espoused Fundamentalist convictions, significantly flavouring the makeup of the mission. For example, AIM missionaries were single-minded devotees of evangelistic labour, something that created conflicts when Africans wanted the mission to adopt more progressive educational policies. Fundamentalists were also hawkish about ecumenical relationships, and this created significant tension between the AIM and the AIC when African church leaders seemed less concerned about ecclesiastical separation.

Several important studies provide the background for understanding the Fundamentalist movement. Timothy P. Weber's 1979 work *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming: American Premillennialism, 1875-1925* asserts that nineteenth-century millennial views merged with Fundamentalist concerns in the early twentieth century. Webber argues that while millennial views were present on 'the fringes of American evangelicalism' in the late nineteenth century, during the early twentieth century these views became more pronounced.²⁸ The Great War (1914-1918) became the Fundamentalist *exempli gratia* that the world was coming to an end and that mankind was living in the final age or last 'dispensation' before the return of Christ. Webber's work also notes that there is a clear connection between late nineteenth-century pre-millennialism and the independent missions movement where evangelism became the most pressing matter. One of the most significant effects of this theological worldview was an internalized sense of urgency in the work of missions coupled with a single-minded focus

African Inland Mission and the Development of Education in the Akamba Community' (PhD diss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2010), 219-244.

²⁸ Timothy P. Weber, *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming: American Premillennialism, 1875-1925* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 177.

on evangelistic work.²⁹ The series of essays in *Earthen Vessels: American Evangelicals and Foreign Missions, 1880-1980* focuses on effects of the Modernist-Fundamentalist Controversies on Evangelical missions. Dana Robert's contribution "'The Crisis of Mission': Premillennial Mission Theory and the Origins of Independent Evangelical Missions' observes how premillennial doctrine shaped the way missionaries carried out their work. Fundamentalist missionaries went to the field with 'a single-issue mentality and a quick results pragmatism' that rendered other causes less important.³⁰ Joel Carpenter's contribution, 'Propagating the Faith Once Delivered: The Fundamentalist Missionary Enterprise, 1920-1945' shows how Fundamentalism and missions became intertwined through what he termed a 'Fundamentalist Network' that included Bible colleges, interdenominational mission networks and mission societies like the Sudan Interior Mission, the China Inland Mission and the Africa Inland Mission.³¹ Carpenter also argues that Fundamentalists who were leading non-denominational mission agencies like AIM were 'generally moderate to "progressive" along the spectrum of attitudes toward other Christians'.³² The sense of 'urgency' in missionary work and the single-minded devotion to evangelistic work directly affected AIM's relationship with the church it founded. Carpenter's claim about the hue of interdenominational missions will be considered in the thesis.

²⁹ Ibid., 74-75.

³⁰ Dana Robert, "'The Crisis of Missions': Premillennial Mission Theory and the Origins of Independent Evangelical Missions' in Joel A. Carpenter and Wilbert R. Shenk, eds., *Earthen Vessels: American Evangelicals and Foreign Missions, 1880-1980* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 32.

³¹ Joel A. Carpenter, 'Propagating the Faith Once Delivered: The Fundamentalist Missionary Enterprise, 1920-1945' in Carpenter and Shenk, eds., *Earthen Vessels*, 101.

³² Ibid., 125.

The most influential study on American Fundamentalism is George Marsden's *Fundamentalism and American Culture*. First published in 1982 and reprinted in 2006, Marsden's work is significant for its emphasis on Fundamentalism as a response to changes taking place in both religion and the wider culture. He argues that Fundamentalists were just as concerned about the growing popularity of 'worldly amusements' like alcohol consumption, dancing, theatre attendance and smoking as they were about the proliferation of evolution and the influence of liberal theology.³³ The social and the religious (as well as the political) converged and Fundamentalists became militant social critics and frustrated cultural outsiders more determined than ever to save as many people as possible before the return of Christ. AIM missionaries often exhibited these same Fundamentalists attributes in a way that created tension between the mission and its converts.

Joel A. Carpenter's 1997 study *Revive Us Again: The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism* is in some ways a sequel to Marsden's work. Carpenter covers the evolution of Fundamentalism from the 1930s into the 1950s. He shows how the most influential Fundamentalists eventually emerged in the late 1940s as new Evangelicals, intent on losing the 'Fundamentalist baggage' while retaining their conservative theological credentials. 'New Evangelical' leaders wanted to downplay (or abandon) the Fundamentalist preoccupation with the inconsequential (drinking, smoking, theatre attendance *et al.*) and recover a robust social agenda (concern for the world's modern problems) while retaining their evangelistic fervour. During the 1940s and 1950s, conservative Evangelicals like Harold Ockenga (1905-1985), Carl F. H. Henry (1913-2003)

³³ George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 153-164.

and Billy Graham (1918-) abandoned the Fundamentalist label and helped create institutions like the National Association of Evangelicals (1943), the Evangelical Theological Society (1949) and the World Evangelical Fellowship (1951). These organizations were intent on discarding the Fundamentalist nonessentials while preserving the essence of historic Evangelical theology. As such, they were also aggressive in their opposition to the growing influence of the World Council of Churches and its enlarging international network. As this study will show, globetrotting Evangelical leaders like Henry and Graham inspired mission leaders to guide AIM away from extreme Fundamentalism and create indigenous Evangelical networks like the Africa Evangelical Office (1962) and the Association of Evangelicals in Africa and Madagascar (1966).

In *Evangelicalism and Fundamentalism in the United Kingdom during the Twentieth Century*, scholars from both sides of the Atlantic explore the similarities and differences between Evangelicalism and Fundamentalism in the United Kingdom and provide comparisons with counterpart movements in North America.³⁴ The study argues that while Fundamentalism did influence British Evangelicalism, its effects were less pronounced in the British Isles. British Fundamentalists in general held more divergent views on eschatology, were less critical of social reform (especially through education), and they often defined personal and ecclesiastical separation differently. The Africa Inland Mission was an Evangelical mission influenced by the Fundamentalist movement but comprised of persons from both side of the Atlantic who were shaped to a greater or lesser extent by their own national experiences. Transatlantic differences were to prove crucial in mission policy.

³⁴ David Bebbington and David Ceri Jones, eds., *Evangelicalism and Fundamentalism in the United Kingdom During the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

Missions, Colonialism and Devolution

Nationalism became more palpable in the Colony of Kenya after the Second World War and gained momentum in the 1950s with the Mau Mau Uprising (ca. 1952-1956). As this study will show, colonialism, nationalism and the coming of independence on 12 December 1963 directly affected the relationship between the mission and the church in Kenya. Stephen Neill's *A History of Christian Missions* served as the standard introduction to the history of Christian mission until the 1990s. The chapters entitled 'The Heyday of Colonialism, 1858-1914' (chapter 10), 'From Mission to Church' (chapter 12) and 'Yesterday and Today, 1914 and After' (chapter 13) provide a narrative that portrays the Christian missionary movement as inseparably linked with colonial expansion. To use his words: 'The colonizing powers were the Christian powers.'³⁵ Neill's 1966 sequel *Colonialism and Christian Missions* was an exploration of the relationship between Christian missions and colonialism in greater depth. He credits Roland Oliver's masterful study *The Missionary Factor in East Africa* for influencing his thinking on the subject. Oliver had argued that during the colonial period, 'the desire to communicate western civilisation along with Christianity was both fully developed and unselfconscious'.³⁶ Neill does not cast all missionaries and their parent bodies in the same light, nor did he portray all missionaries as de-facto agents of the colonial powers. His work did, however, present a tightly woven narrative that portrayed Christian missionaries and colonial powers as inseparable bedfellows, even if they endured the occasional lover's quarrel. AIM's relationship with the colonial authorities will be considered in various places in this thesis.

³⁵ Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Mission* (London: Penguin Books, 1964), 414.

³⁶ Roland Oliver, *The Missionary Factor in East Africa* (London: Longmans, 1952), 289.

In the 1990s R. E. Frykenberg, Dana Robert, Brian Stanley, Andrew Walls and a community of mission historians in their wake, began publishing scholarly studies that explored in greater depth the relationship between Christianity and colonialism using more in depth case studies. Stanley's ground-breaking monograph *The Bible and the Flag: Protestant Missions and British Imperialism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* countered the prevailing assumption that missionaries always worked 'hand in hand with colonial powers', arguing that the dynamic interaction between imperial powers and missionaries was 'complex and ambiguous'.³⁷ In 1996 Andrew Walls published his influential collection of essays *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith*. Walls wanted to look more carefully at the religious and theological motivations of missions and missionaries. He argued that Christian missionary endeavours have historically been marked by 'two opposing tendencies', which he identifies as 'indigenization' and 'transformation'.³⁸ He made the case that missionaries generally attempted to work within indigenous cultures ('indigenization') and that their work often 'liberated' (or led to their liberation) and even at times preserved cultures (e.g., developing written languages, preserving historical memory). At the same time, he went on to say that missionaries also worked to bring about change or transformation within the culture. His conclusion was that the 'tension' that is caused by these two principles often produced a 'battleground' on the mission field.

³⁷ Brian Stanley, *The Bible and the Flag: Protestant Missions and British Imperialism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Leicester: Apollos, 1990), 11, 184, passim.

³⁸ Andrew Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1996), 3-9.

The Studies in the History of Christian Missions series edited by Brian Stanley and R. E. Frykenberg casts more light on mission 'battlegrounds', where tension often flared during the period of imperial expansion and decolonisation. Some twenty volumes containing more than two hundred essays have been published since 2000. The essays are the work of established and emerging historians providing in-depth analyses of Western mission societies working in Africa, Asia and Latin American during the modern period (ca. 1700-2000). While none of the works focuses on the history of the AIM, the series offers fresh interpretations that challenge simplistic assumptions about the relationship between Christian missions and colonialism. Most important for this study are the insightful essays in *Missions, Nationalism, and the End of Empire* examining the responses and reactions of mission societies to the rise of nationalism and rapid decolonisation in India, China, Central Africa, Kenya, South Africa and Nigeria. The accumulated evidence put forth in these essays 'highlights the danger of generalizing' given the unique political contexts, the array of different mission societies, the influence of varied theological assumptions, and the views of individual missionaries.³⁹ Especially relevant is the assertion that mission societies 'were made up of individual men and women, many of them people of no great political sophistication.'⁴⁰ While generalizations remain possible, these essays encourage scholars to look at the relationship between a particular mission organization and its church in a given colony/nation with a degree of openness.

In *Converting Colonialism: Visions and Realities in Mission History, 1706-1914* (2008), several scholars counter the claim that missionaries were enthusiastic supporters of the

³⁹ Brian Stanley, 'Christianity and the End of Empire' in Brian Stanley, ed., *Missions, Nationalism, and the End of Empire* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 8.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 9.

idea of colonial expansion. While this work falls outside of the periodization for this thesis, it does overlap with the founding of the AIM in 1895. The editor for this volume, Dana Robert, synthesizes research on mission societies in India, China, East Africa, West Africa and South Africa (over a two hundred year period) and argues that missionaries were simply 'pragmatic' evangelists who were carrying out their work within a colonial framework. Mission societies, and individual missionaries representing them, 'converted colonialism' for their own aims, only cooperating with colonial governments when it was consistent with the 'gospel values' they cherished more highly.⁴¹ Seen in this light, missionaries were in effect 'gospel pragmatists'.

In another work in this series, *British Missionaries and the End of Empire: East, Central, and Southern Africa, 1939-1964* (2011), John Stuart argues that some missionaries did not favour immediate devolution because they were sincerely concerned that rapid decolonisation in the 1960s would leave the churches they had established without adequately trained clergy and essential financial resources. As such, missionaries often 'proved less able to adapt to the changing circumstances than either the government in London or nationalists in Africa'.⁴² It is worth considering whether or not AIM's hesitancy to turn over its property and ministries to the African church was influenced in part by its concern for the church's well being. Dana Robert's *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion* provides a survey of Christian missions that reflects more recent interpretations on the relationship between missions and colonialism. Robert's work

⁴¹ Dana Robert, ed., *Converting Colonialism: Visions and Realities in Mission History, 1707-1914* (Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2008), 1-20.

⁴² John Stuart, *British Missionaries and the End of Empire: East, Central, and Southern Africa, 1939-1964* (Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2011), 199, passim.

provides a historical survey of the missionary movement with critical assessments on various themes in the history of Christian missions. These themes include a review of critiques of the missionary movement in scholarship and literature, the complex relationship between missionaries, human rights and land in the non-Western world and the significant role of women in mission societies. Her work effectively updates Neill's introduction to Christian missions.

Adrian Hastings' *A History of Christianity in Africa, 1950-1975* has served for more than thirty-five years as the standard work on Christianity in Africa during the period of decolonisation. He identifies the Sudan Interior Mission and the Africa Inland Mission as the largest of the nondenominational societies working on the African continent.⁴³ He observes that during the late 1950s 'the dominant and prevailing aim' was the devolution of the mission and that 'some missionaries wisely handed over their property and responsibilities from the start to the new church' though others developed an 'uneasy "partnership"' that ended up frustrating the church.⁴⁴ Hastings' larger conclusion is that decolonisation in Africa is a period of transition from mission Christianity to African Christianity. His otherwise helpful work only devotes a single paragraph to the topic of devolution and no examples or references are provided. Zablon Nthamburi's survey *From Mission to Church: Handbook of Christianity in East Africa* discusses (albeit briefly) the devolution of the largest Protestant missions working in East Africa. His work shows that the Church Missionary Society and the Methodist Missionary Society handed over their property and authority to their respective churches in 1955, while the Church of Scotland

⁴³Adrian Hastings, *A History of African Christianity, 1950-1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 45.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 160.

Mission devolved its authority in 1956. The Africa Inland Mission was relatively late among these major mission societies and did not hand over its authority to the church until 1971.⁴⁵ No reasons are given for the lateness of AIM's devolution. W. B. Anderson's *The Church in East Africa, 1840-1974* briefly discusses the AIM 'hand over' of the mission to the church by saying that there were 'Great revolts in the Africa Inland Church in Tanzania and Kenya over continuing A.I.M. power' and that 'in 1971, after an explosion of discontent, the property and personnel of the Mission was turned over to the A.I.C.'⁴⁶ This thesis endeavours to provide a case study in devolution and shed some light on the 'great revolts' in the AIM and the AIC.

The scholarly output on the history of the mission is meagre. This may be due in part to some of the problems with sources (which will be discussed below). John A. Gration's 1974 dissertation 'The Relationship Between the Africa Inland Mission and Its National Church between 1895 and 1971'⁴⁷ is written by an observer-participant of the mission and contains some information that could only have been obtained from being personally present at meetings during which mission-church fusion was being discussed the late 1960s. (He culls from a few sources not available in archives.) Gration's thesis, written more than forty years ago, is the only work that covers the relationship between the mission and the church during decolonisation. He argues that the rise of nationalism played a central role in the strained relationship between the church and the mission, and he gives considerable detail about the arguments that ensued in the late 1960s. His

⁴⁵ Zablon Nthamburi, *From Mission to Church: A Handbook of Christianity in East Africa* (Nairobi: Uzima Press, 1995), 24-25.

⁴⁶ W. B. Anderson, *The Church in East Africa, 1840-1974* (Dodoma: Central Tanganyika Press, 1977), 145.

⁴⁷ John Alexander Gration, 'The Relationship of the Africa Inland Mission and Its National Church in Kenya Between 1895 and 1971' (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1974).

dissertation covers a wide period (1895-1971) and has the feel of a well-informed historical narrative rather than a tightly argued thesis. His study ends in 1971 and provides no discussion of the church's first bishop or the events that followed the hand-over of the mission to the church. Gration's work paved the way for the present study, providing some important historical markers in the history of the mission, as well as eyewitness accounts to tensions that existed in the mission in the late 1960s.

Stephen Morad's 1997 thesis 'The Founding Principles of the Africa Inland Mission and Their Interaction with the African Context in Kenya, 1895-1939' was also written by an AIM missionary.⁴⁸ His thesis provides a study of the early years of the mission and the tensions that existed both within the mission as well as between missionaries and Africans up to 1939. Morad argues that the founding principles of the AIM as an independent faith mission often created conflict on the field. AIM was a field-managed mission (rather than being managed by home councils), it was nondenominational (it had no parent body), it did not allow members to solicit funds and it was single-minded in its commitment to evangelistic work. In effect, mission convictions became sources of conflict for AIM as it carried out its work in Kenya. James Karanja's 2009 dissertation 'The Missionary Movement in Colonial Kenya: The Foundation of Africa Inland Church' highlights cultural tensions that existed between missionaries and Kikuyu Christians in the 1930s, leading up to the formation of African church in 1943.⁴⁹ His study is limited to the relationship

⁴⁸ Stephen Morad, 'The Founding Principles of the Africa Inland Mission and Their Interaction with the Africa Context in Kenya from 1895 to 1939: The Study of a Faith Mission' (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 1997).

⁴⁹ James Karanja, *The Missionary Movement in Colonial Kenya: The Foundation of Africa Inland Church* (Göttingen: Cuvillier, 2009).

between AIM and the Kikuyu, and ends in the 1950s. There is no discussion of devolution, but he does deal with some of the problems on mission-church tensions during the 1940s.

There are two standard histories of the mission and one recent work on the history of the AIC. All of these works are written by former AIM missionaries and have the feel of promotional pieces. The first general history of the mission, *Garden of Miracles: The Story of the Africa Inland Mission*, was written by AIM missionary Kenneth Richardson and published in 1968.⁵⁰ The book was republished in 1976 with an additional chapter written by AIM missionary Edward Arensen, who also served as an editor for *Inland Africa*, the mission's official organ. The book provides a geographical survey of the mission, covering the expansion of AIM in Kenya, Tanganyika, the Belgian Congo, West Nile-Uganda, the Central African Republic and Southern Sudan. There is an unfortunate error in the epilogue that can be misleading to the overall narrative. Richardson lists 16 October 1961 (rather than 16 October 1971) as the 'historic day' when the 'Mission turned over to the National Church' its authority and leadership.⁵¹ The epilogue briefly mentions the church's first bishop, but there is no information on him or his work in the 1970s. The East Africa Revival is briefly touched on in Richardson's history, and there are only passing references to the church or African workers. There are no references to breakaway denominations in the 1940s or hints that significant mission-church tensions existed in the 1960s.

⁵⁰ Kenneth Richardson, *Garden of Miracles: The Story of the Africa Inland Mission* (London: Africa Inland Mission, 1968).

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 256.

Dick Anderson's 1994 book *We Felt Like Grasshoppers: The Story of Africa Inland Mission* has become the standard history of the AIM.⁵² Anderson worked as a medical missionary with the AIM from 1956 and served in several capacities with the mission, including general secretary, a position he held until his retirement in 1990. Anderson covers the history of the mission from its founding in 1895 to the late 1980s. The story of AIM is recounted by highlighting the work of celebrated missionaries beginning with Peter Cameron Scott, and as the mission expands, following other well-known figures like Charles Hurlburt, C. T. Studd (who served briefly with AIM), Lee Downing, Carl Becker, Tom Collins, Erik Barnett, and Jonathan Hildebrandt. Anderson highlights the work of Africans in a few places, giving biographical sketches of a few African evangelists and pastors, though the first bishop of the AIC is mentioned only in passing. There is some information on the problems associated with mission-church relationships, and he helpfully discloses that there were frustrations and disagreements on mission organization during the 1950s and 1960s. There is a candid confession that the mission mismanaged the educational crisis in the 1940s but no mention of the independent churches that emerged. The problems surrounding devolution are blamed on the 'winds of change' in Africa, but there is no further analysis.

Richard Gehman's *From Death to Life: The Birth of the African Inland Church in Kenya, 1895-1945* is a hagiographical work that provides historical detail gleaned from documented conversations with other missionaries and primary source materials in his

⁵² Dick Anderson, *We Felt Like Grasshoppers: The Story of Africa Inland Mission* (Nottingham, UK: Crossway, 1994).

possession.⁵³ Gehman's work does not provide critical reflection on the history of the mission, and there is no attempt to interact with the relevant scholarship on the history of Christian missions. His work does give due attention to the leadership of Africans and shows that the AIC was pressing for devolution in the 1960s. He also observes that the mission had difficulty adjusting to the rise of nationalism and Africanisation. The mission's reluctance to handover its authority to the African church it established and the acrimony that ensued is largely missing from official histories of the mission.

The Delimitations of the Study

This thesis is particularly concerned with the attitudes of missionaries and mission leaders toward the African church and its leaders during the period under consideration. While the study considers African perspectives, it provides a more penetrating examination of missionary beliefs and attitudes during decolonisation in Kenya. Though the African voice is heard, the archival material available for the study called greater attention to the deliberations of missionaries.⁵⁴ The time period 1939-1975 was chosen in order to trace the evolving relationship of the Western mission with the African church before and after independence in Kenya. The study is limited to Kenya, the mission's stronghold in East Africa and its oldest territory. While AIM planted churches in the Protectorate of Uganda, Tanganyika, the Belgian Congo, the Central African Republic and the Sudan, the emerging

⁵³ Richard Gehman, *From Death to Life: The Birth of the Africa Inland Church in Kenya* (Ann Arbor, MI: C-M Books, 2013).

⁵⁴ The African voice is present but muted in mission records (as one might expect). During the research for the project considerable effort was made to access the archives of the Africa Inland Church in Nairobi. I made several enquires and visits to the AIC office in an effort to do so and was finally informed by a member of the staff that special permission to examine records must be granted by the AIC bishop. On one particular occasion I secured an appointment with the bishop, and after a considerable wait was informed by an assistant that the archives were not currently available for consultation.

African churches developed independently in each territory. (This will be discussed more fully in chapter 2.) However, developments in adjacent colonies and territories will be mentioned as they impinged on the relationship between the mission and the church in Kenya.

The Land, the People and the Mission

The modern nation-state of Kenya has a landmass of 224,960 square miles, making it nearly identical in size to the Iberian Peninsula. Kenya's geography may be divided into four regions: the coastal area, the drylands (or arid plains), the highlands and the Lake Victoria region.⁵⁵ The total population of Kenya in 1900 was approximately 1 million and increased to a more than 8 million by 1962, the year before independence.⁵⁶ The indigenous inhabitants of Kenya are largely comprised of four linguistic families: Nilotic, Bantu, Hamitic (or Cushitic), and Nilo-Hamitic (the latter two families are sometimes grouped together).⁵⁷ Though a settler colony, only one per cent of Kenya's population has historically comprised members of these groups (Arabs, Asians and Europeans). The coastal area is mostly humid to sub-humid and stretches some 250 miles from the border of Somalia in the north, down to Tanzania in the south. Kenya's coastline resembles a tropical paradise rimmed by white-sand beaches, lush vegetation and towering palms. Willis R. Hotchkiss, one of the original seven missionaries to arrive in Kenya in 1895, wrote

⁵⁵ Mario Azevedo, ed. *Kenya: The Land, The People, The Nation* (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 1993), 63-66.

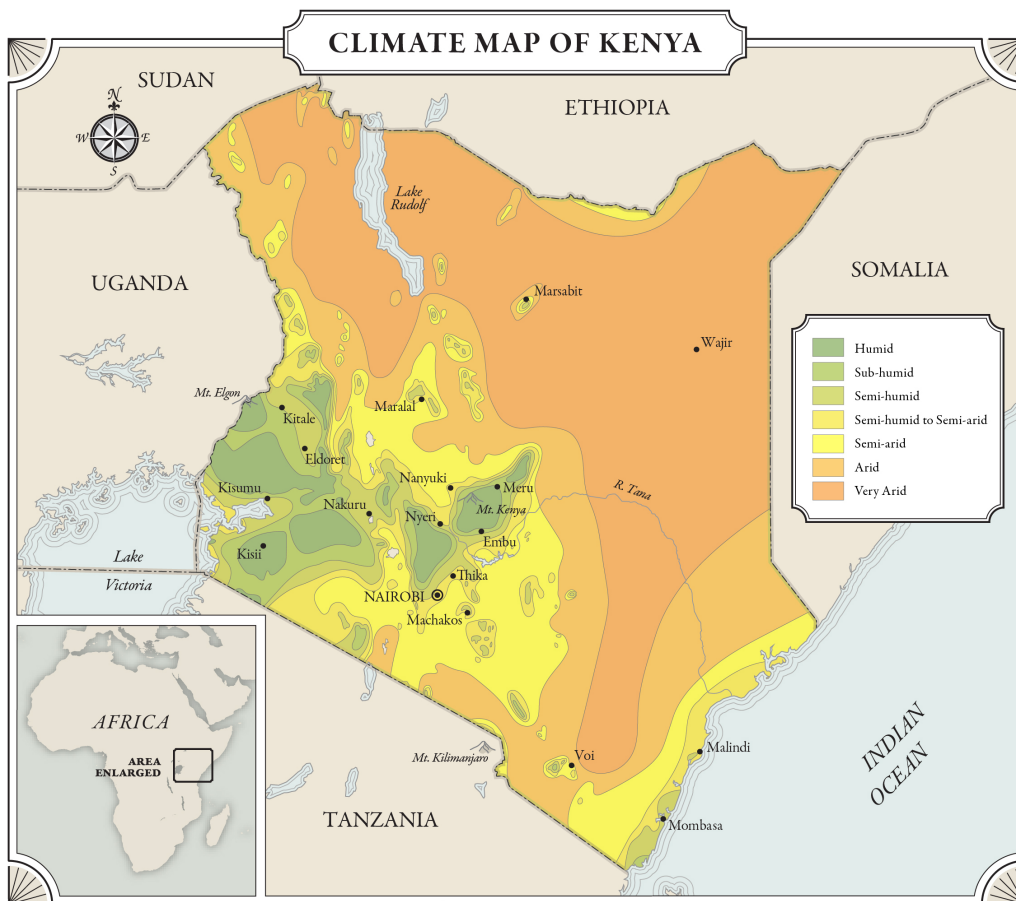
⁵⁶ Survey of Kenya, *National Atlas of Kenya* (Nairobi: Kenya Government, 1970), 48.

⁵⁷ William R. Ocheing', *A History of Kenya* (London: Macmillan, 1985), 13-35, passim. Ocheing provides a helpful overview of the history of tribal families and their migration patterns in Kenya.

of the 'lovely harbour' of Mombasa, calling it 'breathtaking in its sheer allurements'.⁵⁸ In his now-famous travelogue describing the dangers of working on the Uganda Railway, J. H. Patterson recalls his surprise as the ship came into the port of Mombasa in 1899. He recounts the 'delightful and beautiful picture' of an 'old Arab city fringed with palms and washed by the warm waters of the Indian Ocean'.⁵⁹ The coastal area where AIM missionaries arrived by ship is heavily cultivated with mango, cashew, coconut, and sprawling commercial orchards and is home to the Coastal Bantu ethnic groups, the Mijikenda, the Taita and the Swahili. Sweeping north and northwest from the coast, and arcing wide of Mount Kenya, the climate is mostly arid to very arid and is sparsely populated. The geographic features of the drylands in the north and northwest resemble the neighbouring nations of Somalia, Ethiopia and South Sudan. The Hamitic (or Cushitic)-speaking Galla, Somoli and Rendille in the north, and the Nilo-Hamitic ethnic groups, the Samburu and Turkana, inhabit this region.

⁵⁸ Willis R. Hotchkiss, *Then and Now in Kenya Colony: Forty Adventurous Years in East Africa* (London and Edinburgh: Fleming H. Revell, 1937), 14.

⁵⁹ Col. J. H. Patterson, *The Man-Eating Lions of Tsavo* (Chicago: Field Museum of Natural History, 1925), 3.



Map 1. Climate Map of Kenya

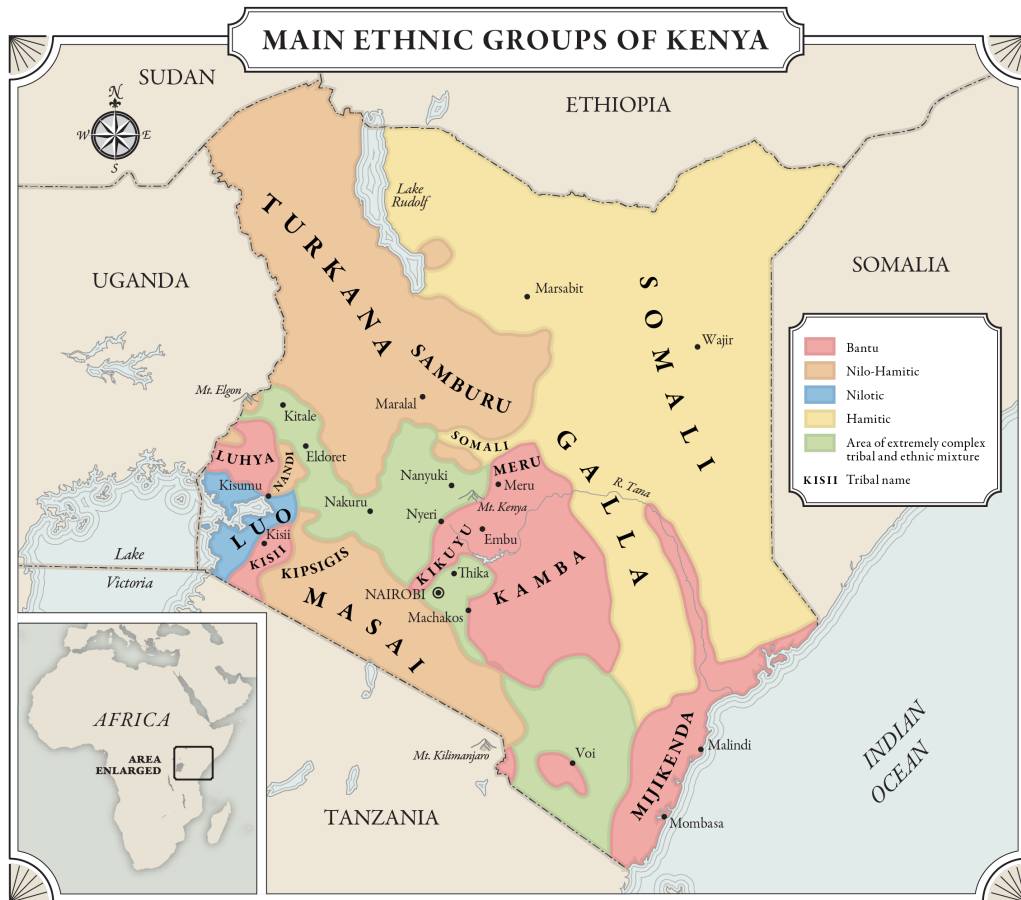
Approximately 200 kilometres inland from Mombasa, beyond Voi and the Tsavo River, the land gradually rises some 5,000 feet above sea level to form the gateway to the Kenyan highlands near the city of Machakos. The highlands cover more than 12,000 square miles of the best agricultural land in the country and are typically subdivided into the eastern, central and western regions. The climate ranges from humid to semi-humid and the land is extensively planted with coffee, tea, sisal, mango and pineapple. The eastern highlands are often referred to as Ukambani because they are home to the Kamba people.

The sprawling city of Nairobi forms the southern node of the central highlands. This part of the highlands stretches north through the town of Thika, then slopes upward toward the Aberdare Mountains to the northwest and Mount Kenya toward the northeast. Mount Kenya is the snow-capped icon of the country, towering more than 17,000 feet above sea level, and is visible from a distance of more than fifty miles. The central highlands are home to the Kikuyu and the Meru with the area around Nairobi forming a complex mix of ethnic groups. The highlands flank the Great Rift Valley, then stretch to the border of Uganda toward Mount Elgon. The Great Rift Valley is home to the Nilo-Hamitic Massai people, the Bantu-speaking Luhya, and a mixture of other ethnic groups. The highlands west of the Great Rift Valley, in the vicinity of the city of Eldoret, are home to the Kalenjin-speaking Nilo-Hamitic people, the Kipsigi, the Marokwet, the Nandi, the Pokot and the Tugen. The Kenyan highlands were home to large settler communities in the 1920s down to the 1950s, made famous by the most influential British settler, Lord Delamere (1870-1931), and the pleasure-seeking adventurers from Australia, South African and Great Britain, who became known as the 'Happy Valley set'.⁶⁰ The fertile land and pleasant year-round climes of the highlands flanking the Great Rift Valley became attractions for Europeans. As Elspeth Huxley recounted in the classic story of her childhood in Thika, 'Oh, but the whole country is a garden; a garden God has planted.'⁶¹ The famed Isak Dinesen (Karen Blixen) would write of her 'farm in Africa, at the foot of the Ngong Hills' in Kenya's central highlands: 'In the highlands you woke up in the morning and thought: "Here I am,

⁶⁰ Nicholas Best, *Happy Valley: The Story of the English in Kenya* (London: Thistle Publishing, 2013).

⁶¹ Elspeth Huxley, *The Flame Trees of Thika: Memories of an African Childhood* (New York: Penguin Books, 1959), 12.

where I ought to be.”⁶² The Lake Victoria region, also known as Nyanza District, is in the extreme southwest corner of Kenya. The area around Lake Victoria has a humid to semi-humid climate. Though small, it is the most densely populated region of Kenya and is home to the Nilotic-speaking people, the Luo.



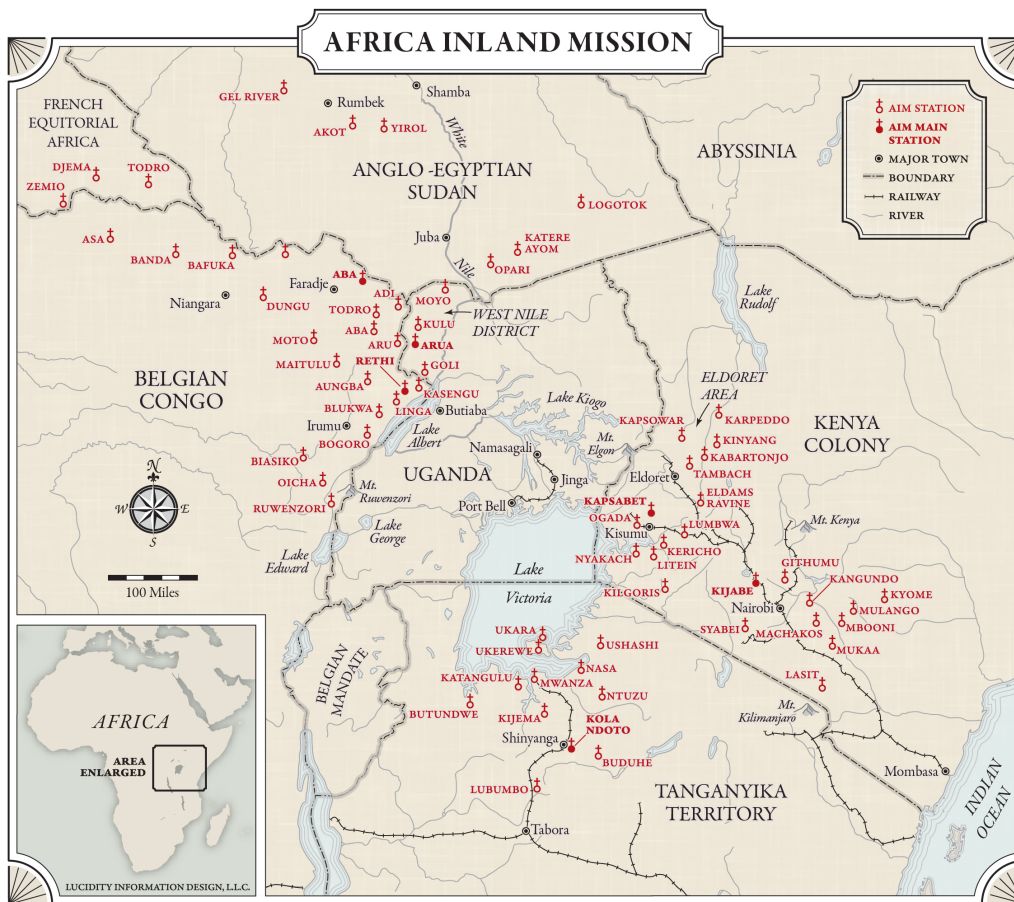
Map 2. Main Ethnic Groups of Kenya

AIM began its work in the eastern and central highlands among the Kamba and the Kikuyu. Together, these two groups comprise nearly one-third of the indigenous population. Due in part to the large numbers of inhabitants, the towns and villages of

⁶² Isak Dinesen, *Out of Africa* (New York: Random House, 1938), 4.

Ukambani and Kikuyuland in the Kenyan highlands became AIM strongholds during the colonial period and continued to be centres of church growth after independence. The completion of the Uganda Railway connected the port of Mombasa to the shores of Lake Victoria and allowed missionaries to begin spreading to other parts of Kenya (as well as bordering colonies) with greater ease. The mission expanded to the western side of the Great Rift Valley extending its work in the Eldoret area where it gained a wide following among the Kalenjin-speaking people. The 'Eldoret Area' also became known as the 'British Sphere' because most of the AIM missionaries assigned to this region were from the United Kingdom. (This will be discussed below.) The mission also gained a significant following in the densely populated region of Nyanza among the Luo around Lake Victoria (near the terminus of the Uganda Railway). AIM had some success during the colonial period working with the Masai in the Great Rift Valley along the Kenya-Tanganyika border around Syabei. AIM was less successful working with the Turkana and the Samburu in the sparsely populated desert regions of the north. The mission largely bypassed the tropical coastal areas where Anglican, Methodist and Catholic missions had already established a presence prior to the arrival of the AIM in 1895. AIM wanted to work *inland* and establish stations among what it called 'unreached peoples'. The mission established two main stations in the Colony of Kenya after the construction of the Uganda Railway, one in Kijabe (in the central highlands), and another in Kapsabet (in the western highlands). It also maintained some twenty other stations throughout the colony along with smaller outstations in remote areas. AIM supervised the African church it established through a Central Church Council divided into four regional councils: Ukambani Regional Council (in the eastern highlands) near Machakos, the Kikuyu Regional Church Council (central highlands) near Kijabe, Lake

Regional Council (Lake Victoria region) near Kisumu, and the Eldoret Church Council (on the western side of the Great Rift Valley) in the vicinity of the Eldoret. These councils represented the four strongest regions of the mission in Kenya.⁶³ The mission's work among smaller ethnic groups was usually managed through remote outstations where a missionary would be assigned.



Map 3. Map of Stations and Main Stations in Kenya and Other AIM Fields (circa. 1950).

⁶³ Charles William Teasdale, 'An Evaluation of the Ecclesiology of the African Inland Church' (MA thesis, Wheaton College, 1956), 50.

Notes on Names and Places

Bantu-speaking ethnic groups utilize prefixes and suffixes to signify places, names and languages. For example, the word 'Kamba' refers to the people, while 'Kikamba' denotes the language, and 'Ukambani' the land. The names of territories, colonies and nations in East and Central Africa during the period underwent changes during the period 1939 to 1975. The primary sources usually reflect these changes accurately, though there are general exceptions. For example, 'Kenya' is used interchangeably with 'colonial Kenya' or the 'Colony of Kenya' during the colonial period, though 'Kenya' is used exclusively after independence in 1963. 'Tanganyika' and 'Tanganyika Territory' is used in the primary sources for the period prior to independence, while 'Tanzania' is reserved for the period after 1964 when Tanganyika merged with Zanzibar. Missionaries used 'Congo' (or 'Congo Field') and 'Belgian Congo' interchangeably up to 1960, and they frequently used 'Congo' as shorthand for the 'Democratic Republic of Congo' (1960-1971). Zaire was used exclusively after 1971. The thesis has used proper names for political entities, but this may vary when directly quoting archival material. One unusual variation is the use of 'West Nile' and 'Uganda' (see map 3). AIM accepted an invitation by the Church Missionary Society (CMS) to work in the West Nile District of Uganda located in the northwest 'British Protectorate of Uganda'; thus the names 'Uganda', 'West Nile' and 'West Nile-Uganda' are used synonymously by the mission community when referring to the AIM mission field in 'Uganda', while 'Uganda' is sometimes used to refer to the entire British Protectorate. In most instances, the context will make the referents for places clear. Other unusual variations will be explained in the footnotes and a gloss will be provided for the modicum of Swahili words used in the thesis.

A Short History of the Mission to 1938

Beginning in the 1940s, AIM missionaries were referring to the era from 1895 to the beginning of the Second World War as the 'pioneer' phase of the mission. The 1941 minutes of the British Home Council (BHC) stated that the work in Kenya is now 'emerging from the pioneer stage towards becoming a self-supporting unit'.⁶⁴ Missionaries began referring to the decade of the 1940s as a 'modern' period in the work of the mission. As the Kenya field director put in 1942, 'Kenya is no longer a pioneer mission field but a civilized country with modern problems.'⁶⁵ Some of the 'modern problems' the mission faced, however, begin in the 'pioneer stage'.

The Founding of an Evangelical Mission, 1895-1896

The history of the AIM from its inception in 1895 to the formal establishment of the church in the early 1940s may be divided into three periods: the founding of the AIM by Evangelical mission enthusiasts (1895-1896); the establishment and expansion of the AIM through the energetic leadership of Charles E. Hurlburt (1897-1925); and the continued growth of the AIM during a period of turmoil (1926-1938).⁶⁶ The Scottish missionary Peter Cameron Scott (1867-1896) and the American clergyman A. T. Pierson were instrumental in the founding of the AIM. Scott was born on 7 March 1867 in Glasgow and emigrated to the United States with his parents and four siblings at the age of twelve. Scott attended the

⁶⁴ Minutes of the British Home Council, 13 March 1941, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

⁶⁵ Harmon Nixon to Ralph T. Davis, 16 March 1942, AIM International, BGC Archives (Wheaton), Collection 81.

⁶⁶ Richard Gehman, *From Death to Life: The Birth of the Africa Inland Church in Kenya* (Ann Arbor, MI: C-M Books, 2013), 9. Gehman helpfully divides the period 1895 to 1945 into three similar phases, and I have borrowed this taxonomy with some modification.

Missionary Training Institute (later Nyack College), a Bible school in New York founded by the Canadian Evangelical minister A. B. Simpson (1843-1919) for the purpose of training Evangelical missionaries.⁶⁷ In late 1890, after only one year of coursework, Scott set sail for Africa to serve with the International Missionary Alliance (later named the Christian and Missionary Alliance), arriving at the mouth of the Congo River in early 1891.⁶⁸ Scott's brother joined him for this expedition, but tragically died in the Congo within a few months. He continued his service for less than two years before leaving the field in poor health. While staying with friends in London, Scott attended a prayer gathering of the China Inland Mission (CIM) and visited the grave of the Scottish missionary-explorer David Livingstone (1813-1873) in Westminster Abbey. During this respite, Scott renewed his commitment to return to Africa and began devising plans to enter the continent from Mombasa on Africa's east coast in order to avoid the disease-ridden waters of the Congo Basin.⁶⁹

Scott travelled back to America and sought the counsel of Arthur T. Pierson, an American pastor and a mission enthusiast who frequently lectured in England and Scotland. Pierson was an erudite Evangelical leader who enjoyed close friendships with influential Evangelicals like D. L. Moody (1837-1899), C. I. Scofield (1843-1921), George Müller (1805-

⁶⁷ Richard Gehman, *From Death to Life*, 15.

⁶⁸ Larry Poston, 'Christian and Missionary Alliance Missions' in *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*.

⁶⁹ Biographical information on Peter Cameron Scott was taken from the following sources: Catherine Miller, *The Life of Peter Cameron Scott: The Unlocked Door* (London: Parry Jackman Limited, 1955); D. F. Wright, *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1993), s.v. 'Scott, Peter Cameron (1867-1896)'; Mabel S. Grimes, *Life Out of Death, or The Story of the Africa Inland Mission* (London: Africa Inland Mission, 1917), 9-20; 'Scotland's Unknown Warrior' (London: Africa Inland Mission), AIM-International Archives (Nottingham); Robert T. Coote, *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions* (New York: Simon & Schuster Macmillan, 1998), s.v. 'Scott, Peter Cameron.'; Kenneth Richardson, *Garden of Miracles: The Story of the Africa Inland Church* (London: Africa Inland Mission, 1976), 21-36; Gehman, *From Death to Life*, 13-38; Stephen Morad, 'The Founding Principles of the Africa Inland Mission and Their Interaction with the Africa Context in Kenya from 1895 to 1939: The Study of a Faith Mission' (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 1997), 13-15.

1898) and Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-1892). Pierson's thoughtful leadership, and his relationship with well-known Evangelical personalities, allowed him to wield significant influence for the cause of foreign missions. He is considered the spiritual father of the Student Volunteer Movement (SVM), organized in 1888 for the purpose of recruiting missionaries at colleges and universities. SVM adopted the slogan popularized by Pierson himself, 'The Evangelization of the World in this Generation'.⁷⁰ Pierson had a reputation for encouraging youthful idealism for the cause of foreign missionary labour. In 1895 Pierson agreed to form the Philadelphia Missionary Council (PMC) and the African Inland Mission (AIM) in order to help Scott realize his dream. The PMC would serve as the parent body of the mission, collecting support and recruiting missionaries, while the AIM would serve as the field agency on the African continent with Scott as the general field secretary.

AIM was established as an independent 'faith mission', similar to Evangelical missions like the China Inland Mission (1865) the Livingstone Inland Mission (1878) and the Sudan Interior Mission (1893).⁷¹ Faith missions energetically recruited their workers from a variety of different Protestant denominations, whether Anglican, Congregational, Methodist, Presbyterian, or Baptist. The specific aim of faith missions was to fill a void, so to speak, to encourage laypersons to volunteer for the work of taking the gospel *inland*, to move beyond the coastal areas where denominational missions laboured, in order to reach 'unevangelized' people. The name 'faith missions' is derived from the belief that

⁷⁰ Dana Robert, *Occupy Until I Come: A. T. Pierson and the Evangelization of the World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 150, passim.

⁷¹ Edwin L. Frizen, Jr., *75 Years of the IFMA, 1917-1992: The Nondenominational Missions Movement* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1992), 139-176.

missionaries should go out 'in faith' without the promise of a salary from a denomination.⁷² These missions were not affiliated with a denomination. They were to be field-managed, they were to make evangelism their highest priority, and their aim was to work among what the mission called 'unreached people'.⁷³

On 27 October 1895 a party of seven missionaries led by Scott landed on the shores of British East Africa and began their journey inland from Mombasa on 12 November. The mission travelled with a 'Government caravan' of some forty-two camels and 300 porters that was en route to Uganda.⁷⁴ On 12 December 1895, they missionaries arrived at Nzai in the eastern highlands to begin their work among the Kamba people. Machakos was a colonial outpost, and the area around Nzai was a gateway into the interior that had been used as a crossroad for nineteenth-century European exploration.⁷⁵ The small team immediately set to work building a station to serve as a makeshift headquarters for the AIM while Scott continued exploring the region of Ukambani.⁷⁶ On 4 December 1896, after a little more than a year in British East Africa, Scott succumbed to haematuria and died at Nzai Station. Following his death, one missionary resigned, two fell sick and returned to

⁷² A history of the 'faith principle' in nineteenth-century Evangelicalism is recounted in David W. Bebbington, *The Dominance of Evangelicalism: The Age of Spurgeon and Moody* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 185-190.

⁷³ Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of Faith Missions: From Hudson Taylor to Present Day Africa* (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 1994), 11-69.

⁷⁴ Hotchkiss, *Then and Now in Kenya Colony*, 23.

⁷⁵ Survey of Kenya, *National Atlas of Kenya* (1970), 82-83.

⁷⁶ A memorial to Peter Scott is being constructed in the town of Nzai, located some 75 kilometers southeast of Machakos. I am grateful to a former student for taking me to visit the site.

Mombasa, and two died of tropical fever. One missionary, Willis Hotchkiss, remained at a small station in Kangundo (see map 3).⁷⁷

Establishing the Mission in Africa, 1897-1925

Charles E. Hurlburt (1860-1936) was the acting state secretary of the Pennsylvania YMCA and president of the Philadelphia Missionary Council when Scott died in December 1896. In 1898 Hurlburt paid a visit to British East Africa to assess the situation firsthand. He sent reinforcements the following year and 1901 Hurlburt moved to Kenya with his wife and five children.⁷⁸ Between 1901 and 1925, the mission envisioned by Scott and Pierson became firmly established in Africa under his leadership. Hurlburt possessed a strong physical constitution as well as a variety of practical talents necessary for survival in the climes of East Africa. He had the appearance of a young Abraham Lincoln with facial features that evinced an unyielding inner determination. One of his colleagues observed that he was 'a good doctor, dentist, carpenter, bricklayer, and almost anything needed on a mission station'.⁷⁹ He was also an effective recruiter and possessed a rare charisma that attracted adventuresome idealists to join the mission in East Africa. During his tenure as general director of the mission, he successfully enlisted nearly two hundred missionaries from the United States and Great Britain.⁸⁰ Hurlburt also encouraged the successful recruitment of indigenous converts, believing that 'native' evangelists were essential to the

⁷⁷ Mabel S. Grimes, *Life Out of Death; or, the story of the Africa Inland Mission* (London: Africa Inland Mission, 1917), 20.

⁷⁸ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, 51; Robert T. Coote, 'Hurlburt, Charles E' in *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions*.

⁷⁹ John Stauffacher, cited in Gehman, *From Death to Life*, 53.

⁸⁰ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, 53; Dick Anderson, *We Felt Like Grasshoppers*, 38.

success of the mission. He wrote in 1924 that ‘few, if any of our missionaries can hope to be as useful in general evangelism as the native’ and that ‘our ideal must always be a self supporting and self directing native church, led and taught by native ministers.’⁸¹ Hurlburt believed that missionaries should work hand-in-hand with converts to create a strong indigenous church that could be handed over to Africans.

In 1903 Hurlburt replaced the Philadelphia Missionary Council with the American Home Council and added a British Home Council three years later in order to recruit missionaries and raise support in the British Isles. In 1906 he moved the AIM headquarters from Ukambani to a large central mission station at Kijabe in the central highlands, where the mission secured more than 2,500 acres from the colonial administration.⁸² In the same year, he established the Rift Valley Academy (RVA) at Kijabe to provide primary and secondary education for missionary children. The school would eventually become one of the most prestigious private boarding institutions on the African continent. Missionaries boasted that Kijabe was ‘possibly the largest mission station in the world’ and became what might be called a ‘missionary estate’ with school buildings, dormitories, hospital facilities, recreational and conference facilities and an impressive home for the missionary in charge.⁸³ In 1908, during a visit to the United States to promote the work of the mission, Hurlburt was summoned to the White House by President Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909), ostensibly to consult with him on East African policy. (It

⁸¹ Charles E. Hurlburt, ‘Annual Report’, *Inland Africa* (Brooklyn), Vol. VIII, no. 7 [July 1924], 1.

⁸² David P. Sandgren, *Christianity and the Kikuyu: Religious Divisions and Social Conflict* (New York: Peter Lang, 1989), 30.

⁸³ The Rift Valley Academy has been the subject of several books including Edith Devitt, *On the Edge of the Rift Valley* (Langley, BC: University Printers, 1992); Philip E. Dow, *School in the Clouds: The Rift Valley Academy Story* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2003); and Mary Anderson Honer, *The Downing Legacy: Six Decades at Rift Valley Academy* (Bloomington, IN: iUniverse, 2010).

was more likely that Roosevelt wished to gain some knowledge of the best places for hunting big game). When Roosevelt travelled to Kenya in 1909 on a hunting expedition, he paid Hurlburt a personal visit and participated in the dedication of the new building for the Rift Valley Academy. Hurlburt also successfully enlisted the help of Roosevelt to petition King Albert of Belgium for AIM access to the Belgian Congo.⁸⁴ He represented AIM at the World Missionary Conference in 1910 and served as the chair of the 1913 Kikuyu Conference in Kenya, a gathering of Protestant mission societies that gave birth to ecumenical missionary efforts in Kenya.⁸⁵ During Hurlburt's tenure, the mission also extended into German East Africa in 1908, the West Nile region of the British Protectorate of Uganda in 1918 and French Equatorial Africa in 1924.⁸⁶

Hurlburt was an effective leader, but he often made important decisions unilaterally, seldom conferring with his mission colleagues or members of the home council. In 1918 he made the decision to move the mission headquarters further inland to Alba in the Belgian Congo, insisting that AIM's work in Kenya had been largely finished. He believed that it was time to turn the church over to African leadership in the Colony of Kenya so that the mission could continue working in 'unevangelized' areas of Africa.⁸⁷ The American Home Council and the mission community opposed this change in direction, insisting that the 'native' church needed to be strengthened through continued education. Hurlburt ignored

⁸⁴ J. N. Kanyua Mugambi, *Christian Mission and Social Transformation: A Kenyan Perspective* (Nairobi, Kenya: National Council of Churches of Kenya, 1989), 29-30.

⁸⁵ M. G. Capon, *Towards Unity in Kenya; The Story of Co-Operation Between Missions and Churches in Kenya 1913-1947* (Nairobi: Christian Council of Kenya, 1962), 10; Anderson, *We Felt Like Grasshoppers*, 35.

⁸⁶ Richardson, *Garden of Miracles*, ix-x; Gehman, *From Death to Life*, 60.

⁸⁷ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, 60.

their advice and a series of disputes followed over the mission's locus of authority, creating a rift between him and the council. In a fit of frustration, Hurlburt offered his resignation to in 1925, fully expecting that it would ask him to remain as general director.⁸⁸ He was surprised when his resignation was accepted. After his departure in 1925, Hurlburt served for a short period of time as the Superintendent of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles (BIOLA), and in 1927 used his considerable influence to found his own mission, the Unevangelized Africa Mission.⁸⁹ After his resignation in 1925, the mission appears to have largely abandoned the idea of establishing a fully indigenous church guided by African pastors.⁹⁰

Expanding the Mission in Crisis and Conflict, 1926-1938

The period 1926 to 1938 was marked by continued growth and expansion as AIM simultaneously struggled through persistent organizational turmoil and rising dissatisfaction by African converts over mission practices. The resignation of Hurlburt in 1925 created a power vacuum that was filled with some success by the American Home Council (AHC) and the mission's home secretary, Henry D. Campbell (1864-1941).⁹¹ Campbell had served for many years on the staff of Moody Church in Chicago, an independent Bible church established by the well-known American pastor D. L. Moody

⁸⁸ Stephen Daniel Morad, 'The Founding Principles of the Africa Inland Mission and Their Interaction with the Africa Context in Kenya from 1895-1939: The Study of a Faith Mission' (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 1997), 143-169. Morad's thesis provides considerable detail about the dispute between Hurlburt and the home council.

⁸⁹ Jack E. Nelson, *Christian Missionizing and Social Transformation: A History of Conflict and Change in Eastern Zaire* (Wesport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1992), 29-32.

⁹⁰ Morad, 'The Founding Principles of the Africa Inland Mission,' 413.

⁹¹ Henry D. Campbell, BGC Archives (Wheaton), AIM International, Collection 81, Personnel Files.

(1837-1899). In 1922 Campbell became the acting pastor of Moody Church following the resignation of the well-known American revivalist Daniel Paul Rader (1878-1938). He remained on the church's staff before becoming the general secretary for AIM in 1926. Under Campbell, the balance of power shifted from the field to the home council, with Campbell reigning over the work of the AIM from the mission's headquarters in New York. The shift in power to the home office was intended as a corrective to the autocratic field leadership of Hurlburt.⁹² This change, however, immediately uncovered another problem, that of home council supremacy.⁹³ Campbell insisted that the American council should serve as the power-base for the mission, and his general lack of diplomacy immediately created tension between the American and British home councils. In 1928 he resisted the British Home Council's move to create a 'British Sphere' in the region around Eldoret as a possible solution to the problem of shared oversight, and he interpreted the recommendation as a power move on the part of the BHC. This area in the western highlands had a large settler population from Australia, South Africa and the United Kingdom. The British Home Council (BHC) had pressed for direct administrative supervision of this area because the non-American mission community around Eldoret had become increasingly discontent with American oversight. The BHC also argued that its constituents in the British Isles viewed AIM as an American enterprise and believed that creating a British sphere would help with raising funds.⁹⁴ After several years of pressure from the Kenya Field Director, and American missionaries who feared the real possibility of

⁹² Morad, 'Founding Principles of the Africa Inland Mission', 162.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 175.

⁹⁴ This is helpfully discussed in Samuel Kiptalai Elolia, 'Christianity and Culture in Kenya: An Encounter Between the African Inland Mission and the Marakwet Belief Systems and Culture' (PhD diss., Trinity College, University of Toronto, 1992), 166-173, *passim*.

a schism in the mission, Campbell reluctantly agreed to the proposal. In 1932, when the BHC created a committee in Canada to raise awareness for the mission, Campbell was adamant that the AHC had jurisdiction over all North America. The BHC for its part argued that Canada's ties to the United Kingdom made it natural for the newly formed committee to work under the BHC. Through the diplomatic intervention of Oswald J. Smith, an influential Evangelical pastor in Toronto, the Canadian Committee was finally brought under the jurisdiction of the American Home Council in order to appease American concerns. In 1934, when the British Home Council began unilateral talks with the South Africa General Mission (SAGM) about a joint station in the newly established 'British Sphere', Campbell became irate. He angrily informed the BHC that its members should consider forming their own mission, and American and British missionaries on the field had to intervene to mollify Campbell's animosity.⁹⁵ These disputes illustrate in part AIM's on-going struggle with the issue of governance as the mission grew larger, a problem that continued causing difficulties for AIM between 1939 and 1970.

Campbell's lack of statecraft was counterbalanced by the steady leadership of Lee Harper Downing (1866-1942), who served in Kenya as the field director of British East Africa between 1926 and 1938. Downing was a bookish Presbyterian who taught Latin and Greek at Philadelphia College of the Bible. He was a charter member of the Philadelphia Missionary Council and the Africa Inland Mission.⁹⁶ His passion for foreign missions led him to leave his post as a lecturer in 1899 to serve on the field in Kenya and provide a

⁹⁵ Interestingly, Campbell accused the American missionaries on the field of being 'British loyalists' for not supporting him. See Morad, 'Founding Principles of the African Inland Mission,' 181-196. Morad provides a thorough examination of these disputes. There is no trace of their existence in the standard histories of the mission, and they are curiously absent from Gratton's thesis.

⁹⁶ Mary Anderson Honer, *The Downing Legacy: Six Decades at Rift Valley Academy* (Bloomington, IN: iUniverse, 2010), 1-7; Gehman, *From Death to Life*, 84-85; Anderson, *We Felt Like Grasshoppers*, 78-79.

steady presence in Kenya until Hurlburt's arrival in 1901. He worked closely with Hurlburt during his tenure, and in 1921 he was appointed to serve as his deputy general director. Even though organizational tensions existed within the mission, AIM continued growing, guided in large measure by Downing, who served on the field as a veritable first-among-equals. In 1926 the mission expanded further north in Kenya, building a station, church and school at Kabartonjo (see map 3), where Kenya's second president Daniel Arap Moi (1924 -) was educated by AIM missionaries.⁹⁷ The mission pressed deeper into Tanganyika Territory, erecting a station in Buduhe (see map 3). The mission also opened a new station in Goli (see map 3) in the West Nile region of the Uganda Protectorate in 1929 and under Downing's leadership solidified its work in the 'British Sphere' around Eldoret. During the decade of the 1930s, AIM opened another seventeen mission outposts, creating an ever-enlarging web of mission stations in the Kenya, West Nile-Uganda, Tanganyika and the Belgian Congo.⁹⁸ Between 1926 and 1939, Downing and his colleagues on the field were responsible for planting more than one hundred churches in Kenya alone, utilizing an enlarging pool of African workers to help them in their labours.⁹⁹ In the 1930s, nearly ninety per cent of the churches planted in Kenya were the result of 'native' evangelists working with Western missionaries or in some cases working alone, though responsible to a missionary.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ Andrew Morton, *Moi: The Making of An African Statesman* (London: Michael O'Mara Books, 1988), 10, 33-37.

⁹⁸ Richardson, *Garden of Miracles*, x-xi.

⁹⁹ Morad, 'The Spreading Tree', 14.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

The success of 'native' evangelists in the 1920s and 1930s, and the increasing number of churches needing ministers, created an even greater demand for trained African workers. In 1928 AIM founded the Ukamba Bible School in Machakos to train Kamba workers. The following year the mission established the W. Y. Moffat Memorial Bible Institute in Kijabe, a school that became a training centre for Kikuyu, Luo, Nande and Massai evangelists. These schools provided rudimentary Bible instruction for 'native' evangelists using an introductory course prepared by the Scofield Memorial Church in Dallas, Texas, and translated into various languages. The Bible schools for African evangelists were led by missionaries who held certificates from institutions like Philadelphia College of the Bible and Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. AIM missionaries largely replicated the basic Bible school instruction they had received, though with less formality. The funding for these institutions was meagre, the quality of instruction was uneven and enrolment was often low. Africans were not to be trained for ministerial ordination or theological competence, and the missionaries who taught them were not formally trained theologians or even properly credentialed ministers. The missionary-instructors were, to use an expression coined by D. L. Moody, 'gap men', Evangelical laypersons that had accepted a call to proclaim the gospel in foreign fields.¹⁰¹ AIM missionaries received a basic education, were sent out to 'fill the gap' and were in turn teaching African workers to do the same. Africans were given a general survey of the Bible with an emphasis on Evangelical doctrine, and then taught basic skills for preaching

¹⁰¹ Virginia Lieson Brereton, *Training God's Army: The American Bible School, 1880-1940* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press), 59-60.

sermons, leading worship services and teaching Bible lessons.¹⁰² This educational scheme would be sufficient to increase the number of converts in Africa, but it would be insufficient to provide competent clergy to lead the African church in the 1940s and on into the 1960s.

During this period of numerical growth in the mission, African resentment was also growing towards missionary control. This resentment erupted in 1929-1931 in what has been termed in Kenyan historiography the Female Circumcision Crisis.¹⁰³ In 1921, when Downing was serving as assistant field director under Hurlburt, the mission had ruled that anyone practising female genital circumcision would be excommunicated from the church.¹⁰⁴ The mission's policy was enforced on mission stations where missionaries exercised direct control, but application of the ruling was lax in rural churches. (These churches were often referred to by missionaries as 'out-churches' or 'bush-churches'.) A division developed between those churches that remained loyal to missionaries (usually those on mission stations) and those churches that began lobbying for autonomy from mission control.¹⁰⁵ In 1928, in an effort to break African resistance, AIM field councils throughout Kenya introduced a loyalty oath requiring African church members to leave their thumbprint as a public statement of their opposition to female circumcision and as a test of their obedience to the mission.¹⁰⁶ Even those Christians who no longer practised

¹⁰² Gehman, *From Death to Life*, 223-242. Gehman, who served as a missionary-professor with AIM in the 1960s, culls from primary source material in his possession and provides the most helpful overview of the early Bible colleges of the mission. In our personal conversations, he reiterated the informal nature of these early institutions.

¹⁰³ Lynn Thomas, "'Ngaitana (I Will Circumcise Myself)': Lessons from Colonial Campaigns to Ban Excision in Meru, Kenya' in Bettina-Shell Duncan and Ylva Hernlund, eds. *Female Circumcision in Africa: Culture, Controversy and Change* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000), 132.

¹⁰⁴ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, 223-242.

¹⁰⁵ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, 214.

¹⁰⁶ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, 215.

female circumcision took umbrage at the high-handed tactics of the missionaries, causing anti-European sentiments to escalate. Large numbers of Kikuyu Christians left the mission-controlled church to attend independent African churches. For example, church attendance at the mission's largest station at Kijabe fell from 700 to fewer than fifty. Student enrolment at the girls' primary school on the same station fell from 300 students to well under a hundred.¹⁰⁷ It is estimated that nearly ninety per cent of the Kikuyu abandoned the mission.

On New Year's Day 1930, AIM missionary Hulda Stumpf (1867-1930) was found dead in her home in Kijabe. The window of her cottage had been shattered, glass and rocks were strewn across the floor and her body had been brutally beaten. Rumour quickly spread that she had also been forcibly circumcised. An autopsy revealed that she had been raped and physically beaten to death. The murder of Hulda Stumpf was naturally considered by missionaries and colonial officials to have been a protest against European opposition to female circumcision. The British government responded by issuing a compromise ruling that allowed indigenous people to practise female circumcision while also providing protection for African girls who did not wish to undergo the procedure. AIM mission continued to oppose female circumcision on humanitarian grounds but rescinded the requirement that members publicly endorse mission policy. During the 1930s, AIM churches among the Kikuyu underwent a gradual recovery, though many AIM converts became part of African independent churches among the Kikuyu. Tensions remained

¹⁰⁷ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, 210-218.

during the 1930s between the mission and its converts that would resurface during the educational crisis in the 1940s.¹⁰⁸

In addition to managing the Female Circumcision Crisis, Downing and the field councils were given the task of implementing the mission's incoherent mission policy on education. The mission displayed what might be termed a 'love-hate relationship' with education. Primary education was a successful aid for the mission in its efforts to convert Africans to Christianity. When missionaries came to a new area to build a station, they often began their work by holding informal classes, telling Bible stories, and teaching children how to read and write. When a church was established in an African village, it also functioned during the week as the village school. Unable to keep up with the demand, the mission began establishing Teacher Training programs for the purpose of enlisting Africans in educational work. This primitive educational scheme became the most important method of evangelism in the pioneer era of the mission. In 1924 Downing observed that 'up to the present, fully ninety-five per cent of church members have passed thru' [sic] our schools'.¹⁰⁹ Hurlburt similarly stated the same year that 'from these schools nearly all of our converts have come'.¹¹⁰ The mission was elated with large numbers of conversions in the schools, but it was concerned that education could eventually become the primary focus, distracting from evangelistic work.

¹⁰⁸ Helpful overviews of the 'Female Circumcision Crisis' and the murder of Hulda Stumpf can be found in John Alexander Gratton, 'The Relationship of the African Inland Mission and Its National Church in Kenya', 130-139; Anderson, *We Felt Like Grasshoppers*, 87-89; Gehman, *From Death to Life*, 207-218. A collection of papers on the murder of Hulda Stumpf is housed in the AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

¹⁰⁹ General Deputy Director to C. E. Hurlburt, 10 May 1924, cited in Gratton, 'The Relationship of the African Inland Mission and Its National Church in Kenya', 158.

¹¹⁰ Charles E. Hurlburt, 'Annual Report', *Inland Africa* (Brooklyn), Vol. VIII, no. 7 [July 1924], 2.

African demand for education became apparent in the 1910s. In 1911 the colonial government established an education office and gradually increased its role in the supervision of colonial education. In 1915 the government also began offering grants-in-aid to help mission societies meet the increased demand for African education.¹¹¹ Under Campbell's administration, AIM frequently vacillated in its policy regarding education and accepting grants-in-aids. There was growing concern in the mission community about becoming too entrenched in educational programmes. In the late 1930s, Africans began to complain that the mission was simply not doing enough for them in the area of education. Some AIM converts threatened to leave the mission in order to join mission societies with more progressive educational policies. This struggle would finally erupt in the 1940s, leading to the climax of what the African novelist Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o termed the 'educational wars of the time'.¹¹² As the mission expanded and grew between 1926 and 1938, developments were already unfolding within the mission structure and on the mission field that would create further complications as it began laying plans in 1938-1939 to establish an African church.

In summary, between 1895 and 1938, the AIM became firmly established in the Colony of Kenya and expanded into Tanganyika, West Nile-Uganda, the Belgian Congo, and French Equatorial Africa. As the church grew in Kenya, a debate ensued over the autocratic field-based leadership of Charles Hurlburt. He wanted to leave the work of the mission in the hands of Africans in order to explore 'unevangelized fields'. Under the leadership of Henry Campbell the mission's locus of authority shifted to the American Home Council,

¹¹¹ Sorobea Nyachio Bogonko, *A History of Modern Education in Kenya, 1895-1991* (Nairobi: Evan Brothers Ltd., 1992), 23.

¹¹² Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Dreams in a Time of War: A Childhood Memoir* (New York: Anchor Books, 2010), 114.

creating tension between AHC and the BHC while leaving a power vacuum on the field. The mission continued to expand in the 1930s even while it faced a crisis over its opposition to female genital circumcision. It also vacillated over its policy regarding education while African converts threatened to leave the mission. Some of the very same questions AIM encountered during the 'pioneer stage' would become even more perplexing in the 1940s through the 1960s. Who should manage the mission, the missionaries on the field or the home councils? How should the mission respond to the African demand for education? When should the mission leave the church in the hands of African converts? These questions continued to surface during the rise of nationalism and through the period of decolonization, directly affecting AIM's relationship with the church it established.

Sources for the Study

As an independent mission organization, AIM did not possess a denominational apparatus for preserving the documents of its organization. Sources are scattered in various places, requiring significant globetrotting during the course of the research, and some inventive ways of getting to primary source materials that are not housed in proper archives. Some mission files were discarded, while others became the possession of individual missionaries. Significant time was spent on this project searching for sources to fill in significant gaps. One of the largest collections of materials for the study of the Africa Inland Mission is easily accessible and preserved in the Billy Graham Center (BGC) archives at Wheaton College. Most of the materials are preserved in Collection 81, but other collections contain information from AIM missionaries who bequeathed personal papers to the center. Collection 81 includes minutes of the American Home Council, minutes from some (though not all) field councils, some personnel files, miscellaneous correspondence of

missionaries and mission officials, and interviews of retired AIM missionaries. The BGC also contains archives of Evangelical organizations that worked closely with AIM on a number of projects. The special collections and archives of Wheaton College attached to the BGC also contain the mission's official periodical, *Hearing and Doing* (1896-1916) and *Inland Africa* (1917 -). The collection at Wheaton is extensive, but it is missing records of many of the field councils of the mission in East and Central Africa.

The most fertile materials are presently housed in a closed archive at the AIM-Europe office in Nottingham, England. This archive is listed as 'currently restricted to members of the Africa Inland Mission International pending archival reorganization', but the European Director of the AIM granted special permission for research. These materials contain the minutes from all the various field councils, including the minutes for the Interfield Council and the Central Field Council. Important confidential minutes from each of the fields are also scattered throughout the collection. The British Home Council minutes are also well preserved, and there are personal papers from several important figures in the mission, including the papers of Hulda Stumpf (murdered in 1930 during the Female Circumcision Crisis) and Philip Henman (a British shipping magnate and the first chairman of the International Council). Other significant materials at Nottingham are papers on the mission's response to the East Africa Revival, as well as a lengthy confidential report from the late 1960s produced by a consulting firm that contains important research on AIM missionary attitudes toward the Africanisation of the mission. There is overlap between the collections at Wheaton and Nottingham, but the latter fills in significant gaps that were essential to this study. The archive also contains a significant collection of tracts, books, leaflets and promotional materials published by the mission, though much of it is in

disarray. The collection sits in a dusty basement used for storage in the AIM offices and needs to be properly organized and preserved.

One of the most surprising discoveries for research on this thesis was found in the possession of former AIM missionary-professor Richard J. Gehman, who resides in Orlando, Florida, at the mission's retirement complex. A large collection of materials was bequeathed to Gehman by an AIM missionary named Frank Frew, who spirited dozens of boxes of records from Kenya in the 1970s after the mission 'handed over' its properties to the African church. According to Dr Gehman, Frew was concerned that he could find no proper place in Kenya to locate these documents. There is overlap with other collections, but there are important materials that are not available in Wheaton or Nottingham, including memoranda and white papers on the educational crises, source materials on breakaway churches in the 1940s and records of minutes missing in other files. Dr Gehman, who served with AIM for thirty-seven years, allowed me unfettered access to the boxes of materials housed in his study and offered helpful explanations on the enigmatic structure and organization of the mission. I was also greatly assisted at the AIM Retirement Center by Jonathan Hildebrandt (1942-2016), AIM missionary and author of the *History of the Church in Africa: A Survey*. I had the privilege of getting to know Jonathan before he passed away in early 2016. Jonathan's wife Dorothy (1942 -) is the daughter of Ken Downing (who figures prominently in this thesis) and the granddaughter of Lee Harper Downing (1866-1942), who served with AIM from 1899 to 1938. She was also a student at the Rift Valley Academy in Kijabe during the Mau Mau Uprising (ca. 1952-1956). In the early 1970s, Dorothy served as the personal secretary for Wellington Mulwa, the first bishop of the African Inland Church, whose influential leadership will be considered in this study (N.B.

chapter 6). Jonathan and Dorothy were gracious with their time and allowed me to record extensive oral interviews for this thesis. They also bequeathed to me copies of personal papers of the Downing family, asking only that I use discretion with regard to personal family matters contained in them. Their insights were very helpful in understanding some of the tensions that existed between AIM missionaries and Bishop Mulwa in the 1970s.

The Kenya National Archives (KNA) in Nairobi provided helpful materials on the educational crises in the 1940s, including information about a property dispute between the mission and the church along with a lawsuit that was kept under wraps by the mission. The National Archives was one of the better sources for finding notes and letters written by members of the Africa Inland Church in the 1940s, and there is some helpful material there on missionary reactions to the Mau Mau Uprising. Materials on the Africa Inland Mission and the Africa Inland Church are dispersed in other files and difficult to find without the assistance of a knowledgeable archivist.

The most useful collection of secondary source materials on the history of Evangelicalism and Evangelical missions are found at the former Henry Martyn Centre, now the Cambridge Centre for Christianity Worldwide (CCCW), the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies in Oxford (OCMS) and the Buswell Library Special Collections in the Billy Graham Center at Wheaton College.

Excursus on the 'Complicated Organization' of the Mission

The online guide for Collection 81 held at the Billy Graham Archives uses the expression 'a very complicated organization' to introduce some of the materials found in the collection. This became immediately apparent during the first few months of archival

work. The available histories of the mission are written by former AIM missionaries and are primarily focused on their actual work in the field, often with a flair for the romantic. They are not institutional studies of the mission, and there is almost no discussion in their accounts about the complex structure of the AIM. The studies by Morad and Gratton provide some information about mission structure, and Morad's thesis in particular is helpful for understanding the structure before 1940. Still, both studies lack important details that might be helpful to future researchers. The mission's organization requires some explanation because it impinges on the development of mission policy and complicates the mounting frustration between the AIM and the AIC.

Because AIM was a nondenominational faith mission it did not inherit a denominational framework. The structure of the mission evolved significantly over time and administrative developments were often ad hoc. It is helpful here to outline four organizational phases in the history of the mission that will allow greater understanding for reading the thesis. The first phase may be characterized as 'field-managed and council supported'. AIM was established in 1895 as a 'field-managed' mission, and the home councils of the mission did not possess any real authority over the work on the field. Mission policy and management was under the oversight of the missionaries or councils comprising missionaries. As the mission became established under Hurlburt, field councils were added in new spheres like Tanganyika, West Nile-Uganda, Belgian Congo, and French Equatorial Africa with each of these field councils being responsible for managing its own affairs. The home councils comprised board members who were served by a small administrative staff. The councils confined their work to recruiting new missionaries (as well as approving them for service), keeping supporters informed about the work of the

mission at home (primarily through publications), and providing administrative assistance for missionaries (such as obtaining visas, managing finances, and distributing funds). As the mission expanded globally, it added home councils in Australia (1916), South Africa (1919) and Canada (1936), though the American and British Home Councils remained the largest and most influential of the councils.

The second phase may be described as 'home-council governed with a decentralized management' on the field. During Campbell's administration between 1926 and 1941, the home office began exercising greater authority over administrative decisions, though the day-to-day management of the mission on the field still largely rested in the hands of various field councils and their directors. After Hurlburt's resignation, it was felt that more authority should be concentrated in the home council. In theory, the home council governed the mission. However, with Campbell more than 9,000 miles away in a New York office, before the advent of modern air travel, missionaries were often left to govern their own affairs. Field policy during this time was often uneven and ad hoc. Missionaries sometimes lacked clear direction on the best way to respond to developments on the field with any degree of uniformity.

The third phase begins in the 1940s and may be described as a return to a 'field-governed mission' with the emergence of a central management structure on the field. After Campbell's administration ended in 1941, AIM established an Interfield Council (for interfield consultation) followed by a Central Field Council to bring all the various fields under the oversight of a council that would help coordinate the work in all AIM fields. The Central Field Council became the governing body of the mission and consisted of representative members from the various councils in each field. The director of the Central

Field Council was elected by the missionaries and served as the on-field supervisor of all fields in East and Central Africa. The home councils merely ratified the election of this director *pro forma*. This move consolidated the power of the missionaries, effectively making the mission community the power base through democratically elected leaders. However, the Central Field Council still allowed a significant degree of autonomy in the various fields.

The fourth phase began in 1955, when the mission re-organized and developed the International Council (IC) and created the positions of chairman, general secretary and general director. The chairman provided oversight of board governance, the general secretary was the senior official of the mission's operations, while the general director was the field-based supervisor over the various councils. The purpose of this change was to bring all the home councils and the field councils together under one unified, international mission and shift the balance of power to a home office. This change to 'become an International Mission', created significant tension between influential home council representatives and opinionated mission leaders on the field who had been elected by the mission community. The problems became so acute that when the first International General Secretary resigned in frustration in 1963, the position was left vacant until 1973. The evolving organization of the mission will serve as an important context for understanding some of the tensions that existed between 1939 and 1975 and will be referenced throughout the thesis.

The Chapter Outline

The second chapter of this thesis will cover the period 1939 to 1947, beginning with the mission's efforts to establish the Africa Inland Church during a period when AIM was

responding to an educational crisis that resulted in the formation of two independent African denominations. Chapter three of the thesis will begin in 1948 and extend to 1954. It will explore the mission's reaction to significant religious, political and social changes taking place in Kenya in the post-war period and discuss how the mission responded to these changes. These changes include the rise of religious ecumenism, the East Africa Revival, the 'spirit of nationalism', the Mau Mau Uprising, and post-war social change in Africa. The fourth chapter will cover the period 1955 to 1963 and consider the mission's response to the rise of nationalism in the Colony of Kenya and the call for a mission-church merger. This chapter will consider the relationship between the rise of nationalism and the pressure to hand over the authority of the mission to the church. It will explore the causes of the mission's decision to reject a proposed merger preferring to adopt a partnership agreement. Chapter five will cover the period from 1964 to 1971, which was marked by increased government pressure for complete 'Africanisation' in all spheres of society. The 'partnership agreement' became increasingly unsatisfactory to the church resulting in a revolution by African leaders determined to achieve control of both the mission and the church. Chapter six covers the period 1972 to 1975, after mission officials reluctantly handed over the mission to the church in Kenya. This chapter will consider what happened to the mission and the church following the devolution. The final chapter will provide a synthesis of the study and a concluding argument. It will also explore the significance of the research to historical enquiry.

The Africa Inland Mission, the Birth of the Africa Inland Church and the 'Educational Wars' in Kenya, 1939-1947

The minutes of 9 January 1941 of the Africa Inland Mission's British Home Council (BHC) reported that 'since the last Council meeting a land mine had been dropped at the corner of John Street doing considerable damage to the buildings in the neighbourhood.' It was noted that 'the A.I.M. office windows had been shattered' while thankfully there had been no 'loss of life, although the caretaker and his family were sleeping on the premises at the time'.¹ The London headquarters at 3 John Street were 'condemned as unsafe for occupation as a result of enemy action'. The secretary recorded with evident calmness that 'the Open-Air Mission had very kindly offered hospitality on [sic] their premises at No 19 John Street and the work of the mission had been conducted from that address since

¹ Minutes of the British Home Council, 9 January 1941, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

January 21st.² In British wartime fashion, members of the home council in London remained calm, and the work of the mission carried on.

This chapter will show that during the decade of the 1940s, with much of the world at war, the work of the Africa Inland Mission in British East Africa continued its advance. The mission was, to use the title of a 1942 article published in its official organ, 'Harvesting in Wartime'.³ The success of the mission on the field, even during the Second World War, obscured significant problems that were surfacing between AIM missionaries and African converts over the issue of education. There were hints in mission publications of a crisis on the field, though much of the difficulty was hidden from supporters. In a throw away line describing his boy-hood experiences in Kenya Colony, the acclaimed Kenyan writer Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o referred to 'the educational wars of the time' to describe the significant problems taking place in East Africa during the late 1930s and the 1940s.⁴ These 'educational wars' were downplayed in mission publications on the home front, though they created a serious and long-lasting schism in the mission. The conflict was described in confidential correspondence as a 'serious crisis in the African church' with exasperated missionaries on the field venting to the home office that 'too bright a picture of the work was being presented to the friends at home'.⁵ The paramount problem during the 1940s was the mission's ambivalent attitude toward the increasing demand of Africans for better education.

² Minutes of the British Home Council, 13 February 1941, AIM International Archives, (Nottingham).

³ 'Harvesting in Wartime', *Inland Africa* (British), Vol. XXIII, No. 125 [Jan.-Mar., 1942], 5.

⁴ Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Dreams in a Time of War: A Childhood Memoir* (New York: Random House, 2010), 114.

⁵ Minutes of a Special Meeting of the British Home Council, 22 March 1949, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

This chapter will begin in the year 1939 when British Home Council issued a formal memorandum to the field calling for the establishment of an independent African church. The chapter will conclude in 1947, when the second of two separatist denominations was formed in Kenya, the first being established in 1945. An overview of the most significant developments of the period will be given followed by an explanation for AIM's vacillating position on education.

In the early 1940s, the mission routinely reported exponential growth in the number of African converts and newly established churches. While record keeping in African churches was irregular during this period, missionaries frequently issued reports to the home offices that were collated and published in the mission's official organ. A 1942 article in *Inland Africa* reported that 2,500 evangelists and teachers from 'African churches in the bush are spreading the "Good News" of the Gospel to thousands of their fellows'.⁶ *Inland Africa* referred to data from 1942 indicating that the mission had now established '57 stations, 2,500 outstations, on which 275 missionaries and 2,500 African evangelists labour'.⁷ A 1943 report in the very next issue estimated that 'there must be 3,000 church centres in the Mission' further noting that 'the average total attendance is upwards of 300,000'.⁸ These numbers represent the estimates of the mission based on actual reporting from all AIM fields. The mission was experiencing rapid growth in Africa. According to one mission executive, the war may have aided the work of the mission. 'It is our opinion that the war has but furthered the cause of missions,' exclaimed Ralph T. Davis,

⁶ 'Harvesting in Wartime', *Inland Africa* (British), 6.

⁷ 'Annual Report', *Inland Africa* (British), Vol. XXIV, No. 129 [January-April 1943], 19.

⁸ 'Annual Report', *Inland Africa* (British), Vol. XXV, No. 130 [May-August 1943], 20.

the North American general secretary of the AIM. He noted that while some missionaries were unable to reach the field during the war, AIM workers were now perforce relying on assistance from the 'great increase in the number of full-time native evangelists', which made it possible for AIM to enter 'new territory and mark out new stations'.⁹ Reliable statistics on the growth of the AIC in Kenya show a significant increase in the number of churches being planted, as well as a steady rise in the percentage of churches being planted by African workers. In Kenya the mission planted 58 churches in the 1930s, 108 churches in the 1940s and 243 churches in the 1950s. At the same time, the percentage of churches that were planted by an African church-planter assisting a missionary, or working completely alone, rose from 87-per cent in the 1930s, to 93-per cent in the 1940s, surpassing 95-per cent during the decade of the 1950s. The work of the mission advanced as more Africans helped to propagate the Evangelical faith and the church grew even during the war.¹⁰ As a 1943 editorial put it: 'War or no war, famine, pestilence, catastrophic events, or any ills to which the world has fallen heir, missions must go on.'¹¹

Mission work proved more difficult during the war, but the determination of Western missionaries to carry on in difficult times, and the tranquil conditions in British East Africa, furthered the work of the mission. A few missionaries were reclaimed from the field for active service during the war, though the overall number of missionaries in Africa

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Stephen Morad, 'Local Church Survey of the AIC', BGC Archives (Wheaton), Papers of Stephen D. Morad—Collection 689, p. 15.

¹¹ 'Editorial', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXVII, No. 4 [July-August 1943], 1.

was only moderately reduced.¹² *Inland Africa* reported that ‘the draft has made its claims among the personnel of the Africa Inland Mission’ listing the names of less than half a dozen personnel.¹³ Travel to and from East Africa became irregular and dangerous, but missionaries booked passage and set sail on treacherous seas. The council expressed only mild displeasure that a Miss Quelch had overspent her travel allotment of £100 in 1942, but conceded that ‘the greater part of the additional expenditure was due to long delays at various ports owing to war conditions’.¹⁴ The *Zamzam*, a ship carrying 137 missionaries to the African continent, twenty-four serving with AIM, was sunk by a German surface raider in the South Atlantic en route to Mombasa on 17 April 1941. However, all passengers were rescued, and the incident was used to raise awareness about the important work of ‘saving souls’ for eternity even during wartime.¹⁵ Wartime rations meant that supplies like petrol and paper were in shorter supply, but missionaries made do. AIM missionary Harmon Nixon wrote from Machakos, Kenya, in 1943 explaining that he was running low on his monthly budget for petrol but had continued his travel by bicycle and adding his hope that

¹² Distribution & Status of All A.I.M. Personnel, 1927-1981’, May 1982, AIM International Office (Bristol). The report indicates that the number of missionaries on the field grew from 180 in 1936 to 230 in 1941 and dipping to 193 in 1946 but climbing to 294 by 1951. However, the same report indicates that the overall number of missionaries affiliated with the mission actually increased from 309 in 1941 to 332 in 1946. The decrease on the field was largely due to travel restrictions during the war.

¹³ ‘Mission Matters’, *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXVII, No. 1 [January-February 1944], 1.

¹⁴ Minutes of the British Home Council, 11 June 1942, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

¹⁵ After *Life* magazine published two articles on the incident (a magazine reporter was a surviving passenger), the Africa Inland Mission co-sponsored an event in Brooklyn for AIM missionaries to share their personal experiences. The event was attended by more than 2,000. See Ephemera of the *Zamzam* Incident, BGC Archives (Wheaton), Collection 624, <http://www2.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/GUIDES/624.htm#3> (accessed 5 August 2015). See also Eleanor Anderson, *Miracle at Sea: The Sinking of the Zamzam and Our Family’s Rescue* (Springfield, MO: Quiet Waters Publications, 2000).

perhaps 'the war will end this year and some of our difficulties cease'.¹⁶ Wartime difficulties were faced with a stiff upper lip, and missionaries carried on with their duties.

Missionaries were greatly aided in their evangelistic efforts by the peaceful conditions on the field once they arrived in East Africa. Although troops were recruited from the population in colonial Kenya, unlike in the First World War, there were no hostilities in British East Africa during World War II.¹⁷ A wartime field report sent to the American office was typical of the mood: 'Many souls were being saved' and 'Absolutely nothing of great importance is happening out here' relative to the war. Supporters were assured that 'there is no need to fear for our safety'.¹⁸ Undeterred by wartime conditions on the home front and aided by tranquil conditions on the field, the work of the mission progressed.

Discussions about the formation of an African church began as early as 1939 in response to field reports about the increasing number of converts that were coming to the Evangelical faith. A lengthy memorandum from the British Home Council noted that they were addressing 'the problem with which our missionaries are confronted concerning the consolidation of the Church in Africa'.¹⁹ The council was responding to a flood of correspondence from the field suggesting the need for creating a consolidated African church. The memo stated that the 'matter of the organization of the Church has been

¹⁶ H. S. Nixon to Miss Johnson, 20 October 1943, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

¹⁷ 'British East Africa' in Ian Dear and M. R. D. Foot, eds., *Oxford Companion to World War II* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

¹⁸ Confidential Minutes of the Executive Committee of the African Inland Mission, 18 February 1941, Billy Graham Center Archives (Wheaton), Collection 81.

¹⁹ 'The Church in Central Africa', Memorandum from the British Home Council to the Field Councils, 2 October 1939, AIM International Archives (Nottingham), cover letter.

brought before [the council] in a considerable amount of correspondence from all parts of the Field'.²⁰ In response to these field reports, the British Home Council issued guidance for the field councils instructing them to establish the 'African Christian Church' stating that that 'the settlement of this matter is overdue' and 'is one of vital importance for all, as it concerns tens of thousands of converts'.²¹ The mission's stated reason for establishing a denomination in Africa was to provide a church for the growing number of converts, but other factors may have influenced this decision. In the 1930s there was increased dissatisfaction among Africans over mission authority, especially among the Kikuyu. Two independent African churches emerged among the Kikuyu in 1937, the Africa Orthodox Church (AOC) and the Africa Independent Pentecostal Church (AIPC).²² The AIPC used the word 'Pentecostal' in its name not because the members were heirs of the Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition but rather because it wanted to stress its belief that the Spirit of God, not foreign missionaries, ordained its pastors.²³ In addition, missionaries working in Tanganyika were feeling pressure to create a church in the 1930s that would give Africans more leadership responsibility. AIM missionaries responded by creating a 'shadow' denomination in 1938, the Ecclesia Evangel of Christ (EEC), which was the forerunner of the Africa Inland Church of Tanzania.²⁴ The rise of independent churches among the

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid., 1.

²² F. B. Welbourn, *East African Rebels: A Study of Some Independent Churches* (London: SCM Press, 1961), 144-161.

²³ Allan H. Anderson, *African Reformation: African Initiated Churches in the Twentieth Century* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2001), 148-150.

²⁴ D. N. M. Ng'hosha 'The Bishop: Jeremiah Kissula' in John Iliffe, *Modern Tanzanians: A Volume of Biographies* (East African Publishing House, 1973), 209-226; Bengt Sundkler and Christopher Stead, *A History of the Church in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 887.

Kikuyu, and the restlessness of church leaders in Tanganyika in the 1930s, may have influenced also influenced the mission's decision to begin work on creating a formally established African church. Upon the urging of the British Home Council, the Kenya Field Council unanimously agreed to begin work on 'the consolidation, co-ordination and organization of the Church of the Africa Inland Mission' in 1940.²⁵ By January 1943 a draft of the new constitution was presented to the African representatives who would form the initial governing council of the church. It is not clear why it required fully three years to complete work for a church constitution. It is possible that the absence of a denominational prototype, the desire to collaborate with African leaders, and the difficulty of coordinating the various fields were all contributing factors.²⁶ African converts recommended that the name of the denomination be changed to the African Inland Church (AIC) rather than the proposed African Christian Church. This was due to concerns that the initials 'ACC' would confuse the new church with the African Church Council (ACC), an institution created by the Anglican Bishop William Peel (1854-1916) in 1900 for the purpose of promoting African leadership in the Church Missionary Society (CMS).²⁷ Plans were slowly underway by the mission for a formally organized African church.

²⁵ Kenya Field Council Minutes of the Annual Conference Business Meeting, 10 January 1940, AIM-International Archives (Nottingham).

²⁶ Charles William Teasdale, 'An Evaluation of the Ecclesiology of the Africa Inland Church' (M.A. thesis, Wheaton College, 1956). Teasdale was an AIM missionary who was involved in the formation of the AIC in the early 1940s. He recalled that the development of the constitution was highly collaborative and involved numerous drafts.

²⁷ Confidential Minutes of the Central Church Council of the Africa Inland Church, 18 January 1943, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida). On the formation of the African Church Council, see Robert W. Strayer, *The Making of Mission Communities in East Africa* (London: Heinemann, 1978), 67-71 and Colin Reed, *Pastors, Partners and Paternalists: African Church Leaders and Western Missionaries in the Anglican Church in Kenya, 1850-1900* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997), 150-151.

The mission set about to establish a church structure that was intentionally simple with theological underpinnings that were decidedly Evangelical. The mission's stated aim was to create an 'African church' with 'a common membership and common discipline, uniform in principle, centred around one common Lord and in no sense divorced from, or independent of the evangelical Church as a whole'.²⁸ The mission envisioned an African church that would be an extension of the global Evangelical community. A unique but simple structure was proposed. Local churches were organized along congregational lines with pastors, elders and deacons being responsible for the affairs of their respective local churches.²⁹ Individual or 'local' churches were in turn related to each other through the creation of District, Regional and Central Church Councils, somewhat representing a Presbyterian organizational scheme.³⁰ The mingling of denominational traditions was in part a reflection of the background of the AIM missionaries, most of whom were either Baptists or Presbyterians.³¹ The church confession resembled conservative Protestant orthodoxy with its belief in the Trinity, the death, burial and resurrection of the virgin-born Christ, the return of Christ, and the bodily resurrection of the dead. Historic Evangelical traits were also apparent, with a clear emphasis on the 'supernatural and plenary inspiration of the Scriptures', the work of Christ on the cross as 'sufficient to cleanse from all sin', and the responsibility for the church to be actively engaged in 'the evangelization of

²⁸ 'The Church in Central Africa', Memorandum from the British Home Council to the Field Councils, 2 October 1939, AIM International Archives (Nottingham), 2.

²⁹ 'Proposed Church Organization of The African Christian Church (A. I. M. Kenya)', n.d., Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Teasdale, 'An Evaluation of the Ecclesiology of the Africa Inland Church' 48, passim; John Alexander Gratton, 'The Relationship of the African Inland Mission and Its National Church in Kenya Between 1895 and 1971' (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1974), 237-238.

the world'.³² In Evangelical fashion, members of the church were required to give evidence of 'regeneration' by making a profession of faith, and those who had been converted were to receive baptism 'as a sign of its reality'.³³ The council envisioned 'a continent-wide church fellowship, which is definitely African'.³⁴ One AIM missionary summed up the principles that were to govern the formation of the AIC: 'The organization of the Church in Africa ought to be characterized by: Simplicity, authority and unity.'³⁵ The mission aimed for a simple church structure with an authoritative confession of orthodox Christianity that would unite African Christians for a common Evangelical witness. In December 1943 the Kenya Field Council formally ratified the church constitution, and the Africa Inland Church was born.³⁶

There were three major challenges faced by the mission as it set out to establish its own denomination on African soil, and all three would continue to vex the mission for another twenty-five years. The first two challenges will be considered briefly, while the third, because it bears more directly on the decade of the 1940s, will be discussed at greater length. First, the Africa Inland Mission was not a denomination nor was it affiliated

³² 'Proposed Church Organization of The African Christian Church (A. I. M. Kenya)', n.d., Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

³³ 'The Church in Central Africa', Memorandum from the British Home Council to the Field Councils, 2 October 1939, AIM International Archives (Nottingham), 2.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 4.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.

³⁶ Kenya Field Council Minutes, December 1943, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida); Oxford's *History of East Africa* incorrectly gives 1955 as the date for the establishment of the Africa Inland Church. It is not clear why this mistake was made. However, the dates surrounding the formation of the AIC have been obscured by the historical accounts. Mission narratives are largely silent on the formation of the church until the late 1960s, and the genesis of the church has been buried in inaccessible and peripatetic archives. 1955 was the date that the Africa Inland Mission adopted a new constitution and reorganized as an international mission, though this had little (if anything) to do with the founding of the African church. See F. B. Welbourn, 'The Impact of Christianity on East Africa' in D. A. Low and Allison Smith, eds. *History of East Africa*, Volume III (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 400.

in any sense to a denominational framework. This reality would create challenges over the issue of relationship (of the mission with the African church) and authority (would the mission now come under the authority of the church?). AIM differed in this way from two of the largest Evangelical missionary societies working in Kenya, the Church Missionary Society (CMS), affiliated with the Church of England, and the members of the Church of Scotland Mission (CSM) directed by the Church of Scotland. The mission gloried in its status as a nondenominational faith mission and fervently believed this was advantageous in furthering the Evangelical cause in Africa. One advantage cited by the mission was that it allowed AIM to recruit Evangelical workers from many types of churches. A spokesperson for the home office responded to questions about AIM missionaries by proclaiming: 'Our workers come to us from various denominations.'³⁷ This was something AIM was proud of: 'On the letterhead of the Africa Inland Mission is the statement that the Mission is without denominational affiliation.'³⁸ Missionaries also believed the nondenominational status of the mission promoted a unified witness on the field, devoid of denominational idiosyncrasies. Spokespersons for the mission argued that the dissemination of denominational variety might be confusing to African adherents. As one editorial put it in the mission's official organ: 'Because heathen peoples know many gods, bewilderment can be brought to their minds if we present them [sic] denominationalism, with its various emphases and confusion of names.'³⁹ Instead of trying to win adherents over to a particular denomination, AIM missionaries believed that 'there must be the presentation of

³⁷ 'A. I. M. Information Bureau', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXX, no. 3 [May-June 1946], 8.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ Ralph T. Davis, 'Editorial', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXI, No. 5 [September-October, 1947], 1.

Christ as the only Saviour from sin and His finished work on the cross as the only basis for their redemption'.⁴⁰ AIM viewed nondenominational credentials as a godsend because they allowed Evangelicals to draw from a broad range of denominations to unite in common witness and proclaim the simple message of the gospel.

While the mission's status as a nondenominational mission was often trumpeted in the 1940s and 1950s, this reality created an organizational conundrum for mission officials. Now that the mission had given birth to a formally constituted church, in effect a new denomination now existed on African soil. The question of the relationship between the missionary and the African church soon came to the fore. Writing to friends in 1945, AIM missionary E. L. Davis spoke for the mission community when he wrote: 'As to the Ecclesiastical Relationship of the Missionary to the African Church, we felt it was not the time for us to go into this yet.'⁴¹ Even in the 1940s, the mission recognized that the problem could not be ignored while it temporized on the question. Davis added, 'It is coming in our Kenya Field, and we will have to consider it more seriously later.'⁴² In 1946, the mission's official organ asked the question, 'What is the missionary's relationship with the present-day African church?'⁴³ The article answered the question with a note of uncertainty. The missionary was there to provide 'leadership' in areas where Africans were ill equipped. Each was to act as a 'counsellor' on ecclesiastical matters and provide an

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ E. L. Davis to Friends, 27 September 1945, Nairobi, AIM International Archives (Nottingham). The contents of the letter address confidential mission matters. The title 'friends' most likely refers to 'friends' on the American and British Home Councils.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ 'I Will Build My Church', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXX, No. 2, [March-April 1946], 10.

overall 'example' to the African church.⁴⁴ Leader, counsellor and example were in some respects informal ways of relating to the church. The relationship between the mission and the church remained nebulous.

In the absence of a clearly defined scheme, missionaries continued wielding tremendous authority over the African church in the 1940s and 1950s. When the home councils urged the mission to begin working on the formation of a church in 1939, they also warned about the 'danger of undue haste' in the matter of giving Africans too much authority.⁴⁵ There was concern that 'the premature giving of power and control to native Christians' had in the past 'led to a steady lowering of the Christian standard'.⁴⁶ This assertion was made without explanation but is a likely reference to the tendency of some church leaders to hold more accommodating views on certain cultural practices like female circumcision, polygamy, dancing, tobacco use and beer drinking. A 1944 guide for catechism classes contains instructions on the evils of circumcision (rather awkwardly given in light of the many references in Scripture on the issue) and answers to questions like, 'Why should a Christian not dance?' and 'Why should a Christian not drink beer?' and 'Why should a Christian not use tobacco?'⁴⁷

In order to provide safeguards, the mission outlined a scheme for church government that included a Central Church Council comprised of both the 'missionary and

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ 'The Church in Central Africa', Memorandum from the British Home Council to the Field Councils, 2 October 1939, AIM International Archives (Nottingham), 3.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ 'Supplementary Questions for Catechism Classes', 23 March 1944, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

representative natives'.⁴⁸ 'The missionary in charge' was to serve on the local church council along with pastors, elders and deacons.⁴⁹ After the formation of the church in 1943, missionaries still retained significant authority and influence on church councils. AIM missionaries supervised the mission station (where the largest churches were located), controlled the educational system, settled personal disputes between Africans, and they continued to retain significant authority in ecclesiastical proceedings. Isaac Simbiri grew up on an AIM mission station and tells how his own father confronted the 'missionary in charge' on his station in Nyakach in 1946 because he would not allow him to transfer to another school.⁵⁰ In 1946 an Executive Committee of the mission issued a memo encouraging missionaries not to retire on the mission field or if they did, not to purchase property near the mission station because it undermined the 'authority' of the next missionary in charge.⁵¹ The mission would maintain this level of authority well into the 1950s, and the 'missionary in charge' would retain veto power over all ecclesiastical matters.⁵² The missionary presided over the mission-station like a bishop over his diocese, overseeing the church, the medical clinic, the printing press, the shamba⁵³ and the schools while also providing rulings for outlying village 'parishes' and bush churches.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 6.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Isaac Simbiri, 'A Child of a Mission Station: A Life of Isaac Simbiri' (Unpublished Manuscript), RJG Papers (Florida).

⁵¹ 'Retirement of Workers on the Field', Executive Committee Minutes, Africa Inland Mission, 27 February 1946, AIM-International Archives (Nottingham).

⁵² Kenneth Richardson, 'The African Church,' International Conference, Africa Inland Mission 1895-1955, Kijabe, Kenya Colony, 12-19 June 1955, AIM International Archives (Nottingham), 13.

⁵³ Shamba is the Swahili word for garden, field or a plot of land used for farming.

In 1948 the mission began talking more seriously about the question, 'Should missionaries join the African Inland Church as full-fledged members?' while also retaining membership in their own home churches. This posed yet another problem: 'If missionaries were members of the A.I.C. could the Africans discipline them?'⁵⁴ The question of church discipline was theoretical, but the issue of church authority was real. AIM missionaries conveniently argued that they were already members of a church and that they came from varied denominational backgrounds. In essence, they were appealing to the reality that the AIM was not a church or a denomination; it was a non-denominational mission. This line of reasoning would persist into the 1950s, when other mission organizations were merging with the African churches they had established: 'We have no denominational affiliation at Home with which the African Church could be integrated'.⁵⁵ AIM wanted to retain its status as a nondenominational mission, but it also wanted to maintain a degree of control over the African denomination it established. The relationship remained undefined in the 1940s.

The second challenge facing AIM was the lack of a central governing body to unify the home councils, the various field councils and the African churches spread across East and Central Africa. Direction for the mission was de-centralized and managed by the missionaries themselves, who were widely dispersed throughout African's vast interior without the aid of modern transport and communication. The work of the mission was divided into separate 'fields' (also called 'spheres'), each field being led by missionaries who formed what was called a 'field council'. The mission's founder and general director, Peter Cameron Scott, and his successor Charles Hurlburt believed that missionaries

⁵⁴ African Inland Mission Kenya Field, Minutes of the Annual Conference Business Meeting, 1948, BGC Archives (Wheaton), AIM International, Collection 81.

⁵⁵ Kenya Field Council Minutes, 24-29 March 1958, AIM-International Archives (Nottingham).

themselves should be responsible for the management of the mission because they had first-hand knowledge of the actual work and could more readily respond to developments on the field in situ.⁵⁶ As the mission grew and expanded under Hurlburt and Campbell, missionaries were managed by their colleagues who served as members of field councils led by a field director. Even this arrangement proved unwieldy, as many missionaries proved difficult to manage. In 1941 AIM missionary Stuart Cole left his mission station in Adi without permission to work in an outlying district. He ignored the field council's authority stating that he was acting 'at the urge of the Spirit of God'. A letter was sent to Mr Cole stating that 'the same Holy Spirit was, through the agency of the Field Council, bidding you to remain'.⁵⁷ Missionaries were an independent lot, and even field councils had difficulty overseeing their work.

In the 1940s, the work of field councils was spread out over six 'fields' that included Kenya Colony, Tanganyika Territory, Belgian Congo, West Nile (Uganda), Eldoret Area (Kenya), and French Equatorial Africa. Throughout the decade of the 1940s, 'Missionary Location Lists' were routinely published in the mission's official organ listing the names of the missionaries under their 'sphere' of service along with the name of the station where they were posted.⁵⁸ Both husbands and wives were listed together, wives being considered full members of the mission and missionaries in their own right.⁵⁹ The Eldoret Area,

⁵⁶ Morad, 'Founding Principles of the Africa Inland Mission', 121-197.

⁵⁷ Minutes of the Council Meeting of the British Home Council, September 11, 1941. AIM-International Archives (Nottingham).

⁵⁸ 'Monthly Prayer-Cycle for Our Missionaries and Their Stations', *Inland Africa* (British), Vol. XXIII, No. 126 [April-May 1942], 24-25.

though located in Kenya (approximately 300 kilometres northwest of Nairobi), was listed separately because it had been designated a 'British sphere' from 1933 to 1946. It was combined with the Kenya Field Council in 1946 to foster greater unity between American and British efforts in the field.⁶⁰ In 1943 the mission created an Inter-Field Committee that met periodically to exchange information and appoint ad-hoc committees to work on special projects, though its powers were only 'consultative'.⁶¹ Without the aid of a central controlling body on the field in the 1940s, the mission found it difficult to manage independent-minded missionaries from varied ecclesiastical persuasions now toiling in far-flung fields.

When the home office stressed the need for the establishment of an African church in 1939, what it outlined was a simple Evangelical template that gave each field a significant degree of freedom in secondary matters. The council recommended 'a plan whereby the essentials can be preserved and liberty given in the matter of method'.⁶² The missionaries in the varied fields were united around 'essential' Evangelical concerns, but they held various opinions on secondary and tertiary matters like church polity, paedobaptism and millennialism. While they were united around their mission to evangelize Africa, there were occasional squabbles over secondary matters due to denominational predilections. In 1939 a missionary named Powley who was serving in

⁵⁹ For a discussion of the unique role of women in independent Evangelical mission societies, see Dana L. Robert, *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1996), 189-254.

⁶⁰ British Home Council Minutes, 13 June 1946, AIM-International (Nottingham).

⁶¹ Minutes of the Executive Committee, African Inland Mission, 23 November 1943, BGC Archives, AIM International, Collection 81 (Wheaton).

⁶² 'The Church in Central Africa', Memorandum from the British Home Council to the Field Councils, 2 October 1939, AIM International Archives (Nottingham), 1.

Kapsowar, Kenya, 'took exception to certain practices, particularly that of the "laying on of hands"', and asked to be transferred to another field.⁶³ Kapsowar was within the British Sphere, and Anglican influences like the laying on of hands would have been more widely practised (though evidently not with unanimous approval). There were also differences among missionaries and African converts in the various fields over the precise name that was to be used for the African Church. This was related in part to the linguistic variety that existed between Anglophone and Francophone fields. English was the *lingua franca* in the British colonies and protectorates, while French was the language of choice for missionaries working in the Belgian Congo and French Equatorial Africa. The minutes of an Interfield Committee held in the summer of 1944 summarized these challenges: 'It was realized that there were differences of opinion in the various fields concerning Church Organization, as to the name of the African Church, and there were language difficulties (as the English language is unlikely to be used in the Congo.)'⁶⁴ These were significant challenges for a mission to overcome without the aid of a central controlling body on the field.

While the popular histories of AIM gloss over this reality, mission-founded churches marched to a beat of their own drum in each field, and the mission never succeeded in creating a united African fellowship or denomination. For example, the AIM missionaries working in the West Nile District of Uganda were largely from the Church of England, and the mission-founded churches became part of the Anglican communion, known in the

⁶³ Minutes of the Council Meeting of the British Home Council, 12 January 1939, AIM International (Nottingham).

⁶⁴ Africa Inland Mission Kenya Field, Meeting of the Inter-Field Committee, 6-8 July 1944, AIM-International Archives (Nottingham).

1940s as the 'Native Anglican Church'.⁶⁵ The influence of Albert E. Vollor, an AIM missionary and Anglican clergyman who was educated at Cambridge, was paramount during this period. He served in the West Nile with great distinction between 1923 and 1966. One of the distinctive features of Vollor's ministry was his insistence that Africans be trained from the very earliest stages for leadership in the church.⁶⁶ African church leaders in Tanganyika were fiercely independent and formed the Ecclesia Evangel of Christ in 1938 (renamed the African Inland Church of Tanganyika in 1958), and efforts to unify the denominations in Kenya and Tanzania would prove unsuccessful.⁶⁷ AIM-founded churches in the French-speaking countries were operating under the umbrella name the Communauté Évangélique au Centre de l'Afrique (Evangelical Community of Central Africa) in the 1940s.⁶⁸ Without a central governing body, AIM was unable to consolidate an African-wide denomination, and the African Inland Church in Kenya emerged as the mission's African Evangelical exemplar.⁶⁹ There was no central governing body on the field

⁶⁵ Confidential Minutes, 5 September 1957, Uganda Field Matters, British Home Council Minutes, 5 September 1957, AIM-International Archives (Nottingham).

⁶⁶ Anderson, *We Felt Like Grasshoppers*, 97-102; Richardson, *Garden of Miracles*, 183-197. Vollor's work in the West Nile from 1923 to 1966 would make for an interesting parallel study. He was praised by the mission for his commitment to train pastors from the very beginning of his work, though this pattern was not followed on other fields. His educational background may have been a contributing factor.

⁶⁷ Sketches of the history of this church were discovered interwoven in a narrative on the first bishop of the AIC Tanzania. See D. N. M. Ng'hosha 'The Bishop: Jeremiah Kissula' in John Iliffe, *Modern Tanzanians*, 209-226.

⁶⁸ Africa Inland Mission, Central Region, D. R. Congo, <http://cr.aimsites.org/countries/d-r-congo> (accessed November 28, 2014); Dick Anderson, *We Felt Like Grasshoppers* (Nottingham, UK: Crossway Books, 1994), 132 and footnote.

⁶⁹ Minutes of the Africa Inland Mission Inter-Field Directorate, 1-3 June 1954, AIM-International (Nottingham). References to these churches were not found in sources from the 1940s, though a 1954 entry noted their existence before that year. References to the AIM-founded churches outside of Kenya are glossed over in the popular histories of the mission and there are no extant published narratives of these churches.

to guide the development of a continent-wide African church and ecclesiastical relationships would evolve in a haphazard manner.

The third and most significant challenge facing the mission was over the issue of education. During the 1940s, the African demand for more education coupled with the strictures enacted by the colonial government created a heavy burden for the mission. The mission was facing an all-out war on the field in the area of education, and this became the mission's more pressing concern. Western education had been brought to the coast of East Africa in the 1890s and began spreading into Africa's vast interior in the 1910s as pioneer missionaries hacked their way through malaria-infested regions and introduced the gospel to hostile inhabitants.⁷⁰ In 1911 the colonial government established the Department of Education, and after 1915 it began offering grants-in-aids to assist mission societies in their educational work.⁷¹ By the year 1917, there were more than 500 mission-established schools in Kenya alone with approximately 130,000 students on the rolls.⁷² Between 1924 and 1934, several ordinances were passed by the government for educational standards in Kenya, and this added pressure on the various missions to increase the overall quality of education. These ordinances created rules for grants-in-aids and stipulated that government officials should routinely visit mission schools for inspections.⁷³

⁷⁰ Carol Fisher, 'Education', in Stanley Diamond and Fred G. Burke, eds. *The Transformation of East Africa* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1966), 494-510.

⁷¹ Sorobea Nyachieo Bogonko, *A History of Modern Education in Kenya, 1895-1991* (Nairobi: Evan Brothers Ltd., 1992), 23-26.

⁷² Bogonko, *A History of Modern Education in Kenya*, 22.

⁷³ Edward H. Berman, *African Reactions to Missionary Education* (New York: Teacher's College Press, 1975), 1-53; Bogonko, *A History of Modern Education in Kenya*, 17.

During the late 1930s and early 1940s, the African demand for more education continued to accelerate creating intense pressure for AIM.⁷⁴ The demand was due in large measure to the belief that education would allow Africans to acquire the wealth and privileges of the white man. In his classic novel set in post-war Kenya, Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o tells the story of a boy named Njoroge, who wanted to be like a wealthy African named Jacobo because he had as much money as a European named Mr Howlands. Njoroge says to his brother, 'I think Jacobo is as rich as Mr Howlands because he got education.'⁷⁵ Education as advancement was increasingly at the forefront of the minds of Africans. Even during the late 1930s and into the 1940s, demand for education had accelerated to such a degree that converts were threatening to leave AIM in order to join another mission if their petitions for more schools were ignored. The mission was under intense pressure. 'We are being driven as never before both by pressure from Government and natives to improve our educational work in Kenya', wrote AIM missionary H. S. Nixon in 1938.⁷⁶ A 1940 memorandum from the Kenya Field stated it plainly: 'The fact must be faced that our African Church membership in this field is demanding at least an elementary education for its children'.⁷⁷ In February 1942 an African 'clerk' writing on behalf of the 'people of Kano', near Kisumu, issued a letter outlining tribal demands for a 'European Missionary' and a 'Day Primary School'. The clerk, speaking for the local community, issued a clear ultimatum: 'If you fail to bring this to a happy conclusion they will no longer be A.I.M.

⁷⁴ Fisher, 'Education', 494.

⁷⁵ Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o, *Weep Not, Child* (New York: Penguin Books, 1964), 4.

⁷⁶ H. S. Nixon to Rev. Ralph Davis, 19 October 1938, Kenya National Archives (Nairobi), KSM/1/10/42.

⁷⁷ 'Educational Policy in the Africa Inland Mission', Kenya Field, January 1940, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

people. We want an answer this week lest we go to another mission.’⁷⁸ Though not specified, the people of Kano may have had in mind to make an appeal to the Church of Scotland Mission (CSM) or the Church Missionary Society (CMS), both of which had more respectable educational programmes.⁷⁹ After the completion of the railway line to Kisumu in 1901, several mission societies had established works in Western Kenya. The Friends Africa Industrial Mission (Quaker) led the way in 1902, followed by the Church Missionary Society, the Seventh-Day Adventists and the Salvation Army.⁸⁰ There was plenty of competition for the hearts and minds of African converts. The growing demand for education led Nixon to complain in 1942: ‘The natives seem to have gone mad on education.’⁸¹ The African demand for more education, coupled with increased government measures to increase educational standards, exasperated the mission. As the Kenya Field Director put it: ‘We are between the hammer and the anvil, for both the Government and the natives are trying us to the breaking point.’⁸²

AIM missionaries resisted the African demand for more education and grew increasingly frustrated. The mission believed that educational work was a potential distraction from its primary mission. The plea for more education was so strong that it was disrupting Sunday worship services and creating unrest in mission-established churches in

⁷⁸ Joseph C. H. Duto to Mr H. S. Nixon, 1 February 1942, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

⁷⁹ AIM’s substandard performance in education compared to the CMS and the CSM is briefly discussed in E. N. Wanyoike, *The Life and Work of the Rev. Wanyoike Kamawe, 1888-1970* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1974), 124, *passim*.

⁸⁰ Marie Bak Rasmusen, *A History of the Quaker Movement in Africa* (London: I. B. Tauris & Co., 1995), 44-45. The Friends Industrial Africa was co-founded by Willis Hotchkiss, a member of the original party of AIM missionaries who came to Kenya with Peter Cameron Scott in 1895.

⁸¹ H. S. Nixon to Ralph Davis, 16 March 1942, BGC Archives (Wheaton), AIM International, Collection 81.

⁸² *Ibid.*

Kenya. In 1940 the Kenya Field Director reported that there were reports of 'demonstrations' over education that were 'frequently arising' in AIM churches among various tribal groups. Here was an admission that this demand was not isolated in one region of Kenya. The director reported that African Christians were actually walking out of worship services in protest over the mission's unwillingness to provide more education for their children.⁸³ In the same year there were reports in Machakos that 'natives' had ordered the mission to leave the area because it had refused to send more teachers for them. They complained that the mission was no longer concerned for the welfare of its converts.⁸⁴ On the other side of the Great Rift Valley, the people of Kano, who had threatened to leave the mission, were now walking out of worship services in mass protest over AIM's educational policies.⁸⁵ These turmoil was distressing for missionaries working in various parts of Kenya. As Nixon put it: 'From one end of the field to the other they are insisting that the Mission provide trained educationalists to give their full time to educational work.'⁸⁶ The Kenya Field Director expressed his exasperation in a private letter: 'Sometimes I regret that we ever went so far as to teach the natives the syllable

⁸³ H. S. Nixon to Ralph Davis, 13 February 1940, BGC Archives (Wheaton), AIM International, Collection 81; also James Karanja, *The Missionary Movement in Colonial Kenya: The Foundation of Africa Inland Church* (Göttingen: Cuvillier, 2009), fn 822: 'This was not happening just in Kikuyu country. In the same period the Church members in Machakos, Kambaland, asked the mission to leave the area immediately because of an alleged lack of concern for their welfare in terms of education.'

⁸⁴ J. G. Rae, 'A Historical Survey of the Educational Work of the Africa Inland Mission' (M.A.Ed. thesis, University of New Brunswick, 1969), Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

⁸⁵ Gratton, 'The Relationship of the Africa Inland Mission to its National Church', 175.

⁸⁶ Harmon Nixon to Ralph Davis, 16 March 1942, Gratton, 'The Relationship of the Africa Inland Mission to its National Church', 175.

“a”.⁸⁷ During the early late 1930s and early 1940s, as pressure mounted, the mission showed no intention of placating the protestors, even when Africans asked the mission to leave an area, or got up and walked out of church or threatened to leave AIM altogether. The mission appeared more willing to lose church members than mollify African demands for more teachers and schools for their children. In another private letter written to AIM missionary H. W. Innis in Kericho (located near Kano), Nixon revealed his true feelings: ‘If this man is a typical representative of the Kano Church, I do not feel that the Africa Inland Mission would have much to lose if all the Kano people left us.’⁸⁸ The mission appeared unmoved by the increasing pressure to provide more education for Africans.

The clamour for more schools and better education eventually forced the hand of the mission to make changes in its educational policy in 1945. In a letter dated 31 December 1942, Nixon had admitted to home councils that the mission would not be able to hold out for long. As he put it: ‘*We cannot* turn a deaf ear to our people’ [italics original].⁸⁹ The home council conceded, and in 1945 the mission outlined a new policy to ‘maintain schools, making Government standards the minimum requirements’.⁹⁰ The mission would also establish training centres for developing African teachers and ‘evangelical supervisors to deal with the government’ in order to safeguard the mission’s Evangelical identity.⁹¹ In addition, the mission began to revise its long-held policy against

⁸⁷ H. S. Nixon to Ralph Davis, 13 February 1940, BGC Archives (Wheaton), AIM International, Collection 81.

⁸⁸ H. S. Nixon to H. W. Innis, 2 February 1942, Kenya National Archives (Nairobi), KSM/1/10/42.

⁸⁹ H. S. Nixon to Ralph Davis, 31 December 1942, Kenya National Archives (Nairobi), KSM/1/10/42.

⁹⁰ ‘Education Policy of the Africa Inland Mission’, Action of the Executive Committee in its meeting of September 1945, Kenya National Archives (Nairobi), MSS/3/568.

⁹¹ Ibid.

receiving grants-in-aid from the colonial government. While the policy of the mission appears to have been the rejection of government grants in the 1920s and 1930s, the primary sources convey a complicated history. In reality the mission changed courses more than once on its policy of accepting government monies before 1945, but it was generally opposed to the practice.⁹² After 1945 the mission began accepting some grants-in-aid funds from the colonial government as a policy, but it was still reticent to accept funds for building schools on mission property, fearing potential property disputes.⁹³ While the mission's new policy on education was an effort to respond to the demand for more education, the implementation of these new policies would require several years, and as we shall see, the frustrations of Africans continued to mount into the late 1940s, creating significant strain on mission-church relationships.

The mission's apathy toward African demands for better education, followed by its delayed response, resulted in significant schisms during the 1940s. Discussions on AIM's relationship between the mission and the church were deferred. While the stories are ignored in the histories of the mission, two African independent churches were established in the wake of AIM's resistance to respond to the demands of its converts. Both denominations are mentioned briefly in Adrian Hastings' *A History of African Christianity, 1950-1975*, though little attention has been given to these groups in the scholarly literature.⁹⁴ Allan H. Anderson's work *African Reformation: African Initiated Christianity in*

⁹² J. G. Rae, 'A Historical Survey of the Educational Work of the Africa Inland Mission' (M.A.Ed. thesis, University of New Brunswick, 1969), Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Adrian Hastings, *A History of African Christianity, 1950-1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 79.

the 20th Century touches briefly on these churches but does not situate their founding in the educational conflicts of the 1940s.⁹⁵ David Sandgren has helpfully shed some light on both of these schisms, but there is no attempt to synthesize or even relate the two denominations. One denomination is depicted as a Kikuyu problem, while the second is presented as a revolt against AIM authority among the Kamba.⁹⁶ These assessments are partially true, but the overarching issue was AIM's retarded educational policy. Both denominations drew their members largely from the Africa Inland Mission and by 1973 would boast a combined membership of nearly 100,000 believers (the same year that AIC was reporting a membership of 300,000).⁹⁷ There is almost no trace of their existence in mission publications during the 1940s. Their stories emerge from below, buried in correspondence and meeting minutes and hidden away in memories of the past, some of which have been recovered by oral history. Both of these independent offshoots of the AIM-AIC are significant enough to warrant further historical enquiry.

The first independent group to emerge in the 1940s was the African Brotherhood Church and Schools (ABCS), formally established in 1945. As indicated in the denomination's name, the primary cause of the schism was the mission's dismissive response toward the African demand for more schools. The church was founded by Simeon Mulandi (1914-1975), an African Salvation Army evangelist described by those who knew

⁹⁵ Allan H. Anderson, *African Reformation: African Initiated Churches in the 20th Century* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, Inc., 2001), 150-51.

⁹⁶ David Sandgren, 'Kamba Christianity from Africa Inland Mission to African Brotherhood Church' in Thomas Spear and Isaria N. Kimambo, eds., *East African Expressions of Christianity* (Oxford: James Currey, 1999), 169-195; David P. Sandgren, *Christianity and the Kikuyu: Religious Divisions and Social Conflict* (New York: Peter Lang, 2000), 131-143.

⁹⁷ Barrett, ed., *World Christian Encyclopedia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 435.

him as an energetic leader and a 'spellbinding' preacher.⁹⁸ Mulandi was greatly influenced by George Rhoad, an American AIM missionary who came to Kenya in 1903 and started his own breakaway mission in 1936 named the Gospel Furthering Fellowship (GFF).⁹⁹ Rhoad possessed a strong, independent spirit and a reputation for being critical of AIM leadership. He resigned from the mission in 1926 because he felt that AIM authorities were ignoring his counsel on mission policy.¹⁰⁰ He was a tireless advocate for African education, an outspoken critic of the colonial 'hut tax' and an important contributor to the Kikamba translation of the Bible. Though he could be censorious of government policy, he was also successful in convincing colonial authorities to build roads in rural regions of Ukambani.¹⁰¹ He became a veritable legend among the Kamba.

Mulandi went to work for Rhoad some time around 1940 but by 1942 had developed a significant following of his own in Ukambani. Largely unbeknownst to Rhoad, who was feverishly working to expand his new mission in other parts of the colony, Mulandi had been laying plans for his own church in Ukambani. Rhoad, who had recruited many of his own workers from AIM churches, confronted Mulandi: 'I gave you my sheep to tend, but instead of taking care of them, you stole them.'¹⁰² By 1945 Mulandi had

⁹⁸ David Sandgren, 'Kamba Christianity: From Africa Inland Mission to African Brotherhood Church', in Thomas Spear and Isaria N. Kimambo, eds., *East African Expressions of Christianity* (Oxford: James Currey Ltd, 1999), 191-92.

⁹⁹ 'George Rhoad', BGC Archives (Wheaton), AIM International, Collection 81, Africa Inland Mission personnel files, 56-14.

¹⁰⁰ Morad, 'Founding Principles of the Africa Inland Mission', 161-166, and footnotes.

¹⁰¹ Gehman, *From Death to Life*, 75-77, 186, 306.

¹⁰² William B. Anderson, 'Feeling After God: The African Brotherhood Church' (unpublished manuscript, n.d.) Richard Gehman Papers (Florida), 6. Unfortunately there is no date on the paper. In my conversation with Richard Gehman (who advised the student), he believed that paper to have been written sometime in the 1970s; Sandgren, 'Kamba Christianity', 174.

successfully galvanized enough support among the Kamba to launch his own church. Under his leadership as bishop, the ABCS adopted a thoroughly Evangelical doctrinal statement that followed the confessional standards of AIM churches. The constitution makes it clear that the church took the Bible seriously: 'The A.B.C. will always believe in the Holy Book Divine of God.'¹⁰³ One of the primary objectives of the church is 'preaching the Gospel' as commanded by Jesus in Matthew 28:18-20. In addition, all members must confess their faith in Jesus Christ for salvation.¹⁰⁴ In the 1970s, a student who was studying at an AIM school in Kenya completed a research paper on the history and doctrine of the ABCS. He concluded that there were no significant differences in doctrine between the two organizations. In his words: 'The ABC is a strong evangelical Christian Church.'¹⁰⁵

In contrast to AIM churches, the ABCS directly funded educational efforts through its Sunday collections and made it clear in its constitution that one of the primary objectives of the ABCS, alongside preaching the gospel, was 'to open Schools for the education of children'.¹⁰⁶ The ABCS also took a more irenic stance toward African cultural practices, promoting what it termed a 'brotherhood of Christians' to encourage unity in working together for the preaching of the gospel.¹⁰⁷ Mulandi's vision was to create a denomination of acceptance, where all Africans who confessed their faith in Christ were admitted and where education would be a stated priority of the church. The ABCS warmly

¹⁰³ 'Constitution and Rules of the African Brotherhood Church', RJG Papers (Orlando), 1.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Anderson, 'Feeling After God', 14.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

welcomed church members who had been excommunicated from AIM churches for participating in African dances, local circumcision rites, and polygamy (though polygamists could not hold leadership positions in the church).¹⁰⁸ The church also took seriously the need to educate and ordain clergymen. In 1950 the ABCS founded the 'Divinity School' (this was the name) in Mitaboni (approximately 15 kilometres north of Machakos) to train ministers for its churches, a school that now operates as the Eastern Kenya Integrated College (EKIC) in association with Carey Theological College, a Baptist institution in British Columbia (Canada).¹⁰⁹ The AIM tried to block the church's efforts to open new schools in its spheres, but this attempt met with little success.¹¹⁰ ABCS membership rolls swelled in the late 1940s and the decade of the 1950s, reporting a membership of more than 64,000 in 342 congregations by the early 1970s.¹¹¹ The schism was caused by AIM's regressive educational policy.

The second independent denomination to emerge was the African Christian Church and Schools (ACCS).¹¹² On 25 November 1947, two years after the mission reversed its policy on education, African church leaders from Githumu issued a letter to the Kenya Field Director expressing their intention to part ways with the mission. As in the case at Ukambani, the church leaders had no quarrel with the mission over theological issues. The

¹⁰⁸ Sandgren, *Kamba Christianity*, 183.

¹⁰⁹ Africa Brotherhood Church 'Eastern Kenya Integrated College,' <http://www.africabrotherhoodchurch.org/eastern-kenya-integrated-college-ekic.html> (accessed 12 February 2017).

¹¹⁰ Sandgren, *Kamba Christianity*, 184.

¹¹¹ David B. Barrett, et al, eds., *Kenya Churches Handbook: The Development of Kenyan Christianity, 1483-1973* (Kisumu, Kenya: Evangel House Publishing, 1973), 184.

¹¹² This 'revolt' is recounted in Sandgren, *Christianity and the Kikuyu*, 131-143.

letter stated the District Church Council, the Church Council, the District School Committee and 'all members of the Church, Githumu' were 'thankful to the African Inland Mission, for the long period of more than forty years under your leadership in Church and educational matters, although your leadership has been a failure in many cases'.¹¹³ The issue at stake was extreme displeasure over the mission's progress in the field of education. 'On the educational side the schools under this mission seems [sic] to us to be the poorest in the Colony.'¹¹⁴ Church leaders had given careful consideration 'for a long time' about what should be done, and they minced no words: 'Now, the church members of Githumu District ask you very anxiously to leave Githumu District for good and work somewhere else as it pleases you as we are fed up with you.'¹¹⁵ When the Senior Education Officer of Central Province of the colony received a copy of the letter from the mission, he dispatched a memo to the Director of Education explaining in his opinion much of the problem was due to the fact that mission officials 'deprecat[ed] their missionaries spending too much time on educational activities' even though he had been assured last year 'that there had been a change in policy'.¹¹⁶ While the mission had changed its educational policy in 1945, it appeared to be making little progress in placating African church members or impressing colonial officials.

¹¹³ District Church Council, the Church Council, the District School Committee, and All Members of the Church, Githumu to The Field Director, African Inland Mission, 25 November 1947, Kenya National Archives (Nairobi), VQ/1/36.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Memo from the Senior Education Officers Central Province to the Director of Education, Nairobi, 2 December 1947, Kenya National Archives (Nairobi), VQ/1/36.

In December 1947 Elijah Mbatia, the chairman of the Githumu Church Council, dispatched a letter to the District Commissioner at Fort Hall stating that 'we will never work under the leadership of the African Inland Mission' and concluded his protest with a declaration of independence: 'We shall be known as: African Christian Church and Schools, Githumu.'¹¹⁷ The letter was received by the commissioner in January and stamped 13 January 1948. In March of the same year, a lengthy handwritten letter was sent by Mbatia outlining numerous complaints, all related to the running of schools. According to Mbatia, the mission had 'deliberately ignored our needs' by refusing to accept government aid for education. He also said that the mission had closed schools that were being run by Africans, discharged some teachers from their duties, broken its promise to send qualified teachers and failed to pay African teachers a proper salary.¹¹⁸ The declaration of independence by the ACCS and its request for the mission to 'leave and work somewhere else' did not settle the matter. AIM remained at Githumu and refused to give the disaffected church access to mission property. The ACCS immediately appealed to the Provincial Commissioner for a hearing to secure rights to what it argued was the property of the African church. The Provincial Commissioner went about making arrangements for a meeting and privately expressed his exasperation with the mission:

My own view is that the mission has and are continuing to handle the followers with a singular lack of discretion and I have considerable sympathy with those who criticize the past performance of the Mission in Educational matters and indeed for their desire to secede from the Africa Inland Mission tutelage.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ Elijah Mbatia to the District Commissioner at Fort Hall, 3 March 1948, Kenya National Archives (Nairobi), VQ/1/36.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ E. H. Windley to D. N. Nene, 14 July 1948, Kenya National Archives (Nairobi), VQ/1/36.

After failed attempts to find a satisfactory agreement, the new denomination filed a lawsuit claiming that the school at Githumu, while on mission property, was constructed by funds that had been raised by the African church.¹²⁰ The lawsuit was kept under wraps by mission officials and was not settled until 1952. D. M. Miller's private letter to Albert Vollar about the Githumu lawsuit summarized the mission's intent to keep the matter private: 'Needless to say we have not broadcast this information but sent to Council members and an inner circle of trusted friends.'¹²¹ The mission lost the lawsuit, was forced to pay 20,000 shillings for compensation and hand-over all its out schools to the new church. The ACC reported 14,000 adherents in 1962, with attendance in all its churches steadily increasing to approximately 25,000 in 1971.¹²²

The mission's resistance to the African demand for more education and its regressive educational policies resulted in schism. Two denominations emerged, the African Christian Church and Schools (1947) in Githumu as well as the African Brotherhood Church and Schools (1945) in Ukambani. These divisions, while largely hidden from AIM supporters, were acrimonious affairs.

Why did AIM remain so intransigent in its position regarding African education, especially given the tremendous pressure it was under by Africans to make this a higher priority? Why was the mission, to use the words of one mission leader, so 'half-hearted' in its efforts to provide more education for Africans even after changing its educational policy

¹²⁰ 'In His Majesty's Supreme Court of Kenya at Nairobi, Civil Case no. 1050 of 1950, African Christian Church and Schools versus The Africa Inland Mission', 31 October 1950. Kenya National Archives (Nairobi), KA/1/11/76.

¹²¹ D. M. Miller to Albert E. Vollar, 22 May 1951, Kenya National Archives (Nairobi), VQ/1/36.

¹²² Sandgren, *Christianity and the Kikuyu*, 143.

in 1945?¹²³ In retrospect, the mission appears tone-deaf, unable to discern the signs of the times and unwilling to care for those it came to serve. As one missionary had put it as early as 1936: 'our natives think that we do not love them and are neglecting them.'¹²⁴ The missionaries knew that Africans had been displeased for some time, and yet they failed to respond in a way that satisfied their converts. Why?

There are several reasons for the mission's failure to implement a full-orbed educational programme to the satisfaction of African Christians. First, AIM consistently viewed its work in education as inferior to its call to engage in evangelistic work. The African demand for Western missionaries to provide more education was considered a distraction from their call to travel to distant villages and proclaim the gospel. As Mr and Mrs Weppeler put it in a letter to their supporters: 'We wish we could feel free to discontinue our schools...Our great desire is that we might be more free for itinerating work.'¹²⁵ AIM missionaries did not come to East Africa to educate but to evangelize. As Willis Hotchkiss put it in his 1937 memoirs: 'No, we do not come to Africa because men are heathen and need civilization; we come because men are sinners and need a Saviour.'¹²⁶ AIM missionary Edith Devitt described the attitude of the mission community in the late 1930s and 1940s: 'We came to preach, not to teach schools.'¹²⁷ Missionaries in the late

¹²³ Kenya Field Director to Mr Harvey N. Wadham, 15 July 1939, Richard Geham Papers (Florida).

¹²⁴ Elwood Davis to Harvey Wadham, 23 October 1936, cited in Gratton, 'The Relationship of the Africa Inland Mission to its National Church', 165.

¹²⁵ Weppelers to 'Christian Friends', October 1938, Mbooni, Kenya, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

¹²⁶ Willis R. Hotchkiss, *Then and Now in Kenya Colony: Forty Adventurous Years in East Africa* (London and Edinburgh: Fleming H. Revell, 1937), 14.

¹²⁷ Edith Devitt, *On the Edge of the Rift Valley* (Langley, BC: University Printers, 1992), 20.

1930s and 1940s were in many ways reluctant educationalists who did not feel called to the field of education. Education was considered the sphere of the government. As the General Secretary of the AIM put it in 1939: 'We will do the best we can, and if we cannot send the workers they [the colonial government] demand, then we will just have to let them take over the school work. After all, fundamentally, the education of the people is the work of the Government not Missions.'¹²⁸ Missionaries repeatedly made it clear even to Africans that their primary calling was to win souls to Christ, not provide education for them. A lengthy hand-written letter from a 'resident' near Ogoda Mission Station near Kisumu is telling: 'I have heard you many times telling me and yielding that you know nothing about education and that you came to win the souls for God, and not to prepare people for Worldly pleasure like educating them.'¹²⁹ Africans knew that AIM missionaries viewed their work in education as secondary to their call to evangelize, and they were not happy about it.

While AIM was involved in medical and educational work, these activities were viewed as the handmaidens to its evangelistic labours. This stance was a reflection of Fundamentalist attitudes that shaped conservative Evangelicals during the first half of the twentieth century. During the 1920s and 1930s, Fundamentalists had responded to the Social Gospel by placing an even greater emphasis on the priority of evangelism. Social concerns were 'subordinated' to evangelistic endeavours as Fundamentalists increasingly

¹²⁸ Ralph T. Davis to Harmon Nixon, 23 June 1939, BGC Archives (Wheaton), AIM International, Collection 81.

¹²⁹ Noah Amolo to Rev Skoda at Ogada Station, 17 October 1945, Kenya National Archives (Nairobi), DC/KSM/1/10/42

distanced themselves from theological liberalism.¹³⁰ AIM, along with other Faith Missions like the Central American Mission and the Sudan Interior Mission, were shaped by these Fundamentalist concerns and their missionaries were recruited largely from Fundamentalist Bible colleges that ‘majored’ in training missionaries for foreign service.¹³¹ Missionaries came to the field with a single focus and they poured all their energies into evangelistic work.¹³² The concentration on ‘saving souls’ made it difficult for the mission to enlarge its vision in the 1940s. Even the mission’s substandard educational work was carried out for the purpose of gaining entrée into new areas of the colony that would serve as a staging point for sending out more evangelists. The District Commissioner of Kitui issued a private memorandum to the Provincial Commissioner in Central Province in 1942 calling the educational efforts of the AIM ‘pathetic’ and explained why he denied their request to open a school in Mumoni (near Machakos): ‘They do not wish to open schools, but merely to establish native evangelists from the Machakos district.’¹³³ Even colonial officials knew that evangelism was the most important priority of the mission! In his memoir, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o recalls that some missionary schools paradoxically gained a reputation for ‘deliberately depriving Africans of knowledge’ and that they were ‘seen as denying us the kind of education that would propel us quickly into modern times’.¹³⁴ AIM

¹³⁰ George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 90.

¹³¹ Joel A. Carpenter, ‘Propagating the Faith Once Delivered: The Fundamentalist Missionary Enterprise, 1920-1945’ in Joel A. Carpenter and Wilbert R. Shenk, eds. *Earthen Vessels: American Evangelicals and Foreign Missions, 1880-1980* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 92-132.

¹³² Dana L. Robert, ‘Premillennial Mission Theory and the Origins of Independent Evangelical Missions’ in Carpenter and Shenk, *Earthen Vessels*, 32.

¹³³ District Commissioner to the Provincial Commissioner, Central Province, Nyeri, 12 June 1942, Kenya National Archives (Nairobi), VQ/1/36.

¹³⁴ Thiong’o, *Dreams in a Time of War*, 114.

missionaries were concerned about the religious progress of Africans; social progress through education was not their primary aim.

A second reason AIM did not implement a progressive education programme is that the mission lacked sufficient resources to keep up with demand. Existing AIM-operated schools were often poorly maintained and inadequately staffed in the 1930s and 1940s due to insufficient funding. A report issued in 1939 on an AIM-operated school is typical: 'Site and buildings very untidy. Teachers' house unoccupied. Two other buildings in a dirty and dilapidated condition. No latrine. Registers not marked up. No certified teacher. Both teachers quite incompetent.'¹³⁵ A decade later, things had changed little. A 1949 report is typical: 'With the exception of a new block of classrooms, the buildings are old and dilapidated and the grounds were untidy.'¹³⁶ An inspection report on a primary school at Kijabe reads: 'Standard III is accommodated in a narrow building quite unsuitable for effective teaching and one Standard IV was using the church which is not equipped with desks.'¹³⁷ The mission also struggled to keep up with the growing demand for more trained personnel. 'Increasing need of teachers throughout the Mission' read a 1943 memo.¹³⁸ Memos and letters often contained apologies like 'sorry we could not keep a permanent staff for Elementary Teacher School' and 'no missionary available at present to help in the

¹³⁵ Memo issued by Office of Inspector of Schools, Colony of Kenya, 25 March 1939, Kenya National Archives (Nairobi), DC/KSM/1/10/42

¹³⁶ Notes of a visit paid by the Ag. (Acting) C.I.S. (Chief Inspector of Schools), 15 September 1949, Kenya National Archives (Nairobi), MSS/3/568.

¹³⁷ Inspection Report of the A.I.M. Primary School at Kijabe, 21 June 1949, Kenya National Archives (Nairobi), MSS/3/568.

¹³⁸ 'Education Memo', Africa Inland Mission, 4 December 1943, Richard Gehman Papers, (Florida).

Teacher Training School’ and ‘inform the Machakos School Committee that we are still unable to give them a Primary School.’¹³⁹ The problem of inadequate resources had first begun surfacing in the late 1930s. As one missionary put it, ‘It seems to me we are faced with one of two things—to discontinue educational work entirely, or to look to God to supply us with the men and money to meet the great and pressing need.’¹⁴⁰ By the early 1940s, the demands for more education had outpaced the resources of the mission.

A primary cause of this shortage in funds was the mission’s inconsistent policy on government grants. In 1922 AIM issued a ruling not to accept government grants-in-aid because they violated the ‘faith-basis’ of the mission. One of the founding principles of the AIM was that the mission and missionaries would not solicit funds for their work but would instead rely solely on God to meet their needs.¹⁴¹ Missionaries could inform supporters about their needs but could not directly ask for financial assistance. The classic policy statement read: ‘As to the work, full information; as to funds, non-solicitation.’¹⁴² While this may smack of fundraising by circumlocution to outsiders, AIM loyalists lived by the faith principle as a matter of personal conviction.¹⁴³ The Church of Scotland Mission and the Church Missionary Society accepted government grants-in-aid for education, which and

¹³⁹ ‘Education Memo’, Africa Inland Mission, 12 December 1944, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida); ‘Education Memo’, Africa Inland Mission, 16 April 1945, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida); ‘Education Memo’, Africa Inland Mission, 13 August 1946, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

¹⁴⁰ H. S. Nixon to Rev. Ralph Davis, 19 October 1938, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

¹⁴¹ Stephen Morad, ‘Founding Principles of the African Inland Mission and Their Interaction with the Africa Context in Kenya from 1895 to 1939: The Study of a Faith Mission’ (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 1997), 81-121.

¹⁴² Richard Gehman, *From Death to Life: The Birth of the Africa Inland Church in Kenya, 1895-1945* (Ann Arbor, MI: C-M Books, 2013), 23.

¹⁴³ Morad, ‘Founding Principles of the Africa Inland Mission’, 81-121.

both missions had outpaced AIM in the field of education.¹⁴⁴ The willingness of the CMS and the CSM to accept funds for building schools (these buildings also functioned as churches) helps explain why Anglicans and Presbyterians enjoyed greater success among the Kikuyu than did the AIM.¹⁴⁵ Between 1922 and 1945, the mission vacillated on whether or not it should accept these grants as a matter of general policy. For example, the 1922 decision not to accept grants was reversed in 1924 in favour of accepting them. This policy was reversed again in 1926 to the original ruling. In 1937 the British Home Council decided it was in favour of accepting grants while the American Home Council remained opposed to the practice.¹⁴⁶ There was no clear consensus for all AIM fields. In 1939 the American Home Council issued a memo to the Kenya Field Director emphasizing that the mission had given considerable thought to the issue and had concluded once again that 'we do not agree to accepting any Grants-in-Aid'.¹⁴⁷ A paper on 'Educational Policy' was issued by the mission in 1940 making the ambiguous recommendation that 'grants-in-aid be accepted only in cases where their acceptance will not involve the Mission in contracts with the government.'¹⁴⁸ AIM's inconsistency on the issue of accepting colonial grants-in-aid made it difficult for the mission to keep pace with the African demand for more teachers and better schools. The mission simply lacked the resources it needed.

¹⁴⁴ Rae, 'A Historical Survey of the Educational Work of the Africa Inland Mission', 28.

¹⁴⁵ John Lonsdale, 'Kikuyu Christianities', *Journal of Religion in Africa*, vol. 29, fasc. 2 (May 1999), 207, 225, fn. 7.

¹⁴⁶ Rae, 'A Historical Survey of the Educational Work of the Africa Inland Mission', 28.

¹⁴⁷ Henry D. Cambell to H. S. Nixon, 11 August 1939, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

¹⁴⁸ 'Educational Policy in the Africa Inland Mission', Kenya Field, January 1940, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

After the mission adopted a more progressive educational policy in 1945, the practice of accepting grants became more widespread, though the practice was limited to funding for African teachers' salaries.¹⁴⁹ Grants-in-aid were not to be accepted for building new schools on mission station property because the mission was concerned that this could result in a property dispute.¹⁵⁰ If buildings on mission-owned property were built using government funds, then Africans could theoretically claim that the schools belonged to the public, not the mission. (In the Githumu lawsuit, the African church would argue that its members had helped fund the buildings.) This unwillingness to accept funds for buildings placed the mission in an even more precarious position as colonial officials were less apt to grant the mission entrée into new territory given AIM's unwillingness to use grants for building new schools. The colonial government became increasingly dissatisfied with the mission and began limiting the scope of its work, preferring to work with mission societies that were pro-education in their policies. In 1944 the mission was refused a plot in the Kitui District in Ukambani and the District Commissioner issued a confidential memo to the Provincial Commissioner giving his reasoning: 'My personal opinion is that a new mission with a broad and more vigorous [sic] view point (both educational and religious) is needed in Kitui District and if this application by A.I.M. is approved, the field would be effectually closed to another Protestant Mission [parenthesis original].'¹⁵¹ In an effort to shore up its weak educational programme, the mission began recruiting Western

¹⁴⁹ Rae, 'A Historical Survey of the Educational Work of the Africa Inland Mission', 114.

¹⁵⁰ 'Education Capital Expenditure—Grants-In Aid', 19 January 1946, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

¹⁵¹ Confidential Memo from District Commissioner of the Colony of Kenya to the Hon. Provincial Commissioner, 9 June 1944, Kenya National Archives (Nairobi), VQ/1/36.

'educationalists' to come to the field in the late 1940s to train African teachers.¹⁵² However, this would take time and recruiting new missionaries for the purpose of education proved difficult given the mission's evangelistic ethos. When the mission asked the African church to be patient and explained that it could not simply ask missionaries who were already on the field to leave their evangelistic labours in order to work in education, Africans did not believe it. One church leader pointed to the large mission station at Kijabe where AIM missionaries were working for the mission press, cutting timber for construction and farming and selling the proceeds. Meanwhile the 'principal' spent most of his time overseeing the prestigious Rift Valley Academy for expatriate children. As he put it: 'He [the Principal] usually says the Missionaries are very busy at Kijabe. While we know that there are ten or more Missionaries who are busily occupying on their own businesses which businesses do not concern the Africans.'¹⁵³ The mission's reluctance to accept colonial funds weakened its ability to provide educational facilities and qualified teachers, and Africans interpreted their explanations as disingenuous excuses.

A third impediment to a vigorous education programme was that the growing demand for social advancement through education created an ever-enlarging rift between the goals of the mission and those of African church members. The government and the mission worked together to provide education for Africans, but they did not always share the same aims. The colonial government promoted education with the goal of facilitating the social progress of Africans (even if this was for the purpose of incorporating Africans

¹⁵² 'Mission Matters', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXIX, No. 2, [March-April, 1945], 11; 'The African at School', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXI, No. 5 [September-October 1947], 7-10.

¹⁵³ Elijah Mbatia to The Field Director, A.I.M., Githumu, 2 December 1947, Kenya National Archives (Nairobi), VQ/1/36.

into the colonial apparatus), while the mission's goals were directed toward religious and moral progress. The colonial government and the mission worked together to provide education for Africans, but their partnership is best described as a 'happy accident'.¹⁵⁴ The mission saw the classroom as place to teach basic literacy for the express purpose of evangelism and Bible instruction. A 1937 report by the British Home Council made it clear: 'That as school work provided one of the most fruitful fields for soul-winning, every effort should be put forth to conserve this avenue of approach with special reference to elementary education.'¹⁵⁵ As one AIM missionary put it: 'We are believers in education, in so far as it will enable Christians to read the word of God, and that further education is the responsibility of the Government.'¹⁵⁶ The mission viewed education as a way to evangelize, to build up the church and to train native evangelists.¹⁵⁷

During the 1940s, a noticeable shift became evident as the African incentive for acquiring more education, namely social progress, became more closely aligned with the aims of the colonial government. As mentioned earlier, Africans increasingly viewed education as the path to social and economic advancement. One African convert of the mission recalled how he was forbidden entrance into a mission school in 1946 because he failed the Bible test. 'My father confronted the Capens who were in charge of the station at the time and for whom he worked and told them they should not think that because he was

¹⁵⁴ Rae, 'A Historical Survey of the Educational Work of the Africa Inland Mission', 11.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 92.

¹⁵⁶ W. Reid Maxwell to African Inland Mission Home Council, 17 November 1941, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

¹⁵⁷ Rae, 'A Historical Survey of the Educational Work of the Africa Inland Mission', 91.

their cook his son would also be their son's cook.'¹⁵⁸ Africans wanted a better future for themselves and their children, and education was increasingly viewed as a means for attaining it. Even though AIM had outlined a new policy to maintain schools in keeping with government policy in 1945, the concern of the mission was to mollify government pressure and subdue African dissatisfaction so that it could continue providing religious instruction in all its various fields. The mission was concerned that if it failed to provide schools, its converts 'in their greed for knowledge will flock to other schools'.¹⁵⁹ The Inter-field Committee made it clear in 1945 that the mission was 'cognizant of the growing and insistant [sic] demand by the Africans in all the fields of the A.I.M. for a certain amount of education' and 'feels that the schools present a great opportunity for teaching the Word of God, and recognizes the danger of losing many of our adherents to less evangelical denominations'.¹⁶⁰ The mission felt it had no alternative but to respond in some way to the increasing demand for more education, but it chafed at the growing burden this placed on missionaries and expressed concern about the African motive for economic gain. Missionaries often complained publicly in AIM's official organ. A missionary couple from Kenya opined in 1947: 'The difficulties facing the missionary today are those due to the wave of materialism that has settled everywhere, like a pall.'¹⁶¹ Another missionary

¹⁵⁸ Isaac Simbiri, 'Unpublished Autobiography of Isaac Simbiri', 2012, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida), 17.

¹⁵⁹ 'The African at School', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXI, No. 5 [September-October 1947], 7.

¹⁶⁰ 'Educational Policy of the African Inland Mission: Action of the Central Church Council at its meeting of August 1946', Kenya National Archives (Nairobi), MSS/3/568.

¹⁶¹ Kenneth N. and Hazel Phillips, 'From the Regions Beyond', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXI, No. 4 [September-October 1947], 15.

protested in a 1948 article: 'Education and progress is their god!'¹⁶² One missionary captured the sentiment of many missionaries working in the late 1940s: 'The yen of the native is more education and better living conditions.'¹⁶³ AIM resisted the African hunger for more education, and this produced an all out war between the mission and its converts that resulted in schism.

In summary, between 1939 and 1943, AIM established the Africa Inland Church. Its relationship with the church it founded suffered from a narrow-minded vision that was out of step with changing conditions on the field. The demand for education was high. A 1947 article in the mission's official organ put it this way: 'Africa is awakening by leaps and bounds. She is *wanting education* more than ever before, and will get it, by whatever means' [italics original].¹⁶⁴ Africans were frustrated over the mission's inadequate response to its demands for education and some came to question the mission's motives. An African school official identified simply as 'John M.' confronted AIM's educational representative, E. L. Davis, with strong words: 'The white people are subtle.'¹⁶⁵ Dissatisfaction and distrust created schism. This single-issue mentality of the mission during the 1940s became a significant impediment to the mission's educational programme. The lack of resources due to the mission's adherence to its 'faith principles' made it difficult for AIM to keep pace with

¹⁶² Virginia Blakeslee, 'The Lord's Battles in the Ridges', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXII, No. 4 [July-August, 1948], 4-5.

¹⁶³ Ralph T. Davis, 'In the British Fields', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXII, No. 5 [September-October, 1948], 3.

¹⁶⁴ F. J. Mumford, 'The African School', *Inland Africa* (British), Vol. XXIX, No. 144, [Jan.-Feb. 1947], 13.

¹⁶⁵ 'Meeting with School Committee of AIM Mbooni and Location Committee, Chief D. Kaindi in Attendance', 30 November 1948, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida). This ten-page document provides several word-for-word exchanges between the mission's educational director and African members of the AIM educational committee. The print is small and difficult to read, but offers a rare glimpse into a meeting between Africans and an AIM official.

demand. The 'great educational awakening' in Africa created the necessary conditions for the perfect storm as many Africans became increasingly frustrated with the mission in 1940s.¹⁶⁶ The mission was aware that it needed to address the matter of its relationship with the church it founded in 1943. However, it was not the pressing matter. There was no talk of devolution in the 1940s. Africans were pressing for education.

¹⁶⁶ 'Educational Policy of the African Inland Mission: Action of the Central Church Council at its meeting of August 1946', Kenya National Archives (Nairobi), MSS/3/568.

**The Africa Inland Mission in a Rapidly Changing World: Modernism, Revival,
Mau Mau and the Advance of Western Civilization, 1948-1954**

In 1948 the AIM president, Howard W. Ferrin (1898-1993), wrote an editorial for *Inland Africa* to inform readers that missionaries were encountering 'radical changes' in their work on the African continent.¹ He wanted supporters to discard the antiquated idea that 'the chief work of the missionary is to put on a sun helmet, plunge into the bush, and finding a half dozen naked savages, gather them together under a tree and tell them that Jesus died for them'.² Africa was changing, and with it the nature of missionary work. In 1952 the Deputation Secretary of the mission wrote: 'No one can doubt that the missionary situation has changed and is changing rapidly.'³ Even school children were talking about

¹ Howard W. Ferrin, 'How Shall We Serve the Sugar?', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXIII, No. 5 [September-October, 1948], 5.

² Ibid.

³ D. M. Miller, 'Priorities in a Changing Situation', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXVI, No. 3 [May-June 1952], 10.

the changes in the colony. As one African boy put it in an essay published in the mission's official organ: 'The life in Africa is being changed very much and very rapidly.'⁴

The 'radical changes' encountered by AIM missionaries in Kenya during the post-war period were a blending of religious, social, and political developments. Some of the changes in Kenya were due to influences from North America and Europe, others were related to developments in adjacent African lands, and a few were derived from within the colony itself. Scholars often describe the period after the Second World War as a time of significant religious, political and social change in North America, Europe and the non-Western world. Brian Stanley uses the expression 'radically changing context' in reference to theological and religious transformation in global Christianity during the post-war era.⁵ Michael Crowder's introduction to *The Cambridge History of Africa, Volume 8, c. 1940-1975* describes the period after 1940 as a time of 'radical change' in the world directly affecting African society and politics.⁶ John Iliffe uses words like 'unprecedented' and 'swiftly' to describe modernization, urbanization and social transformation on the African continent.⁷ During the late 1940s and into the 1950s, AIM editorials, articles, correspondence and field minutes tell the story of a mission trying to come to terms with the new realities that were affecting its work in Kenya. AIM missionaries and mission officials frequently described the momentous changes they encountered, tossing around words and expressions like

⁴ 'The Old Prophecy: A Composition by a Mukamba Schoolboy of Kenya', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXVI, No. 2 [March-April, 1952], 8.

⁵ Brian Stanley, *The Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism: The Age of Billy Graham and John Stott* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2013), 12.

⁶ Michael Crowder, 'Introduction' to *The Cambridge History of Africa, Volume 8, from c. 1940-c. 1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 2.

⁷ John Iliffe, *Africans: The History of a Continent* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 251.

‘rapidly changing society’ and ‘the onset of Western civilization’ and ‘modern Africa’. These words and expressions were bandied about (with imprecision) in private correspondence and official publications as colloquial, catchall descriptions of the new realities of missionary service in Africa. One missionary wrote his supporters in 1947 about the ‘the challenge of the situation in Africa’ explaining that the ‘onrush of civilization is in danger of sweeping modern Africa off its feet’.⁸ Ralph T. Davis, the general secretary of the mission, summarized his own impressions after a 1948 visit to East Africa: ‘We noted marked changes in the land and its people. Culture has moved forward at a rapid rate.’⁹ The following year he told mission supporters, ‘The day of crude pioneering, in the main, is past.’¹⁰

When missionaries used expressions like ‘modern Africa’, they were referring to a panoply of developments including the rise of the ecumenical movement in Africa, a potent African-led revival movement that originated in Rwanda, and a ‘spirit of nationalism’ pervading the colony that gave foment to an armed rebellion. Missionaries and mission officials were also referencing the accelerated demand for education in Kenya, the migration of Africans to large cities like Nairobi and Mombasa, advances in transportation that revolutionized the colony, as well as changing social conventions in African society. This chapter will explore several of the most significant developments facing the mission during the post-war period and will consider the mission’s response (and reactions) to them. It will consider how it viewed the growing influence of the ecumenical movement,

⁸ Kenneth Richardson to Friends, December 1947, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

⁹ Ralph T. Davis, ‘In the British Fields’, *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXII, No. 5 [September-October, 1948], 3.

¹⁰ Ralph T. Davis, ‘Editorial’, *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXIII, No. 6 [November-December, 1949], 1.

the spread of the East Africa Revival, the Mau Mau Uprising and the 'spirit of nationalism', and visible social transformations in the colony. The post-war period was marked by increased complexity for the mission, which carried implications for its relationship to the church it founded.

The first challenge confronting the mission during the post-war period was how it would respond to the growing influence of the ecumenical movement on the African continent. The mission feared that the influence of ecumenism in Africa could weaken the Evangelical church it had planted. The World Council of Churches (WCC) was formed in 1948, immediately becoming the archenemy of global Fundamentalism as well as the *bête noire* of the AIM.¹¹ AIM missionaries and mission officials were frequently troubled and preoccupied by this post-war development. The WCC traces its history back to the 1910 World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh, where representatives from AIM and other faith missions had been active participants.¹² Although the conference delegates were exclusively Protestant, and primarily Evangelical, the gathering inspired a more inclusive ecumenical movement that culminated in the formation of the WCC in 1948.¹³ Between 1910 and 1948, the ecumenical movement became more diverse, attracting a growing body of liberal Protestants, Roman Catholics and Orthodox Christians with greater representation from the 'younger churches' in the non-Western world. As an outgrowth of the Edinburgh 1910 conference, the International Missionary Council (IMC) was

¹¹ Moreau, A. Scott, ed. *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, s.v. 'World Council of Churches Assemblies', (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000).

¹² Brian Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 7-12, 320.

¹³ Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference*, 320; 'Ecumenism' in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*; 'Ecumenical Conferences' in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*; 'World Council of Churches' in *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*.

established in 1921.¹⁴ The IMC was organized under the leadership of John R. Mott (1865-1955), a passionate promoter of world missions and an effective organizer who had presided over the Edinburgh 1910 conference.¹⁵ Among the varied aims of the council was the furtherance of a united Christian witness on the mission field and the promotion of racial equality in the global church. The council immediately set to work strengthening the 'younger churches' in Africa, Asia and Latin America while advocating a stronger 'partnership' between the foreign missionary and the emerging national churches.¹⁶ Conservative Evangelicals did not embrace the robust social agenda of the IMC and were especially concerned that evangelistic endeavours were gradually receding into the shadows. By the 1928 Jerusalem Conference, Evangelicals (many of whom became known as Fundamentalists) had become critics of the ecumenical movement.¹⁷ Meanwhile, the IMC was advancing its social agenda in the emerging churches in various parts of the African continent through its relationship with territorial bodies like the Congo Protestant Council (1924), the Christian Council of Tanganyika (1934) and the Christian Council of Kenya (1943).¹⁸ AIM was an active and influential member of all three of these entities, and its missionaries served on their councils. The mission's membership in these Christian organizations allowed AIM to flex its Evangelical muscles throughout East and Central

¹⁴ Paul E. Pierson, 'International Missionary Council' in *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*. Scott A. Moreau, ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2000).

¹⁵ C. Howard Hopkins, *John R. Mott, 1865-1955: A Biography* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979).

¹⁶ Philip A. Potter, 'Mission', in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, Nicholas Lossky, et al, ed. (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1991).

¹⁷ Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference*, 320-324.

¹⁸ C. P. Groves, *The Planting of Christianity in Africa: Volume III, 1878-1914* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1955), 288-295; *The Planting of Christianity in Africa, Volume IV, 1914-1954* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1958), 225-234; Norman Thomas, *Missions and Unity: Lessons from History, 1792-2010* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2010), 200-205.

Africa. Writing on behalf of the Kenya Field Council in 1949, the Deputation Secretary noted: "This Council is quite satisfied that membership of the C.C.K. [Christian Council of Kenya] cannot but be helpful, as we are able to influence this body by having such a very strong representation, and we sincerely trust that we may be enabled to make our evangelical contribution to the Cause in general by continuing our membership."¹⁹ The Deputation Secretary was trying to calm the concerns of those Fundamentalists who believed that the mission should consider withdrawal from these councils due to their relationship with the ecumenical movement. When the IMC and the WCC began working together on joint ventures in 1948 (the two bodies merged in 1961), criticism began mounting that the mission was compromising with the liberal agenda of the WCC.²⁰ The relationship between the WCC and the IMC, and the latter's growing influence with bodies like the Christian Council of Kenya (CCK), put the mission in a potentially compromising position. As a 1950 article read, "The Africa Inland Mission has not been without its share of expressed concern because of its membership in the Christian Council of Kenya, the Christian Council of Tanganyika, and the Congo Protestant Council."²¹ Mission authorities felt compelled to respond to these growing concerns in order to assure faithful supporters of AIM's unwavering commitment to Evangelical principles.

The mission's General Secretary between 1941 and 1956 was Ralph T. Davis, a veteran missionary from Chicago (sent out by Moody Bible Church) who had been serving with AIM since 1926. He was an effective missionary, a capable executive and a well-

¹⁹ D. M. Miller to Ralph Davis, 16 November 1949, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

²⁰ 'International Missionary Council' in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*.

²¹ 'Mission Matters', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXIV, No. 3 [May-June 1950], 15.

respected leader in the Evangelical community. Davis had been instrumental in the formation of the National Association of Evangelicals in 1943.²² He was concerned about the growing influence of the liberal agenda of the global ecumenical movement, but he was equally concerned with the influence of Fundamentalist extremists who opposed the movement. Davis attempted to guide the mission toward a *via media*, away from the progressive agenda of the WCC on the left as well as the vitriolic rhetoric of extreme Fundamentalists on the right. Davis and the mission were beginning to receive criticism for their mediating position. As he put it in 1951, 'It has been felt by many that the faith missions have become involved in situations in the international area which linked many of them with the World Council of Churches.'²³ The mission's senior executive was in a difficult position, desiring to exert a strong Evangelical influence in East Africa through church councils working with the IMC while trying to assure supporters at home that the mission was not compromising its Evangelical convictions.

Much of the criticism was coming from the Fundamentalist leader Carl McIntire (1906-2002), who had in 1948 founded the International Council of Christian Churches (ICCC) as the Fundamentalist alternative to the WCC.²⁴ McIntire was a militant Fundamentalist and an able publicist who recruited Evangelicals to join forces with his cause against modernism in the 1940s and 1950s.²⁵ His influence was extended into mission circles through the assistance of Francis Schaeffer (1912-1984), who from 1948 to

²² Davis' role in the formation of the National Association of Evangelicals is recounted in Joel A. Carpenter, *Revive Us Again: The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism* (New York: Oxford, 1997), 144-148, 151-152.

²³ Ralph T. Davis, 'The I.F.M.A. Position on Relationships', *Inland Africa* (American), Vol. XXXV, No. 1 [January-February, 1951], 12.

²⁴ Stanley, *The Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism*, 55; Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 204-206.

²⁵ D. K. Larsen, 'McIntire, Carl (1906-2002)', in *Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals*.

1955 devoted himself to McIntire's fight against modernism.²⁶ (Schaeffer would part ways with McIntire in the late 1950s and become an influential shaper of the 'new' Evangelical movement in the 1960s as well as a critic of the Fundamentalist tradition he once defended.)²⁷ The October 1949 Executive Committee of the AIM meeting, held that year in the United States, devoted significant time to how it should respond to McIntire's attack on the mission: 'A considerable portion of the time of this Committee meeting was given to the matter of the criticisms that have been addressed against the African Inland Mission because the mission has joined the Christian Council of Kenya.'²⁸ Members of the Executive Committee complained about an article 'that has appeared in the "Beacon" wherein Carl McIntire stated that he felt that the African Inland Mission has made a great mistake in joining the Council'.²⁹ Officials were nonplussed over McIntire's public criticism. Erik Barnett, the acting field director, expressed the mission's frustration: 'Personally, I find it difficult to understand why our Presbyterian friends have allowed this matter to go into the public press before first allowing time to enquire into the matter.'³⁰ McIntire's criticism forced the mission to respond in order to assure members of its conservative base that they could continue supporting the mission with confidence in its Evangelical credentials.

AIM was uneasy with McIntire's militant separatism and tried to find a mediating position between the ICCC on the extreme right and the WCC on the left. Davis had not only

²⁶ Stanley, *The Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism*, 135.

²⁷ C. Duriez, 'Schaeffer, Francis August (1912-1984)', in *Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals*.

²⁸ African Inland Mission, Executive Committee Meeting, 3 October 1949, BGC Archives (Wheaton), Collection 81, microfilm.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ Erik Barnett to Ralph T. Davis, Kenya Colony, 6 October 1949, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

helped establish the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) in 1943 but had been instrumental in the formation of the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association (EFMA) in 1945, an agency that served as the foreign arm of the NAE.³¹ AIM worked closely with the EFMA, even sharing office space in Brooklyn with the organization for a short time in 1950.³² The mission worked together with the EFMA on plans to create an Evangelical Office in Nairobi (not opened until 1962), which became the forerunner of the Association of Evangelicals in Africa and Madagascar (AEAM).³³ The mission positioned itself with those Evangelicals who would eventually part ways with separatist Fundamentalists in the 1950s to form a broader Evangelical coalition inspired in large part by the efforts of the evangelist Billy Graham, who in 1956 renounced the label 'Fundamentalist'.³⁴ AIM laboured to maintain its Evangelical principles but did not want to alienate missionaries or supporters who were members of Evangelical churches that retained ties to denominations containing liberal churches. Erik Barnett noted in 1949 that 'we have a large number of missionary members and donors who are connected with a Church organization in which

³¹ The National Association of Evangelicals and the related Evangelical Foreign Missions Association were established in an effort to provide broad-based Evangelical unity. See Stanley, *The Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism*, 28-60, 72-76. For the relationship of both organizations to AIM, see Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 144-148; Edwin L. Frizen, *75 Years of IFMA, 1917-1992* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1992), 75-76; 'National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) Records, 1941-2000', Wheaton College Archives & Special Collections, <http://archon.wheaton.edu/?p=creators/creator&id=137> (accessed 19 November 2015).

³² Edwin L. Frizen, *75 Years of IFMA, 1917-1992: The Nondenominational Missions Movement* (Pasadena, CA: The William Carey Library, 1992), 197.

³³ Records of the Evangelical Fellowship of Mission Agencies (EFMA), BGC Archives (Wheaton), Collection 165, <http://www2.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/GUIDES/165.htm> (accessed 19 November 2015). The name was changed from the Evangelical Foreign Mission Agencies to the Evangelical Fellowship of Mission Agencies in 1992.

³⁴ 'Is Evangelical Theology Changing', *Christian Life* (March 1956), 16. The magazine reported on an interview Graham gave at his 1955 Scotland Crusade in which he denounced the Fundamentalist label. In the Fundamentalist paper *The Sword of the Lord*, evangelist (and editor) John R. Rice spent much of 1957 harshly criticizing Graham for his statement.

there is liberalism'.³⁵ Not all Evangelicals had separated from denominations where liberal theology was countenanced in the early twentieth century, and the mission was trying to align itself with progressive Evangelical concerns.

While the mission did not embrace McIntire's pugilistic brand of Fundamentalism, it did go out of its way to distance itself from modernism and the WCC. An article was published in the May-June 1950 edition of *Inland Africa* assuring mission supporters that AIM was being managed by seasoned leaders who could be trusted to safeguard the mission's integrity: 'The affairs of the Mission on the field are handled by veterans in the work, men who are as desirous of clear-cut testimony as are our friends here at home. They [our friends] have been assured that our alliances have not linked us with modernism, and have furthered rather than hindered our missionary work.'³⁶ The same article also assured supporters that 'none of the councils mentioned is a member of the World Council of Churches'.³⁷ In the very next issue of *Inland Africa*, AIM made what must have been an embarrassing admission: 'The Africa Inland Mission is a member of the Congo Protestant Council. However, it was not known until about January, 1950, that the Congo Protestant Council was a member of the International Missionary Council.'³⁸ This meant that the mission was indirectly linked to the WCC by its membership in the CPC, a body that was in turn affiliated with the WCC. The same article promised supporters that the Congo Field Council had voted in January 1950 to sever ties with 'any organization that has connection

³⁵ Erik S. Barnett to Ralph T. Davis, Kenya Colony, October 6, 1949, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

³⁶ 'Inter-Mission Councils', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXIV, No. 3 [May-June, 1950], 15.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ 'Official Statement of the African Inland's Mission Position in Regard to Inter-Mission Councils', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXIV, No. 4 [July-August, 1950], 11.

with or is subsidiary to the World Council of Churches'.³⁹ Over the next three years, the mission tried to persuade the CPC to part ways with the IMC, but in the end the AIM reluctantly withdrew its membership in the CPC and chose to serve in 'only the relationship of Consultant to that body'.⁴⁰ This was a clever way for the mission to retain some relationship with the CPC while at the same time assuring supporters that it was not officially connected with the WCC. The mission was not just manoeuvring to save face with supporters, for it also wanted to protect the African church from the vagaries of theological liberalism. In Kenya, the mission retained its ties with the CCK but urged the body to strengthen its doctrinal statement to protect its Evangelical principles.⁴¹ The mission then applied pressure to the CCK to remain separate from the IMC and the WCC. Supporters of the mission were informed in 1951 that the mission was standing firm against any move on the part of the CCK to become affiliated with the WCC: 'The Africa Inland Mission will oppose any move towards affiliation with the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches.'⁴² It was pleased to report in 1953 that the CCK had strengthened its doctrinal statement and that the mission would continue to be affiliated with the Kenyan council.⁴³ The mission took a strong stand against the WCC and ecumenical movement but rejected Fundamentalist separatism and pressured the

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Inter-Field Directorate, Africa Inland Mission, Minutes of the meetings held at Kijabe, Kenya Colony, 18-24 March 1953, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² 'A Stand Taken on the Field', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXV, No. 1 [January-February, 1951], 12.

⁴³ Inter-Field Directorate, Africa Inland Mission, Minutes of the meetings held at Kijabe, Kenya Colony, 18-24 March 1953, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

emerging African church to follow its lead. The mission responded to the growing influence of the ecumenical movement in Africa by acting to protect the Evangelical reputation of the mission and the Evangelical purity of the church it founded.

Second, while mission officials were combating both liberals and Fundamentalists, they were also trying to come to terms with the spread of an indigenous revival movement that was challenging mission-established authority. The East Africa(n) Revival had its origins in the Belgian territory of Ruanda-Urundi in the early 1930s, quickly spreading to the British Protectorate of Uganda, and then to the colonies of Kenya and Tanganyika in the late 1930s. The revival gained considerable strength in Kenya during the decade of the 1940s and became a global movement in the 1950s through the itinerating efforts of revival leaders. The movement was referred to variously as ‘The Ruanda Revival Movement’, ‘Ruandaism’, ‘The Uganda Revival’ and the ‘Balokole’ (or ‘Abalokole’), the latter from a Luganda word meaning ‘saved ones’.⁴⁴ The revival was spearheaded by John E. (“Joe”) Church (1899-1989), a medical missionary with the CMS working in Rwanda, and Simeon Nsibambi (1897-1978), a native Ugandan evangelist who had been educated in Anglican mission schools.⁴⁵ The two met in 1929 and formed an intimate friendship, attracting widespread attention as they travelled throughout East Africa in the 1930s and 1940s gracing platforms as equals—African evangelist and British missionary—labouring in unison for church renewal.⁴⁶ They confronted spiritual complacency in the church,

⁴⁴ Kevin Ward and Emma Wild-Wood, *The East African Revival: Histories and Legacies* (Surrey, UK; Ashgate Publishers, 2012), 18-20.

⁴⁵ Gerald H. Anderson, *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions*, s.v., ‘Church, John E. (“Joe”)’ and ‘Nsibambi, Simeon’; also ‘Simeon Nsibambi (1897-1987), Revival Anchor’ in Mark A. Noll and Carolyn Nystrom, *Clouds of Witnesses: Christian Voices from Africa and Asia* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011), 99-110.

promoted racial reconciliation, advocated the equality of men and women and called for the public confession of sin. Their efforts gave birth to what Adrian Hastings has called 'the most famed of Christian associational movements' to emerge from East Africa, and it eventually spread to parts of Europe, North America and Australia in the 1940s and 1950s.⁴⁷ The famed Kenyan writer Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o recalled the 1940s when 'the revivalist movement reached Kenya and swept through the ridges like a fire of vengeance'.⁴⁸

There are no published studies to date examining the relationship between AIM and the East Africa Revival, though passing references are found in the secondary literature. The masterful history of the Revival by Kevin Ward and Emma Wild-Wood observes that 'with the exception of members who belonged to the African Inland Mission, the Balokole had their home in the Anglican Church'.⁴⁹ This statement implies that the Balokole movement had some presence among AIM adherents. The popular survey of the revival by Richard McMaster and Donald Jacobs mentions that some AIM missionaries had a favourable view of the movement but also notes that AIM leaders 'remained uneasy about

⁴⁶ There is now a widening body of literature on the East African Revival. The standard scholarly work on the revival (which provides an extensive bibliography) is Kevin Ward and Emma Wild-Wood, *The East African Revival: Histories and Legacies* (Surrey, UK; Ashgate Publishers, 2012). A survey of the revival's global influence is provided in Richard K. McMaster with Donald R. Jacobs, *A Gentle Wind of God: The Influence of the East Africa Revival* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 2006). An African perspective is provided in James Katarikawe, *The East African Revival* (Lydia Murungi, 2014). An alternative interpretation depicting the revival as counter-cultural movement threatening ethnic cultural norms is provided in Derek R. Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism and the East African Revival: A History of Dissent, c. 1935-1972* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

⁴⁷ Adrian Hastings, *The Church in Africa: 1450-1950* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 596-99; Elizabeth Isichei, *A History of Christianity in Africa* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 241-42; for the influence of the revival beyond East Africa, see McMaster and Jacobs, *A Gentle Wind of God*, 119-233.

⁴⁸ Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *A Grain of Wheat* (New York: Penguin Books, 2012), 82.

⁴⁹ Ward and Wild-Wood, *The East African Revival*, 61.

the revival' because of the 'confusion' it created in their churches.⁵⁰ The primary sources on the mission appear to support the claims found in both works.

AIM church members participated in the revival and some missionaries spoke appreciatively of the movement, though the mission largely opposed it. At least some adherents of AIM churches were attracted to the movement as it 'swept through the ridges like a fire' in the colony of Kenya. Mission authorities began talking about the revival in the early 1940s in the AIM-controlled region of Mbooni in Ukambani. 'The revival at Mbooni has taken a queer turn,' wrote H. S. Dixon from Machakos in 1940.⁵¹ Dixon may have been referring to the way that the revival challenged the orderly worship gatherings of mission-controlled churches, encouraging people to confess private sins openly in a manner that challenged the spiritual complacency of church leaders. As the revival gradually spread in Kenya during the 1940s, AIM tried to stem the tide of the revivalists' influence. The Kenya Field Council minutes of 1948 read: 'Some concern has been felt concerning the spread of certain teachings in connection with the "Ruanda revival movement".'⁵² AIM field representatives complained about the 'erroneous doctrine' of the revival, which they specified as the 'confession of sins, mostly in connection with sex, and an attempt to break down all restraining bars between colour, race, and sex'.⁵³ In 1950 the field council continued addressing reports that some members of the church had been participating in

⁵⁰ McMaster and Jacobs, *A Gentle Wind of God*, 74-75, 124-126.

⁵¹ H. S. Dixon to Ralph T. Davis, Machokos, Kenya, East Africa, 6 September 1940, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

⁵² Africa Inland Mission, Kenya Field Council Minutes, 6-10 December 1948, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 5.

the 'practices' of the revival movement and threatened participants with excommunication. Mission authorities decreed that anyone who participated in the 'practices' of 'Balokole' would be reprovved and that 'if he continues in such practices, he shall then be subject to the discipline of the Africa Inland Church'.⁵⁴ A 1952 white paper titled 'Examination of the Abolekele Movement in Congo' provided missionaries with doctrinal direction for opposing the movement in Kenya and 'throughout the A. I. M.'.⁵⁵ The mission accused the revival of being 'exclusive and separatist' through its repeated use of the expression 'The Saved Ones' (Abalokole), thereby suggesting that those not part of the movement were unconverted.⁵⁶ AIM complained that the movement allowed men and women to work closely together, often attending prayer services that continued after dark, thereby placing 'undue emphasis on intimate fellowship' that 'clashed with mission rules'. This practice, they noted, encouraged what the mission called 'dangerous fellowship' between the sexes.⁵⁷ The mission was greatly troubled by the 'open confession of sin' especially the 'sins of adultery, of lustful thought and desire' and sometimes 'sins which were committed before conversion'.⁵⁸ African church leaders who resisted the movement were in strong agreement with missionaries in their opposition to the practice of revealing sins that

⁵⁴ Minutes of Field Council Meetings, 23-29 November 1950, AIM International, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

⁵⁵ 'Examination of the Abolekele Movement in Congo', BGC Archives (Wheaton), AIM International, Collection 81; 'Report of the Committee Appointed by the Field Council Under Minute 36 of January 1952', Africa Inland Mission, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

⁵⁶ 'Report of the Committee Appointed by the Field Council Under Minute 36 of January 1952', 1.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

should remain out of public view or be confessed privately.⁵⁹ The mission complained about the disorder that the revival created in public services as worshippers made 'wild accusations, often patently false, against various people, usually missionaries or African Church leaders'.⁶⁰ The mission was particularly bothered by the inability of church leaders to control the revivalists, as stated in the conclusion of the paper: 'No attempt has been made in this movement to work through the church or under its control or leadership.'⁶¹ AIM wanted to retain control over mission-established churches and curb what they deemed to be dangerous practices and doctrinal excesses.

Some AIM missionaries, however, held sympathetic views of the movement. Laura Isabelle "Belle" Barr (1914-2003), an American who had been converted at a "Gypsy" Smith (1860-1947) evangelistic meeting in 1930, served with the AIM between 1944 and 1980.⁶² She recalled that 'a couple of our missionaries were in the Abalokole'.⁶³ Barr mentioned Margaret Lloyd, whose experiences with the movement were published in *Inland Africa*. Miss Lloyd spoke, for example, about attending a revival meeting in 1950 in the West Nile region of Uganda where 'the love and joy and friendship were obvious on every hand'. As she put it, 'In Him there is no black and white, but all one.'⁶⁴ She also commented on the orderliness of the gathering: 'Everything went so smoothly that it was obvious Who was in

⁵⁹ Derek R. Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism and the East Africa Revival: A History of Dissent, c. 1935-1972* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 211-214.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid., 3.

⁶² Papers of Laura Isabelle "Belle" Bar, BGC Archives (Wheaton), Collection 481, <http://www2.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/GUIDES/481.htm>, s.v., 'Biography' (accessed 14 November 2015).

⁶³ Laura Isabelle "Bell" Barr, BGC Archives (Wheaton), Collection 481, T3 Transcript.

⁶⁴ Miss Margaret Lloyd, 'Echoes of Revival', *Inland Africa* (British), Vol. XXXII, No. 159 [Oct.-Dec. 1950], 57.

charge.⁶⁵ Another missionary who praised the movement was Virginia Blakeslee, an American medical doctor who had served with AIM since 1911.⁶⁶ She was held in high regard for her more than four decades of service with AIM, and her 1956 memoir *Beyond the Kikuyu Curtain* was widely promoted by the mission.⁶⁷ She was intimate friends with the famed AIM martyr, Hulda Stumpf (1867-1930), having dined with her the night before her murder in Kijabe at the height of the Female Circumcision Controversy.⁶⁸ In 1950 she wrote an article in which she spoke glowingly of the revival: 'The wind of the Spirit is bringing new life and spiritual revival to Kikuyuland to-day. From other parts of Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda, and Ruanda flashes the good news.'⁶⁹ Blakeslee praised the emphasis that was placed on being 'born again' and shared personal stories of reconciliation between African and European where 'bitter feelings' were now gone. With tensions beginning to mount in East Africa between Africans and Europeans on the eve of the Mau Mau Uprising, Blakeslee saw this surprising work of God as perfectly timed: 'May God be praised that in the "nick of time" He has graciously sent His Spirit to breath upon the people of Kikuyuland, yea upon East Africa and beyond.'⁷⁰ Some AIM missionaries were supporters of the East African Revival, viewing it as a God-send for Europeans and Africans alike.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Dana Lee Robert, *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1996), 213-214.

⁶⁷ H. Virginia Blakeslee, *Beyond the Kikuyu Curtain* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1956); Dick Anderson, *We Felt Like Grasshoppers: The Story of Africa Inland Mission* (Nottingham: Crossway Books, 1994), 85-89.

⁶⁸ Blakeslee, *Beyond the Kikuyu Curtain*, 192-93.

⁶⁹ H. Virginia Blakeslee, 'Revival News', *Inland Africa* (British), Vol. XXXII, No. 158 [July-Sept. 1950], 44.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

Although there was some degree of support by AIM missionaries for the East Africa Revival within the mission community, AIM officials largely opposed the movement. In a 1954 memo on the revival, the Anglican Archdeacon of Central Kenya observed that ‘The Churches, except possibly the African Inland Mission, stand by the Revival in approval.’⁷¹ An occasional prayer letter sent out to AIM supporters in 1952 is typical of the attitude. The letter talks about the ‘spurious forms of revival’ in some parts of the field and asks readers to ‘pray that all who are at present gripped by this unhelpful, and even harmful movement’ would be safeguarded from error.⁷² The letter continued with a plea for the AIM community to pray for ‘real revival’ [underlining original].⁷³ In his 1953 promotional book *African Harvest*, the British travelling secretary T. E. Lloyd (no relation to Margaret Lloyd) celebrated the work of the mission and roundly criticized the revival as something ‘thrown against the Church of God by the adversary’. He condemned what he called ‘spurious forms’ of spirituality and ‘perversions of the Christian faith’ and asked for his readers to pray for those in the movement that they might ‘come through safely’.⁷⁴ In 1954 the mission admitted that ‘revival is going on in Kenya’ but that ‘not all that is done in the name of Revival is genuine and of the Spirit of God’.⁷⁵ The mission decreed that ‘no group professing to be under the aegis of the Africa Inland Mission or Church be allowed to

⁷¹ Circular letter from Peter G. Bostock, Archdeacon of Central Kenya, 31 July 1954, Kenya National Archives (Nairobi), VQ/1/36.

⁷² ‘Occasional Prayer Letter’, Africa Inland Mission, 30 August 1952, AIM-International Archives (Nottingham).

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ T. E. Lloyd, *African Harvest* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1953), 62-63.

⁷⁵ Africa Inland Mission, Kenya Field, Minutes of the Annual Conference Business Meeting, 1954, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

maintain a formal organization or to conduct secret [unauthorized] meetings'.⁷⁶ In 1955 Ruth Truesdell, who was recognized for 'the fine service' she had given the mission, was nevertheless not allowed to return to the field until she could 'declare an undivided loyalty to the Africa Inland Mission' and cease her support of the revival. The mission made it clear that 'the African Inland Church and Mission see eye to eye in recognizing the errors in the Ruanda Movement as it is in Kenya today'.⁷⁷ AIM was so strongly opposed to the movement that agreement with its policy became a litmus test for continued missionary service. The mission largely opposed the revival in East Africa and reined in missionaries who supported the movement. AIM was concerned about doctrinal excesses and threats to mission and church authority.

The third challenge facing the mission during this period was the growing nationalistic spirit as well as the armed rebellion that became known as the Mau Mau

Uprising. A historical interpretation of the revolution, variously termed the 'Mau Mau Uprising', the 'Mau Mau Revolt', the 'Mau Mau Rebellion' or the 'Kenya Emergency', is beyond the scope of this thesis. The first published accounts of the Uprising in the 1950s by the leading Kenyan scholar Louis Leakey dismissed the revolt as 'a perverted religious cult manipulated by cynical and evil leaders'.⁷⁸ In the 1960s revisionist historians explained the uprising as a lost-cause ideology of sorts, locating the roots of the revolt in the failure of 'European policy-makers to recognize the need for significant social and

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Confidential Minutes from An Extraordinary Meeting Held At Kijabe, 12-13 May 1955, African Inland Mission, Kenya Field Council, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

⁷⁸ Bruce J. Berman, 'Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Modernity: The Paradox of Mau Mau' in *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, Vo. 25, no. 2 [1991], 183.

political reform'.⁷⁹ Since the 1960s, Mau Mau has been variously portrayed as the war for national independence, a fragmented outburst of powerless villagers with no unifying explanation, a peasants' revolt suppressed by the imperial government and a civil war among the Kikuyu which led to the decolonisation of Kenya.⁸⁰ Caroline M. Elkins' 2005 work, *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya*, sensationalized the uprising as the heroic response of a persecuted minority, accomplished in part by focusing in detail on the heavy-handed tactics of the British military and the gruesome executions of convicted Mau Mau fighters.⁸¹ David Anderson's 2005 study *Histories of the Hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and the End of the Empire* helpfully casts a wider gaze and attempts to bring together many of the varied interpretations of the uprising.⁸² John Lonsdale has argued that several strands of 'incompatible European myths' have marked British memories of Mau Mau. Conservatives have viewed the uprising as 'terror-laden primitivism' among violent Africans, Liberals have couched it in terms of a reaction to the 'effects of rapid social change' among the Kikuyu, Christians have portrayed the movement as a 'collective sin' that needed to be confessed, while the British military have viewed the

⁷⁹ Ibid., 183.

⁸⁰ Rosberg, Carl G. Jr. and John Nottingham, *The Myth of 'Mau Mau': Nationalism in Kenya* (Nairobi: General Printers Limited, 1966); Greet Kershaw, *Mau Mau from Below* (Oxford: James Currey, 1997); Wunyabari O. Maloba, *Mau Mau and Kenya: An Analysis of a Peasant Revolt* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1998); Daniel Branch, *Defeating Mau Mau, Creating Kenya: Counterinsurgency, Civil War and Decolonization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

⁸¹ Caroline M. Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2005). For criticism of her work, see Pascal James Imperato, 'Review: Differing Perspectives on Mau Mau', *Africa Studies Review*, Vol. 48, No. 3 [Dec., 2005], 147-154.

⁸² David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2005).

emergency as a 'political war'.⁸³ While scholarly efforts to interpret Mau Mau have produced a virtual cottage industry, with the passage of time the war is popularly regarded as the 'national war of liberation'.⁸⁴

The Mau Mau Uprising during the 1950s, though largely confined among the Kikuyu in Kenya's central highlands, created political changes within the colony. As early as 1950, the colonial government was aware of the existence of a secret society that was intimidating people into taking anti-government oaths and potentially fomenting massive rebellion in the Kikuyu countryside.⁸⁵ Before the uprising began, a July 1952 'top secret letter' on political activity reported 'mass demonstrations of thousands of Kikuyu women', the 'rapid spread of subversion throughout all Kikuyu', 'increased tempo of Kikuyu political activity' and 'increased incidents of serious Kikuyu crime'.⁸⁶ The report indicated that 'Anti-European propaganda is being found' in various places and 'Missionaries who lived among the Kikuyu in their country for many years are now so apprehensive for their safety that they have asked for police protection'.⁸⁷ Civil unrest finally broke out when the Senior Chief of Kiambu County (north of Nairobi) Waruhiu wa Kungu, a devout Christian leader who opposed the radicalism of the secret society, was shot dead by Mau Mau activists on 7

⁸³ John Lonsdale, 'Mau Maus of the Mind: Making Mau Mau and Remaking Kenya', *The Journal of Africa History*, vol. 31, no. 3 (1991), 393-421.

⁸⁴ The standard history of Kenya since independence is now the 958-page volume by Charles Hornsby, *Kenya: A History Since Independence* (London: I. B. Tauris & Company, 2013). This above citation is found on page 116, but the legacy of Mau Mau is also discussed on pages 44-48.

⁸⁵ George Bennet and Alison Smith, 'Kenya: From "White Man's Country" to Kenyatta's State, 1945-1963' in D. A. Low and Alison Smith, *History of East Africa, Volume Three* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976). 109-55.

⁸⁶ 'Kikuyu Political Activity', top secret letter No. c/349/1 addressed by the Commissioner of Police, 14 July 1952. Kenya National Archives (Nairobi), VQ/1/36.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.

October 1952. Sir Evelyn Baring (1903-1973), the newly appointed governor of the colony, declared a state of emergency on 20 October 1952.⁸⁸ The front cover of the October-December 1952 issue of *Inland Africa* put supporters of the mission on notice: 'There is considerable unrest among the Kikuyu people caused by the Mau Mau secret society.'⁸⁹ Jomo Kenyatta (1891-1978), along with senior leaders of the Kenya African Union (KAU), was arrested and more than 180 political activists were rounded up and detained. (Kenyatta denied being involved with Mau Mau, a claim that is now well-supported by the scholarly consensus.) Police action escalated into guerrilla warfare in the highlands on the slopes of Mount Kenya and in the forests of the Aberdares as up to 30,000 Mau Mau fighters joined the struggle, many of them recruits from some 75,000 demobilized soldiers who had served with Britain during the Second World War.⁹⁰

The Kenyan Emergency lasted from late 1952 to 1959, during which time 55,000 British soldiers were deployed. The government gained the upper hand in April 1954 when 'Operation Anvil' was implemented. Over a two-week period, beginning on 24 April 1954, British troops dragooned some 25,000 Kikuyu men into detention camps for screening, a number that represented nearly the whole of the Kikuyu male population.⁹¹ The Royal Air Force also provided air support from mid-1953 and into 1955, raining heavy fire onto Mau Mau positions in the forested areas of the central highlands, effectively breaking the back of the resistance. By mid-1955 conditions had become largely tranquil,

⁸⁸ Hornsby, *Kenya: A History Since Independence*, 44.

⁸⁹ Front Cover, *Inland Africa* (British), Vol. XXXIV, No. 167 [Oct.-Dec. 1952].

⁹⁰ Anderson, *History of the Hanged*, 36.

⁹¹ Bennett and Smith, 'Kenya: From "White Man's Country" to Kenyatta's State', 133.

though the emergency remained in effect until late 1959. Approximately 150,000 to 320,000 Africans were held in fifty detention camps during the emergency and 1,090 prisoners were executed by the colonial government. An estimated 14,000 Africans (though Anderson places the number at closer to 20,000) along with 29 Asians and 95 Europeans died in the colonial government's pyrrhic victory.⁹²

AIM demonized the Mau Mau Uprising while condemning the heavy-handed tactics of the government and providing relief for Africans affected by the war. The Uprising created unsettling conditions on the field for missionaries, Europeans and the African church. In April 1953, the AIM Field Director in Kenya reported that 'an assessment of the political situation in Kenya is exceedingly difficult owing to the changes from day to day'.⁹³ The mission believed that while Mau Mau was trying to promote African rights it had as its ultimate aim the overthrow of the colonial authorities. In the words of the director, 'a movement called the Mau Mau, having as its objective the ousting of the British Government in Kenya and its promoting of interests of non-Africans, is responsible for the situation'.⁹⁴ The movement was a direct threat to the peace and security of the colony and the work of missionaries. 'Missions have become a target of the Mau Mau,' the field director reported.⁹⁵ A 1953 article in AIM's official organ summarized the mission's attitude toward the 'Mau Mau society' in Kenya: 'This organization, anti-God and inflamed by racial hatred, has swept through the Kikuyu tribe like wildfire and is spreading to other

⁹² Hornsby, *Kenya: A History Since Independence*, 47.

⁹³ Erik S. Barnett, 'The Political Situation in Kenya', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXVII, No. 2 [March-April 1953], 9.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

highland tribes, playing upon the superstitions of the people, persecuting all, especially Christians, who dare to stand against it.’⁹⁶ Mau Mau was considered to be an enemy of the Christian faith: ‘It has taken mass persecution by the Mau Mau to show Christians and heathen alike that Satan is their real enemy and the enemy of God.’⁹⁷ So strong were these feelings that twenty years after the uprising, the mission’s official history described the ‘Mau Mau rising’ as ‘anti-God, anti-Bible, anti-Mission as well as anti-European’.⁹⁸ While the mission strongly denounced Mau Mau, it was also displeased with the government’s execution of the war and its treatment of prisoners in detention camps. AIM joined other mission agencies in lodging a formal remonstrance against the colonial government. They reaffirmed ‘their sincere and whole-hearted support of the government’s objective to terminate the Emergency at the earliest possible moment’ while complaining that ‘indiscriminate action was being taken against the innocent and the guilty alike’.⁹⁹ The mission was ‘disturbed at some of the incidents that have occurred in the follow-up of the “anvil” and similar operations’ and complained that ‘these factors have had a demoralizing effect on African opinion, and are in no way conducive toward eliciting active African support’.¹⁰⁰ During a February 1955 meeting between the governor, Sir Frederick Crawford, and mission representatives, Sir Frederick admitted that ‘abuses had been

⁹⁶ ‘The Menace of the Mau Mau’, *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXVII, No. 1 [January-February 1953], 12.

⁹⁷ Erik S. Barnett, ‘Re-evaluation through Persecution’, *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXVIII, No. 3 [May-June, 1954], 5.

⁹⁸ Kenneth Richardson, *Garden of Miracles: The Story of the Africa Inland Mission* (London: African Inland Mission, 1976), 91.

⁹⁹ ‘Memorandum From The Church Leaders To H.E. The Governor of Kenya’, 18 January 1955, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

committed' and promised to remedy the situation but asked that mission refrain from publicizing its concerns because 'it would tend to give a one-sided picture'.¹⁰¹ The mission also sent chaplains to work in the detention camps. AIM missionary Ken Phillips ministered to Mau Mau prisoners during the Emergency, and in 1958 the Stirling Tract Enterprise published his memoir wherein he related the 'united fellowship', the 'enriching experience' and the 'brotherly love' he frequently encountered during his work.¹⁰² The mission participated in fund-raising efforts with the CCK for the rehabilitation of the Kikuyu and worked with the African church to help provide care for an estimated 40,000 children orphaned by the war.¹⁰³ The mission strongly opposed Mau Mau, criticized the government response and provided relief for Africans impacted by the uprising.

The mission's denunciation of the Mau Mau Uprising naturally raises the question of its view on the nationalistic spirit that has been associated with the revolt. A tentative consideration may be offered from the available sources. The designation 'Mau Mau' (of unknown origin) was being used in Kenya as early as 1948, nearly four years before the emergency, though it was largely confined Kikuyu unrest.¹⁰⁴ It is also evident that AIM missionaries were simultaneously aware of a growing 'spirit of nationalism' throughout East and Central Africa in the late 1940s. In 1948 Ralph Davis wrote of the 'growing resentment toward non-Africans' and the 'spirit of nationalism' that would eventually

¹⁰¹ 'Confidential Report of the Interview of church leaders with Sir Frederick Crawford, the Acting Governor, at Government House', Nairobi, 2 February 1955, Kenya National Archives (Nairobi), VQ/1/36.

¹⁰² K. N. Phillips, *From Mau Mau to Christ* (Stirling: Stirling Tract Enterprise, 1958), 63, passim.

¹⁰³ 'Memorandum', 21 December 1954, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida); D. M. Miller to K. L. Downing, 'Rehabilitation Proposals', 21 December 1954, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida); D. M. Miller to Tom and Ruth Collins, 'Mau Mau', 31 January 1955, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

¹⁰⁴ 'History of the Origins of Mau Mau', Kenya National Archives (Nairobi), KNA-KA 1/1/76.

'affect missionary endeavour'.¹⁰⁵ In 1949 *Inland Africa* reported that government soldiers were dispatched to Githumu (an eventual Mau Mau stronghold in Kikuyuland) because of 'anti-white, anti-mission, anti-Government feeling'.¹⁰⁶ In late 1952 the Kenya Field Council approved the following message to be dispatched to the AIM office in New York: 'The African Church in some parts of the field is going through fiery persecution, largely because of the growing nationalism.'¹⁰⁷ The 'fiery persecution' is a likely reference to the Mau Mau Uprising among the Kikuyu in the area around Githumu. A 1953 article published in *Inland Africa* uses the expressions 'Mau Mau terrorism', 'nationalism sweeping the nation' and 'race hatred' in the same sentence.¹⁰⁸ It is evident that the mission attributed nationalist aims to the Mau Mau Uprising and also opposed the movement. However, it would be going beyond the available sources to suggest that AIM missionaries therefore opposed nationalism. The mission opposed the revolt on various grounds, including its violent 'persecution' of African Christians, the unsettled conditions it created for missionary work and its contempt for Europeans. Nationalist aspirations were present within the Mau Mau Movement, but the 'spirit of nationalism' was not confined to the movement. By the late 1950s, nationalism had become a popular movement throughout East Africa.¹⁰⁹ Missionaries believed that the government would soundly defeat Mau Mau in Kenya, while

¹⁰⁵ Ralph T. Davis, 'Mission Matters', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXII, No. 6 [November-December 1948], 13.

¹⁰⁶ 'Mission Matters', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXIII, No. 1 [January-February, 1949], 15.

¹⁰⁷ Africa Inland Mission Kenya Field, 'Confidential Minutes and Notes from the Field Council Meetings of September 1-5, 1952', AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

¹⁰⁸ Carroll C. Ness, 'Ukamba Bible School', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXVII, No. 3 [May-June, 1953], 11.

¹⁰⁹ J. M. Lonsdale, 'Some Origins of Nationalism in East Africa', *The Journal of African History*, vol. 9, no. 1 (1968), 119-146.

the spirit of nationalism would endure. A 1957 letter from the AIM Kenyan Field Director captures the mission's sentiment: 'Although the Mau Mau terrorists have been defeated militarily, and their violent methods have failed to achieve their ends, it is recognized that their object and desire for ultimate national independence is more alive than ever.'¹¹⁰ The While the mission was concerned about the Mau Mau Uprising, its greater concern was how nationalism would affect its continued work in Kenya after Mau Mau was defeated. D. M. Miller presented a white paper in 1950, two years before the outbreak of the Mau Mau Uprising, on the work of the mission. He observed that 'the conditions in Africa are peculiar and challenging. This is caused by the growing sense of nationalism.'¹¹¹ In his concluding remarks he wrote, 'We have less than 10 years to finish our task!' The Mau Mau Uprising was a challenge for the mission, but the greater challenge was the changing political realities that confronted them in East Africa. The mission worried that independence could possibly bring an end to the work of the mission in Kenya.

The fourth challenge facing the mission was the changing social environs in the colony in the post-war period. During the late 1940s and into the 1950s, missionaries and mission officials often described, with a sense of foreboding, the accelerated demand for education, the growth of Africa's urban centres, the acquisition of consumer goods and changes in social conventions like the increase of smoking and drinking. A 1948 article in the British edition of *Inland Africa* observed that 'the pace of civilization is already

¹¹⁰ Erik S. Barnett, 'Kenya: An A.I.M. Missionary Survey', Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

¹¹¹ D. M. Miller, 'Evangelical Strategy (in its relation to the Church)', Introductory Paper given by Mr D. M. Miller at the F. I. M. S. Conference in London, June 1950. AIM International Archives (Nottingham), 9.

enormously accelerated'.¹¹² Using a turn-of-phrase from European folklore, one missionary noted that in Africa 'civilization has come in with seven-league boots'.¹¹³ In early 1954 an article in *Inland Africa* described the changes that began with the arrival of the European and the 'opening up of Africa'. The article observed that 'Progressive development, slow at first, has become phenomenal in recent years' and explained that 'the contacts between White and Black on a considerable scale are having far-reaching consequences'.¹¹⁴ The demobilised soldier's encounter with European civilization during the war was seen as a contributing factor: 'Africans in the armed forces in particular have a new and broadened viewpoint.'¹¹⁵ The African soldier returned home with 'new desires, new needs, and new ambitions' imported from 'a hitherto unknown and little-heard-of outside world'.¹¹⁶ Air travel rapidly increased the flow of people, ideas and products from the Western world to the Africa continent. In 1948 the British Overseas Air Service (BOAC) began offering regular flights between London and Nairobi while East African Airways began connecting cities within Kenya, Tanganyika, Ethiopia and Zanzibar in the late 1940s and early 1950s.¹¹⁷ Ironically, AIM missionaries did not welcome the arrival of Western civilization with uncritical acceptance.

¹¹² 'Birth Pangs of Africa', *Inland Africa* (Britain), Vol. XXX, No. 150 [April-June 1948], 21.

¹¹³ Lucilda A. Newton, 'From a Missionary's Mail', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXVI, No. 1 [January-February 1952], 4.

¹¹⁴ 'Education and Missionary Responsibility', *Inland Africa* (Britain) Vol. XXXV, no. 171, [Mid Oct. 1953 - Mid Jan. 1954], 74.

¹¹⁵ Ralph T. Davis, 'Editorial', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXVIII, No. 2 [March-April 1944], 1.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ Robin Higham, *Speedbird: The Complete History of B.O.A.C* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2013), 97-116; Stephen Mills, *Dreams, Schemes and Flying Machines: 100 Years of Flight, East Africa, 1909-2009* (Nairobi: Mills Publishing, 2009), 134; 'British Airways: Explore Our Past, 1940-1949', <http://www.britishairways.com/en->

As observed in the previous chapter, AIM adjusted its educational policy in 1945 largely due to increased pressure and threats from its converts. The growing demand for education accelerated in the post-war period to the consternation of missionaries. AIM became increasingly concerned that African demand for schools was motivated by the desire for material gain. AIM missionary Sheldon Folk wrote in 1949, 'The African is fast changing his ways and ideas' adding that 'the people are making great demands on missions and Government for schools'.¹¹⁸ In 1951 he proclaimed again, 'The people are crying out for more and more schools.'¹¹⁹ A 1953 article announced that 'children are flocking to schools in record numbers'.¹²⁰ Missionaries complained: 'They want what the white man has—and education may be a road leading to that goal.'¹²¹ The missionary brought education to East Africa, but now their converts were in danger of being led astray by the 'white man's power and magic'.¹²² As the demand for education accelerated, the mission accused African pastors, teachers and mission-school pupils of ulterior motives: 'Teachers, Pastors and students are leaving mission work for better paying jobs...and are turning their backs on the Lord because of the desire to own bicycles, phonographs,

us/information/about-ba/history-and-heritage/explore-our-past/1940-1949 (accessed November 23, 2015). For a helpful study on how air travel exported aspects of Western society to Africa (and developing world), see Jennifer Van Vleck, *Empire of the Air: Aviation and the American Ascendancy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013).

¹¹⁸ Sheldon O. Folk, 'The Outschools of Kitui', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXIII, No. 6 [November-December 1949], 3.

¹¹⁹ Sheldon O. Folk, 'Reaching the Lost in Kitui', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXV, No. 2 [March-April, 1951], 10.

¹²⁰ 'Evangelism Through Schools', *Inland Africa* (British), Vol. XXXIV, No. 164 [Jan.-Mar. 1952], 7.

¹²¹ Edward Arensen, 'The Well-Dressed African', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXVII, No. 4 [July-August 1953], 12.

¹²² Ngūgĩ wa Thiong'o, *The River Between* (Johannesburg: Heinemann, 1965), 29.

watches, flashy European clothes, and other articles that are available to them now.'¹²³

Confronting the African demand for more education was increasingly viewed as a competition for the heart and souls of Africans, and the mission was perplexed.

Another social change that was worrying for the mission in the post-war period was the growth of urban centres. Missionaries complained about the allure of the city, the onslaught of consumerism and the moral decay of large population centres. In 1950 Philip Henman, the esteemed chairman of the mission's British Home Council, boarded a plane at London Airport for a tour of the AIM field in East Africa. The chairman's travelogue described each part of the flight with wide-eyed wonder, 'England, spread out beneath us like a fascinating mosaic', 'the blue waters of the Mediterranean', a brief layover in Cairo, the flight over 'Anglo-Egyptian Sudan' then 'Beyond Khartoum', followed by his arrival in East Africa less than two days later.¹²⁴ He was also astounded by what he saw when he landed: 'From all that we saw of Nairobi's shops and stores, there should be no need for missionaries in future to take to the field more than personal things.'¹²⁵ During the 1940s, Kenya was transitioning from an agrarian society with subsistence farming and cash crops into a partly industrial society with a managed economy.¹²⁶ People came to the cities to find work, open businesses and purchase modern goods. The population of Nairobi grew from 118,976 inhabitants in 1948 to more than 266,795 by 1962 while the populations of

¹²³ Cleo W. Mann, 'Present Trends in F.E.A', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXVIII, No. 1 [January-February, 1954], 12.

¹²⁴ Philip S. Henman, 'Over to Africa: Review of the African Tour Undertaken by the Chairman and Deputation Secretary, August-October, 1950', *Inland Africa* (British), Vol. XXXIII, No. 160 [Jan.-Mar. 1951], 5-27.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹²⁶ Michael McWilliam, 'The Managed Economy: Agricultural Change, Development, and Finance in Kenya' in Low and Smith, *History of East Africa, Volume III*, 251-289.

Mombasa (Kenya's second largest city), Nakuru, Kisumu and Eldoret also more than doubled during the same period.¹²⁷ 'Small towns are now larger ones; large towns are now young cities,' observed the AIM General Secretary after a visit to the field in 1948.¹²⁸ 'Nairobi Becomes A City' announced *Inland Africa* in 1951.¹²⁹ The same article reads: 'To-day Nairobi is the great shopping centre of East Africa.'¹³⁰ A 1951 article by the General Secretary invited readers to remember how things were changing: 'We are also reminded of the fast growing urban centres.'¹³¹

Missionaries expressed serious misgivings about the problems associated with urbanization. They censured Africans for moving to large cities in order to acquire Western goods and they complained that consumerism was becoming an impediment to their work. Consumerism was blamed on the post-war spread of Western civilization to Africa: 'Africans are awake and want what the rest of the world has.'¹³² 'A thirst for possessions has been created that will be difficult to quench.'¹³³ 'The once-naked African dons anything and everything that will hang on his torso.'¹³⁴ A 1949 article talks of the 'hundreds and thousands of Africans who gather in towns and cities, lured from their tribal

¹²⁷ 'Appendix 3, Statistical Tables' in Low and Smith, *History of East Africa: Volume III*, 573.

¹²⁸ Ralph T. Davis, 'In the British Fields', *Inland Africa*, Vol. XXXII, No. 5 [September-October, 1948], 3.

¹²⁹ 'Nairobi Becomes a City', *Inland Africa* (British), Vol. XXXII, No. 158 [July-Sept. 1950], 44.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Arensen, 'The Well-Dressed African', 12.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

haunts by desire for material gains, adventure or education.¹³⁵ The same article also noted that 'the cities are dens of iniquity'.¹³⁶ Missionaries complained that their own converts were being led astray: 'We are concerned for some of our church members and leaders who have shops and who seem to have little time these days to attend the services.'¹³⁷ Urbanization was viewed as a threat to the work of the mission.

AIM missionaries also expressed concern about changes in post-war social conventions. Social 'taboos' or 'sins' like dancing, smoking, and drinking were becoming more commonplace in post-war Kenya. It is difficult to overstate how important issues of 'personal separation' had become to many Fundamentalist missionaries during this period. Between the 1920s and the 1950s, most American Evangelicals associated progressive social conventions with 'deviance' and 'rebellion.'¹³⁸ Bible colleges and missionary training schools had stringent rules about proper social decorum and participating in banned social behaviour was considered a serious sin calling for a remonstrance by a school official who threatened students with expulsion.¹³⁹ Carl F. H. Henry's 1947 jeremiad excoriated Fundamentalists for making 'the main points of reference' for ethical preaching the call to 'abstain from intoxicating beverages, movies, dancing, card-playing, and smoking'.¹⁴⁰ Missionaries often brought these conventions with them to the field, inscribing into church

¹³⁵ 'The Challenge of Africa's Towns', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXIII, No. 3 [May-June, 1949], 5.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Miss Jean Baxter, 'Days of Opportunity', *Inland Africa* (British), Vol. XXXIV, No. 164 [Jan.-Mar. 1952], 5.

¹³⁸ John C. Burnham, *Bad Habits: Drinking, Smoking, Taking Drugs, Gambling, Sexual Misbehavior, and Swearing in American History* (New York: New York University Press, 1993), 15-20.

¹³⁹ Virginia Lieson Brereton, *Training God's Army: The American Bible School, 1880-1940* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1990), 122-126.

¹⁴⁰ Carl F. H. Henry, *The Uneasy Conscience of American Fundamentalism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1947), 7.

law the wickedness of participating in such behaviour. The toleration of these 'sins' was tantamount to apostasy and church discipline was strictly enforced. A Christian might be banned from communion for not only theft, immorality or idolatry but also for using tobacco, participating in dances, consuming alcohol or practicing 'circumcision according to heathen custom'.¹⁴¹ The 1946 minutes of the British Home Council reported that 'correspondence was placed before the council concerning the difficulty of maintaining Church discipline on the part of some African Christians and to the prevalence of tobacco smoking'.¹⁴² A 1951 article in *Inland Africa* described the difficulty of working with Masai Christians: 'Too many fall by the wayside because they are not able to withstand the hospitality of the white Government official in the form of cigarettes, alcoholic drinks, and dancing.'¹⁴³ Missionaries complained that participation in these social 'sins' was on the rise in African society. 'The African native calls for a dance on the slightest pretext' lamented one missionary.¹⁴⁴ Another missionary condemned the 'the backslidden masses' that were participating in these 'sins', explaining that 'the falling away time has dawned.'¹⁴⁵ A Mr Mundy serving in Nyakach (near Lake Victoria) complained about the 'backslidden'

¹⁴¹ 'A.I.C. Constitution Rules and Regulations', 1954, AIM International Archives (Nottingham), 29.

¹⁴² Minutes of Africa Inland Mission Council Meeting, London, 13 June 1946. AIM-International Archives (Nottingham).

¹⁴³ Ruth T. Shaffer, 'Maasai Christians of Today', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXV, No. 5 [September-October, 1951], 8.

¹⁴⁴ Frank E. Longman, 'The Wailing at Nyakwaropio's Village on the Hill', *Inland Africa* (North America) Vol. XXXII, No. 4, [July-August, 1948], 7.

¹⁴⁵ H. Virginia Blakeslee, 'The Lord's Battles in the Ridges', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXII, No. 4, [July-August, 1948], 3.

Christian husband who took a second wife, observing that the problem with polygamy is that 'the second wife may smoke or drink and be a hindrance to the Christian's children'.¹⁴⁶

Post-war Fundamentalists received the idea of 'modern progress' suspiciously, and evolving social conventions seemed sure evidence that Africans were 'falling away' from the faith.¹⁴⁷ The mission often interpreted these changes through an eschatological lens; even evolving social conventions were viewed as a sign of a great apostasy. The mission frequently complained about the incessant demand for more education, the desire for material gain, and the distractions of 'modern' life in Africa's growing megacities. As the General Secretary summarized it: 'The yen of the native peoples for more education, better living conditions, more money, and more of the commodities of life is evidenced on every hand.'¹⁴⁸ AIM missionaries were genuinely perplexed over changes in African society, and many believed these were the final days before the Second Advent.

The fifth change that confronted AIM during the post-war period was how to respond to changing attitudes over race relations. The late 1940s through the decade of the 1950s was a period of significant transformation in race relations in North America and Europe.¹⁴⁹ On 15 April 1947, Jackie Robinson 'broke the colour barrier' when he made his debut with the Dodgers before nearly 30,000 Brooklyn fans, becoming the first African

¹⁴⁶ William A. Mundy, 'Notes from the Field', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXI, No. 6 [November-December 1947], 15.

¹⁴⁷ George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 66-71; Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 38-40.

¹⁴⁸ Davis, 'In the British Fields', 4.

¹⁴⁹ Ralph E. Luker, *Historical Dictionary of the Civil Rights Movement* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1997), 8-19.

American to grace a major league baseball diamond.¹⁵⁰ In December 1949, a group of scholars gathered in Paris under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to provide an authoritative statement for the global community on the problem of racism.¹⁵¹ The product of the gathering of more than a hundred scholars from various academic disciplines was a 1950 paper titled ‘The Race Question’, which is recognized as the turning point for dialogue on the issue in the global community.¹⁵² The statement argued that ‘all men belong to the same species, *Homo sapiens*’ and boldly declared ‘these are the scientific facts’.¹⁵³ In 1951 in the United States, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People filed a class-action lawsuit against the city of Kansas, and presented its arguments before the Supreme Court in 1952-1953. The famed lawsuit, given the case name *Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka*, was settled in favour of the plaintiff, an African-American bi-vocational pastor whose children were refused admission to an all-white elementary school. The Supreme Court issued a unanimous ruling in 1954 against the constitutionality of segregation, paving the way for the modern civil rights movement in the United States.

The mission was certainly aware of how views were changing on the matter of race relations at the beginning of the 1950s. In early 1951, AIM officials reported that they were being approached by ‘colored evangelicals’ who wanted to serve as missionaries in East Africa: ‘A new decision is being called for now when missions such as ours are being

¹⁵⁰ Gregory Dehler, ‘Jack Roosevelt “Jackie” Robinson (1919-1972)’, *Historical Dictionary of the 1940s*.

¹⁵¹ Michelle Brattain, ‘Race, Racism, and Antiracism: UNESCO and the Politics of Presenting Science to the Postwar Public’, *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 112, No. 5 [December, 2007], 1386.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 1395.

¹⁵³ ‘The Race Question’, UNESCO, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001282/128291eo.pdf> (accessed November 25, 2015).

approached by colored evangelicals for service abroad.¹⁵⁴ Davis, the mission's general secretary, spoke of the difficulty this presented for the mission while assuring his readers that this was not about race. 'The solution has nothing to do with the race problem, for in Christ that has been settled, but must take into consideration many and varied matters at home and abroad.'¹⁵⁵ As he put it, 'A categorical "yes" or "no" may not answer the question in any missionary matter.'¹⁵⁶ In February 1951, a month before Davis' editorial, the Kenya Field Council had already decided against receiving 'negroes' as missionaries. 'It was moved and carried that at the present time it would not be wise to bring American negro missionaries into the A.I.M. in Kenya.'¹⁵⁷ The decision was blamed on 'prevailing political and social conditions in the colony'.¹⁵⁸ In April of the same year, the Kenya Field Council issued a report explaining its reasons for opposing the acceptance of black missionaries. The problems given included the reality of 'definite discrimination against intermingling with Europeans in hotels and at some social functions', the probability that blacks 'will want to join the Africa Inland Mission on the same basis and with the same support' and the possibility that American negroes will intermarry with Africans creating further difficulties about 'how their children would be schooled'.¹⁵⁹ These possibilities were

¹⁵⁴ Ralph T. Davis, 'Editorial', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXV, No. 2 [March-April, 1951], 1.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Minutes of the Field Council Meetings, 9-14 February 1951, Africa Inland Mission, Kenya Field, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Report from Erik S. Barnett, 'Acceptance of Negro Missionaries From U.S.A. to Kenyan Field', African Inland Mission, Kenya Field; prepared by a committee appointed by the Field Council and accepted at its meeting 16-21 April 1951, BGC Archives (Wheaton), AIM International, Collection 81.

considered unthinkable. The Kenyan Field Council voted against the racial desegregation of the mission.

The attitude of the Congo Field Council, however, expressed the possibility of accepting black applicants on a trial basis. In June 1951 the Congo Field Council issued its opinion to the mission's General Secretary: 'We realize that, in these days, there is worldwide sentiment against the color bar, and we do not want to do anything that would conflict with that.'¹⁶⁰ Here was a clear admission that attitudes were changing 'worldwide' on the issue of race. An AIM leader named George Van Dusen reported that while 'the missionaries of this field would welcome colored missionaries' there was 'however, a probably small, minority, who might find it difficult to enter heartily into this relationship.'¹⁶¹ The letter outlined a few of the problems of accepting black applicants, including government attitudes toward black missionaries, the difficulty of 'accommodation in hotels and on public transportation' and potential problems of working together with 'white colleagues'.¹⁶² It was suggested that the latter problem 'might be obviated by assigning several negroes to one locality or by creating negro stations or sections staffed entirely by negroes'.¹⁶³ The recommendation was not against accepting black applications, but that they should 'experiment with a small number'.¹⁶⁴ While the Congo Field Council expressed a greater openness to accepting black missionaries, this was hardly an enthusiastic endorsement of racial equality. The mission's attitude toward black

¹⁶⁰ George C. Van Dusen to R. T. Davis, Rethy, Congo, 1 June 1951, BGC Archives (Wheaton), Collection 81.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

applicants in the post-war period is reminiscent of the United States senator portrayed in the classic 1950s novel, *The Ugly American*. When the senator was assigned to work as an ambassador overseas he complained: 'Now you know I'm not prejudiced, but I just don't work well with blacks.'¹⁶⁵ The mission gave lip service to the concept of racial equality, but in practise it followed a policy of racial discrimination.

While the mission was grappling with postwar changes in Kenya, the problem regarding the 'Ecclesiastical Relationship of the Missionary to the African Church' that had surfaced in 1945 was only briefly considered.¹⁶⁶ The minutes of a January 1948 meeting mention that a missionary had 'raised the question concerning the status of the Africa Inland Mission missionaries in the Africa Inland Church' and that 'an interesting and prolonged discussion' followed.¹⁶⁷ Several questions were posed: 'Should missionaries join the Africa Inland Church as full-fledged members?' 'Is a dual-membership possible (i.e., could a missionary be a member of a church at home and also the A.I.C.)?' 'Is it consistent for missionaries to hold positions of authority in the A.I.C., not being members?' The latter question presumes that missionaries were in fact doing so. A member of the council suggested that the matter be put before the Central Church Council of the AIC, but this was summarily dismissed on the grounds that 'it would merely put a new idea in the mind of the Africans'.¹⁶⁸ It seemed best to let sleeping dogs lie. A missionary named W. J. Guilding

¹⁶⁵ William J. Lederer and Eugene Burdick, *The Ugly American* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1958), 14.

¹⁶⁶ E. L. Davis to Friends, 27 September 1945, Nairobi. The contents of the letter address confidential mission matters. The title 'friends' most likely refers to 'friends' on the American or British Home Councils.

¹⁶⁷ Minutes of the Annual Conference Business Meeting, Africa Inland Mission Kenya Field, 13-16 January 1948, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

suggested that 'if the A.I.C. and the missionaries were walking in the Spirit of God there would be no difficulty', thereby implying that the mission should simply leave the whole matter to God. The council noted that it would be a good idea to 'discuss it with visiting members of the Home Councils', though there is no trace in the minutes that the matter was considered again until after 1955.¹⁶⁹ Upon reviewing the minutes of the January 1948 meeting, the British Home Council wrote to the Kenya Field expressing 'intense interest' in the 'the whole matter of the Church in Africa'.¹⁷⁰ The expression 'whole matter' was a reference to the council's interest in the 'welfare of the African church' as well as the missionaries' relationship to the African church. The council urged the missionaries to 'participate in the closest possible way' as 'full members' while 'co-operating in the greatest possible degree in its government'.¹⁷¹ The home council was in favour of a close-working relationship with the African church while expressing its 'hopes that no hard and fast rules will be formulated' at the present time.¹⁷² Here was a hint that the BHC wanted to see the relationship between the mission and the church move toward integration, but it felt no sense of urgency in proposing a fixed policy.

The nature of the mission's relationship with the church it founded was deferred during the post-war period. AIM was aware that it needed to address the issue, but there were more pressing matters to attend to. The mission was anxious about its perceived relationship with the ecumenical movement. It spent considerable time and energy

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ D. M. Miller to Erik S. Barnett, 'Comments re Minutes of the Annual Business Meeting of the Kenya Field, 1948', 20 April 1948, Richard Gehman Papers (Florida).

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Ibid.

opposing the efforts of the WCC and the IMC, perceiving the liberal social agenda of the movement to be a threat to Evangelical witness. The mission was also defending itself against the vitriol of extreme Fundamentalists. AIM was occupied by questions related to African revivalists and the spread of the East Africa Revival. The mission largely opposed the East African Revival, effectively quenching the spirit of African revivalists who threatened mission control and censuring missionaries who supported the movement. The mission was motivated by a desire to protect the church from doctrinal aberration and moral failure (the mixing of the sexes), but racial attitudes may have also played a role. The mission also denounced the Mau Mau Uprising as anti-God, anti-government and anti-European. While it believed the rebellion would be crushed, it was concerned that the 'spirit of nationalism' that imbued the movement would continue and threaten its ability to remain in the colony. The mission complained about social changes brought by 'Western civilization'. Missionaries frequently lamented the accelerated demand for education believing that this hunger for learning was motivated by a sense of greed. Missionaries marvelled at the growth of modern cities like Nairobi and Mombasa but worried about the vices associated with urbanization. They upheld their inherited Fundamentalist social conventions from the 1920s and 1930s, inscribed them into church law, and worried that smoking, drinking and dancing constituted a sign that Africans were falling away from the faith in the post-war period. The mission also retained regressive attitudes on racial equality.

Why did AIM defer the question of how it would relate to the African church it established in 1943? Deeply entrenched attitudes and the prevailing winds of social change played a role. Racial superiority was certainly a mainstay in the AIM during the late

1940s and early 1950s. However, the mission's attitudes were not out of step with the racism that pervaded large parts of the world in the post-war period. Even the otherwise progressive evangelist Billy Graham did not 'tear down the ropes' of his segregated crusades until 1953, an action that drew the ire of many Americans.¹⁷³ During the East Africa Revival, the mission exhibited a fairly high degree of control over the African church fuelled by what was genuine concern about the spread of what it considered to be false teaching. While other mission societies welcomed the revival, AIM worried that it would upend mission and church authority. The mission also had its attention diverted by the growing influence of the ecumenical movement. As the General Secretary of the mission put it in 1951 after a lengthy debate over ecumenical relations: 'More time than we like to admit has had to be given to consideration of and prayer over these matters, necessitating the stoppage of much essential ministry.'¹⁷⁴ The need to distance itself from liberal Protestants and Roman Catholics in order to protect the mission's good name among conservative Evangelicals was a pressing matter.

It was, however, the mission's interpretation of the political, religious and social changes during the post-war period that paradoxically delayed any serious consideration of mission-church relationships. AIM believed the Mau Mau Uprising would be defeated but it also interpreted the movement as an indication that nationalism was coming to Kenya. The mission was uncertain what this would mean for its work. There was no guarantee that missionaries would continue to be welcome. The question of how the mission would be related to the church would be inconsequential if the mission was

¹⁷³ Grant Wacker, *America's Pastor: Billy Graham and the Shaping of a Nation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), 121-131.

¹⁷⁴ Ralph T. Davis, 'Editorial', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXV, No. 1 [January-February 1951], 1.

expelled. The mission also interpreted the religious, political and social changes through an eschatological lens and believed that the Second Advent was nearing. The spread of the ecumenical movement, the spirit of nationalism, the threats of post-war communism and modern changes in society were all strung together in a Fundamentalist soliloquy as evidence that the time of missions in Kenya might be coming to an end. The mission was at war with the modern age, but it must have the courage to fight. ‘The stripling of David goes out to meet the Goliath of demonism, of Romanism, of nationalism, and even of Communism,’ wrote AIM missionary Peter Brashler in 1954.¹⁷⁵ ‘The warrior for the Lord today faces Nationalism, false isms of all kinds masquerading under the name Christianity, Communism, and the whole tempo of our modern age.’¹⁷⁶ The language was intended as a call to action, a forward advance in the face of so many changes and ‘false isms’. Rather than retreat in the face of a changing world, the mission pressed forward while it had time. Apocalyptic imagery was used. ‘The time is short’ reads one article.¹⁷⁷ ‘The days are evil’ reads another.¹⁷⁸ A 1952 editorial spoke of the current state of the world using prophetic language: ‘The increasingly common talk of many is that we are approaching the end of things.’¹⁷⁹ The same article called for more missionaries: ‘This may be our last opportunity

¹⁷⁵ Peter Brashler, ‘Organization of the Congo Church’, *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXVIII, No. 1 [January-February, 1954], 8. The article begins by describing the situation in the Congo, and expands to discuss trends facing AIM missionaries throughout Central and East Africa.

¹⁷⁶ Ralph T. Davis, ‘Editorial’, *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXV, No. 5 [September-October, 1951], 1.

¹⁷⁷ ‘The Time is Short’, *Inland Africa* (British), Vol. XXXIII, No. 162 [July-September, 1951], 52.

¹⁷⁸ D. M. Miller, ‘Priorities in a Changing Situation’, *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXVI, No. 3 [May-June 1952], 10.

¹⁷⁹ Ralph T. Davis, ‘Editorial’, *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXXVI, No. 5 [September-October, 1952], 1.

for service for the Lord.’¹⁸⁰ The ‘Ecclesiastical relationship of the mission and the church’ remained undefined. Either nationalism would threaten the work of the mission or the Second Advent would end the work of the mission. AIM continued to cooperate with the church it founded in the absence of ‘hard or fast rules’. The urgent matter during the post-war period was hastening the work of the mission while it had the opportunity.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

**The Africa Inland Mission, the Africa Inland Church
and the Winds of Change, 1955-1963**

On 3 January 1955, three Mau Mau rebels were hanged in the city of Nairobi. The military operation to quell the uprising had been executed with cruel efficiency. Although the colony remained under a state of emergency, conditions in 1955 were returning to a state of normality.¹ Later the same year, on 9 June, the mission held a special service in London to commemorate its Diamond Jubilee. The service was held at Westminster Abbey, a symbol of British imperialism and the place where Peter Cameron Scott had knelt beside the grave of David Livingstone.² Following the ceremony, AIM staff from Britain and the United States boarded a flight bound for Kenya. On 12 June mission officials and missionaries arrived in Kijabe, where Mau Mau militants had once threatened, for a

¹ David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2005), 212-224.

² 'Diamond Jubilee Programme in Britain', *Inland Africa* (British), Vol. XXXVI, No. 176 [November-December 1954], 4-5.

weeklong conference celebrating the mission's Diamond Jubilee.³ There was a sense of triumph in the conference reports: 'If Peter Cameron Scott could revisit today the scene of the work he inaugurated by the leading of God, one can only feel that, after rubbing his eyes with astonishment, he would exclaim, as we often do, "What hath God wrought!!"'⁴ The papers described the 'hundreds of thousands of members' that are now 'stretched half-way across the continent', the formation of an indigenous African church, the mission's on-going medical work, the expanded use of radio and film and its renewed efforts in the field of education.⁵ By 1955 the mission had established sixty-five mission stations throughout Kenya, Tanganyika, the Belgian Congo, the West Nile-Uganda, Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and French Equatorial Africa.⁶ There were now more than four hundred missionaries serving in the various AIM fields and annual income had increased from '\$5,958.54 in the first year and a quarter of the Mission's life' to 'just under one million dollars' in the last fiscal year.⁷ In Kenya an average of fifty new churches was being established each year during the 1950s, and some reports indicated that an estimated 3,000 churches had been established

³ Philip S. Henman, 'The Jubilee Conference: Kijabe—The Place of the Wind', *Inland Africa* (British), Vol. XXXVII, No. 179 [October 1955], 5.

⁴ Kenneth Richardson, 'The African Church', Reports of the International Conference of the Africa Inland Mission, Diamond Jubilee, Kijabe, Kenya, 12-19 June 1955, AIM International Archives (Nottingham), 12.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 12. The Reports of the International Conferences, dated 12-19 June 1955 from Kijabe, contain several articles dealing with what the mission saw as its success leading up to the Diamond Jubilee: K. Downing, 'Education and Schools-Kenya', 20-22; A. M. Barnett, 'Medical Work', 24-29; C. W. Teasedale, 'Literature', 31; R. E. Davis, 'Radio Broadcasting', 56-58; R. V. Reynolds, 'Film Production', 59-62.

⁶ E. M. Barnett, 'Review and Challenges of Missionary Work in Africa', Reports of the International Conference, Kijabe, 12-19 June 1955.

⁷ Ralph T. Davis, 'Recognition of North American Home Council', Reports of the International Conference, Kijabe, 12-19 June 1955, 72.

through the six territories.⁸ ‘Mau Mau terrorism’ was only briefly mentioned in the conference reports in 1955.⁹ The mission exulted in its accomplishments, giving due praise to the appeal of its message: ‘The Church of God in Africa is one of the modern miracles, a living monument of the power of the Gospel.’¹⁰

The euphoria of the mission’s 1955 Diamond Jubilee celebration was only a brief respite during an otherwise turbulent period. Although the Mau Mau Uprising had been suppressed, the late 1950s and early 1960s formed a period of accelerated political change in the colony. As this chapter will demonstrate, the ‘spirit of nationalism’ gained strength in Kenya in the late 1950s and pressured AIM to define more clearly the relationship of the mission and the missionary to the African church. There emerged considerable disagreement within AIM during this period over how the mission-church relationship should be defined. Some favoured a policy of devolution that would result in the complete ‘Africanisation’ of the mission and the surrender of authority and property to the African Inland Church (AIC). The internal squabble resulted in the resignation of two of the mission’s senior officials, who had been strong proponents of a mission-church merger. These disagreements are largely glossed over in the standard histories of the mission.¹¹

⁸ ‘Local Church Survey of the African Inland Church’ [unpublished report, 1995], Papers of Stephen D. Morad, BGC Archives (Wheaton), Collection 689.

⁹ K. Downing, ‘Education and Schools-Kenya’, Reports of the International Conference, Kijabe, 12-19 June 1955, 20.

¹⁰ Kenneth Richardson, ‘The African Church’, 12.

¹¹ What may be a typo, but nevertheless misleading, is the year given by Kenneth Richardson for the mission-church merger in his history of the Africa Inland Mission: ‘On 16th October 1961 [sic] the African Inland Church celebrated what was called a “historic day” at Machakos Station. On that day the Mission turned over to the National Church, which it had brought into existence, its properties and submitted to its authority and leadership.’ This historic day did not occur until *after* independence, on 16 October 1971. See Kenneth Richardson, *Garden of Miracles: The Story of the Africa Inland Mission* (London: Africa Inland Mission, 1976), 256.

This chapter will examine the internal debate that ensued within the mission in the late 1950s and early 1960s over the relationship between the mission and its national church in Kenya. It will recount the conflict that followed the 1955 Diamond Jubilee and give consideration to why the mission rejected a proposed mission-church merger on the eve of independence in Kenya.

The Nationalistic Urge

The rise of nationalism on the African continent and the advance toward independence in Kenya raised significant questions about the future of the Western missionary in Africa and the relationship of the AIM with the African church it founded. Decolonisation on the African continent was progressing at a rapid pace during the late 1950s and 1960s.¹² On 3 February 1960, the British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan gave his now-famous 'Wind of Change' speech in Cape Town: 'The wind of change is blowing through this continent and, whether we like it or not, this growth of national consciousness is a political fact.'¹³ Kenya became one of the thirty-three African nations that would gain political independence from Western European powers between 1955 and 1964.¹⁴ While Macmillan was giving his 1960 address in Cape Town, Kenyan nationalists were in London at the First Lancaster House Conference feverishly working on a constitution for the colony that would in effect pave the way for independence and cause alarm among white

¹² David Birmingham, *The Decolonization of Africa* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1995), 7.

¹³ Harold Macmillan, 3 February 1960, cited in L. J. Butler and Sarah Stockwell, eds., *The Wind of Change: Harold Macmillan and British Decolonization* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 1.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 93-98.

settlers.¹⁵ In August 1961 following a prolonged period of rancorous political disagreement over parliamentary representation and who should emerge as Kenya's eventual leader, Jomo Kenyatta (1891-1978) was released from the government prison in Lodwar to stand for election.¹⁶ In January 1962 the Second Lancaster House Conference was held in London to revise the constitution and formulate a plan for political districting.¹⁷ Following a landslide victory by the Kenya African National Union (KANU) in May 1963, Jomo Kenyatta was officially sworn into office on 1 June and immediately assumed leadership responsibilities for an interim period of self-governance. Kenya was formally granted independence on 11 December 1963.¹⁸

AIM missionaries were concerned about how the 'nationalistic urge' would affect their work in Kenya. Even as they were celebrating at Kijabe, they were aware that Africa had undergone revolutionary changes that raised questions about the future of the mission in the colony. At the 1955 International Conference held at Kijabe, Erik Barnett, the Kenya field director, outlined some of the challenges facing AIM missionaries in the late 1950s and early 1960s. His paper gives important insights into some of the concerns of mission leaders even while they were celebrating AIM's Diamond Jubilee. Barnett observed that

¹⁵ George Bennett, *Kenya, A Political History: The Colonial Period* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 147; George Bennett and Alison Smith, 'Kenya: From "White Man's Country" to Kenyatta's State 1945-1963', in D. A. Low and Alison Smith, eds., *History of East Africa, Vol. III* (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), 109-55.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 150-51.

¹⁷ S. H. Fazan, *Colonial Kenya Observed: British Rule, Mau Mau and the Wind of Change* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2015), 245.

¹⁸ William R. Ocheing', *A History of Kenya* (London: Macmillan, 1985), 137-143; Bennett and Smith, 'Kenya: From "White Man's Country" to Kenyatta's State 1945-1963', 153; Fazan, *Colonial Kenya Observed*, 246.

'the past sixty years have seen tremendous revolutionary changes in Africa'.¹⁹ He noted that one of the most significant trends was that 'the ever-increasing urge of nationalism is bringing about political drives that will undoubtedly revolutionize all present government systems' and that 'rule from afar, or by a dominant minority race will be less and less tolerated'.²⁰ He made it clear that this 'nationalist urge' would 'bring increasing pressure' and that as a result 'missionary work was becoming more and more complicated'.²¹

Barnett quoted generously from Roland Oliver's 1952 work *The Missionary Factor in Africa* to bolster his argument that 'political and social change' would directly impinge on the work of missionaries.²² The Kenyan Field Director cautioned the mission community that 'political and nationalist trends may definitely limit our time' but that it was impossible to predict.²³ It was incumbent on the mission to answer the question, 'What is to be the relation of the Mission to the maturing African Church?'²⁴

Between 1955 and 1958 the question regarding 'the relation of the Mission to the maturing African Church' was periodically discussed with no apparent resolution. A 1956 Field Conference Report from Tanganyika noted: 'It was agreed that the strong nationalistic feeling that is spreading throughout the political world is also being manifested in the

¹⁹ Erik S. Barnett, 'Review and Challenges of Mission Work in Africa,' Reports of the International Conference, Kijabe, 12-19 June 1955, 67.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 67.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 68.

²² *Ibid.*, 69-70.

²³ *Ibid.*, 70.

²⁴ *Ibid.* 71.

growing resentment of the African church to foreign domination.²⁵ Nationalism was creating pressure toward devolution in Tanganyika. The International Conference of the AIM held in September 1956 raised the problem of the 'missionaries' relation to the African Church' noting that the 'matter concerned us the most'.²⁶ The minute implies an awareness of increased tensions, though the only advice given was that the Central Field Council in Kenya should work 'to strengthen and preserve the partnership with the African Church'.²⁷ The British Home Council minutes in October contained a report on the International Conference by the council chairman in which he 'asked special prayer for the African Christians at this time, and stressed the importance of a growing partnership between the African Church and the Mission'.²⁸ AIM executives were clearly aware that nationalism was creating a strain on mission-church relationships and that some kind of 'partnership' arrangement was needed.

AIM made efforts to put a positive spin on mission-church relationships. A 1957 survey of the work in Kenya by the Field Director offered a glowing report on AIM's work in the colony and referred to the 'fellowship between the Church and the Mission', calling it 'very wonderful' while admitting (without offering specifics) that 'there are matters that

²⁵ 'Report of Central Field Council Delegates on the Missionary's Relationship to the African Church Government to the Mission Government', June 1956, Tanganyika Field Minutes, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

²⁶ International Conference, Africa Inland Mission, Barrington, Rhode Island, 10-14 September, AIM International Archives (Nottingham), 10.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Minutes of the Council Meeting of the Africa Inland Mission, 4 October 1956, Minutes of the British Home Council, AIM-International Archives (Nottingham).

need constant attention'.²⁹ The same report noted that there are 'certain limitations' for the mission in its relationship with the church and indicated that 'Other Missions in Kenya have already integrated Mission and Church.'³⁰ The 'certain limitations' are not discussed but are likely a reference to the difficulty of formulating a policy for the integration of a nondenominational missionary agency with a recently established African denomination.³¹ The 'other missions' are not specified, but AIM worked most closely with the Church Missionary Society (Anglican) and the Church of Scotland Mission in East Africa. The CMS had established the Church of the Province of East Africa (Anglican) in 1921 and created episcopates in Uganda and Kenya in 1955 and 1956 respectively. African bishops were given oversight of these provinces, and Western missionaries worked under their oversight.³² The CSM had established the Presbyterian Church of East Africa as an autonomous church in 1956, while retaining its ties with the Presbyterian Church of Scotland.³³ A confidential minute from a 1957 British Home Council meeting regarding the mission's work in the West Nile District suggests that developments in Uganda were clearly influencing AIM officials. The minutes reveal that 'the Authorities [of the Anglican Church in Uganda] have in mind the possibility of the country being left without Europeans' and that 'the bishops are anxious, therefore that the N.A.C. [Native Anglican Church] be

²⁹ Erik S. Barnett, 'Kenya, An A.I.M. Missionary Survey', n.d., 1957, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ This will be discussed more fully on pages 167 to 171.

³² Zablon Nthamburi, *From Mission to Church: A Handbook of Christianity in East Africa* (Nairobi: Uzima Press, 1995), 25.

³³ Ibid.

organized entirely in the hands of Africans as soon as possible'.³⁴ AIM was aware that political changes were influencing mission-church relationships in East Africa and that other missions were already following a pattern of devolution. It became increasingly difficult to keep a lid on things. A July 1957 article published in *Inland Africa* made some of these concerns public:

There is a growing nationalistic urge. This reveals itself not simply in the good sense, of love for one's country and culture, but in a strong reaction against things Western, and therefore to many minds who look upon religions as something national, against things Christian.³⁵

In the late 1950s, the 'nationalistic urge' was creating 'a strong reaction against things Western' and forcing the mission to consider how to surrender more authority to the African church.

'A Man Called Henman'

Phillip Henman (1899-1986) served both as the chairman of the British Home Council between 1949 and 1962 and as the first chairman of the International Council (IC), which was established by the mission in 1955.³⁶ The IC was created in 1955 for the purpose of uniting the various home councils and providing greater oversight of the various field councils.³⁷ The councils in North America, Europe, Australia, the British-Isles, Canada (curiously listed separately from North America) and South Africa all reported to

³⁴ 'Uganda Field Matters' Confidential Minute Referring to Minute 7a, 5 September 1957, British Home Council Minutes, 5 September 1957, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

³⁵ Donald H. Temple, 'The Distant Triumph Song,' *Inland Africa* (British) Vol. 39, No. 23 [July 1957], 3.

³⁶ As will be explained, the IC was the executive body of the entire mission after 1955. Philip Henman, as chairman of the IC, was the highest-ranking official in the mission.

³⁷ 'Constitution of the Africa Inland Mission, 1955', Reports of the International Conference, Kijabe, 12-19 June 1955, 4.

the IC. As chairman of the IC, Henman presided over the governance of the mission while his American colleague Ralph T. Davis, the General Secretary of the IC, was responsible for the implementation of mission policy. In Africa the field councils for Kenya, Tanganyika, the Belgian Congo, West Nile-Uganda and Sudan (Anglo-Egyptian Sudan) all reported to the Central Field Council, which comprised senior members of each of the various field councils. In theory, the newly formed IC presided over by Henman and Davis became the legislative and executive body of the AIM in 1955.³⁸ Although he is only mentioned in passing in the 1995 official history of the mission, Henman wielded significant influence in AIM during the 1950s. In his dissertation on the mission, Gration refers to Henman as ‘a dissenting voice, like one crying in the wilderness’.³⁹ Morad’s unpublished history of the AIM simply observes, ‘In 1960, a man called Henman proposed a Mission-Church merger.’⁴⁰ Henman was a successful London-based shipping magnate who (perhaps ironically) bore a striking resemblance to Harold Macmillan, complete with silver hair and neatly groomed moustache. He amassed significant wealth through the acquisition of barges, warehouses and road haulage services, which he parlayed into a publicly held trading company.⁴¹ The son of a Baptist minister, Henman is described as ‘quiet and self-effacing’, possessing an ‘incisive mind with a firm grasp of the essentials.’⁴² He was a

³⁸ A chart showing the new organizational scheme of the mission is titled ‘Africa Inland Mission International Organization’, Reports of the International Conference, Kijabe, 12-19 June 1955.

³⁹ John Alexander Gration, ‘The Relationship of the Africa Inland Mission and Its National Church in Kenya Between 1895 and 1971’ (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1974), 264-67.

⁴⁰ Stephen D. Morad, ‘The Spreading Tree: A History of the Africa Inland Church in Kenya, 1895-1995’, BGC Archives (Wheaton), Papers of Stephen D. Morad, Collection 689, 140.

⁴¹ ‘Obituary of Mr Philip Henman’, *The Times* (London), 14 November 1986, UK Newspapers, University of Stirling.

⁴² Harold H. Rowdon, *London Bible College: The First 25 Years* (Worthing, UK: Henry E. Walter, 1968), 25.

committed Evangelical who was instrumental in the founding of London Bible College in 1943 and became its chairman in 1958.⁴³ He was a generous supporter of various Evangelical causes including AIM and the London Bible College, and often provided quiet financial assistance for missionaries and students in need.⁴⁴ His wealth continued to fund overseas charitable causes after his death in 1986 through the Philip H. Henman Trust.⁴⁵

Henman strongly favoured a mission-church merger, though he also believed that the evangelistic labours of the mission should continue in Kenya under the authority of the African church. In October 1955, after his return from Kijabe, he wrote with a sense of excitement about ‘the God-given achievements of the past 60 years, the pattern of our widespread work to-day [sic] in Africa, and the golden opportunities to march forward together, and in partnership with African Christians, into the future’.⁴⁶ He saw, to use his words, ‘an open door of opportunity in Africa, a door for gospel witness’.⁴⁷ To be sure, these were public sentiments, but they are consistent with Henman’s fervent Evangelical convictions. He favoured the continued work of AIM missionaries, but he also believed that the rise of nationalism in Africa gave the mission no choice but to move toward a policy of devolution. In January 1958 Henman wrote the Kenyan Field Director and reminded him about a previous conversation:

⁴³ Ibid., 22.

⁴⁴ Ian Randall, *Educating Evangelicalism: The Origins, Development and Impact of the London Bible College* (Carlisle, UK: Pasternoster, 200), 72.

⁴⁵ David J. Jeremy, ‘Henman, Philip Sydney’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Volume 26 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

⁴⁶ Philip S. Henman, ‘Kijabe—The Place of the Wind’, *Inland Africa* (British), Vol. 37, No. 179 [October 1955], 5.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 6-7.

In Kenya, you are passing through a vital stage in the relationship between the Mission and the African Church. If you remember, as far back as four years ago, I said that I thought room should be found for a much closer association between the African Church and the Mission at all levels and I envisaged the time when there would be joint membership in the Field Council and there would be African representation in the International Conference.⁴⁸

As early as 1955 (and perhaps before), Henman was pressing for a 'much closer relationship' between mission and church as well as the 'joint membership' of missionaries and Africans in AIM field councils. He also favoured African representation at the executive level of the mission. He was repeating his concerns that nationalism in Africa would eventually affect mission-church relationships and that the mission needed to begin working to Africanise the mission. As he put it in the same letter, 'With the possibility of much of East Africa following the advance of Ghana into independence, I feel we must anticipate the march of events.'⁴⁹ In less than a year after Henman's prescient letter, Kwame Nkrumah (1909-1972) hosted the first All-African People's Conference in newly independent Ghana.⁵⁰ The December 1958 gathering was attended by Julius Nyerere (1922-1999) from Tanganyika, Hastings Banda (1898-1997) from Nyasaland (Malawi), Patrice Lumumba (1925-1961) from the Belgian Congo and Tom Mboya (1930-1969) from Kenya along with other African nationalists.⁵¹ Mboya captured the mood of the conference in his message to European powers: 'your time is past, Africa must be free. Scram from

⁴⁸ Phillip Henman to Erik Barnett, 16 January 1958, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ George M. Houser, *No One Can Stop the Rain: Glimpses of Africa's Liberation Struggle* (New York: Pilgrim's Press, 1962), 70.

⁵¹ Martin Meredith, *The Fate of Africa: From the Hopes of Freedom to the Heart of Despair: A History of 50 Years of Independence* (New York: Public Affairs, 2005), 29.

Africa.⁵² In the mind of the esteemed AIM chairman, the spirit of nationalism sweeping the African continent precipitated the need for a new arrangement for mission-church relationships. Henman was living up to his reputation as an incisive leader with an unusual ability to anticipate emerging developments.

Henman was not alone in recognizing that a problem existed. Though missionaries reported that all was well in their relationship with the AIC, they recognized the need for greater collaboration with the African church. In 1956 AIM missionaries began inviting AIC church officials to attend council meetings as non-voting members while information was shared between the church and the mission through what was termed 'bridge committees'.⁵³ In 1957 the Central Field Council (CFC) observed that 'considerable progress was reported with regard to consultation between field councils and African church leaders'.⁵⁴ At the same meeting the CFC passed a formal resolution for 'such consultation to be increased, both in frequency and types of decisions concerning which consultation is held'.⁵⁵ The minutes of the CFC meeting in 1958 noted that council members had devoted 'considerable time to the matter of the missionary in the African Church' and further stated that it had become 'a critical issue in some of our fields'.⁵⁶ The council asked all field councils to study the problem and report their findings for

⁵² Tom Mboya, cited in David Goldsworthy, *Tom Mboya, the Man Kenya Wanted to Forget* (Nairobi: Heinemann, 1982), 107.

⁵³ Morad, 'The Spreading Tree', 140.

⁵⁴ Central Field Council Minutes, April 1957, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ Central Field Council Minutes, April 1958, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

deliberations at the 1959 International Conference.⁵⁷ While the African voice is largely missing from mission sources during the late 1950s, AIM missionaries were more than likely responding to changing attitudes in Africa toward Western authority structures. A 1959 memorandum sent out by A. E. Vollar, chairman of the CFC, to all AIM workers is revealing:

The practice of some of 'telling off', 'blowing your top', and in various ways showing a spirit of domination over, or of superiority to the Africans, especially those with whom we work and to whom we minister, could easily result in cutting off completely, not only the ministry of the individual, but of the whole missionary body.⁵⁸

A 'spirit of domination' may have been forgiven in the past but not in the late 1950s. The spirit of nationalism was changing the mission's relationship with the church.

Henman believed the mission needed to move forward with a progressive agenda. He was concerned that nationalism would eventually create a struggle for power in mission-church relationships. In April 1959 he wrote a cover article that was published in the British edition of the mission's official organ. He noted that 'Africa is today in the main a battleground for power under the slogan, "Africa for the Africans"'.⁵⁹ The expression 'Africa for the Africans' was enshrined in the 1920 'Declaration of the Rights of the Negro Peoples of the World' and popularized by the Pan-African leader Marcus Garvey (1887-1940).⁶⁰ Here was a clear reference to the nationalist aspirations of the Pan-African movement. In the same article, Henman wrote of the difficulty that nationalist aspirations

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Memorandum from A. E. Vollar to Co-workers in the Africa Inland Mission, 27 June 1959, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

⁵⁹ Philip S. Henman, 'Power?', *Inland Africa* (British), Vol. XLI, No. 32 [April 1959], 1.

⁶⁰ Marcus Garvey and Robert Blaisdell, *Selected Writings and Speeches of Marcus Garvey* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2004), 69-71; Marcus Garvey and Amy Jacques Garvey, *The Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey, or Africa for the Africans* (Dover, MA: Majority Press, 1986), 110.

were creating for missionaries: 'Such circumstances can be more testing and trying than were disease and danger in the pioneer years of missionary enterprise.'⁶¹ Henman put readers on notice that the June 1959 meetings of the IC and the CFC 'will take place against this national background, for in Africa the struggle for power is intense'.⁶² The nationalist struggle for power and the relationship between the mission and the church were inextricably linked in Henman's mind. He felt that just as African nationalists wanted to be liberated from European power, African church leaders would eventually want to have control over both the church and the mission in Kenya. He did not favour a partnership agreement without addressing the fundamental issue of control. As he put it: 'Such questions may well arise as who is to be the senior partner—the Mission or the African Church?'⁶³ Henman was on a mission to change mission-church relationships.

The year 1960 was one of celebration and crises for the mission. Updated 'Africa Inland Mission Statistics' were available and widely touted. There were 3,033 places of worship in the various fields of the mission and an estimated 389,234 worshippers in all its churches. In 1960 the two largest fields were the Belgian Congo and Kenya.⁶⁴ New churches were being planted, new converts were filling the churches, and both the mission and the church were prospering. In May 'the majority of the Mission's 198 missionaries' serving in Kenya gathered for their annual Mission Conference held at Kijabe, 'the largest of

⁶¹ Henman, 'Power?', 1.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ 'Africa Inland Mission Statistics, 1960', AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

Africa Inland Mission's stations in Kenya'.⁶⁵ There were fifty missionaries stationed at Kijabe along with 'nearly a thousand students in various schools, plus a medical work, radio headquarters and a large modern press'.⁶⁶ Missionaries assembled from 'their 27 stations scattered over the Kenya field' to hear inspirational messages, to conduct mission business, and to watch a 'thrilling film' about the mission's expansion in Turkana (northern Kenya). AIM's largest mission station was thriving, and the work of the mission was continuing to expand.⁶⁷ The July-August issue of *Inland Africa* trumpeted the visit of the famed American evangelist Billy Graham (1918-), who came to Kijabe to speak to AIM missionaries and dine with mission leaders before continuing his 'African Campaign'.⁶⁸ The meeting closed with 'Cliff Barrows leading the triumphant crusade hymn—"How Great Thou Art"'.⁶⁹ The mission had partnered with the Billy Graham Association by printing some 500,000 pieces of literature for his East Africa Crusade. AIM missionaries and African Christians were basking in the presence of a 'living legend' who had come to honour them.⁷⁰ There was much to celebrate in 1960.

The crises in the Belgian Congo during the second half of 1960, however, had a profound influence on Henman and the home councils. The Belgian Congo had become the largest field of the AIM during the 1950s. When the colony gained independence on 30

⁶⁵ 'Extracts from Sermons at Missionary Conference', 27 May 1960, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ 'A Glimpse of Billy Graham's Visit', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XLIV, No. 4 [July-August 1960], 8-9.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 9.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

June 1960, the newly established Republic of the Congo (1960-1964) became politically fractured and mired in conflict that lasted until 1965. The September-October issue of *Inland Africa* reported that AIM 'work has closed down partially', that many 'workers have evacuated stations' and 'Missionaries have moved to other A.I.M. stations in Uganda and Kenya'.⁷¹ AIM work in the Republic of the Congo was now imperilled, and this reality became a backdrop for home council meetings late in 1960.

In December 1960 Henman flew to the United States for meetings with the American Home Council and pressed for a merger between the mission and the church in Kenya. Henman believed that the 'Congo Crisis' was a foreshadowing of things to come in the British colony of Kenya. He expressed concern about 'the tragedy that took place in Congo' and argued that the mission needed to be prepared for independence in Kenya.⁷² Henman's remarks were a call to action: 'It is time we face the facts and realize that self-government is coming to all areas of Africa.'⁷³ For Henman, the changes sweeping the African continent required the mission to do more than simply work with the church in a collaborative partnership. He believed that the mission must reorganize to carry out its work under the authority of the indigenous church. As he put it, 'With the Africans being in the majority, it is therefore of necessity that we must be subject and obedient to their authority.'⁷⁴ The power struggle Henman presaged in 1958 was upon them. He called for the submission of the mission to the church as well as the Africanisation of both the church

⁷¹ 'Congo Crisis', *Inland Africa* (North American), Vol. XLIV, No. 5 [September-October 1960], 1.

⁷² 'Memorandum of Remarks Made by Mr Henman', American Home Council Meeting of the Africa Inland Mission, 14 December 1960, BGC Archives (Wheaton) AIM International, Collection 81.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

and the mission. It was time for Africans to lead the way in Kenya. In his words, “The day of the missionary being the senior and the African the junior must change.”⁷⁵ He urged that action should be taken ‘without delay’ beginning with a resolution urging ‘all members of the Mission serving in Africa to become members of the Africa Inland Church in the area [sic] which they serve’.⁷⁶ Demonstrating a clear connection between what was taking place politically and what he believed must take place ecclesiastically, Henman observed: “The Africans by virtue of their independence want to be given the number one position and expect the missionary to take the secondary place. In other words, the Mission should become the handmaid of the church.”⁷⁷ He outlined a strategy for the merger beginning with a joint meeting between AIM and AIC at the International Conference to take place early in 1961 in the Colony of Kenya. The mission must act ‘as early as possible’ to create a ‘merging of the two constitutions’, placing the mission under the authority of the church while also protecting ‘the interests of the missionary’.⁷⁸ The Church Missionary Society in Uganda was held up as an example: “This has been done by the Church of England in Uganda. All property has been handed over to the African Church, and the Africans have been given the place of authority.”⁷⁹ The American Home Council expressed support and enthusiasm over Henman’s proposals.⁸⁰ They also passed a series of resolutions that

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ American Home Council Meeting of the Africa Inland Mission, 14 December 1960; Gration, ‘The Relationship of the Africa Inland Mission and Its National Church in Kenya’, 267.

called for a Conference to 'be arranged in Africa as early as possible in 1961 where representatives of the Church in Africa should meet representatives of the International Conference' to work out a constitutional agreement.⁸¹

Outflanked on the Field

Kenneth L. Downing (1908-1989) was serving in Kenya as the general field secretary of the Mission. Downing was born in Kijabe, Kenya, in 1908, the son of AIM missionary Lee H. Downing (1866-1942), who had come to British East Africa in 1901. Lee Downing served in several important roles including deputy general director under Charles Hurlburt and field director of British East Africa and Kenya. Kenneth returned to the United States to finish his final year of high school and then entered Muskingum College (now Muskingum University) in Ohio, a private liberal arts institution established by the Presbyterian Church. Upon graduating with his BA degree, Downing returned to the place of his birth in order to serve on the field in Kenya. He was fluent in Kikuyu and Swahili and is described by those who remember him as 'a good-looking man' and one 'who gave the appearance of one who was in authority'.⁸² In January 1961 Downing dispatched a hastily written letter from the field informing Henman and Davis that 'there are a [sic] considerable amount of misgivings among many of us over the proposals made by Mr Henman'.⁸³ 'Misgivings' was a clever choice of words. Downing and the CFC were in fact opposed to the direction proposed by Henman and the American Home Council. In April

⁸¹ 'Memorandum of Remarks Made by Mr Henman', 14 December 1960.

⁸² Mary Anderson Honer, *The Downing Legacy: Six Decades at Rift Valley Academy* (Bloomington, IN: iUniverse, 2010), 51-53, 66-67.

⁸³ Kenneth Downing to Ralph T. Davis and Philip S. Henman, 27 January 1961, BGC Archives (Wheaton), AIM International, Collection 81.

1960 they had passed a resolution favouring a 'completely indigenous Church with Africans carrying the full responsibility for all phases of its work' while opposing a 'policy of integration' wherein 'the missionary becomes a member of the African church'.⁸⁴ Downing further rebuffed Henman's recommendation for a joint meeting between AIC and AIM early the following year: 'It is anticipated that the CFC Executive will decide that a conference with Africans shall not be called until after we on the Field have had opportunity to discuss these matters more fully with you men from the homeland.'⁸⁵ Ten days later, in a lengthy letter that reads like a white paper on mission-church relations, Downing observed once again 'that there are a considerable amount of misgivings among many of us over the proposals made by Mr Henman to the Home Councils'.⁸⁶ In the same letter, Downing said that calling a meeting with African church leaders to begin discussing a merger was 'potentially disastrous [sic] to present progress'.⁸⁷ He sent a copy of the same letter to the chairman of the CFC with a note in his own hand: 'Dear Bill, Was alarmed at hearing of your giving possibility to the Henman proposals.'⁸⁸ Bill was William A. Stier, the chairman of the Central Field Council and the director of the Tanganyika Field Council. Stier was most likely the 'CFC Executive' Downing had referred to in his letter to Henman. It appears that Downing was temporizing in his initial letter to Henman while using his considerable influence to guide the field chairman and the entire mission down a different path.

⁸⁴ 'The Relationship of the Mission and the Church', Memorandum of the Central Field Council of the Africa Inland Mission, April 1960, AIM-International Archives (Nottingham).

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Kenneth Downing to Ralph T. Davis and Philip S. Henman, 8 February 1961, BGC Archives (Wheaton), Collection 81.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

Henman had already made travel plans to be in Africa for the proposed joint meeting. Downing politely encouraged Henman and other members of the IC to move forward with their plans to travel to Nairobi. However, Downing had no intention of implementing the decisions of the IC. He believed that he was in a better position to determine mission policy on the field. As Downing put it to Henman in his letter, 'We cannot emphasize too strongly the importance, in our view, of you men who are so far removed from the fast-changing scene in Africa today, taking time to get oriented to the present situation.'⁸⁹ Henman was not amused by Downing's patronizing air and cancelled his travel plans.⁹⁰ Downing then wrote his field directors referring to 'Henman's reaction' and asking for 'prayer that the Holy Spirit will over-rule the breach in our ranks which seems to be threatened by these latest developments'.⁹¹ He asked the council members to keep his letter to them confidential.

Under the firm guidance of Downing, the Kenya Field Council (KFC) rejected Henman's proposals and produced a partnership agreement in August 1961 for the mission and the church in Kenya that could be used as a model for other fields. It was approved on 15 September 1961 at a joint meeting with the Africa Inland Church (AIC) Advisory Committee.⁹² The partnership agreement made it clear that AIM and AIC co-existed as two autonomous organizations working together in Kenya: 'The Africa Inland Church in Kenya and the Africa Inland Mission while working together in the closest Christian unity do

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Kenneth L. Downing to Field Directors of the Africa Inland Mission, 24 February 1961, BGC Archives, AIM International (Wheaton), Collection 81.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² 'Suggested Agreement Between the African Inland Church and the Africa Inland Mission in Kenya', 8 August 1961, BGC Archives (Wheaton), AIM International, Collection 81.

recognize each other as fully autonomous organizations.⁹³ Separate responsibilities for each organization were outlined. The AIC would oversee local churches, including the work of appointing church leaders, conducting worship services, disciplining members, managing church finances, providing pastoral care and managing outreach ministries of the local church. AIM would recruit missionaries for the field, direct monies given to the mission, assign missionaries to their posts, associate with (but not join) local AIC churches and serve the church 'wherever invited'.⁹⁴ The AIM and the AIC would share the management of academic schools, technical departments (medical, literature, press, radio, building), Bible schools and outreach. The issue of property was more complicated. The partnership document indicated that the mission 'further agrees that as soon as it is legally and financially possible to do so, it will initiate steps to begin the transfer of some property to the church'.⁹⁵ However, the mission would still control mission plots and buildings, units for missionary residences, schools, hospitals, 'other institutions' and buildings or land for 'other Mission purposes'. The details regarding property ownership were murky, but it represented movement. During 1962 the mission and the church worked jointly to make revisions to the agreement before it was officially signed for implementation. In March 1963, less than nine months before independence in Kenya, the formal partnership agreement was signed by representatives from the AIM and the AIC.⁹⁶

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Richard Anderson, *We Felt Like Grasshoppers: The Story of Africa Inland Mission* (Nottingham, UK: Crossway Books, 1994), 192.

Henman, whose advice had been snubbed, refused to be chairman of the IC in name only. As Downing and the Central Field Council were working on the partnership agreement in 1962, Henman abruptly resigned from his positions as chairman of the British Home Council and the International Council.⁹⁷ His resignation was a shock to mission officials and was interpreted by the AIM community as a protest. His proposals were considered 'radical'.⁹⁸ The venerated leader of the mission was written off by missionaries in the field as a 'revolutionary'.⁹⁹ Ralph Davis, the esteemed general secretary of the IC, remained in his position but was forced to retire a year after Henman's resignation due to ill health. He blamed his illness on the stress that had been caused by trying to serve as the general secretary of the mission without any apparent authority over the work of AIM on the field. He died on 19 August 1963, just a month before the final partnership agreement was signed. The campaign for a mission-church merger came to an abrupt end.

Why the Merger Failed

Missionaries working in Kenya in the late 1950s and early 1960s were cognizant of the changing political environs and the pressures this created to yield greater authority to the mission. A 1963 prayer letter from AIM missionaries Kenneth and Dorothy Richardson serving in Kenya is typical: 'Mr Macmillan referred to the "Winds of Change" which are

⁹⁷ Henman's resignation came in February 1962. However, he indicated that he had been thinking about the matter for about a year. His disagreement with Downing came in February 1961. See Anderson, *We Felt Like Grasshoppers*, 186-188.

⁹⁸ Gratton, 'The Relationship of the Africa Inland Mission and Its National Church', 267.

⁹⁹ Anderson, *We Felt Like Grasshoppers*, 187: 'Looking back now, we can wonder why Mr Henman seemed a revolutionary.'

blowing over Africa in these days. In some parts they are but gentle breezes; in others they are great hurricanes.¹⁰⁰ The 'gentle breezes' had become 'great hurricanes' and the march toward independence in Kenya pressured the mission to hand over greater authority and responsibility to the church. As the Richardsons put it a few sentences later, 'For a number of years the Mission has been led to give special attention to the preparation of the Church for independence.'¹⁰¹ The mission was also aware that other missions, like the Church of Scotland Mission and the Church Missionary Society, had moved toward a policy of devolution. Still, Downing and the field council soundly rejected the proposals of the IC for a merger, instead emphasizing the constitutional autonomy of two separate organizations. The concept of a merger between the mission and the church was dismissed out-of-hand by Downing and given little consideration by missionaries serving on the field. There are several reasons the mission resisted pressure to follow a path toward integration.

First, the democratic ethos of the mission was resistant to pressure from mission authorities to implement a proposal for integration on the field. The initial structure of the mission established in 1895 confined the role of the first home council in Philadelphia to that of prayer, recruitment and fund-raising without 'exercising any control over it'.¹⁰² AIM was a 'field-based' mission so that the locus of authority existed with the missionaries on the field. An 1896 issue of the mission's official periodical put it this way: 'the men and women on the field should know more about how to meet emergencies and how to plan to

¹⁰⁰ Kenneth and Dorothy Richardson to Friends, Kisumu, Kenya, January 1962, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Hearing and Doing [January 1896] in Anderson, *We Felt Like Grasshoppers*, 24.

overcome obstacles than those at home.¹⁰³ Field-based management was a characteristic of the nondenominational 'faith missions' that emerged during the second half of the nineteenth-century.¹⁰⁴ The China Inland Mission, established in 1865 by the British missionary Hudson Taylor (1832-1905), significantly influenced mission policy for independent faith missions that emerged in the late nineteenth century.¹⁰⁵ Faith missions established home councils to promote the work 'at home' and provide administrative support, while missionaries were considered the resident experts on the field. As the AIM constitution read, "The Mission shall consist of the present members of the Africa Inland Mission, i.e., all accepted missionaries and members of the Home Councils, and such missionaries and Council members as may subsequently be accepted by any Home Council."¹⁰⁶ Missionaries were not considered employees of the denomination. They were actual members of the mission who possessed voting rights and significant control over field policy.¹⁰⁷

When Henry D. Campbell was elevated to be the mission's general secretary in 1926, he was concerned by how much power had been concentrated on the field and was largely wielded by the mission's general director, Charles E. Hurlburt. In an effort to shift authority to the home council, Campbell intentionally left vacant the position of general

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Edwin L. Frizen, Jr., *75 Years of IFMA, 1917-1992: The Nondenominational Missions Movement* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1992), 16.

¹⁰⁵ Daniel W. Bacon, *From Faith to Faith: The Influence of Hudson Taylor on the Faith Missions Movement* (D.Miss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 1983), 87-108.

¹⁰⁶ 'Constitution of the Africa Inland Mission, 1955', Reports of the International Conference, Kijabe, 12-19 June 1955, 4.

¹⁰⁷ Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of Faith Missions: From Hudson Taylor to Present Day Africa* (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 1994), 32-69.

director on the field after Hurlburt's resignation. He chose instead to give more power to the home council and decentralize field management. Work on the field was entrusted to councils comprised of missionaries. In practice however, this move gave missionaries more autonomy and concentrated authority to democratically elected field councils. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, AIM had field councils in Kenya, Tanganyika, the Belgian Congo, Uganda and Sudan.¹⁰⁸ Field Conferences were held in Africa each year (the location usually circulating among various fields) for the purpose of providing 'spiritual refreshment', creating opportunities for 'fellowship', and encouraging the discussion of 'mission policy and practice.'¹⁰⁹ When missionaries gathered at Field Conferences, they elected colleagues to serve on the various field councils and each field council in turn elected a field director. The Central Field Council was established in 1948 for the purpose of 'co-ordinating authority for the work of the Mission throughout the field'.¹¹⁰ The CFC was also an elected body with 'representatives elected biennially by the Field Conference' and the general field secretary being elected by the CFC.¹¹¹ Kenneth L. Downing, who had served as the Kenya field director from 1953-1954, was elected to serve as general field secretary in 1955, a position he held until 1963.¹¹² The formation of the IC in 1955 was an effort to unify the

¹⁰⁸ 'Africa Inland Mission International Organization', organizational chart, 1955, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

¹⁰⁹ 'Constitution of the Africa Inland Mission, 1955', Reports of the International Conference, Kijabe, 12-19 June 1955, 4.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 7.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² 'Officers of the AIM', BGC Archives (Wheaton), AIM International, Collection 81, <http://www2.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/GUIDES/081.htm#1> (accessed 10 November 2016).

mission and bring the entire field under the authority of an executive council.¹¹³ However, missionaries were still accustomed to guiding their own affairs and believed that they were better positioned to determine mission policy. Dick Anderson, who served with AIM in Kenya between 1956 and 1975, noted that 'In practice the CFC [Central Field Council] made policy decisions which the Conference [International Conference] rubber-stamped and each field council uses as guidelines for their own decision making'.¹¹⁴ Even though Henman and Davis wielded new constitutional authority as executives of the IC, they found themselves up against a formidable opponent in the democratically elected General Field Secretary.

AIM missionaries controlled mission policy in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Missionaries on the field effectively undermined the authority of Henman and Davis, two of the mission's senior members, both of whom were widely recognized in the Evangelical community for effective leadership. Mission policy was determined by a democratic process, not by mission executives in London and New York who were far removed from the actual work on the field. A 1959 article published in the mission's official organ celebrates the 'process of our democratic approach' in making policy decisions for the mission.¹¹⁵ Downing had rebuffed Henman, telling him in effect that missionaries were in a better position to make decisions on the question of mission-church relationships given the reality that members of the home councils were 'so far removed from the fast-changing

¹¹³ 'In theory, the American council still led; in practice the increase in missionary numbers and ministry problems demanded decisions closer to the action.' Anderson, *We Felt Like Grasshoppers*, 216.

¹¹⁴ Anderson, *We Felt Like Grasshoppers*, 218.

¹¹⁵ Sidney Langford, 'International Conference', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XLIII, No. 5 [September-October 1959], 3.

scene in Africa today'.¹¹⁶ Downing also complained that the missionaries were not 'consulted' and that the resolution for a merger 'appeared to be a fait accompli long before the Central Field Council had an opportunity to study [it]'.¹¹⁷ It was evident by Downing's response that he resented the unilateral action taken by the 'homeland' without the consultation of councils on the field. Downing and the CFC argued that the resolution issued by the chairman should be submitted 'for simultaneous study by the authorities on the field'.¹¹⁸ The 'authorities on the field' were the missionaries and their duly elected council members. Downing lectured Henman and Davis, telling them that they had already made progress 'on the subject of Church/Mission relationship' and believed that unity is 'is already being achieved by better means'.¹¹⁹ AIM workers in the field viewed themselves as more than missionaries. They considered themselves authorities on mission policy. When Davis resigned in 1963 from his position as international general secretary, he expressed frustration that he had no real authority and called the mission he loved a 'Headless Body'.¹²⁰ The office of international general secretary was left vacant until 1973. The mission was managed by democratically elected missionaries and chose a mission-church partnership over a mission-church merger.

Second, the nondenominational character of the mission complicated the proposed mission-church merger. AIM was aware that two of the largest and oldest missions had already integrated. At a joint meeting between the Kenya Field Council (KFC) and an

¹¹⁶ Kenneth Downing to Ralph T. Davis and Philip S. Henman, 8 February 1961.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Ralph T. Davis to R. Seume, 2 January 1963 in Anderson, *We Felt Like Grasshoppers*, 218.

advisory committee of the Central Church Council of the AIC,¹²¹ the relationship between the church and the mission 'was reviewed in the light of the formation of the Anglican Church in East Africa and the Presbyterian Church of East Africa largely replacing the Church Missionary Society and Church of Scotland Mission'.¹²² (The listed representatives of the Central Church Council of the AIC were AIM missionaries, and if Africans were present, their names were not listed.) Council members argued that AIM should be an exception to the general pattern of devolution because of its nondenominational character. In other words, no mother church existed as with the CMS (Anglican) or the CSM (Presbyterian). As the council put it, 'It was agreed that, as an interdenominational Faith Mission, no such procedure was possible along the lines of integration between ourselves and the African Church.'¹²³ The council noted, 'We have no denominational affiliation at Home with which the African Church could be integrated.'¹²⁴ The CMS and the CSM were affiliated with denominations, while AIM was an independent mission agency with no denominational apparatus. AIM officials therefore objected to integration on the grounds that there was no denomination into which the church could be integrated. AIM council members did not consider the calls for integration a viable option, on the basis that 'the A.I.C. is already a denomination'.¹²⁵ There is no evidence that the AIM considered the example of the London Missionary Society (LMS), also a nondenominational mission

¹²¹ This ecclesiastical body mirrored the Central Field Council of the mission.

¹²² Africa Inland Mission Kenya Field Council Joint Meeting with the Advisory Council of the Africa Inland Church, 24-29 March 1958, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

working in Asia and Africa. The LMS had adopted what they termed the 'Fundamental Principle', a policy that allowed the indigenous church to form its own policies regarding church government, and stressed the need for the missionary 'to work under the direction of the Church'.¹²⁶ Downing and the missionaries on the field believed that the nondenominational status of the mission meant that they were an exception to the trend toward complete integration.

In April 1960, a few months before Henman gave his remarks before the AHC arguing for a complete merger, Downing issued a memorandum under the title 'The Relationship of the Mission and the Church.'¹²⁷ The communiqué was distributed to all fields of AIM and translated into 'such African languages as are necessary' for the purpose of widely disseminating the views of the CFC on the topic.¹²⁸ Downing had already been lobbying against the devolution of the mission. The memorandum observed that "Integration" is the watchword of the hour, and there are areas where it is both possible and desirable'.¹²⁹ Here was a clear acknowledgement on the part of Downing that integration represented the trend in mission-church relations in the 1950s. He portrayed himself as a proponent of church-mission mergers but observed that that they were 'properly possible only with denominational Missions'.¹³⁰ He argued in the memo that

¹²⁶ Wilfred Scopes, *The Fundamental Principle Then and Now: A Brief Study of the London Missionary Society in the Light of World Mission To-day* (London Missionary Society, 1960), 6.

¹²⁷ Kenneth L. Downing, 'The Relationship of the Mission and the Church', April 1960, BGC Archives (Wheaton), AIM International, Collection 81.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

merging the AIM with the AIC would actually impede the indigenization of the church. He pointed out that the mission existed to plant African churches and not to transplant Western missionaries from various Evangelical denominations: 'It needs to be remembered that it is indigenous churches that are to be permanently planted; not foreign missionaries that are to be permanently transplanted.'¹³¹ In January 1961 he argued along similar lines against the policy of requiring AIM missionaries to become members of AIC churches. In his words, 'It could ultimately be interpreted as the white missionary trying to provide a place for himself in that which should be (in the ordinary African's view) an African organization.'¹³² If we are to believe that Downing's motives were sincere (and there is no reason to doubt them), he simply could not comprehend how a 'foreign' mission agency without denominational affiliation could 'integrate' with an indigenous African denomination.

The argument against devolution on the grounds that 'AIM is not a denomination' was bolstered by an appeal to some of the practical problems associated with merging the two bodies. The challenge of implementing Henman's proposed merger would largely fall on the missionaries in the field. If the mission and church merged, how would the new organization handle the 'professional side of medical work' or 'the technical side of the Presses', or manage 'schools for missionaries' children' or oversee the 'discipline of missionaries'?¹³³ Was the African church prepared to manage all of these responsibilities? How would the integrated agency distinguish between 'Mission property as distinct from

¹³¹ Downing, 'The Relationship of the Mission and the Church', April 1960.

¹³² Kenneth L. Downing to Ralph T. Davis and Philip Henman, 8 February 1961.

¹³³ Downing, 'The Relationship of the Mission and the Church', April 1960.

Church property' and how would mission finances be managed?¹³⁴ The AIM field council felt so compelled by the soundness of its own reasoning that it began to question the motives of African church leaders who were pressing for a merger. In a hand-written letter scribbled on mission stationery, a veteran AIM missionary who served on the mission's Central Field Council issued this warning to Downing:

I wish I could believe that our church leaders had righteous reasons for wanting to take over the mission. I fear, however, they want to possess and control what they imagine is a wealthy mission treasury, plus the Mission property.¹³⁵

Downing included Maynard's comments verbatim in one of his letters to the home councils as part of his case-cumulative argumentation that the merging of two constitutions was problematic.¹³⁶ The proposition of merging a nondenominational mission comprised of 'foreigners' with a recently established African denomination was inconceivable for the missionaries. Downing refused to accept the objective guidance of the International Council, and he was unable to appreciate the sage counsel of its chairman. While there were difficulties associated with integration, it was not impossible for a nondenominational mission to devolve its powers and work under the direction of the church in Africa. The justifications of Downing and the members of the field council seemed clear and compelling to them. Blinded by what they perceived to be the soundness of their own arguments, Henman was dismissed for being uninformed, while the Africa church was written-off for being ambitious.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ William J. "Nangi" Maynard to Kenneth and Mrs Downing, 26 January 1961, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

¹³⁶ Kenneth L. Downing to Ralph T. Davis and Philip S. Henman, 8 February 1961.

Third, the paternal disposition of the mission moderated institutional movement toward integration. In a manner reminiscent of the apostle Paul's care for the churches, AIM missionaries related to the national church 'like a father deals with his children'.¹³⁷ Downing actually cited this Pauline passage to explain the nature of the mission's relationship with the AIC 'through the Church's infancy, seeking to lead it on to spiritual maturity'.¹³⁸ In theory the AIC had become an 'independent' church in 1943, governed by its own constitution and a growing number of African clergy. In practice, however, the church and mission did not operate separately. The mission owned church property (land, buildings, vehicles and equipment), operated parachurch ministries (schools, Bible institutes, printing presses and medical clinics) and maintained veto power over decisions made by local church elders.¹³⁹ The AIM missionary who served as the station superintendent acted as the final authority in the district over matters related to both the mission and the church. While he entrusted pastoral responsibilities to African church leaders at the local church level, it was his duty when present to serve as 'the Chair of Local Church Councils in his area' and to 'act *in loco parentis* to the growing church in parts where no local church council has yet been formed'.¹⁴⁰ The mission exercised significant authority over the church at the national level in the areas of doctrine, discipline and direction while also working through the missionary-in-residence at the local level, who functioned like an apostolic administrator. Africans had been given greater authority in the

¹³⁷ I Thessalonians 2:7.

¹³⁸ Downing, 'The Relationship of the Mission and the Church', April 1960.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ 'Proposed Field By-Laws and Rules Kenya Field Draft' [n/d], AIM International Archives, (Nottingham). The document is filed with Kenya Field Council minutes from 1956-1957.

late 1940s, but as Kenneth Richardson made clear in a 1955 report, 'the Missionary in Charge may veto any decision of the Local Church Council.'¹⁴¹ AIC existed *de jure* as a separate entity, but it still functioned *de facto* under the authority of the mission. A merger would transform the nature of the relationship between mission and church, effectively putting the mission under the authority of the church. Downing had argued in a 1960 memo that he favoured 'a completely indigenous Church with Africans carrying the full responsibility for all phases of the work' but that 'until this goal is reached' the missionaries needed to provide 'guidance' for the church.¹⁴² He observed that 'as soon as the church becomes autonomous, it must assume complete responsibility for all Church affairs'.¹⁴³ Downing was admitting by his choice of words that the African church was not fully indigenous or completely autonomous. He believed that 'the Mission must retain ultimate authority' over many areas of the church's work 'that are too heavy for it at present'.¹⁴⁴ In the late 1950s and early 1960s, the mission continued to treat the church as an adolescent in need of paternal oversight.

AIM's paternalism was expressed most clearly in its efforts to protect the African church from theological liberalism. A central concern of the AIM was maintaining its Evangelical identity and assuring supporters that neither the mission nor the African church it had established would compromise their core convictions. The General Secretary of the mission wrote to a concerned supporter in 1955 letting him know that AIM 'accepts

¹⁴¹ Richardson, 'The African Church', Reports of the International Conference of the Africa Inland Mission, Kijabe, 12-19 June 1955, 12.

¹⁴² Downing, 'The Relationship of the Mission and the Church', April 1960.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

no one as a member thereof unless we are first assured they have been born again, that they love the Book and the Christ of the book, and the main reason they go to the mission field is that they desire to see souls saved'.¹⁴⁵ This was Evangelical language. During the first half of the twentieth-century conservative Evangelicals waged war against theological liberalism. While Evangelicals emerged victorious, the 1950s through the 1960s could be likened to a religious cold war in which many Evangelicals felt the need to be vigilant about the dangers of 'unholy alliances' with ecumenical bodies.¹⁴⁶ The World Council of Churches (WCC) included avowed liberals in their diverse ecclesiastical membership, and during the 1950s the organization was beginning to exert greater influence on 'younger churches' located in developing countries.¹⁴⁷ The WCC developed a close working relationship with the International Missionary Council (IMC), which led to a merger between the two organizations in 1961.¹⁴⁸ Between 1955 and 1961, the WCC actively recruited 'younger churches' in AIM fields under the aegis of the IMC. AIM was worried about the influence of the WCC on the African church it had founded. The mission wanted

Church leaders [to] be warned of the danger to their very foundations set in the Word of God, which the teaching of the followers of the World Council of Churches may insidiously undermine, and from which they may be beguiled by munificent offers of purely worldly advancement.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁵ Ralph T. Davis to David Nettleton, 5 January 1955, BGC Archives (Wheaton) AIM International, Collection 81.

¹⁴⁶ John A. Newton, 'Protestant Nonconformists and Ecumenism' in Alan P. F. Sell and Anthony R. Cross, eds., *Protestant Nonconformity in the Twentieth Century* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2003), 366.

¹⁴⁷ Ernest W. Lefever, *Amsterdam to Nairobi: The World Council of Churches and the Third World* (Washington D.C.: Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1979), 17-18.

¹⁴⁸ Tom Stransky, 'International Missionary Council', *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

IMC leaders were not only preaching the gospel of ecclesiastical unity, they were promoting the Africanisation of Western missions! AIM feared that the AIC would be drawn into an 'unholy alliance' with the WCC, and believed that they needed to provide fatherly protection. Writing to the CFC in 1963 after a visit with the Congo Protestant Council (to which AIM was affiliated), field director Peter Brashler observed that "The evangelicals of the Congo have been aware of the subtlety [sic] and guile with which the ecumenicals have endeavoured to reach their one great goal of organic union throughout Africa, and throughout the world".¹⁵⁰ In what is an interesting slip of the pen, Brashler refers to the AIC as the 'A.I.M. church' and warned his colleagues in the mission not to be naïve.¹⁵¹ The mission was particularly concerned because the IMC was promising the church 'the very things the Mission has been accused of negligence in granting, including indigenization of the church, educational institutions, and bourses for study abroad'.¹⁵² The AIC may have been an African church, but it was considered in some sense the 'AIM Church'. The 'dangers' of the WCC heightened AIM's sense of paternal responsibility.

AIM was genuinely concerned that the African church needed both protection and preparation. In June 1961 the CFC voted to move forward with plans for 'the organization of an 'African Evangelical Fellowship'.¹⁵³ Downing was seconded by the mission to begin working on plans for an Africa-wide Evangelical fellowship for the church, and he stepped

¹⁵⁰ Peter J. Brashler to Colleagues of the AIM Central Field Council, 7 March 1963, BGC Archives (Wheaton) AIM International, Collection 81.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ 'Africa Inland Mission—Central Field Council', Minutes of the Seventh Annual Meeting, Mwanza, Tanganyika, 2-6 June 1961, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

down from his post as the general field secretary.¹⁵⁴ Downing worked closely with the Evangelical leader Clyde Taylor (1904-1988), a key organizer of the World Evangelical Fellowship (WEF) founded in 1951 and the general director of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE).¹⁵⁵ The Africa Evangelical Office was opened in Nairobi in the fall of 1962 with Downing serving as the general secretary.¹⁵⁶ The AEO was intended to serve as an Evangelical countermeasure to the aggressive efforts of the WCC to unite the 'younger' African churches. It was intended to be a 'fellowship of churches rather than of Missionary Societies' and as the minutes noted, it was 'hoped that in due course the Office will be under African leadership'.¹⁵⁷ Until an African was ready for this assignment, Downing would oversee the effort to bring African Christians together under a united Evangelical witness.

In July 1961 the Kenya Field Council (KFC) voted to open Scott Theological College (STC) the following year.¹⁵⁸ STC opened in 1962 as the mission's first four-year college offering courses leading to a 'Diploma of Theology on the level of that offered by the London University'.¹⁵⁹ The mission applauded the work of its Bible schools in training

¹⁵⁴ 'Confidential and Private Circulation Only, Africa Inland Mission', Bulletin to give official information to members of the mission in all fields, Eldoret, Kenya, December 1962, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

¹⁵⁵ 'Papers of Clyde Willis Taylor', BGC Archives (Wheaton), Collection 597, <http://www2.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/GUIDES/597.htm> (accessed 9 December 2016).

¹⁵⁶ Christina Maria Breman, *The Association of Evangelicals in Africa: Its History, Organization, Members, Projects, External Relations, and Message* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 1996), 12-14.

¹⁵⁷ 'Confidential and Private Circulation Only, Africa Inland Mission', Bulletin to give official information to members of the mission in all fields, Eldoret, Kenya, December 1962.

¹⁵⁸ Kenya Field Council Minutes, 19-21 July 1961, AIM-Archives (Nottingham).

¹⁵⁹ Erik S. Barnett, 'Scott Theological College', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XLVI, No.1 [January-February 1962], 7.

evangelists, pastors and teachers, but observed that 'they fall short of meeting the need for the future'.¹⁶⁰ Africans were doing adequate work in churches and primary schools, but the mission felt that a theological college was necessary 'for higher leadership training for the Evangelical Churches of East Africa'.¹⁶¹ The AEO was created to provide a united witness that would protect the African church, while SCT was established to prepare Africans to provide leadership for the Evangelical church of East Africa. The mission resisted efforts for a merger because they believed the African church was simply not ready. AIM's fatherly instincts were visibly present, impeding progress toward a mission-church merger.¹⁶²

In summary, between 1955 and 1962, the heady winds of nationalism in East Africa forced AIM to reconsider its relationship with the national church it birthed. While other missions merged with the indigenous church, AIM resisted this trend. The democratic ethos of the mission made it possible for missionaries on the field to resist pressure from the eminent chairman of the IC and members of the American and British Home Council to implement plans for a merger. The missionaries were the ones down in the trenches working with the church. They knew the needs first-hand and believed they were in a better position to guide mission policy. The interdenominational character of the mission was an obvious impediment, beclouding the already complex problem of mission-church relationships. How could a coalition of Evangelical missionaries from various denominations merge with a newly formed and 'independent' African denomination? How

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 6.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² AIM addressed the impulse toward ecumenicity with the creation of the Association of Evangelicals in Africa and Madagascar in 1966, essentially institutionalizing 'African Evangelicalism.' The influence of the WCC was one impetus for this move. This subject will be discussed in the following chapter.

would matters like finance and property be managed? AIM's patriarchal disposition also inhibited the move toward the merger recommended by the 'homeland'. Missionaries were still guiding the church at every administrative level, acting *in loco parentis* while simultaneously guarding the church from looming 'dangers' like the ecumenical movement and the WCC. It may be argued that all three factors converged to create a line of resistance to Henman's proposed mission-church merger. The mission simply did not believe that the church was ready to manage its own affairs effectively and retain its Evangelical witness without the guidance, counsel, and authority of the mission. The proposed mission-church merger was flatly rejected, and missionaries devoted considerable energy to creating institutions for protection and preparation. The interdenominational character of the mission was a secondary factor. The absence of a denominational framework complicated the challenge of handing over the complex machinery of a nondenominational mission to a young African church. The democratic ethos of the mission allowed respected field operatives to leverage influence to resist executive directives from a venerated international chairman. The mission's resistance to a mission-church merger appears to be motivated largely by attitudes of paternalism. As the cover article of *Inland Africa* read in 1962, 'As elders should be tolerant to adolescents and love them, so we would look upon our beloved Africans.'¹⁶³ The mission loved the church, but it did not believe the church was mature enough to oversee the work of the church and the mission in Kenya.

¹⁶³ Ralph T. Davis, 'Africa in Adolescence', *Inland Africa* (North America) Vol. XLVI, No. 4 [July-Aug 1962], 1.

**The Africa Inland Church 'Take Over' of the
Africa Inland Mission, 1964-1971**

In a 1964 issue of AIM's official news magazine, Edwin G. Schuit summarized conditions on the field a year after the 1963 partnership agreement had been signed: 'To put it mildly, we are faced with serious problems.'¹ The article refers to a myriad of challenges facing the mission during decolonisation. Sudan was being closed to missionaries: 'In the month of March, Sudan's doors were rudely slammed shut to our Mission and our total staff told to leave without hope of return.'² Tension was mounting in Tanganyika: 'the lingering impasse between the Mission and the Church on our Tanganyika Field has kept so many of our workers in a state of suspense.'³ AIM workers were being evacuated from the Congo for a second time (the first came in 1960): 'Our Congo field is our

¹ Edwin G. Schuit, 'An Ancient Answer to Our Present Crisis', *Inland Africa* (British), Vol. 43, No. 6. [November-December 1964], 1.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

latest crisis.⁴ Developments in the wake of nationalism were leaving the mission uncertain about its fate. The ‘political bush fires’ were ‘burning over Africa’ and the mission was ‘caught in the smoke of confusion and bewilderment’.⁵ The changes taking place in other fields were raising questions about what might happen in Kenya. The mission had persevered in Kenya during the Mau Mau Uprising, but Africanisation was now challenging the colonial models of missionary work.⁶ AIM missionaries had sacrificed life and limb to bring the Evangelical faith to the African continent, and their work in medicine and education had brought social progress to what they had once called ‘the Dark Continent’. Now that Evangelicalism was flourishing on African soil, many Western missionaries were confused. They were feeling unappreciated, even unwanted by the Church they had brought to life. As one AIM missionary put it, ‘What bothers me is the downgrading of the missionary by the church and the world.’⁷ The ‘serious problems’ facing the mission worsened during decolonisation as AIM missionaries endured the ‘downgrading’ of their mission in Kenya.

This chapter will cover the period 1964, the first full year of Kenyan independence from the United Kingdom, to 1971, the year when the AIM handed over its property and power to the AIC. The chapter will provide an overview of the events that led up to the eventual devolution of the mission and will consider why the AIM lagged behind other missions and resisted African demands for a complete merger. Several primary sources

⁴ Ibid., 15.

⁵ Ibid., 15.

⁶ Ibid., 16.

⁷ Peter Stam, ‘Headlines and Security’, *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XLVII, No. 5 (September-October 1964), 13.

have been helpful for the contents of this chapter. The first of these sources is housed in the Billy Graham Center (BGC) and contains oral interviews of mission officials who were actively involved in the tension-filled period of the 1960s. These interviews, conducted in the 1990s, uncover some of the hidden concerns of one of the central figures of the mission during the 1960s. The second source is an important confidential study that was conducted in the 1960s. In 1968 AIM commissioned an American-based consulting firm to examine the attitudes of missionaries working in the field (and some recently retired) in order to assess their attitude toward the African church in the 1960s. The study both provides an analysis of the mission's ethos and contains actual comments from AIM workers in response to questions about a possible merger. The third source is Gration's unpublished 1974 study on the mission.⁸ John Alexander Gration (1926-2012) was an AIM missionary and served as the associate home director for AIM between 1967 and 1975. He was an observer-participant in some of the proceedings of the late 1960s and early 1970s and his study refers to some sources that either have been lost or are otherwise unavailable for examination. As in the previous chapter, developments of the mission and the church in Kenya will remain the central focus of this study. However, given the interconnected nature of the various fields in East Africa, developments in other fields are also considered when they impinged on church-mission relationships in Kenya.

Resisting the Winds of Change

The winds of change that were blowing across the African continent in the late 1950s leading up to the independence of many African nations were blowing even harder

⁸ John Alexander Gration, 'The Relationship of the Africa Inland Mission and Its National Church in Kenya between 1895 and 1971' (PhD diss., New York University, 1973).

in the 1960s after independence had been won.⁹ Edward G. Schuit borrowed Macmillan's oft-used phrase in an article he wrote for *Inland Africa* in late 1964: 'The winds of change have blown themselves into a tornado that men cannot contain.'¹⁰ The political and ecclesiastical environment in independent Africa was more turbulent than it had been in the period leading up to independence. The partnership agreement that was signed by mission and church officials on 26 March 1963 would not weather the new ecclesiastical and political environs of post-colonial Kenya. Independence in Kenya created pressure to 'Africanise' government structures as well as churches, schools and mission agencies.¹¹ The winds of nationalism were now followed by the even stronger winds of Africanisation.

Perhaps the most influential figure in the mission during the 1960s was Erik S. Barnett (1910-2006), the field director in Kenya. He was the son of Albert Barnett, an Australian missionary who had come to East Africa to serve with AIM in about 1907.¹² The Barnett family was highly influential in the mission community and well known in Kenya. The town of Kabarnet, located in the scenic Great Rift Valley, was named after Albert Barnett.¹³ Erik and his brother Paul, also an AIM missionary, were childhood friends with Vice-President Daniel Arap Moi (1924-) and remained close to the family, often spending

⁹ L. J. Butler and Sarah Stockwell, eds., *The Wind of Change: Harold Macmillan and British Decolonization* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 1. The original phrase is 'wind of change' (singular) though it was often used in mission publications as 'winds of change'.

¹⁰ Rev. Edwin G. Schuit, 'An Ancient Answer to Our Present Crisis', *Inland Africa* (British), Vol. 43, No. 6, [November-December 1964], 15.

¹¹ Charles Hornsby, *Kenya: A History Since Independence* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2012), 57-58, 121-127; Gratton, 'The Relationship of the Africa Inland Mission and Its National Church', 282-342.

¹² Anderson, *We Felt Like Grasshoppers*, 188. Another source gives the date 1908 for their arrival: John Kamau, 'The First Lady Kenya Never Had', *Daily Nation*, 17 November 2013, <http://mobile.nation.co.ke/lifestyle/The-First-Lady-Kenya-never-had/1950774-2076766-format-xhtml-nnuxpl/index.html> (accessed 1 January 2017).

¹³ Kabarnet is a Kalenjin word that means 'the place of Barnett'.

holidays together. Erik was the presiding minister at Moi's wedding ceremony in 1950, and Paul built the Moi family home in 1957.¹⁴ Barnett held numerous positions with the mission in the 1940s and 1950s, but in the 1960s he became even more influential as the Kenyan field director. When AIM officials gathered with African politicians at a private tea party on the eve of Kenyan independence in 1963, Barnett was still chatting away about the need for more Western missionaries. He used the festive occasion to remind government officials that 'the Church in Kenya is well established, but it was quite untrue to say that there was now no further need for missionaries'.¹⁵ He went on to say: 'If the missionary force could be doubled immediately, there would be plenty of work for every one of them.'¹⁶ He wanted to make it clear that the changes taking place in the nation and the church did not necessarily mean that there would be changes taking place in the mission.

Between 1965 and 1970, Barnett and AIM officials in Kenya made several attempts to appease restive church officials who wanted to Africanise the mission. Minutes of a joint meeting of AIM field representatives in December 1964 indicate that the mission was beginning to feel direct pressure from church officials in Kenya for AIM to be 'joined into one organization with the AIC'.¹⁷ The late-year report came on the heels of an agreement between the AIM and the AIC in Tanganyika after several years of tension between missionaries and African church leaders. In 1961 AIM had agreed to hand over the

¹⁴ Andrew Morton, *Moi: The Making of An African Statesman* (London: Michael O'Mara Books, 1998), 9, 34, 41, 43-44, 47, 62.

¹⁵ Kenneth Richardson, 'Kenya Attains Independence', *Inland Africa* (British), Vol. 43, No. 2, [March-April 1964].

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ 'Memorandum on need for possible changes in A.I.M. Policies and Operations, in order to meet rapidly changing conditions in Africa', submitted by Erik S. Barnett to the Kenya Field Council, 27 May 1964, BGC Archives (Wheaton), Collection 81, 70/6.

administration of four mission departments but stipulated several exclusions in the agreement that were placed in the appendix under 'reservations'. AIM wanted to reserve the right to control mission finances, oversee the work of missionaries and retain control over several properties including a school, a hospital and a missionary guest house.¹⁸ The church in Tanganyika 'did not accept the reservations'.¹⁹ A more perplexing problem was the church's insistence that all AIM missionaries must fill out an 'Application Form' that was in effect an application for permission to continue working in Tanganyika with the AIC. The application form 'was brought to the Synod of the AIC in the beginning of 1963, and in spite of the missionaries present' or the protests of the Central Field Council, it was approved by the AIC. The mission protested against the application form because it believed 'that the basic problem is the desire of the AIC to have authority over the missionaries'.²⁰ Missionaries who refused to sign the form were embarrassed when in retaliation they were censured by the Synod and not allowed to attend the public worship services of the church.²¹ The AIM Central Field Council (CFC) was called on to help resolve what had been called a 'dead-lock'. The mission's CFC brokered an agreement between the church and the mission that established a 'Joint Committee' comprising executive members of the African church and the AIM. The Joint Committee would be responsible for assigning missionaries to their posts, and it would have the authority to accept or reject missionaries returning from furlough. All mission departments were to be handed over to the church 'as

¹⁸ Meeting of the Executive Committee, Mwanza, Tanganyika, 17-21 December 1963, AIM International Archives (Nottingham), 1.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid., 2.

²¹ Ibid.

soon as possible'.²² The application form was withdrawn though missionaries had to 'agree to work loyally under the duly appointed Church offices'.²³ (A modified form was approved the following year.)²⁴ In addition, 'any missionary' who felt that they could not 'agree to work whole-heartedly under these conditions' was promised 'transfer to another Africa Inland Mission Field'.²⁵ An agreement having been reached, African church leaders and mission officials stood and 'expressed their fellowship by shaking hands and singing the Doxology together'.²⁶ The African church had gained nearly all of its demands. The mission became a 'service organization' of the AIC in Tanganyika, and AIM missionaries began working under the authority of the church.²⁷

In 1965 African church leaders in Kenya began pressing the mission for revisions to the 1963 partnership agreement. Two African leaders, one a Kikuyu and the other a Kamba, applied pressure on the mission in Kenya for a closer working relationship with the church. Andrew Wambari Gichuha became the first president of the AIC in 1961, the year that AIM and AIC began work on the 1963 agreement. He was born in 1902 in Kiambu District (Kikuyuland) and educated at the Alliance High School, one of Kenya's most prestigious boarding schools. He worked as an educator for nearly twenty years before being appointed by the government to be the Chief of Eldoret in 1945. Gichuha served in

²² *Ibid.*, 4.

²³ *Ibid.*, 3.

²⁴ Africa Inland Mission, Meeting of the Central Field Council Executive Committee, Nairobi, Kenya, 20 October 1964, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Meeting of the Executive Committee, Mwanza, Tanganyika, 17-21 December 1963, AIM International Archives (Nottingham), 1.

²⁷ Africa Inland Mission, Special Ad Hoc Medical Committee of the Central Field Council, Nairobi, Kenya, 20 October 1964, AIM International Archives (Nottingham), Appendix.

the colonial administration with distinction during the Mau Mau Uprising and was a respected church elder and lay preacher in the AIC. He was described by those who knew him as a humble but effective leader.²⁸ Gichuha loved the mission, and wanted the AIM and the AIC to work closely together. As he had put it in 1963, “There is a Kikuyu proverb which says, “No one ever appreciates the cow’s milk until the cow is gone.” However we of the Africa Inland Church appreciate the help of the Africa Inland Mission. We want the mission to stay.’²⁹ He was a strong advocate of mission-church unity. To use his words, ‘We as an African church and a mission must walk together in love.’³⁰ The other prominent African, Samuel Masila Kioko, was an influential church leader in Ukambani and one of two Kamba who had served on the Central Church Council of the AIC in the 1950s. In 1954 he became the founding pastor of the ‘AIC Ziwani’ (in Nairobi), a church that became one of the largest and most influential in the AIC under his steady leadership. He was remembered as a ‘loving pastor, a dynamic speaker and an effective leader’ who was committed to the ‘evangelical faith’.³¹ Kioko served as the first general secretary of the AIC during the 1960s. It is notable that ‘Mr Andrew Gichuha’ and ‘Samuel Kioko’ of Kenya had been invited by the Central Field Council of AIM to help broker the agreement between the

²⁸ A biographical sketch of Gichuha appeared in the mission’s official organ in 1964 announcing his visit to North America. ‘Mr Andrew Wambari Gichuha, President of the Africa Inland Church, Kenya’, *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XLVIII, No. 2 [March-April 1964], 14. Additional information can be found in Richard Gehman, ‘The Spreading Vineyard: The Growth of the A.I.C., Kenya’, (Unpublished Manuscript, 2016), Richard Gehman Papers (Florida), 546-47.

²⁹ ‘Andrew Gichuha’, *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XLVII, No. 13 [May-June 1963], 11.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ ‘The Spreading Vineyard,’ 27-28.

mission and the church in Tanganyika.³² The mission and the church held Gichuha and Kioko in high regard, and their involvement in the Tanganyika 'dead-lock' meant that they were experienced negotiators. These African leaders were now in the vanguard of church-mission disputes in Kenya.

In 1965 the relationship between the AIM and the AIC became strained as the AIC, led by Gichuha and Kioko, pressed the mission to revise its previous agreement. The 1963 partnership agreement had rejected the Henman merger proposal in favour of emphasizing the autonomy of both the AIM and the AIC. Church leaders felt that the mission and the church were becoming disjointed. AIM had agreed in March 1965 to make 'changes to the 1963 statement on AIM/AIC relations' and to present those changes to the church councils of the AIC for discussion.³³ In his capacity as president of the AIC, Gichuha reported to the mission in 1965 that 'in some Regional Councils' of the AIC 'he has heard more words of complaint and murmuring than previously'.³⁴ He expressed sadness over the 'slowness of the Church receiving more responsibility from the Mission' and said some regions of the church 'are pressing for an immediate and complete take-over of Primary Schools by the Church'.³⁵ In the same report Gichuha expressed concerns over growing division and pleaded for the 'continued unity between the Church and the Mission'.³⁶ In November

³² Special Meeting of the Central Field Council, Rethy, Congo, 15-16 November 1963, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

³³ Africa Inland Mission, Kenya, Minutes of the Field Conference Business Meetings, 29 December 1965 – 1 January 1966, AIM International Archives (Nottingham), 2.

³⁴ Report of the A.I.C. President, Joint Meeting of the Representatives of the AIM Kenya Field Council and the Kenya AIC Central Church Council, Nairobi, 20 July 1965, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*

1965 he asked 'for increased cooperation with the church in plans and work both by the Mission officially and by individual missionaries'.³⁷ He had been travelling 'all over Kenya' and he was seeing the 'building up of opposition' in the AIC against both himself and the mission. There was a national groundswell of dissatisfaction: 'When the A.I.C. cries to the Mission for help, then the Mission should ask why this is so and see what can be done to help.'³⁸ Kioko, in his role as general secretary of the AIC, reported in the same meeting 'that there seems to be a lack of good health at present' between the mission and the church.³⁹ He expressed personal displeasure over the attitude of AIM workers: 'Missionaries cannot drop their church work and stand aside, saying the Church is independent and able to direct its own affairs.'⁴⁰ He voiced regret over the 'trouble and criticism caused by the 1965 Diaries', a probable reference to detailed notes (apparently lost) from council meetings in which Africans were apparently more candid about their frustration with missionaries.⁴¹ The AIC wanted greater responsibility from the mission and more cooperation from AIM workers. The 1963 partnership agreement was beginning to feel like a separation agreement.⁴²

³⁷ 'Report of the A.I.C. President', Joint Meeting of the Representatives of the AIC Central Church Council with the AIM Field Committee, Nairobi, 30 November 1965, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ 'Report of the A.I.C. General Secretary', Joint Meeting, 30 November 1965, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² After the 1963 partnership agreement was put into effect, it appears that AIM missionaries became less involved in local affairs and an increasing number of missionaries did not worship at AIC churches. Tom Houston, who served as the pastor of Nairobi Baptist Church in the 1960s, recalled that a growing number of AIM missionaries attended the church he served (Tom Houston, interviews by author, 22-24 July 2014,

In 1966 the strained relationship between the mission and the church worsened. The minutes of a meeting held on 1 January 1966 indicate that the mission had presented revisions 'for discussions in the church councils' but that 'no report from these discussions has yet been received'.⁴³ Frustrations mounted when AIM unilaterally decided to withdraw from the Christian Council of Kenya (CCK) without the knowledge or support of AIC church leaders. The AIM and the AIC had a long-standing relationship with the CCK, an organization that had been established by Protestant missions working in East Africa in the early twentieth century. The CCK emerged after the Kikuyu Conferences of 1913 and 1918, which had been held for the purpose of creating 'comity agreements' between missions in order to avoid overlapping 'spheres' of responsibility.⁴⁴ Leading mission agencies that included the Church Missionary Society (CMS), the Church of Scotland Mission (CSM) and AIM, along with a spate of smaller societies, created the alliance.⁴⁵ AIM made the decision to separate from the CCK in 1966 in order to protect its Evangelical identity and appease mission supporters who were wary of supporting organizations that were related in any way to global ecumenism. AIM was also working to create an Evangelical alternative to the WCC, the Association of Evangelicals in Africa and Madagascar (AEAM). Kenneth Downing, who had opposed Henman's proposal for a merger in 1961, had been laying the groundwork for the Africa Evangelical Conference to be held 29 January to 6 February

Oxford). The partnership agreement, while intending to bring mission and church together more closely, may have had the unforeseen effect of promoting even less cooperation.

⁴³ Africa Inland Mission, Kenya, Minutes of the Field Conference Business Meetings, 29 December 1965 – 1 January 1966, AIM International Archives (Nottingham), 2.

⁴⁴ M. G. Capon, *Towards Unity in Kenya: The Story of Co-operation between Missions and Churches in Kenya 1913-1947* (Nairobi: Christian Council of Kenya, 1962), 10-25; Bengt Sudkler and Christopher Steed, *A History of the Church in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 561.

⁴⁵ Capon, *Towards Unity in Kenya*, 10-11.

1966. In January, just a few weeks before the Africa Evangelical Conference was held, the mission voted to 'withdraw membership in the C.C.K. and sever all connections with it'.⁴⁶ The mission's decision to break ties with the CCK was never discussed with AIC church officials, though the mission was in effect speaking for the church since it was expecting 'to withdraw in unison with the A.I.C.'.⁴⁷ AIM's decision was a *fait accompli* made worse by the fact that AIC church officials were informed of the mission's decision through a third-party representative of the CCK. When CCK leaders displayed a letter to AIC representatives that revealed the mission's decision to withdraw from the council, African church leaders were embarrassed. Not only were AIC council members unaware that their parent body had decided to leave the ecumenical body but also their colleagues on the CCK apparently knew more about AIM decisions than AIC church leaders!⁴⁸ The mission back-pedalled by delaying the implementation of its earlier decision to leave CCK and somewhat awkwardly affirmed the church for making the 'right' decision to 'continue its membership in the C.C.K.'.⁴⁹ The relationship however remained tense, and the mission privately maintained its determination to keep the mission and the church separate. A confidential memo of the Kenya Field Council held 28 November to 2 December 1966 noted the following: 'we must try to continue with a separate Mission organization, for the loss of it

⁴⁶ Africa Inland Mission, Kenya, Minutes of the Field Conference Business Meetings, 29 December 1965 – 1 January 1966, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Gratton, 'The Relationship of the African Inland Mission and Its National Church', 299.

⁴⁹ Joint Meeting of the Representatives of the A.I.C. Central Church Council with the A.I.M. Field Committee, Nairobi, 29-30 March 1966, AIM-International Archives (Nottingham).

would be to the detriment of both Mission and Church.⁵⁰ AIM's decision to withdraw from the CCK was an effort to protect its Evangelical identity, but its handling of the entire episode exacerbated the tensions that existed between the mission and the church.

Over the next two years, AIC officials became increasingly frustrated with its parent body and a break in the decades-long relationship loomed on the horizon amidst continued confusion. Kioko warned mission officials at a joint meeting in July 1967 that 'human relationships can be broken'.⁵¹ He was sending a message to the mission that any further delay in revising the partnership agreement might lead to a permanent breach. By the end of 1967, copies of a revised agreement were finally in the hands of the District Councils of the AIC. Under the revisions, more authority would be transferred to the AIC in the field of education and the plots for new churches would become the property of the AIC. The agreement maintained that the church and the mission were autonomous entities, though a provision was added stating that the AIC 'welcomes the missionaries of the Africa Inland Mission as members with it in all phases of the work'.⁵² The revisions to the partnership agreement were signed by both parties in March 1968 but tensions surfaced immediately. The language of the revised agreement was ambiguous, and the implications were largely imperceptible in the mission community. Gration, who became the associate home director of the AIM in 1968, observed that many AIM missionaries were completely unaware that

⁵⁰ Confidential Minutes of the Kenya Field Council, November 28-December 2, 1966, quoted in Gration, 'The Relationship of the Africa Inland Mission and Its National Church', 304.

⁵¹ Minutes of a Joint Meeting, 18 July 1967, quoted in Gration, 'The Relationship of the Africa Inland Mission and Its National Church', 306.

⁵² Minutes of the Business Meetings of the Field Conference, 28 December 1967 to 3 January 1968, quoted in Gration, 'The Africa Inland Mission and Its National Church', 307.

there had even been a revised agreement.⁵³ There were continued reports that AIC churches were leaving the mission, and AIC officials increasingly expressed their displeasure with the AIM leadership. In July the AIC president reported that there were defections ‘in some areas’ noting that ‘seven pastors have withdrawn and joined with other separatists from the Gospel Furthering Fellowship’ and had formed a new denomination named ‘The Good News Church of East Africa’.⁵⁴ Gichuha was actually referring to the Good News Church of Africa (GNCA), which had been formed in 1958 after a large schism from the Gospel Furthering Fellowship (GFF) mission.⁵⁵ In November 1968 Kioko spoke of the need to get ‘this matter of the “stroke” [slash] in A.I.C./A.I.M. straightened out’.⁵⁶ ‘AIC/AIM’ was still stamped on church stationery and proudly displayed on church signage. Kioko complained that it was ‘especially difficult to explain this matter to Government officials and large Insurance and business companies [who] cannot see that there has been a change’.⁵⁷ Kioko argued that the church and the mission must ‘become one in name, like the manner in which Tanganyika and Zanzibar have now become Tanzania’.⁵⁸ The revised partnership agreement of 1968 proved unworkable and the General Secretary of the AIC

⁵³ Gratton, ‘The Relationship of the Africa Inland Mission and Its National Church’, 314.

⁵⁴ Joint Meeting of the A.I.C Central Church Council and the A.I.M. Field Committee, Nairobi, 16 July 1968, AIM-International Archives (Nottingham).

⁵⁵ There is scant information on the Gospel Furthering Fellowship (GFF) that was founded in the 1930s and the 1958 schism that founded the Good News Church of Africa. Both organizations are mentioned in David B. Barrett, ed., *Kenya Churches Handbook: The Development of Kenyan Christianity, 1498-1973* (Kisumu, Kenya: Evangel Publishing House, 1973), 27, 186. Barrett’s study lists the membership of the Good News Church of Africa at 30,000 in 1968.

⁵⁶ ‘Report of the AIC General Secretary, Rev. S. M. Kioko’, Joint Committee of the Representatives of the AIC Central Church Council and the AIM Field Committee, Nairobi, Kenya, 26 November 1968, AIM-International Archives (Nottingham).

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

was in effect calling for a union of the two organizations. AIC churches were defecting, AIC senior leaders were displeased and the mission-church relationship was still unclear. As Kioko put it, 'There is still confusion.'⁵⁹

The AIC pressed its parent body for a mission-church merger while AIM remained decidedly ambivalent on the issue. The church wanted both organizations to work together in Kenya under a single name, with the same leader, guided by one constitution, with missionaries working under the authority of African leadership in a central office. At a Joint Session of the AIM and AIC councils in February 1969, the AIC proposed a new agreement that was in effect a union of the two organizations working together in Kenya. The proposals were presented in unambiguous language:

1. There should be only one name in the place of AIM/AIC.
2. There should be only one leader.
3. There should be only one constitution.
4. There should be only one Trustees body.
5. There should be only one treasury.
6. There should be only one central office.
7. There should be only one set of rules for the work.⁶⁰

These demands were along the lines of the proposals made by Henman in 1960. AIM leaders expressed a willingness to negotiate with the church, but in a private meeting the mission maintained its view that 'it was the consensus' of the field council 'that there must

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Erik S. Barnett to Fellow-missionaries of the Kenya Field, 30 May 1969, Nairobi, Kenya, BGC Archives (Wheaton), Collection 81, 73/4; Minutes of Joint Session of the A.I.C. and the A.I.M., 10-11 February 1969, cited in Gratton, 'The Relationship Between the Africa Inland Mission and Its National Church', 315; Stephen D. Morad, 'The Spreading Tree: A History of the Africa Inland Church in Kenya, 1895-1995' (unpublished book, n.d.), BGC Archives (Wheaton), Papers of Stephen D. Morad, Collection 689.

be two organizations'.⁶¹ A July minute noted that 'there have been two meetings on Church-Missions Relations and a third is scheduled' stating that 'progress is being made, but much prayer is needed' to resolve the dispute.⁶² The mission was feeling intense pressure from the church to integrate the AIM with the AIC fully. As Barnett put it in a letter to the home directors and secretaries, 'As things now stand it seems to me that we are going to be forced into one of two positions, either full-integration, with all the dangers involved there, or an agreed separation of Mission and Church with all the pitfalls involved in that.'⁶³ Barnett's statement implies that he considered it 'dangerous' to hand over the authority of the mission to the church. Church leaders were pressing for fusion, and the mission was being forced to make a decision.

In 1970 African church leaders issued an ultimatum. AIM must agree to its proposals or the church would in effect 'take over' the mission. The church was calling AIM to come to terms with the new conditions in Africa and follow the pattern of other mission societies. The confidential notes of a January 15 meeting reveal the disappointment and anger of an African church leader identified as Kitui:

...we have had several meetings, and every time we talk about the getting together of A.I.M. and A.I.C. I am surprised that the A.I.C. has to put pressure on its parent A.I.M. to get something. It amazes the Government people in Kenya...When Uhuru came, many denominations tried to bring forward the Africans in the Church, even the Roman Catholics. But it appears that A.I.M. is not going forward, but backward.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Summary of Discussion on Church/Mission Relationships, Africa Inland Mission, Kenya Field, Special Meeting of the Field Council, Nairobi, 7-8 May, 1969, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

⁶² Joint Committee of the Representatives of the A.I.C. Central Church Council and the A.I. M. Field Council, Nairobi, 22 July 1969, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

⁶³ Erik Barnett to Home Directors and Secretaries, 4 November 1969, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

⁶⁴ Confidential Notes on Joint Session of the AIC and the AIM Executive Committees, Nairobi, 15 January 1970, BGC Archives (Wheaton), AIM International, Collection 81.

Kitui was actually Wellington Mulwa, whose name was listed in the minutes as W. M. Kitui. Church leaders were exasperated with the mission. Other societies like the CMS and the CSM had already merged with their 'younger churches'. *Even* the Roman Catholics, seldom praised for anything by the AIC, were viewed as more progressive than the mission! In a document dated 28 January 1970, AIC leaders made it clear that mission property and mission personnel should immediately begin working under the authority of the AIC. The memo stated in no uncertain terms that since the church and the mission 'are working as one body and for the common purpose, both of them should now merge together to form one body to be known as the "Africa Inland Church" Kenya.'⁶⁵ The AIC was in effect demanding devolution.

On 2 June 1970, the AIC president, Gichuha, sent a letter to Barnett in which he stated that unless the mission agreed to an immediate 'change of directions', the AIC would proceed 'with plans to find ways and means of effecting the arrangements as contained in the A.I.C. document of 28th January 1970'.⁶⁶ The church was threatening a hostile takeover of the mission. The AIC vowed to use extreme measures (though unspecified) to seize power and property from the mission. The AIM and the AIC had finally reached an impasse. On the day Barnett received Gichuha's letter threatening to take unilateral action, Sidney Langford and Peter Stam, directors of the American and Canadian Home Councils respectively, arrived on a 'fact-finding mission' to provide counsel during this 'time of

⁶⁵ New Organization of the Africa Inland Church in Relation to the Africa Inland Mission-Kenya, Prepared by the AIC Sub-committee for Presentation to the Joint AIM/AIC Sub-Committee, 28 January 1970, BGC Archives (Wheaton), AIM International, Collection 81.

⁶⁶ Letter of Andrew Gichuha to Erik Barnett, 2 June 1970, quoted in Gratton, 'The Relationship Between the Africa Inland Mission and Its National Church', 335.

uncertainty'.⁶⁷ Both Langford and Stam were veteran mission officials with considerable on-field experience. Barnett, unable to find a solution, invited African church leaders to meet with Langford, Stam, and the field council. In an unprecedented move, the senior officials of the home councils negotiated directly with African church leaders, effectively circumventing the authority of Barnett and the field council. On 26 June 1970, Langford and Stam presented a proposal to the AIC that would in effect make AIM in Kenya a 'department of the church' with the name 'Africa Inland Church' representing both the church and mission in all of its ministries.⁶⁸ Mission property would be handed over to the church, all stations would become known as 'Africa Inland stations' and missionaries were to become members of the AIC. The work of foreign missionaries would fall under the direction of the AIC president in Kenya. A compromise allowed for the election of a committee comprising AIM workers to represent Western missionary interests. The mission also retained the authority to operate the Rift Valley Academy and to hold some properties that were not directly related to the work of the African church in Kenya.⁶⁹ Church officials accepted the new arrangement with 'thanksgiving to God that at last a solution had been found and that from now on we could work together as brothers and sisters'.⁷⁰ Langford called the agreement 'a momentous occasion'.⁷¹ Barnett referred to the

⁶⁷ Sidney Langford, 'Report on Trip to Africa', May 31-June 30 1970, BGC Archives (Wheaton), AIM International, Collection 81; Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Kenya Field Council, 26 June 1970, in Gratton, 'The Relationship Between the Africa Inland Mission and Its National Church', 334.

⁶⁸ Resolutions Agreed to by the A.I.M. Kenya Field Council for Presentation to the Africa Inland Church, 26 June 1970, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Langford, 'Report on Trip to Africa', May 31-June 30 1970.

⁷¹ Ibid.

breakthrough as 'a tremendous moment for us all'.⁷² (Barnett was perhaps pleased that missionaries could remain in Kenya under the agreement, but his comments after the official hand-over reveal that he was less than pleased with the arrangements.) On 29 June 1970, the AIM and the AIC reached an agreement. AIM in Kenya finally agreed to merge with the church it founded. Meetings were held in July to work on the legal implementation of the agreement and begin laying plans for a nationwide celebration to be held on 16 October 1971.⁷³

Why the Mission Resisted a Merger

During decolonisation Kenya became an increasingly confusing place for AIM missionaries. In the late 1950s and early 1960s nationalism pressured the mission to create a partnership agreement with the African church. After independence, Africanisation became the new watchword, forcing missionaries to reappraise their role in post-colonial Africa. Questions were looming during the turbulent decade of the 1960s about whether or not Western missionaries were still needed in places like Kenya. A popular 1964 work on Western missions began with a contemporary assessment of the modern mood: "Missionary Go Home!" is an attitude frequently stated or implied.⁷⁴ This expression, 'Missionary Go Home!', was heard with increasing frequency in Western

⁷² Erik Barnett to Fellow Missionaries, 30 June 1970, quoted in Gration, 'The Relationship of the Africa Inland Mission and Its National Church', 338.

⁷³ Gration, 'The Relationship of the Africa Inland Mission and Its National Church', 338-41.

⁷⁴ James A. Scherer, *Missionary Go Home! A Reappraisal of the Christian World Mission* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1964), 5.

missionary circles during the 1960s and 1970s.⁷⁵ AIM missionaries were devoted to their calling and were trying to find their place in the new political and religious landscape of Africa. They openly questioned what these changes meant for them while expressing their strong commitment to continue the work of missions. In early 1965 Peter Brashler published an article in the mission's official organ bearing a provocative title: 'Is the Era of Missions Over?'⁷⁶ Brashler, a veteran AIM missionary, observed that 'the missionary has tried hard to keep abreast of the mad pace of Africanization, but has been falling behind'.⁷⁷ African attitudes were changing about the role of the missionary: 'The elaborate mission station where the missionary in charge is still the big "Bwana"⁷⁸ must be Africanized.'⁷⁹ These changes however did not mean that the era of missions was coming to an end. It simply meant that the mission must adjust in some way to the new realities. As Brashler noted, 'The missionary Era is by no means over, but a reshuffling of the policies and personnel is necessary if the Mission is to survive.'⁸⁰ The mission was determined to stay even if it meant making necessary adjustments. Nevertheless, Barnett and the AIM field council resisted a mission-church merger until officials from the home office forced them to do so. Why was there such strong resistance in the AIM against devolution?

⁷⁵ Dana L. Robert, *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion* (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 92.

⁷⁶ Peter Brashler, 'Is the Era of Missions Over?', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XLIX, No. 1 (January-February 1965), 10-13.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁷⁸ Bwana is the Swahili word for 'sir'. During the colonial period, the word was associated with the African respect for the white man, akin to the word 'master' or even 'boss'.

⁷⁹ Brashler, 'Is the Era of Missions Over?', 12.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

First, AIM believed that a merger would result in loss of mission identity and impede its evangelistic efforts. Some members of the mission community argued that there existed a division of labour between the church and the mission that should be maintained. The mission, they asserted, existed to break new ground and plant the seeds of the gospel in fresh soil. The church, they maintained, existed to work alongside the mission in order to provide oversight and care for the ever-enlarging harvest. A union of church and mission would, in their minds, create confusion over the roles and spheres of the respective Evangelical partners. A 1964 report on the work of the mission conceded that 'most of the denominational missions and churches' have fully integrated and that 'it has been a satisfactory solution for most denominations in "foreign mission" countries'.⁸¹ The report also reveals that the mission was opposed to full integration on the grounds that it would 'cause the Mission to lose its identity' and 'it would necessitate its giving up its reason for existence at all'.⁸² The minutes of a June 1967 meeting of the Central Field Council included an explanatory parenthesis in the following entry: 'That we re-affirm our position that fusion (the loss of identity of the Mission) is not the answer to the closer working relationship of Church and Mission on our fields which we desire' [parenthesis original].⁸³ The mission expressed a desire to work more closely with the church, but it still wanted to preserve the mission's identity. In early 1970, on the eve of the agreement brokered between the home council and the AIC, Barnett was still arguing against the fusion of the

⁸¹ 'Memorandum on need for possible changes in A.I.M. Policies and Operations, in order to meet rapidly changing conditions in Africa', Africa Inland Mission, Kenya Field, 1964, London Office File, AIM International Archives (Nottingham), 8.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Minutes of the Africa Inland Mission Central Field Council, 7-10 June 1967, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

mission and church on the basis that they were separate organizations with complementary roles. He reminded both mission and church executives that the AIC had been founded 'to care for local congregations' while 'the AIM has functioned for the purpose of helping establish local churches and preaching the Gospel by any means possible'.⁸⁴ Missionaries were concerned about the loss of mission identity. Barnett and the field council wanted to keep both organizations separate and maintain what they considered to be a clear division of labour.

Missionaries believed that protecting the unique identity of AIM was important for the continued work of Western missionaries as well as the spread of the Evangelical faith. Missionaries wanted to carry out their work unencumbered by ecclesiastical affairs in Africa. Mission authorities recommended that missionaries should provide counsel and encouragement for AIC leaders but strongly urged them to resist entangling themselves in local church matters. A 1968 article titled 'Mission-Church Relations: Integrate or Cooperate?', authored by an American Presbyterian missiologist at Columbia Theological Seminary (Georgia) named C. Darby Fulton (1892-1977), was approvingly cited by mission leaders.⁸⁵ The article, published in *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* and distributed by AIM field representatives, argued that other mission agencies (unspecified in the article) were experiencing difficulties with the 'integration' approach. One of the main problems, Fulton argued, was that integration unnecessarily involved missionaries in ecclesiastical politics. He observed that

⁸⁴ Confidential Notes on the Meeting of Special AIC and AIM Agreement Committee, 28 January 1970, BGC Archives (Wheaton), AIM International, Collection 81.

⁸⁵ 'C. Darby Fulton: A Christian Statesman', 5 September 2013, <http://www.thisday.pcahistory.org/2013/09/september-5-c-darby-fulton> (accessed 3 January 2017).

...there is widespread dissatisfaction and unrest among many over the policy in question [integration of mission and church]. To most missionaries the call to serve abroad comes primarily in terms of the need of the unevangelized millions. To find upon arrival on the field that they have lost the initiative in pursuing their missionary purpose and must accept an assignment within the structure of some existing church group comes to them as a bitter and disappointing experience.⁸⁶

AIM embraced the philosophy that the church and mission must remain separate so that the mission could remain focused on reaching the 'unevangelized millions'. Missionaries did not come to the field to be embroiled in parish politics but rather to be pioneers in the progress of the gospel. At a special meeting held in May 1969, Barnett proposed the options for consideration regarding mission-church relationships: '1) To retain the status quo and meet its attendant problems 2) To operate parallel with the Church in full cooperation, and 3) complete integration with the church and the disappearance of the Mission as a functioning body.'⁸⁷ In his mind, a merger between the mission and the church would result in the 'disappearance' of the AIM and the downplaying of the important role of the missionary. Barnett and field representatives thus rejected calls for a merger in order to retain mission identity and remain focused on the work of evangelism uninhibited by ecclesiastical concerns.

Second, the independent ethos and rugged individualism of the mission community was an impediment to AIC pressure for a unified mission-church organization. AIM was not a denominational mission. It was an interdenominational mission agency comprised of fiercely independent missionaries. The mission traced its ancestry to a family of

⁸⁶ C. Darby Fulton, 'Mission-Church Relations: Integrate or Cooperate?', *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No. 2, [Winter 1968]. The article was attached as an addendum to the Minutes of the International Conference of the Africa Inland Mission, June 14-18, 1968, AIM-International Archives, (Nottingham).

⁸⁷ Summary of Discussion on Church/Mission Relationships, Africa Inland Mission – Kenya Field, Special Meeting of the Field Council, Nairobi, 7-8 May, 1969, AIM-International Archives (Nottingham)

Evangelical mission agencies founded in the late nineteenth century commonly referred to by missiologists as 'faith missions'.⁸⁸ The largest and most influential of these faith missions were the China Inland Mission (1865), the Christian Missionary Alliance (1887), the Evangelical Alliance (1887), the Sudan Interior Mission (1893) and the Africa Inland Mission (1895).⁸⁹ One of the common features of these mission organizations was their belief that denominational agencies were not effectively moving 'inland' to reach 'unevangelized' people. These mission organizations were determined to carry out their work independent of denominational affiliation by recruiting missionaries with an adventuresome spirit who received training at independent Bible colleges and secured funds outside of denominational structures. 'Faith missions' were able to operate with greater flexibility and without the constraints of denominational oversight. They prized their independence.

AIM was a card-carrying member of this movement and celebrated the heroic efforts of missionaries who struck out on their own looking to God alone for provision and protection. The heroic efforts of missionaries were often portrayed in books and pamphlets produced by the mission. Even missionaries that proved difficult to manage became mission heroes. Typical of the promotional works produced for the masses was the celebrated 1965 book *Tom Collins of Kenya: Son of Valour* published by AIM in London and disseminated widely in Britain and North America. Tom's application to serve with AIM in the early 1930s had been rejected because his undergraduate degree from

⁸⁸ Stephen Daniel Morad, 'The Founding Principles of the Africa Inland Mission and Their Interaction with the Africa Context in Kenya, 1895-1939: The Study of a Faith Mission' (Ph.D. diss., University of Edinburgh, 1997); Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of Faith Missions: From Hudson Taylor to Present Day Africa* (Oxford, UK: Regnum Books International, 1994), 70-111.

⁸⁹ Ralph R. Covell, 'Fath Missions', *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*.

Cambridge was considered insufficient preparation. He was told that he would need to reapply after receiving Bible training at a school that also offered practical preparation for surviving in the African wilderness. At the behest of the mission, Collins reluctantly enrolled in the Missionary Training Colony in England, a school founded by Barclay Godfrey Buxton (1895-1986), grandson of the famed Evangelical abolitionist, Thomas Fowell Buxton (1786-1845).⁹⁰ In his eagerness to begin work, Collins left for Mombasa before finishing the programme and began his work as a missionary before receiving mission approval. AIM was impressed by his eagerness and self-reliance and accepted him into the mission after he arrived on the field. The mission celebrated Collins for his 'tough self-sufficiency' and his willingness to strike out on his own to work among the Pokot tribes in the 'unreached' areas of the colony.⁹¹ Zeal for mission work and an independent spirit were more important than a degree from Cambridge or a willingness to follow mission protocol.

The independent ethos of the mission and its missionary force became apparent on the question of church-mission relationships in a study conducted by the Christian Service Fellowship (CSF) at the request of AIM in 1968. In an effort to assess missionary attitudes on the question of mission-church relationships, AIM funded an on-field study to assist mission decision-makers for long-range planning. The study was completed in 1970 and copies were made available to mission authorities but not released to the larger mission community. It included a survey of missionary attitudes in the AIM community on the question of integration. Fifty-six per cent of all missionary personnel participated in the

⁹⁰ Anderson, *We Felt Like Grasshoppers*, 151-52.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 152.

study, a high enough percentage to provide accurate statistical analysis with a very small margin of error. The results of the study show AIM missionaries were extremely independent. Only eight per cent of AIM missionaries surveyed favoured the integration of the mission with the church on the grounds that the mission could carry out its work more effectively independent of the church.⁹² The consultants used the expression 'individualistic spirit' to describe the AIM mission culture, a turn of phrase they lifted from their on-field interviews.⁹³ The individualistic spirit pervaded the mission, even making it difficult for missionaries on the field to receive directives from mission superiors. Using the precise words of one missionary, the report read: 'Many station managers do not manage because missionaries refuse to be managed.'⁹⁴ When consultants asked the missionaries who they reported to, one of the most frequently recorded responses was 'to no one.'⁹⁵ Another AIM missionary crudely confessed: 'We're uneducated and unconditioned to working under authority.'⁹⁶ The consultants themselves appear to have been mystified by some of the attitudes they uncovered during their research and found it impossible to refrain from making personal comments to this effect in various parts of the report. Given the independent ethos of the mission community, the consultants concluded that a merger 'should not be discarded as a possible option' but that they could not recommend proceeding at this time. In their words, 'the climate is not ready for volunteer

⁹² 'Africa Inland Mission Evaluation Study Report' (Minneapolis, MN: Christian Service Fellowship, 1970), AIM International Archives, (Nottingham), 52.

⁹³ Ibid., 152.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 213.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 117.

amalgamation with others.⁹⁷ Missionaries were simply not ready to work in harmony with their African brethren. The mission, the consultants concluded, was operating as a 'fellowship of individuals'.⁹⁸ Rugged individualism pervaded the mission community and it was an impediment to mission-church unity.

A third factor that militated against a mission-church was the considerable influence of the field secretary, Erik Barnett. Barnett was a household name in the AIM community. He was a veteran missionary, the son of a famous pioneer missionary, and it was widely known that he was a close friend with the Vice-President of Kenya. It appears that Barnett was operating the work in Kenya with little input from the AIM home councils. D. M. Alloway, a member of the AIM council in Canada, wrote a confidential letter to Barnett in March 1970 expressing his personal concerns: 'I wrote to you on July 16, 1969, expressing my personal grave concern over procedures that were being followed, particularly your own understanding as to the meaning of Kenya field autonomy.'⁹⁹ The letter further stated that 'The view of the Canadian Council is that the church/mission negotiations and commitments have already been carried too far without reference to the International Council.'¹⁰⁰ This was the very issue that had frustrated Henman ten years earlier. The letter to Barnett implies that he was acting unilaterally: 'Surely you want to share this great responsibility of involving the destiny of A.I.M. in Africa and the careers of so many missionaries with the senior authority of the mission?'¹⁰¹ Barnett held the reins of power

⁹⁷ Ibid., 236.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 493.

⁹⁹ D. M. Alloway to Erik S. Barnett, 23 February 1970, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

on the field in Kenya, and he was able to use his considerable influence to resist the pressure of African church leaders who were calling for a merger.

Barnett believed that a mission-church merger would result in the 'disappearance' of the mission, although he later admitted that he also held suspicions about AIC church leaders. A personal letter from Richard Anderson, who served as the general field secretary in 1963-1964, shows that there was distrust among some members of the mission community regarding African motives for desiring control of the mission community. This distrust surfaced during the disputes with the Tanganyikan church leaders in the early 1960s. Some missionaries were raising questions about the 'spiritual condition' of African church leaders though not everyone agreed. The letter read: 'I could not quite agree with you that the whole matter' of Africans asking missionaries to work under their authority 'rests on the spiritual condition of the Leaders.'¹⁰² The celebrated AIM missionary "Nangi" Maynard (Nangi is Swahili for Teacher) had written a personal note in 1961 stating that AIC church leaders simply wanted 'to possess and control what they imagine is a wealthy mission treasure'.¹⁰³ Maynard's comments had been copied into Kenneth Downing's correspondence with the home councils in 1961 and dispatched to the home office as proof positive that the mission must rule out any consideration of Henman's proposals for devolution. Downing clearly had suspicions about African motives for a

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Kenneth Richardson to R. H. Baker, 8 January 1964, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

¹⁰³ William J. "Nangi" Maynard to Kenneth and Mrs Downing, 26 January 1961, AIM International Archives, (Nottingham).

mission-church merger in Kenya.¹⁰⁴ Barnett also held strong suspicions about African motives in the 1960s and 1970s, suspicions he revealed in oral interviews after his retirement. He admitted to being bothered by the 'manoeuvring' and 'subterfuge' that was taking place behind the scenes. He pinned much of the blame on Wellington Mulwa, a popular African pastor in the mission stronghold of Ukambani.¹⁰⁵ Mulwa was so influential that he was elected to serve as AIC president in 1970. (His title was later changed to bishop).¹⁰⁶ Barnett confided in the interviewer: 'I don't think you are going to find it [the story of manoeuvring] very much in the accounts...because it's more or less the bad stage.'¹⁰⁷ Barnett was referring to the tensions leading up to the mission-church merger in the late 1960s, and the period after its implementation in the 1970s, as the 'bad stage' in the history of the AIM. He accused Mulwa of 'manoeuvring all the time to get everything the mission had in the name of the AIC'.¹⁰⁸ This included, Barnett recounted, control of mission funds, missionary housing, and the property of the missions' central office. Further, he complained, 'AIM would be under the AIC...that *they* [AIC] would do the assignment...that the *church* would do the assignment...and all of this....and this was again a manoeuvre of the Bishop.'¹⁰⁹ Barnett was complaining about the merger itself as well as the implementation of the merger agreement, according to which the mission would serve

¹⁰⁴ Kenneth L. Downing to Ralph T. Davis and Philip S. Henman, 8 February 1961, AIM International Archives, (Nottingham).

¹⁰⁵ Cf. pp. 226-238.

¹⁰⁶ More detailed information is provided on Mulwa in chapter 6.

¹⁰⁷ Erik S. Barnett, interview by Paul Erickson, tape recording, 23-24 January 1995, BGC Archives (Wheaton), Collection 510, T-3.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

under the authority of the church and cede control of assigning missionaries to their work. When Mulwa officially became the AIC president in 1970, he forced Barnett to resign as Kenyan field secretary. Barnett in turn accused Mulwa of trying to line his own pockets with mission money. In what may have been an unguarded moment, Barnett spoke about the premature death of Mulwa in 1979,¹¹⁰ calling it an answer to prayer:

It was such a relief [when hearing Mulwa had died]...I don't know of a case except Ananias and Sapphira of the Bible, where God stepped in...as he did out there. Now that kind of thing should not go into any book or into writing.... but it's in the record...it's true.¹¹¹

Barnett went on to talk about how he urged AIM to return to the old partnership model of the 1960s after Mulwa's death in 1979! The Field Secretary was opposed to the mission-church merger throughout the 1960s, only conceding under pressure from the home council in the 1970s. His considerable influence in the mission community and his distrust of the motives of some African church leaders delayed the move to unify the AIM and the AIC in Kenya.

A fourth deterrent for a mission-church merger in post-colonial Kenya was the lingering attitude of paternalism among many AIM missionaries. Western missionaries believed they were in a better position to assess a whole range of issues, including the wisest course of action on the question of mission-church relationships. While it is overly simplistic to describe Western missionaries during this period as colonial sympathizers, Western colonial expansion did create a contemporary *Pax Romana* complete with the

¹¹⁰ In his interview, Barnett conflates the years 1969 to 1979, referring to the entire period as the 'bad stage' in mission-church relationships.

¹¹¹ Barnett interview, T-3. The story of mission-wide expressions of joy over the death of Mulwa is recounted in Jones Maweu Kaleli, 'Theoretical Foundations of African and Western Worldviews and Their Relationship to Christian Theologizing: An Akamba Case Study' (Ph.D. diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 1985), 367-69.

equivalent of Roman roads (ships, trains, planes) that were used for transporting goods as well as the gospel. Christian missionaries came to missionize, but the gospel was often carried out under the protection of the Union Jack with the power (and money) of Old Glory. Echoes of David Livingstone's call for the advancement of Christianity, commerce and civilization were visibly present in the mission.¹¹² Missionaries often viewed themselves as citizens of 'advanced cultures' who were called to evangelize as well as civilize.¹¹³ In the 1965 book celebrating the life of famed AIM missionary Tom Collins, the author observes with conventional ease: 'Tom Collins, in common with every other member of the more advanced races, indirectly owed all his attainments to the Christianizing influences that have pervaded civilized countries throughout the centuries.'¹¹⁴ In 1965 a major AIM publication was still referring to Americans and Europeans as members of 'advanced races'!

In the 1960s, Evangelical leaders were aware that paternalism had created tensions between mission agencies and the younger churches they had planted in non-Western societies. In April 1966 Evangelical mission leaders from more than 100 agencies convened in Wheaton, Illinois, for a Congress on the Church's Worldwide Mission. A gathering of 938 delegates from seventy-one nations met to discuss the challenges facing the modern missionary movement. The fruit of the meeting was the Wheaton Declaration.

¹¹² Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions* (New York: Penguin Books, 1986), 414.

¹¹³ Stephen Neill, *Colonialism and Christian Mission* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1966), 35-69; Roland Oliver and Gervase Matthew, eds. *History of East Africa: Volume I* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 354-57.

¹¹⁴ K. N. Phillips, *Tom Collins of Kenya: Son of Valour* (London: Africa Inland Mission, 1965), 32.

'Confession is needed'¹¹⁵ the declaration read. 'We have sinned grievously',¹¹⁶ it continued.

Among the sins mentioned was the failure of the Western church

To trust fully the Holy Spirit's leadership in newly planted congregations, thereby perpetuating paternalism and provoking unnecessary tensions between national churches and mission societies.¹¹⁷

Representatives of the AIM home councils, including John Alexander Gration, were present and among those seeking forgiveness for their grievous sins. The Evangelical mission community recognized that paternalism was still a problem in the late 1960s and it had strained relationships between mission societies and emerging national churches.

The mission often expressed this paternalistic attitude by calling the African church immature. Many missionaries felt that the church was simply not capable of providing oversight of the work of the mission in Kenya. Parent-child language was often used to describe the relationship of the mission with the church. While missionaries recognized that the church was no longer an infant, like good parents they refused to give in to all the demands of their children. A 1969 Annual Report of the British Home Director reads, "'The babe" has grown into adolescence and adulthood; and therefore, we must make sure that we are not still aiming at the goals of "infant care".'¹¹⁸ The report links the parent-child relationship with the issue of a mission-church merger: 'Now the church leadership in some areas is pressing for a fusion of the Mission and the Church relationship with the

¹¹⁵ 'The Wheaton Declaration, 1966', Records of the Congress on the Church's Worldwide Mission, BGC Archives, (Wheaton), Collection 21.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Annual Report of the British Home Director, 1969, AIM International Archives (Nottingham). T. E. Lloyd was the director of the British Home Office in 1969, though his name is nowhere attached. The extensive report was most likely a collaborative endeavour. It is signed by Kenneth S. Thornberry, the Administrative Secretary of the British Home Council.

thought of eliminating the autonomy of the Mission.¹¹⁹ The same report goes on to speak of a significant ‘obstacle’ blocking a merger: ‘True to the parental concept, there are those who question “junior’s” maturity.’¹²⁰ Some missionaries simply did not feel that ‘their children’ were ready for the responsibility of a mission-church merger. The CFS researchers summarized the attitude of many missionaries in their 1970 report: ‘This “feeling” [of superiority] was very evident and best expressed as heard, ‘Who do they [the Africans] think they are?’”¹²¹ A persistent air of paternalism complicated mission-church relations in the 1960s and became another ‘obstacle’ for an AIM-AIC merger.

The African ‘Take Over’

On 16 October 1971, the African Inland Mission held a public ceremony in which it handed over its property and powers to the Africa Inland Church. The mission had reluctantly yielded to AIC pressure in an eleventh-hour deal brokered by senior officials of the home councils who were visiting the field on a fact-finding mission. ‘Thousands’ of worshippers gathered in Machakos, Kenya, for the outdoor celebration, the crowd partially shaded by the spreading branches of the luxuriant fig tree gracing the grounds of the mission station at Machakos. Vice-President Moi, a life-long member of the AIC, arrived by motorcade ‘flanked by aides and ministers’ to witness the historic day. AIM officials from the field and home councils stood side-by-side on the platform with AIC officials. Legal representatives were present for the ceremonial signing of official documents. Mission

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ ‘Africa Inland Mission Evaluation Study Report’ (Minneapolis, MN: Christian Service Fellowship, 1970), AIM International Archives (Nottingham), 138.

representatives appeared pleased, but mission publications were less enthusiastic. The lead article in the October-December 1971 issue of *Inland Africa* called for patience in 'this age of "take over" by the African Church'.¹²² The African church had finally taken over and missionaries would be tested.

AIM had resisted the merging of the mission and the church even after other societies had already devolved authority to their younger churches during the period leading up to independence. Between 1964 and 1970, AIM remained firm in its opposition to a merger. The mission's mulish refusal to hand over its power and property in the late 1960s was influenced by a compilation of factors. Missionaries who had lived in Kenya for decades, some for their entire lives, wanted to protect the identity of the mission. They believed that a merger between the AIM and the AIC would mire the mission in local church matters and impede the effectiveness of Western missionaries. The fiercely independent spirit that pervaded the mission community also proved inimical to devolution. AIM missionaries were an independent lot and they carried out their work under the banner of an independent faith mission. Another contributing factor was the personal influence of Erik Barnett, who believed a merger would result in the 'disappearance' of the mission. He harboured malignant misgivings about the motives of AIC church leaders, believing some to be motivated by a desire for power and personal gain. Finally, the mission's paternalistic disposition was an obstacle for an AIM-AIC merger. Mission officials did not believe 'junior' was mature enough to drive the car, and they refused to take a back seat. It is the combination of these factors that strongly impeded African pressure for a mission-church merger when other missions had already handed over authority to their younger churches.

¹²² E. H. Arensen, 'Impatience', *Inland Africa* (North America) Vol. XV, No. 4 [November-December 1971], 3.

Barnett's influence seems paramount, but it was bolstered by the fact that he had the support of nearly the entire mission community. AIM missionaries preferred working independently of the African church, and they did not believe the African church was ready to manage them. Barnett wanted to preserve the unique identity of the mission that had been such an important part of his family for decades. He believed that the devolution of the mission would damage the work of missions in Kenya, and he was also suspicious of the motives of influential African leaders. Barnett proved to be the linchpin that had to be removed by the home councils and eventually the new president of the AIC. Western missionaries were forced to bow to the demands of the African church. As the mission's official magazine put it in the final issue of the decade: 'It's a black man's country and the winds of change still blow.'¹²³ The church, the nation, and now the mission were in African hands.

¹²³ 'The Times They Are A-changin' *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. LV, No. 6 [November-December 1969].

**The Dominance of the Africa Inland Church and the Rise of
'Africa's Evangelicals', 1972-1975**

In 1972 the editor of *Inland Africa* rang in the New Year with a sensational feature article: 'The Day Our Mission Died.'¹ The title was a morbid reference to the day the Africa Inland Mission (AIM) formally transferred its authority and property to the Africa Inland Church (AIC) in Kenya on 16 October 1971. The mission's editor, also a participant-observer at the historic ceremony attended by tens of thousands,² began the full-length feature in solemn reflection. He likened the outdoor service at the mission station in Machakos to a funeral, festooned with flowers and solemnized by the presence of Vice-President Moi, himself a proud member of the AIC. This was a difficult day for some AIM missionaries. As the narrative progresses, there is a discernible change in the article's tone,

¹ E. H. Arensen, 'The Day Our Mission Died,' *Inland Africa* (North America) Vol. XVI, No. 1 [January-March 1972], 3-7.

² Kenneth Downing to Mr Mundy, 21 October 1971, Downing Papers (Florida). Arensen's 1972 article cited above reported that there were 100,000 in attendance, though this number was disputed by Downing, who was present: 'We estimated from 10,000 to 12 or even 15,00 people (though one of the daily papers said 100,000!).'

like that of a popular evangelist raising his voice to encourage his audience to hold out hope even in challenging times. He reminded the mission faithful with funereal flair that for those in the Christian community, death is never the end. Though the mission had ‘died’ and been ‘buried’, there was great anticipation that ‘through the Church the Mission could spring forth in renewed growth and service’.³ ‘The historic day’ (as it was dubbed) marked the death of an era and became fixed in church and mission lore as the beginning of something new.⁴

While ‘the historic day’ was a significant event, the ‘renewed’ life that followed the ‘death’ of the mission in Kenya was of even greater import. The early 1970s were marked by a sudden shift in ecclesiastical power as African leaders rose victorious to reign over the church and the mission in Kenya. African Evangelicals were elevated to positions of influence in the early 1970s and became dominant forces in Kenya and the continent. This chapter will provide a brief explanation of what actually happened on ‘the historic day’ and offer an examination of key developments that have been ignored in the histories of the mission, including the influence of the AIC’s first African bishop. It will also consider how AIM missionaries responded to the historic day and the events that followed.

A ‘Department’ of the African Church

The signed agreement of 16 October 1971 gave the AIC near absolute authority over the mission in Kenya. AIM went out of its way to emphasize that the mission had not dissolved though it frequently struggled for language to define its new status. The mission

³ Arensen, ‘The Day Our Mission Died,’ 7.

⁴ Dick Anderson, *We Felt Like Grasshoppers: The Story of Africa Inland Mission* (Nottingham: Crossway Books, 1994), 193-194.

was downgraded to a department within the AIC. The agreement read as follows: 'The Africa Inland Mission Kenya takes the position of a department of the Africa Inland Church in all Church-related matters.'⁵ Under the agreement the mission still existed in Kenya, but it worked under the aegis of the African church with autonomy allowed in matters not related to the church. The language allowed some room for the mission to manoeuvre. The phrase 'department of the AIC', though present in the original agreement, was seldom used in the mission community. In 1972 the American Home Council (AHC) used words like 'closely related' but 'autonomous' in its official minutes: 'The Africa Inland Mission is closely related to the Africa Inland Church on the national level but as an international organization it is autonomous and formulates its own policy on relationship.'⁶ The minute appears to be an attempt to assure supporters that they could trust the mission to remain thoroughly Evangelical in its affiliations and that it had the authority to do so as an 'autonomous' body even though it worked under the authority of the African church. While the AIC retained its Evangelical convictions, even opposing the World Council of Churches, it was less rigid in its policy on affiliation.⁷ In 1973 the Canadian Home Council called the mission-church agreement 'a partial merger'.⁸ The most frequently used language to

⁵ 'Msingi Wa Maptatano baina ya Africa Inland Church na Africa Inland Mission - Kenya' ['Basis of Agreement between the African Inland Church and the Africa Inland Mission - Kenya'], AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

⁶ Minutes of the American Home Council, 22 November 1972, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

⁷ This will be discussed later in the chapter. The AIC held firm Evangelical convictions, but it was not as hawkish as the AIM on ecumenical issues. This is implied in John Alexander Gration, 'The Relationship of the Africa Inland Mission and Its National Church in Kenya between 1895 and 1971' (PhD diss., New York University, 1973), 298-300.

⁸ 'Report of the Home Director', Africa Inland Mission (Canada), 24 April 1973, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

describe the signed agreement of 1971 was ‘hand-over’ or simply ‘the historic day’.⁹ This turn of phrase appears to have been used by missionaries because it avoided the word ‘merger’, a concept that was still confusing for many AIM workers.¹⁰

The ‘historic day’ in Kenya was important because it was emblematic of the new reality that the mission was now working under the authority of the African church in all its fields. When AIM had begun laying the groundwork for establishing an African church in 1939, it had provided general guidance for each field council but had allowed each field to determine its own structure.¹¹ During decolonisation, each field also negotiated with the African church it had helped establish. A case in point is Tanzania, where the Central Field Council provided guidance but the working agreement was between the AIM field council in Tanzania and the AIC of Tanzania.¹² A 1972 document explains this arrangement: ‘Each country is gradually developing its own way of working’ and ‘each African Country has its own separate A.I.C.’ noting that ‘the exception is Uganda’ (which fused with Anglican Church).¹³ The same document made it clear that the mission was now working under the authority of the African church in all its fields: ‘Although the development is different in each Country, generally the Church Councils control the work of the church and much of

⁹ Jonathan Hildebrandt, interview by author (Florida), 3 April 2014.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Africa Inland Mission Kenya Field, Meeting of the Inter-Field Committee, 6-8 July 1944, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

¹² Meeting of the Executive Committee, Mwanza, Tanganyika, 17-21 December 1963, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

¹³ International Structure of the A.I.M. as it relates to the African Church, March 1972, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

the work of the missionaries.¹⁴ Kenya was the mission's oldest field, and the veritable 'first among equals' in all its fields. 'The historic day' made headlines because it was the last domino to fall. The 1971 agreement between the mission and the church made it clear that the heartland of the mission was now under the control of the Central Church Council of the AIC.¹⁵ 'All Church-related properties, moveable and immovable, formerly held by the Africa Inland Mission' were turned over to the church.¹⁶ All 'African Inland Mission personnel' were now recognized as members of the 'African Inland Church' and therefore under their authority.¹⁷ In an article titled 'What Really Happened on Oct. 16 1971', E. H. Arensen, as editor of the mission magazine, told supporters that the missionary was still welcome on the field in Kenya while also making it clear that conditions had changed. As he put it, 'The A.I.C. has opened its arms to [the missionaries] and said, "While you are here on the field you belong to us. You are members of our church. You are under our authority, even as our national pastors. We will assign you to your place of service."' ¹⁸ AIM continued to exist and missionaries were welcome to serve in Kenya, but the 1971 agreement was the symbolic denouement of the mission's submission to the African church. The African church now ruled the mission in Kenya.

AIM missionaries accepted the historic 'hand-over' with a sense of resignation, though a few workers expressed resentment. Some AIM workers who had been opposed to

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ 'Basis of Agreement between the African Inland Church and the Africa Inland Mission - Kenya', AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ E. H. Arensen, 'What Really Happened on Oct. 17 1971', *Inland Africa* (North America) Vol. XVI, No. 1 [January-March 1972], 8.

Henman's 1960 proposed merger accepted the changes and served under the authority of the church and alongside their African colleagues. Kenneth Downing may have been the most influential representative of the old guard who came to embrace the historic 'hand-over.' During his time as the director of the General Field Council in Kenya (1955-1963), Downing had blocked a short-lived push by Philip Henman, then chair of the British Home Council, for an AIM-AIC merger in 1960. After successfully negotiating the partnership agreement in the early 1960s, Downing was seconded¹⁹ by the AIM to open the Africa Evangelical Office (AEO) in Nairobi.²⁰ He continued to attend AIM field council meetings when he was able, often reporting on AEO progress, but he spent much of his time between 1962 and 1970 traversing the African continent in an effort to unite Africans around an Evangelical fellowship. A 1964 minute is typical: 'The Rev. K. Downing, returning from his West Africa trip, was welcomed to the meeting and the courtesies extended to him.'²¹ Through his efforts, and with the strong support of the AIM, the Association of Evangelicals in Africa and Madagascar (AEAM) was established and headquartered in Kenya in 1966 with Downing appointed as general secretary.²² He viewed his role as a 'temporary loan from the Africa Inland Mission' and was 'looking for, and trusting to find, an African to take over this position as soon as possible'.²³ Downing resigned from his position as general

¹⁹ Missionaries were often 'seconded' to work in other Evangelical agencies for a period of time. The British term, which means to transfer an officer or official temporarily to another post, is frequently used in mission minutes.

²⁰ Christina Maria Breman, *The Association of Evangelicals in Africa: Its History, Organization, Members, Projects, External Relations, and Message* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 1996), 12-14.

²¹ Africa Inland Mission Central Field Council, Minutes of the Tenth Annual Meeting, Rethy, Congo Republic, 19-23 June 1964, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

²² Bremen, *Association of Evangelicals in Africa*, 17.

²³ Kenneth L. Downing to Bernard C. Reed, 27 October 1969, Nairobi, Downing Papers (Florida).

secretary in 1970, yielding his responsibilities to the Nigerian-born Samuel Odunaike (1934-1991), a well-known Nigerian minister and activist.²⁴ He then accepted an assignment to Nakuru to collect mission documents from various posts in Kenya and 'go over all the AIM archives' and 'determine what should be disposed of, and what kept'.²⁵ He was present at the historic hand-over at Machakos on 16 October 1971 and wrote his son two days after the event saying that the 'meeting was really quite terrific'.²⁶ In a letter on 2 November 1971, Downing noted that 'a ceremony like the AIM/AIC one in October marks a great achievement in the history of the Mission'.²⁷ After years of tension and strain between the mission and the church during the 1960s, he now spoke of his 'much closer relationship with the churches', calling it 'refreshing'.²⁸ In 1973 he wrote, 'I am really enjoying working with AIC since "uhuru" celebration in Oct. '71. I feel more of a partnership than I ever used to feel.'²⁹ Some AIM missionaries believed that the hand-over of the mission was a remarkable accomplishment for the mission and the church and found their new working conditions satisfactory.

Not everyone in the mission adjusted to the new realities. Downing recalls a private conversation he had with one AIM colleague after the hand-over:

One of our second-generation missionaries (of my age group) said to me something to the effect of: "To think that the mission I was born in and served all these years has come to this!" I said to him, "Why that's exactly what your Dad and my Dad

²⁴ Bremen, *Association of Evangelicals in Africa*, 36-40.

²⁵ Kenneth L. Downing to Owen Hendrix, 17 January 1971, Nairobi, Downing Papers (Florida).

²⁶ Kenneth L. Downing to Victor Downing, Nairobi, 18 October 1971, Downing Papers (Florida).

²⁷ Kenneth L. Downing to Wilfred A. Bellamy, Nairobi, 2 November 1971, Downing Papers (Florida).

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Kenneth L. Downing to Victor Downing, 11 November 1973, Nakuru, Kenya, Downing Papers (Florida).

came out here to do. To preach the Gospel and establish churches. They're just now coming of age."³⁰

Downing may have been referring to Erik Barnett (1910-2006), the ousted director of the Kenya Field Council, who held consistently firm in his opposition to the concept of 'fusion'.³¹ He had conceded to a settlement negotiated by the home councils and accepted the merger in 1970 only after being held hostage to African threats of a hostile takeover. After his retirement from the mission, he called the 1970s the 'bad stage' in the mission's history and referred to the 1960s as a period of 'partnership' that worked very well until the hand-over.³² Barnett was 'pushed out' of his position by the newly elected bishop immediately after the merger was signed in 1970.³³ Members of the mission community, even those who supported the hand-over 'felt bad' that 'no mention was made of Erik Barnett at all' on the historic day.³⁴ He was reassigned to work in a remote outpost of central Kenya among the Marakwet tribe until his retirement in 1975.³⁵ He expressed what can only be called a deep-seated resentment toward the new bishop and referred to his death in 1979 as an answer to prayer.³⁶ However, Barnett's own views appear to have

³⁰ Downing to Bellamy, 2 November 1971.

³¹ Cf. pp. 206-209.

³² Erik Barnett, Interviews of Erik Stanley Barnett, BGC Archives (Wheaton), Collection 510, T3. His colleague Richard Gehman described Barnett's recollection of the 1960s as 'romantic'. Richard Gehman, interview by author, 31 March 2014 (Florida).

³³ Raymond Wolfe to Sidney Langford, 2 August 1972, Journal of Raymond Wolfe (e-mail to author); see discussion on page 235.

³⁴ Kenneth L. Downing to Claudos and Gladys Stauffacher, 1 November 1971, Downing Papers (Florida).

³⁵ Erik Barnett, Interviews of Erik Stanley Barnett, T3.

³⁶ Ibid.

been out of step with those of most members of the AIM community in the 1970s.³⁷

Downing's change of heart is more than likely a better representation of the attitude of AIM missionaries in Kenya in the early 1970s. As Downing put it a year after the agreement was signed, 'Although a few missionaries are opposed, I think most of us feel very encouraged.'³⁸ Most members of the AIM community adapted to the new arrangements.³⁹

The Dominance of the African Church

The historic hand-over was both the culmination of the church's struggle for control and the commencement of a new era marked by African domination. Three major developments converged in the early 1970s, ushering in a period marked by African supremacy in both the church and the mission. First, 'Africanisation' became part of the prevailing cultural mood in Kenya, affecting nearly every aspect of society, including the mission's relationship with the church. Kenya had achieved national independence in 1963, but as president, Jomo Kenyatta had subsequently implemented a gradual process of Africanisation. On the eve of independence, senior government posts were handed over to Africans in preparation for autonomy, but other spheres of society, including the military, the police force, the educational system, and the courts were only gradually Africanised.⁴⁰ Kenyatta had called for Africans and Europeans to 'pull together', making the Swahili word

³⁷ Jonathan Hildebrandt, interview by author, 3 April 2014 (Florida); Richard Gehman, interview by author, 31 March 2014 (Florida). Hildebrandt and Gehman both served on the field with Kenneth Downing and Erik Barnett. They were participant-observers in the mission community during the 1970s and 80s.

³⁸ Downing to Bellamy, 2 November 1971.

³⁹ Downing's shift during the early 1970s appears to be representative of the majority (though not all) AIM missionaries. J. Hildebrandt, interview by author, 3 April 2014; Gehman, interview by author, 31 March 2014.

⁴⁰ Charles Hornsby, *Kenya: A History Since Independence* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2012), 57-58, 121-127.

*Harambee*⁴¹ the national motto of Kenya.⁴² In the early 1970s, government pressure mounted to complete the Africanisation process in all spheres of society.⁴³ While the government did not legally exclude foreign missionaries, the social pressure to Africanise was being felt in the mission community. In 1973 Sidney Langford published an article in the mission's official organ entitled, 'Africa Inland Mission in Change'. Langford described the 1960s in Africa as 'a decade of change—political, education, social and economic'. He then added, 'Missions have had to adjust their sails to the winds of change. As we move into the seventies, gigantic changes are still taking place and others are on the horizon that will lead to complete Africanisation in government, business, and every other activity.'⁴⁴ As he made it abundantly clear, 'These changes [in politics and society] have likewise affected the church and its leadership, the missionary and his work, and the Mission, its policies and responsibilities.'⁴⁵ Africanisation in society was creating pressure to Africanise the mission.

Missionaries were increasingly viewed as relics of a by-gone era associated with colonial oppression. Downing talked about the changing attitudes toward missionaries in a letter recounting his visit to a boys' high school in Kenya in 1971. During a question and answer period, a Kenyan student said to Downing, 'We read in books written by African historians that foreign, colonial governments sent missionaries to Africa to "soften up the

⁴¹ *Harambee* is the Swahili word for 'pull together'.

⁴² Robert M. Maxon, 'Independent East Africa, 1960s to 1990s' in *East Africa: An Introductory History* (Morgantown, WV: West Virginia University Press, 1994), 247-281.

⁴³ Hornsby, *Kenya*, 232-234.

⁴⁴ Sidney Langford, 'Africa Inland Mission in Change', *Inland Africa* (North America), [July-September 1973], 9.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

population” so they could come in and occupy and exploit the countries. Is this true?’⁴⁶ African students were being taught that foreign missionaries were complicit with the exploitative policies of colonial nations. The image of the missionary as an outdated representative of the colonial era was popularized in the 1970s through the work of the African playwright Joe de Graft, who was commissioned by the All-Africa Conference of Churches (ACCC) to produce a play for its international meeting to be held in Nairobi in 1975 during the World Council of Churches (WCC) gathering.⁴⁷ *Muntu*⁴⁸ tells the story of the ‘Water People’ who arrive by ship in an African village during a tribal feud. Three men disembark from the ship: the first holding a Bible (the missionary), the second in a uniform brandishing a rifle (the colonial officer) and the third carrying agricultural tools and a musket (the settler). *Muntu* depicted the missionary, the British officer and the settler as members of the same colonial fraternity sent to exploit the African.⁴⁹ Literary works like *Muntu* were effective ‘propaganda’, successfully depicting the missionary as another cog in the wheel of a vast imperial machine.⁵⁰ The editor of *Inland Africa* captured the spirit that pervaded the early 1970s: ‘The church and the European settler are one. The settler robbed the African of his land. The missionary robbed him of his soul.’⁵¹ Even if this unflattering view of the missionary was propaganda, the perception was part of African

⁴⁶ Ken Downing to Mr and Mrs Earl Antworth, 27 September 1971, Downing Papers (Florida).

⁴⁷ Arthur Kemoli and Helen Mwanzi, *Notes on Joe de Grafts ‘Muntu’* (Nairobi: Heinemann Educational Books, 1981), 1.

⁴⁸ *Muntu* is the Swahili word for ‘soul’ or ‘essence of mankind’.

⁴⁹ Joe de Graft, *Muntu: A Play* (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1977).

⁵⁰ Brian Stanley, *The Bible and the Flag* (Leicester, England: Apollos, 1990), 11-31.

⁵¹ E. H. Arensen, ‘Where Have All the Sheep Gone?’, *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. LVI, No. 4 [July-August 1970], 5.

reality in the 1970s and added pressure on the mission to work toward Africanisation. In 1973 Peter Stam, the director of the AIM Canadian Home Council, explained why the old field councils, dominated as they were by white missionaries, had now been replaced: 'It is no longer workable in today's Africa, where nationalism and "Africanization" demand, understandably, "African leadership in every realm of life and in every organization".'⁵² Africanisation was all the rage in Kenya and ecclesiastical organizations could no longer be 'dominated' by 'white missionaries'. As AIM missionary Peter Brashler put it, "'Africanization" is the popular cry!'⁵³

A second dynamic force that gave rise to the domination of the African church during the early 1970s was the assertive leadership of Wellington Mulwa (1918-1979), the first bishop of the AIC.⁵⁴ The colourful and controversial leader of the church may be rightly listed as an example of Africanisation, but Mulwa was also an indomitable force in his own right for the emergence of a dominant African church. Regrettably, the first bishop of the AIC is barely mentioned in the published literature on the mission. Mulwa was briefly introduced to the mission community in a 1971 edition of *Inland Africa*,⁵⁵ and a polite paragraph was devoted to him in the epilogue of Richardson's history of the mission published by AIM in 1976.⁵⁶ Curiously, his name is found only in passing in what is

⁵² Peter Stam, 'The A.I.M. in Organizational Change', *Inland Africa* (North America), [October-December 1973], 7.

⁵³ Peter Brashler, 'Congo's Shifting Scene', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. LVI, No. 4 [July-August 1970], 8.

⁵⁴ Maurice Wheatley, 'Bishop Wellington Mulwa: The Africa Inland Church Kenya mourns its loss', *Inland Africa* (British), [February-March 1980], 10-11.

⁵⁵ Dave Hornberger, 'Kenya's New A.I.C. President', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. LV, No. 2 [March-April 1971], 7-8.

⁵⁶ Richardson, *Garden of Miracles*, 257.

considered the standard history of the mission published in 1994 and written by the retired International General Secretary of AIM.⁵⁷

Wellington Mulwa was an educator and an AIC pastor from Ukambani, the oldest area of the AIM and a stronghold of the mission. He was a competent administrator, an effective fund-raiser and a gifted public speaker. William Barnett, an AIM missionary and the brother of Erik Barnett, talked about the impression Mulwa made on him in the 1960s and 1970s: 'Boy, he could get up and talk and preach. And he was a preacher. And he could have his audience in stitches, with telling stories about Africa and the difference between the whites and the blacks and all that sort of thing that were [sic] going on.'⁵⁸ In 1926 Mulwa began attending an AIM school at the mission station in Mukaa, where he was converted to Christianity about 1929.⁵⁹ The only known record of his conversion is found in a brief biographical sketch of Mulwa that was provided in a promotional piece published for the church in 1972:

One Good Friday morning, Mulwa recited the words of the gospel concerning Jesus on the cross. The power of Jesus came upon him until he confessed that he was a sinner who had need of being saved. From that day Mr Mulwa received the Lord Jesus to be the Saviour of his life.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Anderson, *We Felt Like Grasshoppers*, 40, 326. Anderson was a medical missionary with AIM and began his career in 1956 in Kenya. In 1975 he was appointed Associate Secretary for Outreach, and in 1978 was elected International General Secretary of AIM, a post he held until his retirement in 1990. He would have been well acquainted with Bishop Mulwa's leadership in the 1970s.

⁵⁸ William Barnett, Papers of William John Barnett, BGC Archives (Wheaton), Collection 248, T9.

⁵⁹ 'Kenyan Church Leader to Speak', *Lakeland Ledger*, 6 October 1973. The article states: 'On a Good Friday morning in 1929, the eight-year old Mulwa made a profession of faith in Christ at a mission station near his birth place of Mukaa.'

⁶⁰ Ed Arensen, 'Rev. Wellington Mulwa' in *1st Anniversary of the Africa Inland Church, 15th October, 1972* (Kijabe, Kenya: Africa Inland Church, 1972), 49.

Mulwa's salvation experience is described in Evangelical language, with an emphasis on the cross and man's need for conversion, and he made evangelistic work a central part of the church he would lead.

The young convert of the AIM received his secondary education at the Alliance High School.⁶¹ Alliance was founded in 1926 by the Alliance of Protestant Churches with strong support from its leading members, the Church of Scotland Mission (CSM), the Africa Inland Mission and the Church Missionary Society (CMS). The school accepted the top students from post-secondary schools in Kenya and offered education for potential members of the African elite who would lead the nation during decolonisation.⁶² After completing his studies at Alliance, Mulwa served for one year as teacher in his hometown of Mukaa in 1940 before accepting several government posts, first with the Soil Conservation Service in 1941 and then as a director in the government health department.⁶³ In 1946 the AIC elders at Mukaa invited Mulwa to serve as a teacher in the AIC school, but the invitation was revoked by the AIM missionary in charge of the station named Guilding. The reason for Guilding's rejection of Mulwa is not disclosed, though Gehman implies that it may have been a personal conflict between a missionary from the 'old era' and an up-and-coming African leader who clashed with mission authority.⁶⁴ When Guilding had a court order issued forbidding Mulwa from trespassing on mission property, the African leaders

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Hornsby, *Kenya: A History Since Independence*, 34; David B. Barrett, et al., *Kenya Churches Handbook: The Development of Kenyan Christianity, 1498-1973* (Kisumu, Kenya: Evangel House Publishing, 1973), 24; J. Stephen Smith, *A History of the Alliance High School* (Nairobi: Heinemann Educational Books, 1973).

⁶³ Arensen, 'Rev. Wellington Mulwa', 49.

⁶⁴ Richard Gehman, 'The Spreading Vineyard: The Growth of the A.I.C. Kenya' (unpublished manuscript), Richard Gehman Papers (Florida), 572.

resigned and left the mission.⁶⁵ Following his rejection at Mukaa in 1946, Mulwa went to work for the Department of Education and in 1956 was invited by the AIM to serve as the Deputy Principal of the Kangundo Teachers' College.⁶⁶ In 1960 he moved to London and studied for two years at the All Nations Bible College before returning to Kenya for ordination and pastoral ministry in Matungula, approximately 50 kilometers north of Machakos.⁶⁷ Mulwa took a similar path as that of Jomo Kenyatta, who was educated at a Church of Scotland mission school before moving to London to study abroad. African leaders who acquired Western education and spent time overseas were considered privileged by their peers and were treated with reverence.⁶⁸ Mulwa served as an AIC pastor in Machakos and was soon elevated to serve as chairman of the Machakos Regional Church Council.⁶⁹ Jonathan Hildebrandt, an AIM missionary who knew Mulwa in the 1960s and 1970s, remembers that he was 'able to push up giving in the whole region' so that 'when it came time for the election of the bishop in 1970, he was elected on the basis of his vision and his ability to raise funds and his ability to lead'.⁷⁰ Mulwa's life-long affiliation with the mission, his educational background, his time spent abroad, his experience in education and government and his able leadership in one of the largest regions of the AIC

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Arensen, 'Rev. Wellington Mulwa', 49.

⁶⁷ 'Life History of the Late Bishop W. E. Mulwa', prepared for his funeral, n.d., 1979, BGC Archives (Wheaton), AIM International, Collection 81.

⁶⁸ J. Hildebrandt, interview by author, 3 April 2014 (Florida); Gehman, interview by author, 31 March 2014 (Florida).

⁶⁹ Gehman, 'The Spreading Vineyard: The Growth of the A.I.C. Kenya', 572; J. Hildebrandt, interview by author, 3 April 2014 (Florida).

⁷⁰ J. Hildebrandt, interview by author, 3 April 2014, (Florida).

made him the obvious choice to become leader of the church when President Ghichuha retired in 1970.⁷¹

Mulwa elevated the profile of the African church in the nation through his energetic leadership. Dorothy Hildebrandt (married to Jonathan Hildebrandt) was the daughter of Kenneth Downing and an AIM missionary who served as Mulwa's personal assistant in the early 1970s. She remembers him as 'a strong natural leader' who wanted 'to move the church ahead'.⁷² Mulwa maintained a visible presence on the national stage as the representative of one of Kenya's largest denominations. He presided over the service celebrating the hand-over of the mission to the church on 16 October 1971 and accepted the signed legal documents in the presence of Vice-President Moi and thousands of onlookers.⁷³ He served as the chair of the National Christian Council of Kenya (the name was changed from the Christian Council of Kenya in 1966 to reflect nationalism) from 1972 to 1973.⁷⁴ Mulwa did not advocate the separatist stance taken by many AIM leaders, and even a few members of the AIC viewed his continued association with the NCCCK with suspicion.⁷⁵ In a move that was controversial among some AIM missionaries, he accepted the title of bishop in 1973 and introduced ministerial robes for clergymen.⁷⁶ The adoption

⁷¹ J. Hildebrandt, interview by author, 3 April 2014 (Florida).

⁷² Dorothy Hildebrandt, interview by author, 3 April 2014 (Florida).

⁷³ Gehman, 'The Spreading Vineyard: The Growth of the A.I.C. in Kenya', 575.

⁷⁴ The name was changed from the National Christian Council of Kenya to the National Council of Churches of Kenya in 1984. See National Council of Churches of Kenya, 'Our Journey', <http://www.ncck.org/newsite2/index.php/about-ncck/our-jouney> (accessed 30 June 2017); for a list of past officials, see 'List of Council Officials', <http://www.ncck.org/newsite2/index.php/about-ncck/council-officials> (accessed 13 January 2017).

⁷⁵ Gehman, 'The Spreading Vineyard: The Growth of the A.I.C. in Kenya', 260.

⁷⁶ J. Hildebrandt, interview by author, 3 April 2014 (Florida).

of a new title and the donning of clerical vestments were especially bothersome for missionaries who were baptistic or nonconformist in their church polity.⁷⁷ The AIC Central Church Council (called the Baraza Kuu⁷⁸) approved the title of 'bishop' for Mulwa after a law was passed disallowing the use of 'president' by anyone except for the nation's head of state.⁷⁹ The council replied to its critics in the mission community that the title was more biblical than president!⁸⁰ Mulwa wanted AIC ministers to wear robes so that they would be readily identifiable in their communities like their Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, Lutheran and Roman Catholic colleagues.⁸¹ He wanted the AIC to be highly visible in the community, and he was leading the way. As Hildebrandt put it, 'He needed those things [title, robes] just like the queen of England must have a sceptre or a crown; for a church leader it was a robe, for the business leader it would be a sharp Armani suit.'⁸² Through Mulwa's leadership, one of Kenya's largest denominations became highly visible in Kenya.

One of Mulwa's first endeavours was the creation of a national headquarters for the AIC church. His predecessor had worked out of his own home located on his farm in

⁷⁷ Frank Frew, *Between Two Mountains: A Pilgrimage from Kamba Traditional Beliefs to Christian Community* (Scarborough, ON: Africa Inland Mission, 2006), 333-334; Gehman, 'The Spreading Vineyard: The Growth of the A.I.C. in Kenya', 579-580.

⁷⁸ Baraza Kuu is Swahili for 'gathering of the elders' or a 'council of chiefs'. The term was used by the AIC for the Central Church Council.

⁷⁹ Frew, *Between Two Mountains*, 333; Richardson, *Garden of Miracles*, 257; J. Hildebrandt, interview by author, 3 April 2014 (Florida).

⁸⁰ J. Hildebrandt, interview by author, 3 April 2014 (Florida).

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

Kiambu, and in the absence of a cathedral, the AIC had no visible seat of power.⁸³ The bishop immediately began developing plans for a permanent headquarters in the nation's capital.⁸⁴ The church initially set up offices in a hostel of the AIC Ziwani Church (in Nairobi), one of the nation's largest congregations, whose pastor was Samuel Kioko, the former general secretary of the AIC.⁸⁵ Under Mulwa's direction, the AIC purchased property and built an office building in Nairobi that was dedicated by Vice-President Moi in 1972.⁸⁶ The church quickly outgrew these offices and in 1974 secured funding to begin leasing a three-storey office complex that had formerly housed the AIM headquarters.⁸⁷ The AIC took over these offices, formally opening them on 15 March 1975.⁸⁸ The new building housed offices for the departments of education, theological education (Scott Theological College and eight Bible Institutes), radio, AIC missions (the AIC Missionary Board), literature (printing), medicine and the Africa Inland Mission, now a department of the AIC.⁸⁹ Under the bishop's leadership, the AIC had a physical seat of power in the nation's capital.

Mulwa used his position as bishop to create partnerships with the global Evangelical community in order to expand the work of the AIC. He believed the African church needed educated leaders to provide guidance and education for the AIC. He arranged for several

⁸³ Gehman, 'The Spreading Vineyard: The Growth of the A.I.C. in Kenya', 577.

⁸⁴ J. Hildebrandt, interview by author, 3 April 2014 (Florida); Wellington Mulwa, '80th Anniversary: Africa Inland Church, Address by Wellington Mulwa', BGC Archives (Wheaton), Collection 81, 12-13

⁸⁵ Mulwa, '80th Anniversary', 12-13; Gehman, 'The Spreading Vineyard', 577.

⁸⁶ Mulwa, '80th Anniversary', 12-13.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Africa Inland Mission – Kenya Field Council, 24-25 March 1975, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

⁸⁹ Mulwa, '80th Anniversary', 9-12; Gehman, 'The Spreading Vineyard', 578.

graduates of Scott Theological College to study at Evangelical schools like Wheaton College (Illinois), Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (Illinois), Columbia Bible College (South Carolina) and London Bible College. By 1975 the first two African leaders had completed their studies and returned to Kenya to take up leadership responsibilities in the AIC.⁹⁰ In 1973 he flew to the United States and England to meet with home councils and speak at local churches in order to promote the work of the African church.⁹¹ A May 1974 minute of the International Council (IC) contained this note: 'We know already that Kenya, through its very active president, is making all kind of links in other parts of the world quite apart from the A.I.M.' An editor crossed out the word 'President' and wrote above it the title 'Bishop'.⁹² Between January and July 1974, Mulwa took an extensive global tour, travelling to the United States, Canada, Singapore, Hong Kong and the Philippines on behalf of the AIC. He also represented the African church at the 1974 International Congress on World Evangelization in Lausanne and affixed his signature to the covenant. His trip was funded by the Christian Nationals Evangelism Commission (CNEC), later re-named Partners International, an organization established in 1943 for the purpose of funding 'native' workers in China (the organization's original name was China Native Evangelistic Crusade).⁹³ He successfully secured support from CNEC to fund the work of 'ten national

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Minutes of Meeting of the British Home Council of the African Inland Mission, 3 September 1973, AIM International Archives (Nottingham); 'Kenyan Church Leader to Speak', *Lakeland Ledger*, 6 October 1973.

⁹² 'Church Mission Relations with Particular Reference to African Members of the International Council of the A.I.M.', 12 May 1974, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

⁹³ Africa Inland Mission – Kenya Field Council, 2-4 December 1974, AIM International Archives (Nottingham); Partners International, 'History', <https://www.partnersintl.org/about-us/history> (accessed 14 January 2017).

evangelists' to begin work 'among the Griama people on the coast'.⁹⁴ He developed a personal relationship with the Dutch philanthropist Anna Marie Rookmaaker (1915-2003), who in the mid-1960s had developed child sponsorship schemes for underprivileged children in Africa and Asia.⁹⁵ Rookmaaker was the wife of the well-known Evangelical scholar and activist, Henderik Roelof 'Hans' Rookmaaker (1922-1977).⁹⁶ Mrs Rookmaaker (affectionately known as 'Anky') was troubled by paternalistic attitudes among Western missionaries and held deep convictions about indigenous church leadership. She circumvented traditional mission agencies and preferred working directly with national leaders.⁹⁷ In 1968 Anky established the organization Redt een Kind (Save a Child) for the purpose of providing aid to orphans in Africa and India.⁹⁸ Mulwa used the funds he raised through Rookmaaker to open homes for underprivileged children on vacant AIM mission stations.⁹⁹ He also developed a partnership with Brot für die Welt (Bread for the World), a relief organization that mobilizes Protestant churches in Germany to provide financial

⁹⁴ Africa Inland Mission – Kenya Field Council, 2-4 December 1974, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

⁹⁵ J. Hildebrandt, interview by author, 3 April 2014 (Florida). Hildebrandt mentioned Mulwa's relationship with Rookmaaker in the interview. It is corroborated in a collection of unpublished papers on the the history of the Danish-based Friends Missionary Prayer Band in India by Paul H. Jeyasingh, 'The Story of the Danishpet Mission' (unpublished paper, 2014), <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1BbwdQAKh01xJlI2L9RL7hZr8WU2COGqjmez6GfwMMn4/edit>, 27-28; Mulwa, '80th Anniversary', 15. Mulwa refers the AIC's partnership with the organization in his remarks.

⁹⁶ Laurel Gasque, *Art and the Christian Mind: The Life and Work of H.R. Rookmaaker* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2005), 59-90.

⁹⁷ Jeyasingh, 'The Story of the Danishpet Mission', 28.

⁹⁸ Gasque, *Art and the Christian Mind: The Life and Work of H.R. Rookmaaker*, 89, 181.

⁹⁹ J. Hildebrandt, interview by author, 3 April 2014 (Florida); Mulwa, '80th Anniversary', 15.

assistance for churches in the developing world.¹⁰⁰ His relations with the Western church were used to fund church planters, children's homes, relief efforts and administrative costs for the AIC headquarters in Nairobi.¹⁰¹ Mulwa was an assertive leader who forged alliances with Western Evangelicals for the purpose of bolstering the work of the AIC in Kenya.

Bishop Mulwa wanted Western missionaries to continue working in Kenya after the hand-over, but he was uncompromising in his insistence that they should work under his authority. In 1971 the Kenyan-born general secretary of the Presbyterian Church in East Africa, John Gatu, irritated members of the Evangelical mission community when he famously called for an Africa-wide 'moratorium on missionaries' at the Milwaukee Mission Festival.¹⁰² Gatu's call for a moratorium gained such a wide hearing in the early 1970s that Billy Graham felt compelled to oppose Gatu's ideas publicly in a keynote address at the Lausanne Congress in 1974.¹⁰³ Mulwa, however, was opposed to a missionary moratorium and openly expressed his own desire for Western missionaries to remain in Kenya. In a 1971 interview published in *Inland Africa* a few months before the historic hand-over on 16 October, Mulwa was asked if Western missionaries were still wanted in Africa. 'Absolutely!' he replied. 'We have no intention of driving out the white brethren.'¹⁰⁴ He went on to describe his desire for Western missionaries to serve in various capacities,

¹⁰⁰ J. Hildebrandt, interview by author, 3 April 2014 (Florida); Brot für die Welt, 'Who We Are', <https://www.brot-fuer-die-welt.de/en/bread-for-the-world> (accessed 20 January 2017).

¹⁰¹ J. Hildebrandt, interview by author, 3 April 2014 (Florida).

¹⁰² John Gatu in C. Peter Wagner, 'Color the Moratorium Grey' in *International Review of Mission* (1975), vol. 64, 165-76.

¹⁰³ Brian Stanley, "'Lausanne 1974': The Challenge for the Majority World to Northern-Hemisphere Evangelicalism', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 64, No. 3 [July 2013], 543-44.

¹⁰⁴ David Hornberger, 'Kenya's New AIC President', *Inland Africa* [June-July 1971], 7.

including 'Bible Training', 'Secondary Education' and Medical Work'.¹⁰⁵ When Mulwa travelled to London in 1973 to report on the progress of the church, he even made an appeal for more Western missionaries. At a meeting with the British Home Council in London on 3 September 1973, Mulwa spoke of the great needs of the church and 'expressed the continuing need for more expatriate missionaries'.¹⁰⁶ Mulwa explained that the reason Western missionaries were still needed was that Kenya was still 'a developing country' and needed the support, expertise and financial assistance of the 'older overseas churches' to aid the 'fast developing young' African church.¹⁰⁷

Mulwa wanted missionaries to remain in Kenya, but he also insisted that they work under the authority of the African church. The bishop was not afraid to unseat a missionary who was unable to work under his leadership. When he came to office in 1970, he forced Erik Barnett out of his position as field director. Barnett recalls the bishop's words to mission representatives: 'I want a voice in choosing your field director...and the one thing I don't want to have is I don't want to have Erik Barnett.'¹⁰⁸ Though the bishop's reasons were not disclosed, Barnett had strongly opposed the devolution of the mission in the 1960s. After Mulwa 'chased away' Barnett in 1970, he had AIM missionary Raymond Wolfe removed from his post as a professor at the AIC Scott Theological College in 1972.¹⁰⁹ The reason, according to Wolfe, was that he had been 'opposed to him [Mulwa] ever since

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 8.

¹⁰⁶ Minutes of the British Home Council, 3 September 1973, AIM International Archives, Nottingham.

¹⁰⁷ Hornberger, 'Kenya's New AIC President', 8.

¹⁰⁸ Erik Barnett, Interviews of Erik Stanley Barnett, Collection 510, BGC Archives (Wheaton), T3. The reasons for Barnett's resignation in 1970 are not found in the official record.

¹⁰⁹ Raymond Wolfe to Sidney Langford, 9 July 1972.

his ordination' and the bishop accused him of causing 'division' in the AIC.¹¹⁰ Wolfe candidly admitted that he was loyal to the AIC but could not give his loyalty to Mulwa when he became bishop.¹¹¹ Mulwa did not tolerate insubordinate missionaries. After the bishop's death in 1979, the British edition of *Inland Africa* noted that he was a leader who 'stressed the need for continued missionary activity' but that he was 'strong against any kind of expatriate control in church affairs'.¹¹² The bishop welcomed AIM missionaries, but he also demanded their allegiance.

Bishop Mulwa took the merger seriously. He wanted a 'merging' of not just the mission and the church but also the *missionary* and the church. He wanted AIM missionaries to become integrated with the church and assist the AIC with its work. He was frustrated with the mission-station mentality and pressed for missionaries to work side-by-side with Africans. A 1972 document summarizing the field study that had been commissioned by the mission in 1968 expressed concern that missionaries often carried out their work in isolation from the African church. The report noted that 'the missionary is viewed as the resident of the "mission station" with its built-in isolation from the community'.¹¹³ The bishop wanted a collaborative relationship with the mission and the missionary, and he frequently pleaded for a change. A 1974 minute reads: 'Bishop Mulwa again urged all missionaries to take active steps to become integrated into the fellowship

¹¹⁰ Raymond Wolfe to Sidney Langford, 2 August 1972.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Maurice Wheatley, 'Bishop Wellington Mulwa', 10-11.

¹¹³ 'C.S.F. Evaluation Report: Summary and Recommendations for A.I.M. International Conference', 8 May 1972, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

and programme of the Africa Inland Church.’¹¹⁴ A 1975 minute reads that ‘Bishop Mulwa... again asked all missionaries to really get involved in the work and ministry of the local churches.’¹¹⁵ In 1975, at a large gathering of AIM workers on the mission’s largest station located in Kijabe, Mulwa exclaimed: ‘We want you as missionaries to be out and be one with the people. Missionaries are like manure, they do nothing but stink [when they are gathered in one place], but if you spread them out you have great growth and wonderful crops.’¹¹⁶ Mulwa wanted AIM missionaries and AIC church leaders to get out in the churches spread across Kenya and work together with their African brethren for the common cause of spreading the Evangelical faith. The first bishop of the AIC was a visionary leader and an effective fundraiser with an imposing personality. He established the AIC as a visible presence in Kenya, created a global network for expanding the work of the church in the nation, and demanded that missionaries bow to the will of the African church and work in harmony with it.

The third major development that ushered in an era marked by the dominance of the AIC was the exponential growth of the African church. David Barrett’s 1968 groundbreaking study *Schism and Renewal in Africa: An Analysis of Six Thousand Contemporary Religious Movements* alerted mission communities in the late 1960s to the

¹¹⁴ Africa Inland Mission – Kenya, Field Council, 2-4 December 1974, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

¹¹⁵ Africa Inland Mission – Kenya, Field Council, 24-25 March 1975, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

¹¹⁶ Wellington Mulwa, according to J. Hildebrandt, interview by author, 3 April 2014 (Florida). Hildebrandt could not recall the precise date of this meeting though Mulwa was present at a large gathering of AIM missionaries in December 1975. His presence is noted in the ‘Report by Byang Kato on the World Council of Churches given at AIM field conference’, December 1975, BGC Archives (Wheaton), Collection 81, T306, Side 1.

new realities of independent churches emerging on the African continent.¹¹⁷ The findings bewildered scholars and missionaries alike. As Barrett notes in the preface:

This study describes one of the most remarkable achievements of the African religious genius. Out of a bewilderingly disparate patchwork of Christian foreign missionary endeavour in countless African societies, a spontaneous yet extraordinarily coherent response is emerging, which indicates how creatively Africa can respond to the Christian Faith when foreign assistance and (as some would add) foreign interference are withdrawn.¹¹⁸

'Foreign assistance' (the foreign missionary) had established a vibrant church in 'African societies' and now those very churches were growing even when in some cases the missionary had to be 'withdrawn'. The growth of the African church was rendering the missionary obsolete. E. H. Arensen published a straightforward review of Barrett's book for the AIM community in a 1969 issue of *Inland Africa*.¹¹⁹ Barrett had conducted his research on the growth of Christianity in Africa while living in Nairobi, and in 1973 he published another study: *Kenya Churches Handbook: The Development of Kenyan Christianity, 1498-1973*.¹²⁰ Commissioned by the National Christian Council of Kenya (formerly named the Christian Council of Kenya), the study provided a survey of Christianity in Kenya from the era of Roman Catholic missions in the sixteenth century through the rise of Protestant missions in the nineteenth century and followed by the dramatic growth of the church in Kenya in the second half of the twentieth century. Chock-

¹¹⁷ David B. Barrett, *Schism and Renewal in Africa: An Analysis of Six Thousand Religious Movements* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968).

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, xvii.

¹¹⁹ E. H. Arensen, 'Schism and Renewal in Africa: A Book Review', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. VII, No. 2 [March-April 1969], 21.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

full of charts, maps and statistics, Barrett's 1973 study provided a never-before-seen printed panorama of the status of Christianity in Kenya that astounded even Africans. John Mbiti, the Kenya-born and Cambridge-educated professor at Makerere University in Uganda, expressed astonishment at the findings:

This *Handbook* is a disturbing revelation. Nobody could have guessed the statistical surprises contained in this book...The information contained herein shatters many preconceived notions about Christianity in Kenya, and its data leave no doubt that Kenya has become very much a Christian country.¹²¹

Mbiti was an Anglican clergyman, and so he was most likely using the word 'disturbing' in the sense that the findings were shocking. Barrett's study provided statistical evidence that 'disturbed' former perceptions that Christianity was merely a European religion.

Christianity had grown in Kenya from less than one per cent of the population in 1900 to a remarkable 66.3 per cent in 1973!¹²² There was now empirical evidence that Christianity had become the dominant religion in Kenya.

Barrett's 1973 study crowned the AIC as one of the largest Protestant denominations in the country, with some 300,000 baptized members in 1,700 congregations.¹²³ A publicity piece on the AIC published after 1971, but before Barrett's 1973 study was released, estimated the membership of the AIC to be around 300,000 in 1,600 churches.¹²⁴ In 1975 Bishop Mulwa reported that there were now more than 2,000

¹²¹ The Rev. Professor John S. Mbiti, 'Preface' in Barrett, et al., *Kenya Churches Handbook*, xviii.

¹²² Barrett, *Kenya Churches Handbook*, 160.

¹²³ Ibid, 184.

¹²⁴ 'Introducing the Africa Inland Church', ca. 1972, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

AIC churches in Kenya with more than 550,000 members.¹²⁵ A 1979 'Fact Sheet' produced by the AIM estimated the size of the AIC church in Kenya to be at one million.¹²⁶ It is difficult to confirm the accuracy of the reporting by Barrett, Mulwa or the AIM. Morad's 1995 survey of the growth of the AIC indicates that there were 960 AIC churches in 1970, growing to 1,533 by 1980, and reaching 2,116 places of worship by 1990.¹²⁷ Morad's numbers are more conservative than Barrett's, though his study does indicate that the AIC was rapidly growing at a rate of more than 50 new churches a year. Though Mulwa may have been extrapolating from Barrett's data, it is conceivable that the AIC grew from about 300,000 adherents in 1970 to some 500,000 by 1975 and reaching nearly 1 million by the end of the decade. Even if the precise statistics are difficult to ascertain, the numbers reported by Barrett, Mulwa, Morad and the AIM indicate that the AIC was a rapidly growing indigenous church. The growth of the African church was attributed to the work of African pastors, missionaries and evangelists. Morad's 1993 study commissioned by the AIC shows that between 1940 and 1975, fewer missionaries were providing assistance for church planting endeavours even as the number of church plants increased. According to the study, there were 456 AIC churches established in Kenya during the 1960s with more than 400 of those churches being planted by Africans working without the assistance of AIM missionaries. In the decade of the 1970s, Africans planted 532 of the 573 AIC churches

¹²⁵ Mulwa, '80th Anniversary', 8. Worship attendances are more difficult to confirm. Sidney Langford, AIM's General Secretary, reported in a 1974 radio address that 'one million attend Africa Inland Churches each Sunday', but this is probably a reference to all the AIM fields. See 'News Clips', *Inland Africa* (March 1974), 14.

¹²⁶ A.I.M. Kenya Fact Sheet, April 1979, Nairobi, BGC Archives (Wheaton), Collection 81.

¹²⁷ Stephen Morad, 'Local Church Survey of the Africa Inland Church' (unpublished report, 1995), BGC Archives (Wheaton), Papers of Stephen D. Morad, Collection 689, 15.

established in Kenya, again with no assistance from Western missionaries.¹²⁸ During the 1960s and 1970s, only twenty-three of the more than one thousand churches that were planted in Kenya began under the auspices of Western missionaries.¹²⁹ The AIC experienced rapid growth in the 1970s, and Africans played the dominant role.

Africans were providing leadership for a growing indigenous church and they were now in the vanguard of evangelistic efforts throughout Kenya. This created a degree of uncertainty on the part of missionaries about their place in the new order. If they were no longer engaged in establishing churches and counting converts, how could they justify their existence to supporters? Some AIM workers expressed concern that they might 'lose their statistics' and have difficulty 'impressing home constituencies that they/or AIM are productive'.¹³⁰ The home councils explored other fields for evangelism as missionaries in Kenya tried to adjust to new roles. The American Home Office floated the idea of turning AIM's attention to the 'blacks of America' as a major evangelistic target.¹³¹ The mission was unable to recruit workers for this venture, the British displayed little interest and by 1974 the project was in 'a holding pattern'.¹³² Missionaries in Kenya moved into ancillary roles: hosting short-term service teams, working in medical missions, or serving in radio, film and theological education. Issues of *Inland Africa* in the early 1970s are filled with pictures and

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 13.

¹³⁰ 'Africa Inland Mission Evaluation Study Report' (Minneapolis, MN: Christian Service Fellowship, 1970), AIM-International Archives, (Nottingham), 139.

¹³¹ John Alexander Gratton, 'New Fields', 4 September 1970, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

¹³² John Alexander Gratton, 'Urban Committee Report', 24 September 1974, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

stories of AIM missionaries serving on the field in almost every way except church planting. An article titled 'Summer Invasion' shows college students from schools like Wheaton College (Illinois) and Moody Bible Institute (Illinois) working 'with patients in the hospital' or doing 'secretarial work in the Radio Studio' or helping as 'Nurses' Aids' in a clinic.¹³³ An article showing pictures of missionaries recording a message from an African pastor is typical: 'Not only is the regular radio work itself expanding but a whole new field is opening in cassette ministry.'¹³⁴ Another article with the caption 'Medicine on Wheels and Wings' includes pictures of missionaries taking medical supplies to Kenya's Northern tribes via Land Rovers and aeroplanes.¹³⁵ AIM missionaries were shown working on film sets lauding the work of *Afromedia*, 'a Christian film/TV production center based in Nairobi'. AIM assisted in this new venture in order to provide programming for African television stations in Nairobi to 'witness' and 'extend the church where it can not normally go'.¹³⁶ Steve Wilson, an AIM missionary who graduated with an engineering degree from Le Tourneau (Texas), is pictured using his skills to help build places of worship for AIC churches in Kenya. He had now found his 'niche in the matrix that makes up God's Master Plan' working in 'his role as a missionary builder and engineer'.¹³⁷ A few AIM missionaries served in administration and teaching in the AIC's theological school, Scott Theological

¹³³ Edward H. Arensen, 'Summer Invasion', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. LVII, No. 1 [January-March 1973], 4-5.

¹³⁴ Edward H. Arensen, 'Not Sound Proof', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. LVII, No. 2 [April-June 1973], 4-5.

¹³⁵ Richard Anderson, 'Nomad Medicine', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. LVII, No. 1 [January-March 1973], 10-11.

¹³⁶ Art Davis, 'Afromedia: Take One: Sound One', *Inland Africa* (North America) [July-September 1974], 6-9.

¹³⁷ Bob Clements, 'The Steve Wilsons', *Inland Africa* (North America), [April-June 1975], 8-9.

College.¹³⁸ The mission continued to exert significant influence in Kenya, especially as a service provider, but it became increasingly less visible.¹³⁹ As the minutes of the British Home Council noted, 'it was felt that the mission was primarily a "service agency" of the churches.'¹⁴⁰ The number of AIM personnel serving in Kenya increased from 255 in 1971 to 268 in 1976, while the number serving in all its fields declined from 471 to 442 during the same period.¹⁴¹ The net gain in Kenya is due in part to the transfer of missionary personnel from other fields, including Tanzania, Uganda and Zaire.¹⁴² Though Kenya enjoyed a modest increase in AIM missionaries, they were gradually receding from the frontlines of ecclesiastical work. A 1975 article in *Inland Africa* reads, "The missionaries have "worked themselves out of jobs"". The article further states that while still needed, 'the missionaries serve behind the scenes'.¹⁴³ AIM missionaries were present and serving, but the African church now played the dominant role.

'In African Hands'

In May 1975 the International Council of the AIM gathered in Kent for a series of meetings on the 80th anniversary of the mission. Philip S. Henman, now the president of

¹³⁸ Gehman, 'The Spreading Vineyard: The Growth of the A.I.C. Kenya', 346.

¹³⁹ Julie Hearn, 'The "Invisible" NGO: US Evangelical Missions in Kenya', *Journal of Religion in Africa*, Vol. 32 (Feb. 2002), 48-50. Hearn observes that AIM and other missions continued to exert significant influence in Kenya after the 1970s. She argues (perhaps cynically) that Kenyan political leaders like Moi (a member of the AIC) co-opted mission agencies for political gain by collaborating with them in order to provide needed services to voters.

¹⁴⁰ British Home Council Minutes, 2 November 1971, AIM International Archives, (Nottingham).

¹⁴¹ Distribution and Status of All A.I.M. Personnel, 1927-1981, AIM International Office (Bristol).

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Hal Olsen, 'View from Africa', *Inland Africa* [July-September 1975], 11.

the mission's British Home Council, hosted the May meeting.¹⁴⁴ He must have been pleased by the 1971 merger between the mission and the church in Kenya. Evangelistic work in Kenya was now in the capable hands of African Evangelicals, and it was time for the mission to explore other fields. The mission passed the following resolution:

Motion prevailed that on this, the eightieth anniversary of the Mission, we commit ourselves to the fulfillment of our evangelistic mandate. Unreached areas, representing literally thousand upon thousands for whom Christ died, present themselves to us as did our present fields at the beginning of the century.¹⁴⁵

Most of Kenya was no longer considered an 'unreached area' as it had been in the beginning of the twentieth century. The minutes struck a hopeful chord, reflecting on past accomplishments and laying out plans to explore opportunities to carry out its work in the Comoros Islands, Mozambique and the Seychelles.¹⁴⁶ A job description was drawn up for an associate secretary, whose sole responsibility would be the 'research and investigation of unreached areas' and to make recommendations to the International Council for new opportunities.¹⁴⁷ The mission had worked itself out of a job in its old fields, and it was looking for new opportunities.

In October 1975 the AIC held its own celebration in Kenya. The African church was marking the 80th anniversary of the mission as the 80th anniversary of the church. The gathering was planned and hosted by Bishop Wellington Mulwa and attended by missionaries, church leaders, government officials and representatives from other

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ International Council, Africa Inland Mission, Tonbridge, Kent, 19-23 May 1975, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ 'Job Description, Associate Secretary for Outreach', ca. 1975, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

denominations in Kenya.¹⁴⁸ The event was held at the Kenyatta International Conference Centre in Nairobi and attended by several thousand delegates.¹⁴⁹ Bishop Mulwa recounted a history of the AIC beginning in 1895 with the arrival of Peter Cameron Scott. He noted that while some had ‘arrived to colonise the country’, Scott and the early missionaries ‘had come with different aims’.¹⁵⁰ Mulwa was embracing the history of the Evangelical mission as the history of the AIC and he discriminated between the aims of colonial powers and those of pioneer missionaries. He marked the historic day of 1971 when the mission had become ‘a department within the church’ and observed that the AIC had moved forward by ‘leaps and bounds’ since his installation as ‘Head of the AIC in Kenya’.¹⁵¹

The backdrop for the bishop’s remarks on the ‘80th anniversary’ of the AIC was the scheduled gathering of the WCC in Nairobi. In November 1975 the 5th Assembly of the World Council of Churches would be convened in Kenya. It would be the first gathering of the WCC to be held south of the equator, and the location mirrored the significant Southern shift that was occurring in global Christianity.¹⁵² Even the AIM, a staunch opponent of the WCC, acknowledged the landmark gathering in its official organ: ‘No one can blame the

¹⁴⁸ Mulwa, ‘80th Anniversary’, 1.

¹⁴⁹ Sophe de la Haye, *Byang Kato: Ambassador for Christ, Biography of Dr. Byang H. Kato* (Harpenden, UK: Africa Christian Press, 1986), 87. A reported 10,000 persons were in attendance, but the largest hall in Kenyatta International Conference Centre can only hold between 3,500 and 4,000 delegates.

¹⁵⁰ Mulwa, ‘80th Anniversary’, 3.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹⁵² Ogbu U. Kalu, ‘African Christianity: From the World Wars to Decolonisation’ in Hugh McLeod, ed., *The Cambridge History of Christianity. Volume 9* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 200; Ernest W. Lefever, *Amsterdam to Nairobi: The World Council of Churches and the Third World* (Washington D.C.: Ethics and Policy Center of Georgetown University, 1979), 40-46.

W.C.C. for their [sic] decision to meet in Africa.’¹⁵³ While the article sounded a critical note, the mission was acknowledging that the decision to hold the WCC gathering in Africa was befitting. A year before the WCC gathering, Bishop Mulwa had promised the church, the mission and his supporters that the AIC would remain true to its Evangelical convictions. The bishop had written a letter to ‘all AIC supporters’ in 1974 assuring them that the ‘The Africa Inland Church in Kenya is noted by all in Kenya as the most evangelical church group’ in the nation.¹⁵⁴ In March 1975 the bishop invited all the missionaries to join the ‘A.I.C. Kenya-wide gathering’ on 11 October where he planned to give his remarks and ‘make a declaration as to their stand on the World Council of Churches’.¹⁵⁵ Along with his speech on 11 October 1975, the bishop presented ‘The AIC 80th Anniversary Covenant’.¹⁵⁶ The document was nearly identical to the Lausanne Covenant that had been adopted by representatives of the global Evangelical community in July 1974 in Switzerland. Large portions of the actual text utilize the precise wording of the Lausanne Covenant, including captions like ‘The Purpose of God’ and ‘The Authority and Power of the Bible’ and ‘Christian Social Responsibility’.¹⁵⁷ The document was reworked as the covenant of ‘the Africa Inland

¹⁵³ ‘W.C.C. to meet in Africa’, *Inland Africa* (North America) [January-March 1975], 3.

¹⁵⁴ Wellington Mulwa to All AIM Home Councils, All AIM Missionaries, Kenya and AIC Supporters, November 1974, Nairobi, BGC Archives (Wheaton), AIM International, Collection 81.

¹⁵⁵ African Inland Mission, Kenya Field Council, 24-25 March 1975, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

¹⁵⁶ ‘The AIC 80th Anniversary Covenant’, Africa Inland Church, Kenya, 11 October 1975, BGC Archives (Wheaton), AIM International, Collection 81.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

Church, Kenya'.¹⁵⁸ Global Evangelicalism was firmly transplanted in Kenya and presided over by a stalwart African bishop.

Byang Kato, the general secretary of the Association of Evangelicals in Africa and Madagascar (AEAM), also spoke at the event. Byang Kato (1936-1975) was born in Nigeria, converted to Christianity at the age of twelve through a Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) representative and educated at London Bible College and Dallas Theological Seminary (Texas).¹⁵⁹ In 1967, while serving as a lecturer at the Igbaja Seminary in Nigeria, he was named the general secretary of the Evangelical Church of West Africa (ECWA), a denomination founded by the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) in 1954.¹⁶⁰ He was the first African Evangelical to earn a doctorate in theology and was elevated to the position of general secretary of the Association of Evangelicals in Africa and Madagascar (AEAM) in 1973.¹⁶¹ After Kato was installed as general secretary, the AEAM published a pamphlet promoting its work under the title, 'Africa's Evangelicals'.¹⁶² On the front of the pamphlet was a picture of Kato standing next to AIM missionary Eric Maillefer, who was serving as the AEAM administrative secretary. Also pictured was Samuel Odunaike, who continued his role as president of the AEAM. Along with Mulwa, Kato was an African representative at the International Congress on World Evangelism (ICOWE) in July 1974 and embraced

¹⁵⁸ Ibid. For the documents on Lausanne, see John Stott, ed., *Making Christ Known: Historic Mission Documents From the Lausanne Movement, 1974-1989* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 7-54.

¹⁵⁹ Haye, *Byang Kato*, 17-72; Mark A. Noll and Carolyn Nystrom, eds., 'Byang Kato (1936-1975)', in *Clouds of Witnesses: Christian Voices from Africa and Asia* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2011), 84-90.

¹⁶⁰ Haye, *Byang Kato*, 80, 88.

¹⁶¹ Bremen, 40-40; Noll and Nystrom, eds., 'Byang Kato (1936-1975)', in *Clouds of Witnesses: Christian Voices from Africa and Asia*, 84-90.

¹⁶² 'Africa's Evangelicals: Association of Evangelicals in Africa and Madagascar', BGC Archives (Wheaton), AIM International, Collection 81.

the *esprit de corps* of Lausanne.¹⁶³ In the official publication of the AEAM edited by Kato, the December 1974 issue noted that the “‘Lausanne Spirit’ Spreads’ in Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, Ghana, and the Central Africa Republic.¹⁶⁴ As the leader of the AEAM, Kato urged Africans to remain committed to Evangelical Christianity, but he also encouraged them to embrace their African culture when it did not ‘conflict’ with the Christian message.¹⁶⁵ His theological vision is best summarized in an article he wrote in 1975 (published posthumously in *Bibliotheca Sacra*): ‘It is God’s will that Africans, on accepting Christ as their Saviour, become Christian Africans. Africans who become Christians should therefore remain African wherever their culture does not conflict with the Bible.’¹⁶⁶ He was rejecting the Christ-against-Culture posture of Fundamentalists on the one hand as well as syncretistic theology of some adherents of the ecumenical movement on the other. Kato advocated an African *via media* between the World Council of Churches on the left and McIntire’s International Council of Christian Churches on the extreme right.

Following the 5th assembly of the WCC Kato was invited to the AIM mission station at Kijabe to give a report to missionaries on the ecumenical gathering. Bishop Mulwa and AIC church leaders who had attended the WCC event in Nairobi joined Kato.¹⁶⁷ During his speech at Kijabe, he was diplomatic in his comments on the WCC gathering and reported

¹⁶³ Haye, *Byang Kato*, 80.

¹⁶⁴ *Afroscope* (December 1974), Association of Evangelicals in Africa and Madagascar, Nairobi.

¹⁶⁵ Byang H. Kato, ‘Christianity as An African Religion’, *Evangelical Review of Theology*, Vol. 4, No. 1 [April 1980], 31-39.

¹⁶⁶ Byang Kato, ‘Theological Issues in Africa’, *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. 133, No. 530 [April-June 1976], 146.

¹⁶⁷ ‘Report by Byang Kato on the World Council of Churches given at AIM field conference’, December 1975, BGC Archives (Wheaton), Collection 81, T306, Side 1.

the presence of John Stott and ‘many outstanding Evangelical Christians’ who attended.¹⁶⁸ He noted with calmness that there was ‘very little theological content’ and found it curious that a Hindu and a Sikh were seated on the platform of a gathering that focused on Christian unity.¹⁶⁹ He shared a story of standing in front of a large wall at the WCC gathering, where delegates had been invited to write out their prayers and post them on large placards. He recounted that someone wrote on the wall: ‘Oh God, deliver us from the shackles of the World Council of Churches’.¹⁷⁰ The audience of AIM missionaries can be heard laughing. Kato was given a rousing applause at the end of a gracious speech in which he noted that ‘the opportunity is very wide for the Association of Evangelicals in Africa and Madagascar’.¹⁷¹ In Kato’s own diary in December 1975, he noted with joy that the AEAM had grown ‘over one hundred per cent in less than two years’ and stating that the Evangelical body ‘now represents ten million Christians in Africa’.¹⁷² His comment may have been a reference to statistics being gathered by AEAM showing that ‘there were 90 million “Christians” in Africa with at least 10 million evangelical Christians’.¹⁷³ There were now approximately half a million members of the AIC in Kenya, and a reported 10 million Evangelicals on the African continent. Kato tragically died in a drowning accident while on

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Byang Kato, Diary, 15 December 1975, in Sophie de la Haye, 89. This comment may have been based on a study that was referenced in *Afroscope* (December 1974).

¹⁷³ ‘Africa Decides for the BEST’, *Afroscope*, Association of Evangelicals in Africa and Madagascar, April 1975. BEST is the acronym for the Bangui Evangelical School of Theology. The creation of BEST in the Central Africa Republic was inspired by Kato and the AEAM.

holiday in Mombasa four days after his 15 December journal entry. The young theologian was eulogized in *Christianity Today* and memorial services were held in Nigeria, Kenya, and the United States.¹⁷⁴ His theological papers and addresses were posthumously published, and the leaders he inspired carried his vision for African Evangelicalism forward.¹⁷⁵ The AEAM experienced significant expansion under the guidance of another Nigerian, Dr Tokunboh (Tok) Adeyemo, a graduate of Talbot Theological Seminary (California) who went on to undertake doctoral studies at the University of Aberdeen under the guidance of Andrew F. Walls.¹⁷⁶ A stalwart Evangelical bishop was now leading the AIC in Kenya, and Evangelical statesmen were providing inspiration and leadership for a rapidly growing Evangelical community on the African continent. AIM could begin exploring other lands while the missionaries who remained in Kenya worked under authority of African churchmen.

The devolution of the church in Kenya on 16 October 1971 marked the end of an era for the work of the AIM in Kenya. It was the death of an old era and the rise of a something new. The advance of Africanisation, the energetic leadership of Bishop Wellington Mulwa and the rapid growth of the church in Kenya permanently altered the relationship between the AIM and the AIC. The mission became subservient to the church and missionaries began working behind the scenes. An uncompromising African bishop summarily dismissed those who could not adjust to the new arrangements. African theologians were shaping an expanding Evangelical community on the African continent. In the early 1970s,

¹⁷⁴ Haye, *Byang Kato*, 98-104.

¹⁷⁵ Noll and Nystrom, eds., 'Byang Kato (1936-1975)', in *Clouds of Witnesses*, 94-95.

¹⁷⁶ Breman, *The Association of Evangelicals in Africa*, 53-58.

Evangelicalism in Africa was now the dominion of Africans and the rise of 'Africa's Evangelicals' permanently altered the relationship between the AIM and the AIC. 1975 came to an appropriate close as *Inland Africa* devoted its final issue of the year to a single theme: 'World Evangelism in African Hands'.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁷ *Inland Africa* (October-December 1975), front cover.

Conclusion

The relationship between the Africa Inland Church (AIC) and the Africa Inland Mission (AIM) was marked by contention and uncertainty during the period of decolonisation. The mission and the church it founded frequently struggled with how to coexist in Kenya. Between 1939 and 1947, the mission formally established the AIC and resisted the African demand for more schools. The mission's ambivalent attitude toward education during the 1940s resulted in a major schism in the recently established denomination and gave rise to breakaway independent churches. The formation of the AIC raised the question of how the nondenominational mission (with no ecclesiastical hierarchy) would be related to the structure and authority of a newly formed African denomination. Would missionaries become members of the African church and would Africans pastors provide direction for Western missionaries? Would the mission remain independent of the African church but related in some other way? The mission deferred

discussion on the issue of its relationship with the church in order to address more pressing matters.

The most significant challenge facing the mission during the period 1939-1947 was how to respond to the African demand for more education. Africans viewed education as a means to achieve social progress. The mission resisted these demands because it viewed evangelistic work as paramount. The involvement of the AIM in education was primarily for the purpose of evangelism, and its educational standards were behind those of the Church Missionary Society and the Church of Scotland Mission. When the mission perceived that its lacklustre performance in education was impeding its ability to expand in Kenya, AIM revised its policies and began the process of improving its educational work. The mission was unable to right the vessel and set a new course quickly enough to satisfy many of its African church members. Significant schism resulted with the African Brotherhood Church and Schools (ABCS) being established in 1945 in the mission's homeland of Ukambani and the African Christian Church and Schools (ACCS) being founded in 1947 among the Agikuyu. Both the ABCS and the ACCS were thoroughly Evangelical with confessional statements nearly identical to that of the AIM/AIC. They parted ways with the AIM because they wanted to stress the importance of 'schools' as part of their mission, even inscribing their commitment in the very names of their denominations. The significant schisms caused by the mission's inadequate response to African demands for more education were not discussed in mission publications, even as the mission community in Kenya was frustrated by the educational dilemma and distraught by the schism. The 'educational wars' created schism in the AIM and delayed discussion on how the mission and the church should define their relationship.

Between 1948 and 1954, the mission was perplexed by the rapid religious, political and social changes reverberating throughout Kenya and the African continent. The World Council of Churches was established in 1948, and AIM tried to 'plant the Evangelical flag in the middle of the road' while staving off criticisms from vocal Fundamentalists like Carl McIntire. The mission was also responding to the perceived threat of the East Africa Revival in the post-war period. The Revival, known variously as the Uganda Revival, the Balokole Movement and the Ruanda Revival Movement, became influential in Kenya during the late 1940s and early 1950s. The mission opposed the revival on the grounds that it promoted doctrinal excesses and threatened church order. The militant expression of political protest during the 1950s was the Mau Mau Revolt, which resulted in the declaration of a state of emergency by the British government in 1952. The mission denounced the movement as 'anti-God, anti-Bible, anti-Mission as well as anti-European'.¹ Missionaries increasingly viewed the Mau Mau Uprising as a foreshadowing of coming independence in Kenya and believed that its evangelistic work could be negatively impacted. AIM frequently recounted the social changes of post-war Kenya in correspondence, periodicals and mission publications. Missionaries complained about the ever-crowding urban centres of Kenya, the buying and selling of consumer goods, the appetite for Western accessories and the accelerating demand for education. AIM workers decried the softening of attitudes toward social taboos like smoking, drinking and dancing, and adamantly upheld Fundamentalist conventions. Social attitudes toward race also created a quandary for the mission. When 'negroes' applied to AIM to serve as missionaries, the mission rejected their applications but denied being racists.

¹ Kenneth Richardson, *Garden of Miracles: The Story of the Africa Inland Mission* (London: Africa Inland Mission Press, 1976), 91.

The mission interpreted the rapid religious, political and social changes through an eschatological lens, believing that the challenges it was facing meant that 'the end was near'. The unresolved issue of the how the mission and the missionary were related to the African church was raised again during this period. The spirit of nationalism was growing and with it the nagging awareness that the mission's relationship with the church remained undefined. However, the ecclesiastical question was inconsequential to the mission because of its sincere belief that 'the time was short' and 'the end was near'. Evangelism became more urgent during the period of uncertainty and missionaries carried out their work while they had time. The mission recruited more foreign workers and accelerated its evangelistic efforts even as it ignored the complicated issue of how the mission should be related to the church it founded. The religious, social and political changes paradoxically diminished the importance of addressing the mission's relationship with the African church. Millennial convictions subdued earthly concerns; evangelism was the urgent matter.

In 1955 the mission celebrated its Diamond Jubilee, and missionaries reflected on the past with a sense of wonder at the growth of the church in Africa during its sixty years of service. The festive mood of 1955 quickly gave way to acrimonious debates about the relationship between the mission and the African church. Between 1955 and 1963, AIM missionaries resisted a proposal by Philip S. Henman (1899-1986), the chairman of the British Home Council and the International Council, for a mission-church merger. During the 1950s, AIM officials and missionaries were aware of what they were calling a 'nationalistic urge' sweeping through the colony and adjacent lands. Henman presciently believed that nationalism would create problems for the relationship between the missionary and the African church. In 1959 he boldly called for a 'merging of the two

constitutions', and won the approval of the British Home Council as well as the American Home.

Kenneth L. Downing, the general secretary of the Central Field Council in Kenya, asked the home councils for more time to study the proposals. Downing had no intention of supporting the merger. He was temporizing in order to win support from his colleagues in the field. Downing and the members of the Central Field Council rebuffed Henman's counsel and began working on a 'partnership agreement' between the mission and the church. Downing and the field council were elected by the missionaries to manage field policy and serve as their representatives. The mission had created an International Council in 1955, but a democratic structure on the field still controlled mission policy. The mission had established an African church in 1943, but it was still the duty of the missionary to serve as 'the Chair of Local Church Councils in his area' and to 'act *in loco parentis* to the growing church in parts where no local church council has yet been formed'.² The missionaries on the field viewed themselves as experts on mission policy, and they did not believe the African church was prepared to take on the responsibility of providing oversight for the work of the mission. Downing argued that 'the Mission must retain ultimate authority' because there were too many matters 'that are too heavy for it [the church] at present'.³ Missionaries also worried about the increased influence of the WCC on the African church and felt that it had a responsibility to protect Africans from the 'dangers' of ecumenism. The partnership agreement proposed by Downing distinguished between the responsibilities of the AIM and the AIC, encouraged each to cooperate where

² Kenneth L. Downing, 'The Relationship of the Mission and the Church', April 1960, BGC Archives (Wheaton), AIM International Wheaton, Collection 81.

³ Ibid.

possible and still made it clear that the mission and the church were autonomous organizations. Rather than merging, the AIM and the AIC were to remain separate entities and collaborate in their mission labours where possible. Henman resigned from his chairmanships of the British Home Council and the International Council. Ralph Davis, the general secretary of the International Council, also resigned from his post and later referred to the mission he loved as a 'headless body'.⁴ The paternal disposition of the mission deterred AIM from merging with the church it founded, and the democratic structure on the field allowed missionaries to subvert the will of the home councils.

Between 1964 and 1971, African church leaders became increasingly dissatisfied with the partnership agreement that had been adopted in 1963. African leaders were disappointed with the agreement's implementation and began pressing for significant revisions. The heady winds of nationalism were blowing even stronger after 1964 as 'Africanisation' became the watchword in every sphere of Kenyan society. Erik Barnett and the field representatives in Kenya agreed to revise the agreement but remained inflexible on the issue of fusion. Missionaries on the field were concerned that a merger would result in the loss of mission identity and worried that the sole focus to 'evangelize' would become institutionalized in ecclesiastical bureaucracy. The majority of AIM missionaries were fiercely independent in spirit and preferred autonomy on the field rather than the prospect of serving under the authority of a national church. Some missionaries distrusted the motives of African church leaders and believed that the call for a merger was in fact a grab for property and power. Many AIM missionaries continued to display paternalistic

⁴ Ralph T. Davis to R. Seume, 2 January 1963, in Anderson, *We Felt Like Grasshoppers*, 218.

attitudes and did not believe that Africans were capable of managing the work of the missionary on the field.

In 1965 the mission reluctantly began working on a revised partnership agreement in an effort to mollify African demands for unification. The relationship between the mission and the church became increasingly tense in 1966 when the mission took unilateral action to withdraw its membership from the National Christian Council of Kenya (formerly the Christian Council of Kenya) while African church leaders were kept in the dark. In 1968, with relationships slightly improved, the mission felt compelled to issue a revised partnership agreement that gave African church leaders greater authority and encouraged a closer-working relationship between the church and the mission. The revised partnership agreement of 1968 was a short-lived rapprochement. In February 1969 the Central Church Council of the African Inland Church issued a memorandum expressing their dissatisfaction over the revised partnership agreement and called once again for a complete merger, 'with one name, one leader, one constitution, one central office and one set of rules' for working in Kenya.⁵ Mission officials dismissed their request, maintaining their steadfast conviction that 'there must be two organizations'.⁶ In early 1970 the church issued an ultimatum for a merger and then threatened to 'find ways and

⁵ Minutes of Joint Session of the A.I.C. and the A.I.M., 10-11 February 1969, cited in John Alexander Gratton, 'The Relationship of the Africa Inland Mission and Its National Church in Kenya between 1895 and 1971' (PhD diss., New York University, 1973), 315; Stephen D. Morad, 'The Spreading Tree: A History of the Africa Inland Church in Kenya, 1895-1995' [unpublished book, n/d], Papers of Stephen D. Morad, BGC Archives (Wheaton), Collection 689.

⁶ Summary of Discussion on Church/Mission Relationships, Africa Inland Mission – Kenya Field, Special Meeting of the Field Council, Nairobi, 7-8 May, 1969, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

means'⁷ of taking control of mission property. Prominent members of the American and Canadian home councils travelled to Kenya in June 1970 and in an unprecedented move, negotiated directly with African church leaders, effectively bypassing the authority of Barnett as the duly elected secretary of the Kenya Field Council. Barnett resigned from his post after the agreement, and on 16 October of the following year the Africa Inland Mission handed over its property and powers to the African Inland Church in Kenya at a public ceremony. AIM was an independent mission, and Erik Barnett was an independently minded, second-generation missionary who wanted the mission to retain its autonomy in Kenya. The independent ethos of the mission embodied by Erik Barnett was the most significant obstacle to devolution in the 1960s.

Between 1971 and 1975, the Africa Inland Church became one of the dominant forces for the direction and dissemination of Evangelical Christianity in Kenya. The October 1971 'take over' of the mission gave the African church almost complete control of AIM's operational freedom in Kenya. Western missionaries serving on the field became members of the AIC, accepted new roles as co-adjutant workers and served at the pleasure of the African church it founded. The overall number of AIM missionaries declined during this period, though there was a slight increase in the number of missionaries serving in Kenya. The assertive leadership of the first bishop of the AIC, Wellington Mulwa, was a dynamic force in the rising domination of the African church. He presided over one of Kenya's largest Protestant denominations in the 1970s with a membership of approximately half a million persons by 1975. Under his leadership the mission retained its Evangelical identity and expanded its Evangelical witness throughout Kenya.

⁷ Andrew Gichuha to Erik Barnett, 2 June 1970, quoted in Gration, 'The Africa Inland Mission and Its National Church', 335.

In 1973 Byang Kato (1936-1975), an esteemed African theologian with reliable Evangelical credentials, was elevated to the post of general secretary of the Association of Evangelicals in Africa and Madagascar (AEAM). Ken Downing had been 'seconded' by the mission to establish the Evangelical fellowship and provided reliable vision and steady leadership for the association. Kato, who had earned his doctorate in theology from Dallas Theological Seminary, insisted on a *via media* between the wholesale adoption of African cultural practices on the one hand and the uncritical acceptance of Western-branded Christianity on the other. His elevation to general secretary of the AEAM and his effective advocacy for Evangelical Christianity on the global stage signalled a new era for the Evangelical movement. The leadership of the Evangelical church, together with the Evangelical movement, was now in the hands of African Evangelicals. During the early 1970s, the devolution of the church in Kenya and the rise of 'Africa's Evangelicals' permanently altered the relationship between the AIM and the AIC as the mission became subservient to the church.

The process of devolution in the African Inland Mission in Kenya was retarded by mission principles. AIM's single-minded commitment to evangelism during the 'educational wars' of the 1940s created schism and deferred the question of how the mission should be organically related to the church it founded. Religious, social and political changes in the post-war period heightened AIM's millennial impulses and diminished, in its own eyes, the importance of examining the problematic relationship of the mission with the African church. Evangelism was the urgent task. The paternalistic disposition of the mission deterred the mission from fusion on the eve of independence in Kenya and the democratic structures of the field councils effectively thwarted home council

pressure for a merger. The independent spirit of the mission endured in the 1960s, embodied by a formidable second-generation missionary on the field in Kenya. Single-mindedness, educational wars and millennial impulses delayed serious consideration of mission-church relationships before 1963 while a paternalistic disposition and a fiercely independent ethos prevented fusion after *Uhuru*. Nationalism, Africanisation and the unflagging demands of an African church combined to overcome the mission's intransigence during decolonisation.

Evangelicalism, Missions and African Christianity

Evangelicalism became a global movement in the twentieth century. The Africa Inland Mission was a volunteer mission society united around common, historic Evangelical commitments with a determined vision to spread its brand of Christianity to Africa. Influential personalities, formal and informal networks and a continual flow of publications and correspondence reinforced the mission's Evangelical identity. Mark Noll argued in *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys* that Evangelicalism is not a denomination but a movement of Christians who hold similar beliefs and relate to each other through networks, societies, publications and personal relationships.⁸ This is mirrored in the work of the Africa Inland Mission as a society of individuals who hailed from varied denominational backgrounds and frequently identified themselves under the banner 'Evangelical'. The mission embraced the label 'Evangelical' and spread its message through its periodical *Inland Africa* and a menagerie of mission-published books and pamphlets that were disseminated in the English-speaking world for

⁸ Mark Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 19.

the purpose of promoting its work. Mission leaders like Philip Henman (British) and Ralph Davis (American) identified themselves as Evangelicals and leveraged a network of relationships (rather than denominations) for the cause they represented. Evangelical organizations like the AIM were held together by certain convictions strengthened by these networks, publications and relationships. The convictions that held Evangelicals together have been sharply identified in David Bebbington's study *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s*. Bebbington identified the central traits of Evangelicalism as biblicism, conversionism, crucicentrism and activism.⁹ Evangelicals placed a special emphasis on the Bible (biblicism), they insisted on the necessity of conversion (conversionism), they laid great stress on the atonement (crucicentrism) and they were unflinching in their religious zeal (activism). Missionaries working with the AIM from varied denominations and countries frequently used expressions like 'personal experience of salvation',¹⁰ 'love for the Word of God',¹¹ and 'the centrality of the cross',¹² while issuing rousing calls to 'go evangelize'.¹³ The mission also emphasized the essential need to 'propagate Evangelical standards' throughout Africa in both the mission and the church.¹⁴ AIM's Evangelical convictions influenced its relationship with the church it

⁹ David W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (Grand Rapids: MI: Baker, 1989), 1-19.

¹⁰ 'Qualifications for Candidates Re-Emphasized', pamphlet for missionary qualifications, 1956, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² 'Wither Africa?', *Inland Africa* (British), Vol. XXXI, No. 154 [July-September 1949], 53.

¹³ 'Go Evangelize!', *Inland Africa* (North America), Vol. XXIX, No. 3 [May-June, 1945]. 9-12.

¹⁴ Paper given by D. M. Miller at the F.I.M.S. Conference in London, June 1950, AIM International Archives (Nottingham).

founded as the mission worried about its need to protect the African church from the ecumenical 'dangers.'

The transmission of Evangelical Christianity to the non-Western world is recounted in Brian Stanley's *The Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism: The Age of Billy Graham and John Stott*. Stanley gives prominence to the work of Evangelical missions for what he calls the 'increasingly multidirectional nature of evangelical internationalism' and the rise of Evangelicalism in the global South.¹⁵ His work situates the Evangelical movement within the transatlantic revivals of the eighteenth century, held together by common Evangelical traits and diffused into the non-Western world through the work of Evangelical mission agencies in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Stanley marks out the early 1970s as the rise of 'southern Christianity' and the 1974 Lausanne gathering as an important turning point for global Evangelicalism. This periodization conforms identically to the historical contours of the AIM and its relationship to the growing African church it established. As it turned out, the concerns that AIM had over whether or not the Evangelical faith would continue flourishing in African soil after the historic 'hand-over' were unfounded. The Evangelical faith flourished under the guidance of indigenous African leaders.

The label 'Fundamentalist' has been bandied about in the literature with varied degrees of imprecision. Evangelicalism evolved in the twentieth century, eventually distancing itself from the complaints of its Fundamentalist critics. Joel A. Carpenter's study *Revive Us Again: The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism* argues that Fundamentalism underwent significant changes in the 1940s, and by the 1950s 'had made

¹⁵ Brian Stanley, *The Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism: The Age of Billy Graham and John Stott* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2013), 61.

a major comeback'.¹⁶ The new Evangelicalism that emerged in the 1940s retained its commitment to 'Fundamental' orthodoxy even as it worked to create a coalition of Evangelicals that were critical of 'Fundamentalist extremists' on the one hand, and wary of the liberal hue of the World Council of Churches on the other. The evolution of conservative Evangelicalism in the United States and the United Kingdom had implications for the spread of Christianity in the non-Western world. For example, the single-minded commitment to evangelism in the 1930s was typical of the Fundamentalist thinking in America, while in the 1940s conservative Evangelicals had begun re-thinking this bifurcation. AIM's willingness to adopt a new education policy in the 1940s was a response to realities on the field in Africa, but it also likely represented more progressive attitudes within Evangelicalism on education and social progress.¹⁷ AIM leaders were in the vanguard of the Evangelical renaissance that began in the 1940s and continued spreading through the 1970s on the coattails of leaders like Billy Graham and John Stott. The general secretary of the AIM, Ralph Davis, helped to organize the National Association of Evangelicals in the early 1940s, while the esteemed chairman of the British Home Council, Philip Henman, helped lead and fund 'new Evangelical' endeavours like the London Bible College during the same period. Kenneth Downing worked to create an Evangelical coalition in Africa in the 1960s, while Bishop Mulwa along with Byang Kato spread the 'spirit of Lausanne' (not Fundamentalism) on the continent in the 1970s. AIM was a conservative Evangelical mission agency, but it is an oversimplification to label the mission,

¹⁶ Joel A. Carpenter, *Revive Us Again: The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism* (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 233.

¹⁷ This argument is made in Bernard K. Nzioka, 'Education Among the Akamba People, 1895-1970: An Investigation of the Educational Policies of the Africa Inland Mission and the Development of Education in the Akamba Community' (PhD diss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2010), 282-83.

its missionaries, or the church it founded as Fundamentalists. In his contribution to *Earthen Vessels: American Evangelicals and Foreign Missions, 1880-1980*, Carpenter argued that non-denominational mission agencies like the AIM were 'generally moderate to "progressive" along the spectrum of attitudes toward other Christians'.¹⁸ This was generally true of the AIM (though attitudes of individual missionaries varied) when compared with strident Fundamentalists like Carl McIntire. AIM was part of the more progressive elements of conservative Evangelicalism that were trying to break free of some of the Fundamentalist excesses of the 1920s and 1930s, and the mission was heavily criticized by McIntire. However, it is also true that during the 1950s and 1960s, AIM was more concerned about the 'dangers' of the ecumenical movement than African leaders. As this thesis has shown, AIM was concerned about how its position on the issue of ecclesiastical separation might affect its support among more conservative elements of the American and British churches that supported the mission. A case could be made that the mission's position on the ecumenical movement was as much of a practical concern as it was a theological one. AIC leaders, who were not beholden to American donors, appeared less concerned than the mission over the ecumenical movement. The AIC bishop served as chairperson of the National Christian Council of Kenya in the early 1970s, though in his correspondence with Western supporters he was careful to emphasize his strong Evangelical convictions and his opposition to the WCC. The AIM distanced itself from Fundamentalists, and the Evangelical church it founded was even less inhibited by the mission's preoccupation to separate from other Christian bodies in Africa. AIM was not a Fundamentalist mission society, and what

¹⁸ Joel A. Carpenter, 'Propagating the Faith Once Delivered: The Fundamentalist Missionary Enterprise, 1920-1945' in Joel A. Carpenter and Wilbert R. Shenk, eds., *Earthen Vessels: American Evangelicals and Foreign Missions, 1880-1980* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 125.

emerged in Kenya between 1939 and 1975 was historic Evangelicalism, not early twentieth-century American Fundamentalism.

Steve Brouwer, Paul Gifford, and Susan D. Rose have argued that the rapid growth of Protestant Christianity in the non-Western world in the late twentieth century is due in large measure to the 'exporting' of American Fundamentalism. The study begins in a most unorthodox manner: it asserts that Reinhard Bonnke, a German evangelist who holds massive crusades in Africa, and Paul Yonggi Cho, a Korean minister who leads the world's largest church, are exporting *American* Fundamentalism. The authors take as their starting point the assumption that all "Bible-believing" Protestants with a specific mission to win souls for Jesus in every country on earth' are *de facto* American Fundamentalists. They classify 'the substantial portion' of Evangelicals in this category, and therefore a large (and growing) percentage of Christians in the non-Western world.¹⁹ While their work purports to be serious scholarship, it has the feel of investigative journalism. The highly biased name-calling comes across as an effort to cast all Evangelicals in a negative light, as Elmer Gantry types or savvy T.V. personalities, who, according to the authors, are all given to 'authoritarianism, an aggressive tendency to identify U.S. interests with God's interests, and an intolerance of people of different cultures.'²⁰ Such procrustean pronouncements are unhelpful in explaining the tremendous diversity of the Evangelical tradition. As this study has demonstrated, AIM was not associated with one particular nation, nor was it peddling a distinctively American religion. Missionaries came from a wide variety of nations

¹⁹ Steve Brouwer, Paul Gifford and Susan D. Rose, *Exporting the American Gospel: Global Christian Fundamentalism* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 3.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 270.

(such as Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom) and they worked under the banner of transatlantic Evangelicalism. As already mentioned, Evangelicalism must not be simply equated with Fundamentalism. The relationship between Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism in *Evangelicalism and Fundamentalism in the United Kingdom during the Twentieth Century* fits more accurately with the history of the AIM. Fundamentalism was a movement within Evangelicalism, it was less pronounced (though present) in British circles, and its influence began to fade considerably in the second half of the twentieth century. AIM was clearly influenced by some of the 'extravagances' of Fundamentalism, but these were muted by the British influence,²¹ and AIM leaders were in the vanguard of the new Evangelical movement. What emerged in Kenya under the auspices of Wellington Mulwa and Byang Kato was not African Fundamentalism, but African Evangelicalism.

Missionaries, as this study has shown, did not aim to export American or British culture to East Africa, even if they exemplified some of the cultural habits of their native lands. AIM missionaries were first and foremost concerned about evangelistic work. In *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion*, Dana Robert challenges the 'postcolonial re-readings of history' that gloss over the successes of Western missionaries and dismiss their work as 'an assault on indigenous cultures' and an expression of 'cultural imperialism'.²² Her work credits the labour of Western missionaries with 'the making of a world religion' and recalls their humanitarian work in education, medicine, and human rights. As Robert points out, missionaries have been unfairly maligned in both the popular

²¹ David Bebbington and David Ceri Jones, eds., *Evangelicalism and Fundamentalism in the United Kingdom During the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 374.

²² Dana Robert, *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 93-96.

and scholarly literature. Robert's work provides a much-needed correction to post-colonial dismissals of missionaries as destructive forces to indigenous cultures. Notwithstanding, Robert's excellent monograph does not always give due consideration to the failures of Western missionaries. The transgressions of AIM missionaries are evident in the historical record. While there were prophetic voices within AIM, missionaries often displayed attitudes of racism and paternalism that have been typical of people in the United States, Britain and South Africa during a significant part of the twentieth century. Some missionaries belittled their converts for wanting education for their children, others impugned the motives of African leaders when they pressed for Africanisation, and AIM's harsh rejection of African cultural practices was often grounded in a lack of critical theological reflection. Even while the AIC grew and matured, AIM's 'sins' often strained the relationship with the church it brought into being. Robert is right to challenge post-colonial critiques that characterize missionaries as failed ambassadors of cultural imperialism. Missionaries were first and foremost ambassadors of the gospel who succeeded in their work, though still deserving of scrutiny for their manifold transgressions.

Christianity was successfully transmitted to Africa via the missionary movement, but the work of Western missionaries is only part of the story. Mark Noll's *The New Shape of World Christianity: How American Experience Reflects Global Faith* credits indigenous witness for the spread of Evangelical Christianity in the non-Western world: 'The best scholarship increasingly describes missionary activity as a necessary, but not sufficient,

explanation for the emergence of new Christian churches.’²³ As the study of AIM has demonstrated, while missionaries played a vital role in the spread of the Evangelical faith, indigenous converts often became more effective evangelists and church workers, and the record indicates that most of the work of church planting was done by Africans by at least the 1940s. In addition, the process of Africanisation and the rapid growth of the church in Africa appear to be direct correlations in Kenya. During the 1940s through the 1960s, AIM workers frequently struggled with how to adjust to the changes in Africa as their converts became even more effective in the work of church planting and evangelism. The tired argument that Christian missionaries acted as pseudo-agents of imperial expansion does not adequately explain why Africans eagerly embraced the gospel and engaged in evangelistic work alongside Western missionaries. Africans were eager to throw off the shackles of Western control, even as they wholeheartedly embraced the Christian message. In *Whose Religion is Christianity: The Gospel Beyond the West*, Lamin Sanneh wants to give ‘priority to indigenous response and local appropriation and direction’ for the spread of Christianity in the twentieth century.²⁴ He speaks of the ‘indigenous discovery of Christianity’ rather than the ‘Christian discovery of indigenous societies’ that has been the emphasis of secular critics. The acceptance of Christianity in Kenya bears a remarkable resemblance to Sanneh’s central argument. While AIM missionaries ‘translated’ (a word Sanneh utilizes) the Christian message to indigenous people, Africans appropriated the message even as they struggled (and sometimes defied) the messengers. In the instances

²³ Mark A. Noll, *The New Shape of World Christianity: How American Experience Reflects Faith* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009), 77.

²⁴ Lamin Sanneh, *Whose Religion is Christianity: The Gospel Beyond the West* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 24.

where converts left the mission in the 1940s to establish their own denominations, Africans 'appropriated' mission doctrine for an African context and provided guidance for their own independent denominations. In the 1970s, Bishop Mulwa appropriated the Lausanne Covenant for an African context, even while he insisted on complete Africanisation of the church and sacked Western missionaries for not coming under his control. Mulwa also distinguished between the aims of colonial governments and those of Evangelical missionaries. Africa church leaders commended missionaries for their good work, criticized missionaries for their failures, pressed for control of the church and the mission, all the while holding unswervingly to the Evangelical faith.

Twenty-five years ago, Brian Stanley argued 'concern for national prestige was rarely uppermost in Christian minds' for missionaries during the colonial period and that 'the most powerful motivations were those which stemmed from the heart of the historic evangelical conscience'.²⁵ As this study has indicated, AIM opposed the Mau Mau Uprising but it was not opposed to the independence that emerged in its wake. The main concern of the mission was how independence would affect its continued evangelistic work. This way of looking at missionaries does not absolve them of their sins, but it does encourage historians to understand their subjects better by taking religious motivation seriously. Along similar lines, the series of studies in *Converting Colonialism: Visions and Realities in Mission History, 1706-1914* edited by Dana Robert lends support to the thesis that missionaries 'were naively unaware of how the larger political contexts in which they functioned impacted the spiritual and cultural issues that occupied their days'.²⁶ AIM

²⁵ Brian Stanley, *The Bible and the Flag: Protestant Missions and British Imperialism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Leicester, UK: Inter-Varsity Press, 1990), 182.

missionaries were certainly not 'unaware' of 'the larger political contexts', but they frequently struggled with knowing what those changes would mean for their work. They were poor strategists who were generally behind the times, motivated primarily by religious convictions and bewildered by changing conditions on the field. Even as Africans demanded more schools, AIM rejected government aid for educational work (to their own peril) out of fear that it would impede their evangelistic labours. They wondered what nationalism and independence would mean for their work without any apparent plan. They bemoaned the export of American products and Western consumerism because it interfered with their religious work. If it was their aim to sustain the British Empire, or export American culture, they were poor subjects of the crown and disappointing patriots. The convenience of colonialism was utilized by missionaries and 'converted' (to use Robert) for their own aims.

Christian missionaries largely succeeded in transmitting the faith to the non-Western world, and Evangelicalism became a global movement during the second half of the twentieth century. Philip Jenkins' study *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* showed to a wide audience the remarkable growth of Christianity in Africa, Asia and Latin America during the twentieth century. For example, Christianity grew in Africa from less than 9 million adherents in the year 1900 to more than 335 million by the year 2000, and there were similarly impressive growth patterns in Asia and Latin America.²⁷ His exposition is largely a popular distillation of the monumental research

²⁶ Dana Robert, ed., *Converting Colonialism: Visions and Realities in Mission History, 1706-1914* (Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2008), 5.

published in the *World Christian Encyclopaedia* edited by David B. Barrett. He credits the research of specialists like Andrew Walls and Walter Buhlman for their ground-breaking work in scholarly circles beginning in the 1970s. Jenkins draws from an abundance of statistical data and fleshes out the story of Christianity's growth in the non-Western world using additional primary and secondary sources from the twentieth century. He challenges the secular caricature of the missionary as ineffective: 'If the modern missionary stereotype had any force, we can scarcely understand why the Christian expansion proceeded as fast as it did, or how it could have survived the end of European political power.'²⁸ As this study has demonstrated, AIM missionaries were often short sighted, paternalistic and even stubborn. Yet they did succeed in transmitting the Evangelical message in a way that appealed to Africans. While the labours of Western missionaries and African converts contributed to the spread of Christianity to the non-Western world, the dynamism of the Evangelical movement itself may have played an important role. The movement was not held together by an 'Evangelical Act of Uniformity', but operated instead under what may be termed an 'Evangelical Act of Toleration'. Anglicans, Baptists and Presbyterians laboured side-by-side in Africa, and while they sometimes stepped on each other's toes, they were largely able to work together for the greater cause. As an African church emerged in Kenya in the 1940s, it was neither Anglican, nor Baptist, nor Presbyterian, but something different, yet fully Evangelical. In *Christianity Reborn: The Global Expansion of Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century*, a roundtable of prominent historians have argued

²⁷ David B. Barrett, George T. Kurian and Todd M. Johnson, eds., *World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Survey of Churches and Religions in the World*, Second Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 12.

²⁸ Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 42.

that 'the greatest strength of evangelicalism' may in fact be 'its ability to adapt to local cultural expressions once it is freed from the tethers of missionary control and intrusive forms of influence.'²⁹

Evangelical 'faith mission' societies like the AIM were unique from denominational mission societies like the Church Missionary Society and the Church of Scotland Mission. Klaus Fielder has provided the only history to date of the independent 'faith mission' movement beginning with the establishment of the China Inland Mission (CIM) in 1865. *The Story of Faith Missions: From Hudson Taylor to Present Day Africa* provides brief history of the major faith missions, including the AIM. He argues that the independent Evangelical missions that emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries possessed unique characteristics that distinguished them from the denominational missions that emerged during the first half of the nineteenth century. The missionaries of these independent societies were from varied denominational backgrounds and they were required to go out in 'faith' (rather than depend on a denominational salary). Church order and institutional work were always subjugated to evangelistic work, missionaries were 'members' of the mission (rather than employees), lay and ordained missionaries were welcomed as workers (and treated equally), and the mission was to be 'field-directed' rather than governed by a home council.³⁰ Fiedler's work is a helpful introduction to faith mission societies, though it offers very little in the way of historical analysis. For example, his work does not provide commentary on how faith mission societies devolved their

²⁹ Donald M. Lewis, *Christianity Reborn: The Global Expansion of Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2004), 4.

³⁰ Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of Faith Missions from Hudson Taylor to Present Day Africa* (Oxford, UK: Regnum Books International, 1994), 32.

authority during decolonisation. However, his history does cast important light on some of the unique characteristics of faith mission societies. AIM bore all the distinguishing characteristics of a faith mission and remained true to its founding principles even when doing so made its work more difficult or threatened its relationship with the church it founded. The mission initially rejected educational grants because its conviction against soliciting funds violated the 'faith principle'. Evangelistic work took precedence over ecclesiastical work for missionaries. The field-managed and democratic structure of the voting members of the mission made it possible to resist pressure from far-removed mission officials. These were attributes that were unique to Evangelical faith missions, and AIM's unswerving devotion to them contributed to the delayed devolution of the mission. John Stuart's study *British Missionaries and the End of Empire: East, Central and Southern Africa, 1939-64* does not cover British missionaries working with the AIM, but it does show that there were varied responses by British missionaries and mission societies to the question of devolution during decolonisation. As Stuart observes, "There was no single missionary response to the end of empire in Africa. Missionary responses were too varied and too complex for this to have been the case."³¹

The literature on the growth of Christianity in Africa and the non-Western world is rapidly evolving, though it remains 'one of the most important but least examined changes in the world over the past century.'³² AIM was the largest Protestant mission working in

³¹ John Stuart, *British Missionaries and the End of Empire: East, Central, and Southern Africa, 1939-64* (Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2011), 13.

³² Joel Carpenter and Lamin Sanneh, eds., *The Changing Face of Christianity: Africa, the West and the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

Kenya, yet it has garnered miniscule scholarly attention.³³ Due to the mission's leading role in Protestant missions, and the significant influence of the church it established, the mission is periodically mentioned in the literature on the history of the church in Africa. Bengt Sundkler's voluminous study of the church in Africa may be the most comprehensive treatment of the history of Christianity in Africa.³⁴ Sundkler provided the seminal work for the study of independent churches in Africa early in his career,³⁵ but some fifty years later he argued that there has been too great a focus on African 'Independent churches' to the neglect of 'mission-related churches'. He asserts that scholars are 'mistaken' to speak of the mission-related churches as though they were not authentically African. He further argues that 'the overwhelming majority of African Christians have belonged' to mission-established churches 'and still do'.³⁶ He provides a concise account of the Africa Inland Mission, calling it 'possibly more interesting than another other' because of its 'widespread' influence on the African continent.³⁷ He mentions the 'offshoots' from the mission in the 1940s, including the 'African Brotherhood Church' and the 'African Christian Church and School'.³⁸ He views these churches as authentically African churches, along with the AIC in Kenya and Tanganyika, even if the latter churches lagged behind in the process of Africanisation. In Adrian Hastings' magisterial work, *The Church in Africa, 1450-1950*, AIM

³³ See Introduction, pp. 19-21.

³⁴ Bengt Sundkler and Christopher Steed, *A History of the Church in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

³⁵ Bengt G. M. Sundkler, *Bantu Prophets in South Africa* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1948).

³⁶ Sundkler, *A History of the Church in Africa*, 3.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 558, 886-887, 891, 1000. The quote is found in p. 886.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 887.

is mentioned in a sentence that is worth repeating: 'It seems odd that groups like the Salvation Army and the Quakers, or a "faith mission" like the AIM in Kenya should want to own estates of thousands of acres, but few societies were not affected by land lust.'³⁹ As this thesis has shown, AIM was a 'faith mission' (rather than an 'industrial mission') and possessed a single-minded devotion to evangelistic work. Yet the AIM never seemed to question the wisdom of owning such a large tract of land in the 'white highlands' while offering privileged education for its own children right under the noses of land-starved Africans who were also frustrated over the mission's substandard educational performance. While AIM missionaries were effective evangelists, they made some rather 'odd' blunders. In *A History of African Christianity, 1950-1975*, Hastings observed that in 1950 AIM was one of the few mission societies that was 'expanding in a way others were not'.⁴⁰ Hastings mentions the African Christian Church and schools 'as a major break from the African Inland Mission' as well as the African Brotherhood Church 'founded in 1945 among the Kamba, most of its early members having formerly been in the African Inland Mission'.⁴¹ His work refers to the row between the mission and the church in 1966 over AIM's desire to sever ties with the Christian Council of Kenya.⁴² Hastings also observes that 'Kenya was certainly the Mecca in black Africa for Western missionaries during the period 1967-1975 with the AIM having 'by far the biggest number of personnel'.⁴³ His comprehensive

³⁹ Adrian Hastings, *The Church in Africa, 1450-1950* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 424.

⁴⁰ Adrian Hastings, *A History of African Christianity, 1950-1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 45.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 79.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 163

⁴³ *Ibid.* 227.

coverage of the period takes a 'chronological shape' but his decision to outline each chapter following an A, B, C sequence (A comprising political history, B the ecclesiastical account, and C independency) is forced. The strength of Hastings' work is that it does bring political developments (namely decolonisation) into the narrative of church history. The weakness of this structure is that political developments control (and confuse) the narrative. The relationship between the AIM and the AIC was affected by political developments in Africa. But social (e.g., population growth, changing race relations), religious (e.g., the East African Revival, the Ecumenical Movement) and theological developments (millennial convictions) were more crucial.

Evanson N. Wamagatta's monograph, *The Presbyterian Church in East Africa: An Account of the Gospel Missionary Society Origins, 1895-1946* is replete with references to the AIM.⁴⁴ During the 1930s, the GMS began to seriously consider the idea of a merger with another mission society. In spite of the AIM's early alliances with the GMS (1895-97, 1901-1915), and the shared identities of the two missions, the GMS did not seriously consider AIM as a viable partner. As Wamagatta notes, "The AIM was the most ideal for alliance with the GMS since they were both American faith missions and their doctrines were almost identical."⁴⁵ Wamagatta argues that the reason such an alliance was rejected was the issue of education: "Such an alliance was, however, not tenable in the 1930s because the AIM was the weakest educationally of the Protestant missions."⁴⁶ As this study has shown, AIM

⁴⁴ Evanson N. Wamagatta, *The Presbyterian Church in East Africa: An Account of Its Gospel Missionary Society Origins, 1895-1946* (New York: Peter Lang, 2009).

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 204.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

lagged behind other Protestant missions in education during the 1930s and 1940s. The educational crises in Kenya was so intense that it created spin-off denominations like the African Brotherhood Church and the African Christian Church and Schools. The GMS merger with the Presbyterian Church of East Africa was a direct result of the educational wars. The standard scholarly work on East African Revival is now *The East African Revival: History and Legacies*.⁴⁷ AIM is not discussed in the work though it is mentioned in a footnote that in the West Nile some of its missionaries accepted the revival while ‘in Congo and Kenya the AIM distrusted the revivalists and banned their activities in their churches’.⁴⁸ The research presented in this thesis confirms the mission’s ‘distrust’ of revivalists and offers some explanation for AIM’s efforts to clamp down on their activities. Influential members of the mission dismissed the revival as ‘spurious’ expressing their concern about the public confession of sins, the disorder it created in worship gatherings and the ‘break down’ of the ‘restraining bars between colour, race and sex’.⁴⁹ Derek Peterson’s study, *Ethnic Patriotism and the East African Revival: A History of Dissent, c. 1935-1972* helpfully shows that the AIM was not alone in its opposition to the revival.⁵⁰ As the revival spread in Southern Uganda, Buganda, Western Kenya and Northwest Tanganyika, it was opposed by the converted and unconverted alike who were concerned that embarrassing private affairs were being made public during open confessions. Peterson argues that ‘ethnic patriots’ opposed the revival because of their desire for social

⁴⁷ Kevin Ward and Emma Wild-Wood, *The East African Revival: History and Legacies* (Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2012).

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 133, fn. 17.

⁴⁹ See p. 113.

⁵⁰ Derek R. Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism and the East African Revival: A History of Dissent, ca. 1935-1972* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

control. His study is important because it explores the question of why one of the most celebrated movements in East Africa was opposed by ethnic groups in East Africa. Notwithstanding Peterson's brilliant archival and field research, his statement that 'The Mau Mau war began as a socially conservative struggle against sexual promiscuity and moral laxity' stretches the imagination.⁵¹ Nevertheless, his research does show that one of the primary reasons for opposition to the East Africa Revival among otherwise disparate groups (e.g., AIM and Mau Mau) was the practice of publicly confessing private (embarrassing) sins. If AIM missionaries and the Mau Mau oath-enforcers had anything in common it was likely their desire for 'control'.

Conclusion

In 1943 the Africa Inland Mission established the Africa Inland Church in Kenya. The mission resisted African demands for education because of its single-minded commitment to evangelism, a posture that resulted in significant schism. AIM responded to religious, political and social changes with millennial fervour and made evangelistic work the urgent matter even as it remained firmly in control of the African church. The problem of sorting out the mission's relationship with the church it founded was overshadowed by educational wars, church schism, and the mission's emphasis on evangelism. On the eve of independence in Kenya the mission rejected a proposed merger by the home councils. The paternalistic disposition of AIM missionaries and the democratic structure of the mission combined to thwart the will of influential mission officials in Britain and North America. After *Uhuru* in Kenya, the independent spirit of the mission endured, stubbornly resisting

⁵¹ Ibid., 226. For commendation and criticism, see John Illife, review of *Ethnic Patriotism and the East African Revival: A History of Dissent, C. 1935-1972*, by Derek R. Peterson, *African Affairs*. 112, no. 448: 510-511.

the pressure of the African church for devolution. The combined forces of nationalism and Africanisation overcame mission intransigence and gave rise to 'Africa's Evangelicals' in the early 1970s.

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