CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Area of Investigation

The study focuses on an African perspective of Christian missionary provision of education in colonial Zimbabwe from 1890 to 1980. By an African perspective is meant the perceptions of Africans on the provision of education in colonial Zimbabwe. Only aspects of some of those Christian missionaries who either accompanied the settlers or came before the settlers to Zimbabwe are going to be considered. The cut off point of 1980 was based on the view that after 1980, the leadership of most missionary societies was transferred to Africans. The study involves an examination of the interaction between Africans, missionaries and the colonial rulers and of the philosophical principles which formed the basis of missionary activities, especially the provision of education to Africans in Zimbabwe. The whole research study was in the context of the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*. It is from this perspective of *hunhu/ubuntu* that this study seeks to examine whether missionaries can be characterised as collaborators with the colonialists or benefactors of Africans in their provision of education to Africans in Zimbabwe.

Context of the discussion

There have been many studies on the role that missionaries have played in the provision of education to Africans. However, most of these studies were not from a philosophical standpoint and were not in the context of the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*, but from historical, anthropological, or sociological stand-points. Such works were not intended to
explore whether missionaries, in their provision of education to Africans, could be described as collaborators with the settlers or benefactors to Africans. These works, for example, include those of Zvobgo (1991), and Bhebe (1979), whose works are historical; Dachs and Rea (1984), Sonderstrom (1984) and Schoffeleers (1985), whose works are largely sociological and anthropological. These works lack detailed critical analysis of the responses of Africans to the missionary enterprise from the perspective of *hunhu/ubuntu* and to the philosophical principles that informed missionary activities in Zimbabwe. Little has also been written evaluating the role of missionaries as collaborators with the colonial administrators and as benefactors of the Africans. There is virtually nothing substantial on the perspectives of the recipients of missionary education. It is this that I propose to investigate from a *hunhu/ubuntu* philosophical perspective. Presently, I present the objectives of the study followed by the research methodology used in this study.

**Objectives**

The objectives of the study are:

i. To determine the fundamental philosophical principles guiding missionaries in their interactions with Africans;

ii. To establish the nature of African perceptions of the missionary enterprise in Zimbabwe;

iii. To ascertain the nature of the response of African indigenous education and culture to missionary activities.
Methodology

The focus of this study was on the beliefs, attitudes, and practices of human beings. It was therefore deemed that the most appropriate approach would be to use a multiple of research methodologies within the qualitative research paradigm. As is argued by Bogdan and Biklen (1992:31), some of the central questions that characterise qualitative research include, "How do people negotiate meaning? How do certain terms and labels come to be applied? How do certain notions come to be taken as part of what we know as 'common sense'?". Such questions are crucial in understanding human thought and practices. They reveal the thinking that determines attitudes and beliefs. Within the qualitative paradigm, the approaches adopted include the historico-inductive method as well as aspects of the comparative approach. While some historians make use of quantitative methods, Borg and Gall (1989:806) endorse Edison’s four characteristics that historical research shares with other qualitative research methodologies; these being:

i. emphasis on the study of context;
ii. the study of behaviour in natural rather than laboratory settings;
iii. the appreciation of the wholeness of experience, and
iv. the centrality of interpretation in the research process.

Analysis and synthesis were indispensable aspects of these methodologies, both from the perspectives of the Africans and from those of the Christian missionaries.

The historical method was utilized in the research and the interpretation of data. The approach that was largely used was inductive. Induction facilitated meaningful interpretation of gathered data. The inductive approach was also appropriate given that
there were a number of missionary societies operating in Zimbabwe whose views and attitudes were interrogated. Primary historical sources in the form of letters, diaries, missionary and government records in the form of minutes and reports, as well as secondary sources in the form of literature by other scholars were used. The historical method was informed by philosophical reflection on Christian missionaries' views and attitudes towards Africans that missionaries brought with them from their countries of origin. In line with this, deductions were made from the utterances and writings that missionaries left behind. These utterances and writings assisted me to determine whether missionaries were collaborators with the settlers or benefactors of Africans in their activities in Zimbabwe. The aim was to arrive at the fundamental philosophical principles that underlay their activities in the provision of education to Africans. The inductive approach was used in the presentation of the material when I focused on activities of individual missionary societies. Induction is here understood to refer to the arguments in the form:

X has been observed to have characteristic C.
N has been observed to have characteristic C.
D has been observed to have characteristic C.
E has been observed to exhibit characteristic C.

Where X, N, D, and E are members of the same family, which is Q.

It can then be concluded that members of the Q family have the characteristic C, and perhaps other characteristics that would have been observed. In this case the degree of
C-ness exhibited by each member of the family may be pointed out during the discussion of that member. But when the whole is considered, the degree of C-ness in each may not come out clearly as it is now overwhelmed by the consideration of the whole. In this case, X, N, D, and E can be substituted by the different missionary societies considered in this thesis.

The inductive method involves the identification of similarities within a group of particulars and moving towards generalising these to all that fall within the category of groups observed. Jardine (1825:2) puts this more clearly when he states, "It sets upon the principle that when we observe, in many individual substances, the same properties and powers, we ascribe these properties and powers to the whole class of which these individuals constitute a part."

In addition to the historico-inductive approach, the study also makes use of aspects of the comparative approach that aims to make comparisons across different missionary societies in Zimbabwe. Raymond Chan quoted in Hantrais and Mangen (1996:10) describes comparative research as "a comparison of two or more cases of analysis in one piece of work which goes beyond a mere description of each of the cases." He goes on to argue that from the large body of literature that he examined, what emerges, as characterizing a comparative study is that one or more units, societies or cultures are compared in respect of the same concepts with the intention of explaining them and generalizing from them (Hantrais and Mangen, 1996:111–12). At the same time Estes (n.d.) argues that comparative research is a field of inquiry that aims at understanding national and
international provisions (http://www.sp2.upenn.edu/restesispv/chapter6.html).

Heidenheimer, Hugo and Adam (1983:4) emphasize that comparative study focuses on the study of how, why, and to what effect different governments pursue a particular course of action or inaction.

The comparative approach was appropriate to this study as it enabled me to determine what was true of all missionary societies and what was true of one society at one point in time and space (Heidenheimer et al, 1983). This made the task of accounting for differences and similarities easier as the forces that influenced each society were examined in the context of the historical conditions obtaining at any one given time. However, I realised that the cross denominational context made this method not an easy one given different societal organisations, contexts as well as locations. In other words one uses the comparative approach aware that each society being studied is unique in its own way.

**Literature Review**

This section reviews a few writers who have examined missionaries’ activities in Zimbabwe. More literature will be reviewed in advancing the argument in the thesis. The writers who are reviewed presently are Moyana (2002), Majek (1996), Zvobgo (1986), Zvobgo (1996), Mungazi (1982), Bhebe (1979), Atkinson (1972) and Wakatama (1976).

Of the authors mentioned above, and many other authors who have written on missionary activities in Zimbabwe, none has yet produced a definite account of their ambiguous role in relation to the Africans in the context of the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*. An exception is
Moyana (2002) who has explored the question of land alienation in Zimbabwe from an African perspective. Moyana’s discussion is interesting as it issues out of a personal experience of land alienation. Ultimately, he is one of the few pioneers who argue for a redress of the land question in Zimbabwe on the basis of restitution. He maintains that justice on the land question can only be done through compensating those who lost their land to the colonial regime. Moyana (2002:34) further argues that missionaries supported segregation against blacks with full knowledge of what was implicitly involved in such a policy. He maintains that missionaries, in this regard, worked hand in hand with the settlers and supported legislation that dispossessed Africans. Since the missionaries were aware of what they were doing when they accepted segregation, Moyana (1996) argues that they cannot be exonerated. A similar argument is presented by Nosipo Majeke (1996).

In her strong critique of missionary activities in Southern Africa, Majeke (1996) adopts a Marxist perspective. She examines missionary activities in the context of the development of imperialism and the colonisation of Africa. She maintains that these two processes were inseparable and help us understand missionary activities in Southern Africa, including the provision of education to Africans. Her problem lies in that she perceives the role of missionaries in Africa as entirely negative. In this sense her work can, therefore, justifiably be regarded as prejudiced. However, her argument that for missionary activities to be intelligible, one must also study the forces that enabled them to come to Africa, is quite sound. Majeke provides the theory of missionaries as collaborators with the settlers that contrasts with the generally held theory that missionaries were benefactors of Africans.
While Majeke was looking at the role of missionaries in the conquest of Southern Africa, Zvobgo (1986) was concerned with colonial educational policies in Zimbabwe.

Zvobgo (1986), in his studies of colonial educational policies argues that missionaries’ experiences elsewhere had taught them that for Christianity to take root among Africans, it had to be buttressed by Western type education. In the same work Zvobgo is mainly concerned with colonial educational policies. It is when he endeavours to link political economy and education that he discusses the missionary contribution to the education of Africans. He is not concerned, at least not explicitly, with providing an African perspective as is the present work but a narration of the activities of missionaries in the provision of education to Africans.

Unlike Zvobgo (1986), Zvobgo (1996) was not concerned with educational policies in colonial Zimbabwe. He focuses on three components of missionary activities in Zimbabwe, evangelism, medicine and education. While he provides a detailed discussion of the missionary venture, investigating various denominations, his work is largely a chronicle of missionary activities in Zimbabwe. The focus is not on whether or not what missionaries did was beneficial to Africans or on what informed the responses of Africans to these efforts. He does not interrogate missionary activities from the perspective of *hunhu/ubuntu*.

Unlike the other authors discussed above, Mungazi’s (1982) provides an account that is sympathetic to missionaries and their activities in Southern Africa. His focus is on the
underdevelopment of African education. He concentrates on problems that hindered the development of African education during and after the colonial era. He explores African endeavours to acquire education and the problems they encountered. When he considers missionaries, he maintains that in their provision of education to Africans, they were guided by the tenet that all people are equal in the eyes of God, and that all are endowed with intellectual capabilities. Consequently missionaries were presented as benefactors of Africans. This is one aspect of the interpretation of the role of missionaries that I seek to problematise.

Bhebe (1979), writing much earlier than the other authors, is concerned mainly with the history of interaction between Christianity and Traditional religion in Matabeleland. He argues that traditional religions in western Zimbabwe before colonialism were in the process of interaction and assimilating one another. This enabled them initially to resist Christianity. Missionaries were able to make inroads only after the demise of the Ndebele Kingdom and the suppression of the first Chimurenga (1896-7). His focus was mainly on those Christian missionaries who worked in western Zimbabwe. He was also not explicitly concerned with an evaluation of missionary activities and the provision of education to Africans from the point of view of hunhu/ubuntu as this work does.

Atkinson (1972) like the other authors discussed above was not concerned with whether or not missionaries were collaborators with the colonial regime in providing education to Africans. Atkinson (1972) primarily examines the structure of the colonial education system without examining what different groups thought about it. This is understandable
given that he was not at all concerned with its impact on particular groups including Africans. His main concern was with the history of educational policy in Zimbabwe. This places his work in the same category with that of Zvobgo (1986). There is still need to discuss in detail the ambiguous nature of the missionary project. No thorough analysis of the interaction between Occidental education as brought by missionaries to Zimbabwe and indigenous education has so far been made.

While Wakatama (1976) tries to provide an objective assessment of missionary activities in the Third World countries, he is mainly concerned with the question of moratorium on missionary activities in these areas. Furthermore, while his is also an African perspective, it is from a theological stand point. In the present work I endeavour to provide an African perspective from a philosophical standpoint.

What the preceding paragraphs entail is that there is also need to examine the philosophical principles that informed Christian missionaries in the execution of their mission in Zimbabwe. At the same time, it is essential to examine the philosophy that informed Africans in their interaction with Christian missionaries. These have largely been ignored by most writers on missionary activities in Zimbabwe. In other words, while there is an abundance of literature on missionary activities in Zimbabwe, there is very little reflection on the responses of the Africans especially from an African and philosophical perspective.

Another problem is that most of the literature available is in the form of secondary sources yet a study of this nature demands reliance on primary sources in the form of diaries, letters
and missionary publications as well as interviews where there is need. An exception in this regard is Moyana (2002) who analysed oral presentations to the Land Commission in 1925. He brings out clearly the forces at play during the process of land alienation from Africans in the eastern part of Zimbabwe.

**Limitations**

In some instances, I detected some unease among some members of the missionary societies under study. Some were not comfortable to see me go through their documents. It was as if they felt I was invading their privacy. What this means is that there were some documents that I was not able to access which may have data that could have led to conclusion that are different from the ones made now on the documents that I accessed.

**Organisation of the Study**

The focus of chapter one was to provide a general introduction to the discussion that is presented in this thesis. It defines the area that is investigated, sets the context of the discussion, and provides the objectives of the study as well as the methodologies used for this study. In addition, the chapter provides a review of relevant literature as well as summaries of the chapters of this thesis.

The main thrust of chapter two is the argument that all societies are guided by some philosophy of life. It is the philosophy of life that informs members of the community in their plans, activities, attitudes, beliefs and thought patterns and education. The argument is then presented that in the case of the African communities in Zimbabwe; they were
guided by the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*. Furthermore, it is maintained that it was this philosophy that informed Africans’ socio-cultural, political and educational institutions. The argument is made that the principles of communalism, holism, preparationism, essentialism and all those other principles that have been proposed and popularized as the philosophical foundations of African education, are in fact, all aspects of this one overriding philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*. Thus, it is argued that indigenous education, through its aims, methods and devices, was an education for *hunhu/ubuntu*. Any collaboration with the Africans in Zimbabwe would have necessarily involved an appreciation of *hunhu/ubuntu*.

In chapter three I discuss two theories on the characterization of missionaries’ activities, including the provision of education to Africans. I explore the historical development of these two theories, the theory of benevolence which presents missionaries as benefactors of Africans, and the theory of collaboration which presents missionaries as collaborators with, first the colonists and secondly the colonial regimes in the conquest, colonization and exploitation of Africa. The contention is then proffered that it is on the basis of these two theories that missionary provision of education to Africans in Zimbabwe can be described either as having been made in the spirit of collaboration with the settlers or that of benefiting Africans. This then necessitates an examination of missionary perceptions of Africans as well as the aims of missionaries in their provision of education to Africans.

As a result, in chapter four I examine missionaries’ perceptions and goals in the provision of education to Africans. I further discuss the role they played in pre-colonial
and colonial Zimbabwe based on their perceptions of Africans. In other words, the chapter explores the missionaries’ activities from their own perspective and examines the goals that informed them in providing education to Africans. The purpose of the provision of education by the Christian missionaries was presented as the evangelisation of the Africans. With this aim in mind, the education that the missionaries provided to Africans was rudimentary as it was intended to enable Africans to read the scriptures for themselves. Yet, an interrogation of missionary activities reveals that their activities went beyond mere evangelisation. The question that arises then is how the Africans responded to Christian missionaries’ activities.

From the preceding paragraph, chapter five examines African responses to missionaries’ activities in Zimbabwe. While initially Africans were not keen on receiving Western education, when the turn of events required them to be educated, they found the education provided by the Dutch Reformed Church and the London Missionary Society shallow and very inadequate. They had to protest and appeal to the colonial regime. In some instances, when nothing was done they established their own schools or opted to go to schools run by other denominations. This was especially the case where some missionaries seemed mainly concerned with exploiting Africans under the guise of providing education to them. This did not help the situation. At the same time no attempt was made by Christian missionaries to come to terms with the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu* and other aspects of African culture. The Africans therefore, though they were compelled by necessity to seek Western education, continued to experience it as a process that alienated them from their culture.
Being the last chapter, chapter six is an assessment of whether missionaries can be described as collaborators with the colonists and the colonial regime or benefactors to Africans. The assessment is based on the material that is presented in all the previous chapters. What emerged from the discussion in the various chapters is that individual missionary societies varied in degrees of collaboration with the colonial regime. Their concern for the welfare of the Africans also varied. It seems clear that one cannot just label missionaries as collaborators with the colonial regime or benefactors of Africans without qualification. One needs to indicate the perspective from which one is passing judgment on missionary activities in Zimbabwe, that is whether one has adopted a micro or a macro perspective, or whether one is looking at it from the perspective of *hunhu/ubuntu*. Thus, chapter two explores the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu* as the philosophical foundation of African indigenous education in Zimbabwe, and as the philosophical standpoint from which missionary activities in Zimbabwe are going to be examined.
CHAPTER 2

THE PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF ZIMBABWEAN INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

Introduction

In the struggle to survive, societies evolve philosophies of life peculiar to their existential circumstances. In the process thereof they define their being, their identity, their selves in forms that become manifest in their literary works, be they oral or written. The philosophy of education that is generated is an expression of the people's philosophy of life, their hopes and aspirations, for, as Sifuna and Otiende (1994:10) argue, “Any system of education, whether simple or sophisticated is firmly based on some philosophical foundation.”

Regarding the Zimbabwean context in particular, and indeed, Southern and Central Africa in general, the major contention in this discussion is that this philosophy is hunhu (ChiShona) or ubuntu (IsiNdebele) and anything contrary to the dictates of this philosophy risks being thrown away as irrelevant to the people concerned. To understand a people's philosophy of education, the study of their philosophy of life becomes imperative. This is primarily so if one shares Luthuli's (1982:6) conviction that “Philosophy of education emanates from a philosophy of life of a people and one which has been formulated from a distance could not be considered to be a philosophy of education.”
It is argued presently that principles of indigenous philosophies of education that have been popularised by African philosophers as philosophical foundations of education are, in fact, branches of the one overriding philosophy, that of hunhu/ubuntu. These principles are holism, humanism, essentialism, communalism, functionalism and preparationism. It is argued that hunhu/ubuntu determines the aims, content and methods of African indigenous education. It is, therefore, critical to know what it is, what it has accomplished, how much of it remains relevant to the circumstances now obtaining in Zimbabwe with an education system that "dangerously emphasises literacy and technical instruction to the neglect of education for life" (Castle, 1966:39). It is in this context that in this chapter I reflect on the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu. At the same time, the intention is to explicate a philosophy upon which missionaries could have built the kind of education that they provided to Africans in Zimbabwe.

_Hunhu/Ubuntu philosophy_

It is only recently in the case of Zimbabwe that attempts have been made to explore the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu, (Samkange and Samkange, 1980; Makuvaza, 1996a; 1996b; Ramose, 1999). Samkange and Samkange's book is significant in the sense that it was the first attempt to espouse hunhu/ubuntu as a philosophy and to proceed to endeavour to define, describe and explain what it is. Makuvaza's papers are a projection from Samkange and Samkange's reflections. However, these works do not fully define, explore, and expatiate hunhu/ubuntu philosophy in the context of African indigenous philosophy of education. They present the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu as if readers already know what this philosophy is all about. Samkange and Samkange (1980) argue
for the adoption of hunhu/ubuntu as the Zimbabwean political philosophy while Makuvaza (1996a, 1996b) advocates that hunhu/ubuntu be the philosophical foundations of modern Zimbabwean education. Thus, in this chapter I attempt to elucidate the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu in the context of Zimbabwean indigenous education.

In defining hunhu/ubuntu, Samkange and Samkange (1980:34) write:

Hunhuism or Ubuntuism is, therefore, a philosophy that is the experience of thirty five thousand years of living in Africa. It is a philosophy that sets a premium on human relations. In a world, increasingly dominated by machines and with personal relationship becoming ever more mechanical, Africa's major contribution in the world today may well be in her sense of `hunhu' or `ubuntu ' which her people have developed over the centuries.

Samkange and Samkange (1980:34) argue that the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu ōnspires, permeates and radiates ... regulates our well-planned social and political organisations.

Along the same lines, Ramose (1999:49) contends:

Ubuntu is the root of African philosophy. The being of an African in the universe is inseparably anchored upon ubuntu. Similarly, the African tree of knowledge stems from ubuntu with which it is connected indivisibly. Ubuntu then is the wellspring flowing with African ontology and epistemology. If these latter are
the basis of philosophy then African philosophy has long been established in and through *ubuntu*. Our point of departure is that *ubuntu* may be seen as the basis of African philosophy.

Linguistically, the word *hunhu/ubuntu* comes from the word *munhu* (ChiShona), *umuntu* (IsiNdebele) respectively which defines the African essence. *Munhu/umuntu* is singular; the plural is *vanhu*, while for *umuntu* the plural is *abantu*. The corollary to the above question is: What constitutes being? For Anschwanden (1982), *being* implies the possession of *mweya* (spirit/soul) and *muviri* (flesh/body) as well as *mumvuri* (shadow). The shadow emanates from, and is at the same time independent of the body. The triad constitute the wholeness that is a person. Thus, the human person is a composite being. The shadow manifests itself in two parts, *mumvuri woupenyu* (the shadow of life) that outlives physical death and is immortal, which is only visible when a person is alive, and the ordinary shadow resulting from and, therefore, disappearing with the physical body. The spirit and the shadow of life constitute the *immaterial* dimension of the human person that survives bodily death. It is the shadow of life that often is said to be visible if the deceased was wrongfully killed or is not happy about something. When it thus becomes visible, it is a sign that there is need for relatives to investigate the cause of death if the soul of the departed is to rest in peace. The being, that is the individual self, is in the process of continuous unfolding and becoming. Birth is the point of departure, and *hunhu/ubuntu a terminus ad quem*. The *munhu/umuntu* continuously mutates socially, morally, psychologically and even metaphysically, ultimately attaining the status of a *mudzimu* (spiritual being), an ancestor (Ruwa'ichi, 1990), the living-dead (Mbiti, 1989).
However, in the process of living, *munhu/umuntu* exhibits *hunhu/ubuntu*, as evidence of gravitation towards fuller realisation. *Hunhu/ubuntu* becomes qualitative, a manifestation of the attainment of a higher level of being. *Hunhu/ubuntu* is, therefore, *being* itself, an unfolding of the individual's spirituality and materiality.

Ramose (1999) argues that for a philosophical understanding of *hunhu/ubuntu* it is essential that it be treated as a hyphenated word, that is, *hu-nhu/ubu-ntu*, that is, *hu +nhu/ubu+ntu* and on this, I am in agreement. However, the subsequent contention he advances can be refuted. While he argues that *ubu* evokes the idea of being in general, it can be argued that on the contrary, it is *-nhu/-ntu* that evokes the idea. *-nhu/-ntu* exudes potentiality, embodies in it the notion of being. It is the stem that is concretised by the prefix *-hu*, as in *hu+nhu = hunhu*, *mu+nhu=munhu*, *chi+nhu= chinhu-* a thing. *-hu/-ubu* alone is meaningless. It is only meaningful if it serves as a qualitative or quantitative denotation. In spite of these differences, I concur with Ramose that *hunhu/ubuntu* reflects the *indivisible one-ness and wholeness of [African] ontology and epistemology* (Ramose, 1999:50). The option for a hyphenated approach can only be for explicatory purposes.

In an endeavour to explain the meaning of *hunhu/ubuntu*, Samkange and Samkange (1980) contend that *munhu/umuntu* in some instances entail more than just a biological physical person or human being. For instance, when the Mashona see a black person and a white person walking together, they would normally say, *Hona munhu uyo ari kufamba*
nomurungu (There is a munhu walking with a white man). Samkange and Samkange (1980:80) then infer:

So there is a sense in which the word `munhu' or `umuntu' stands for much more than a person, human being or humanness because a white man (murungu or umlungu) - is always a person, a human being, and therefore always has his humanness. Yet we say, ÒThere is munhu walking with a murungu.Ó

Samkange and Samkange (1980) then try to identify that which a white man does not have but a black man has, that justifies the distinction referred to above by making recourse to black Americans. They assert that among black Americans, this something is soul which is found only among black Americans. This soul is indefinable, yet identifiable among black American people. Even blacks from Africa do not automatically possess that soul. Soul is apparent in perseverance, empathy, helping one another, and solidarity among black Americans (Samkange & Samkange, 1980:80). A reading of Eldridge Cleaver's (1968) Soul on Ice confirms the view of soul as that which humanizes or restores humanity to those whose existence is characterised by alienation. According to Cleaver, soul is what makes people fully human, what brings wholeness and leads to authentic existence. But the soul remains unintelligible to the outsider. In this context soul becomes culture bound.

In the case of Zimbabwe and Southern and Central Africa, Samkange and Samkange (1980) maintain that this something which is indefinable yet identifiable is hunhu/ubuntu.
The white person mentioned above does not possess hunhu/ubuntu, does not subscribe to the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu, hence, in that sense, cannot be described as a munhu/umuntu. A paradox arises when a munhu/umuntu (person) is described as munhu asiri munhu (a person who is not worthy). This paradox is resolved when it is argued that the self that constitutes a munhu/umuntu goes through stages of initiation into the values and norms of the society. In other words, as Menkiti (1984:122) argues, the nature of being among Africans is "processual". What society regards as important and valuable is what it prescribes and imparts to the self. The development of the self involves the assimilation of these values and norms which result in the acquisition of hunhu/ubuntu. Still a thorough grasp of what constitutes hunhu/ubuntu remains illusive.

To make the concept of hunhu/ubuntu more intelligible, Samkange and Samkange (1980:39) elucidate:

The attention one human being gives to another: the kindness, courtesy, consideration and friendliness in the relationship between people, a code of behaviour, an attitude to other people and to life, are embodied in hunhu or ubuntu. Hunhuism is, therefore, something more than just humanness deriving from the fact that one is a human being. We will, therefore, describe more accurately what we are talking about if we use the words hunhu and ubuntu or hunhuism and ubuntuism, instead of the word humanness.

Ramose (1999) takes Samkange and Samkange to task for making an option for hunhu – ism/ ubuntu - ism. I agree with Ramose when he argues that hunhu/ubuntu is always a -
ness and not an -ism. An -ism, he contends, suggests an ideology which *hunhu/ubuntu* is not. He proceeds to argue:

The ism suffix gives the erroneous impression that we are dealing with verbs and nouns as fixed and separate entities existing independently. They must function as fixations to ideas and practices which are somewhat dogmatic and hence unchangeable. Such dogmatism and immutability constitute the false necessity based upon fragmentative thinking. This latter is the thinking ì based on the subject-verb-object of the understanding of the structure of language ì which posits a fundamental irreconcilable opposition in be-ing becoming. On the basis of this imputed opposition being becoming is fragmented into pieces of reality with an independent existence of their own (Ramose, 1999:51).

The same criticism can also be extended to Makuvaza who, in his papers already alluded to, accepts Samkange and Samkange's option without critically reflecting on the implications of the option (Makuvaza, 1995a, 1996b).

For Gombe, *hunhu/ubuntu* was reflected in *kubatana* (oneness), *kwirirana* (harmony/unity), *kushandira pamwe* (communalism as opposed to individualism) (Gombe, 1986). Following Greenberg and Guthrie's postulation of the unity of Bantu people of Southern Africa, Samkange and Samkange conjecture that these people share ëa common concept of hunhuism which varies only to the extent that individual groups have undergone changes not experienced by others (Samkange & Samkange, 1980:39).
*Hunhu/ubuntu* reflects a fuller realisation of being. *Hunhu/ubuntu* means a more humane existence, selflessness, a realisation of a common destiny and a striving for upholding and respect for human life before anything else. *Hunhu/ubuntu* expresses the ideal and yet attainable state of being.

For Makuvaza *hunhu/ubuntu* encompasses respect and concern for other people especially elders. At another level, after realising that there is something fundamentally wrong with the Zimbabwean education system, he argues that *hunhu/ubuntu* should be the aim of Zimbabwean educational institutions that would enable them to provide relevant education. His main concern is the inability of the present system of education to impart to the learners those moral and social values cherished in *hunhu/ubuntu* and its clear negation of the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*. This inability was by design rather than accident when the colonial administration put the education system in place (Makuva, 1996b). It is from this common understanding that a philosophy and a philosophy of education can be deduced, a philosophy which reflects the oneness of the people, that is the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*.

**Education for hunhu/ubuntu**

The foundation of indigenous education, as has already been pointed out is *hunhu/ubuntu* philosophy. The focal point of Zimbabwean indigenous education is the production of *munhu ane hunhu* (a human being with *hunhu*, who is worthy), which Aschwanden (1982) describes as *umunhu*. The attainment of *hunhu/ubuntu* is the primary goal of indigenous education and other human attributes it is assumed can be developed through
the education for *hunhu/ubuntu*. The acquisition of *hunhu/ubuntu* does not come simply because one belongs to the family of human beings; it is something individuals have to strive for. The acquisition of *hunhu/ubuntu* is a process at which individuals could prove inadequate or incompetent, hence the saying, *Munhu asina hunhu* (A person without *hunhu*, who is not worthy - *hunhu* being more than just humaneness as is explained above) or *Hausi munhu iwe* (You are not worthy). To be *munhu asina hunhu*, or to be an unworthy human being is to be dehumanized; to have failed to attain the primary objective of indigenous education. It is not just a denial of membership, but something more fundamental, the very being of the individual concerned is under attack. It is a condition individuals have to avoid at all costs and the society tries to assist the individual to attain *hunhu/ubuntu*. To ensure none miss out on the acquisition of *hunhu/ubuntu*, education for *hunhu/ubuntu* was and still remains a communal responsibility. Samkange and Samkange suggest that, "Education of the individual was not only by members of the immediate or extended family; it was also by any member of the community" (Samkange & Samkange, 1980:77). Communalism as an aspect of *hunhu/ubuntu* was, therefore, the basis of African education.

Indigenous education, like religion, permeated the whole process of living. It was the process of the development and the cultivation of socially desirable attitudes and skills among the learners, taking into cognisance that human beings were first and foremost social beings who had to appreciate their relatedness to others. Thus, education was by the society for the society.
A very strong and central concept to the philosophy of *hunhu* was that of *mushandira pamwe* (communalism) which was also cardinal to indigenous education. *Mushandira pamwe* emanated from the idea of *vanhu vanwe* (people belonging to one tight unit; one people) which was more than just a group of numerically counted people. *Mushandira pamwe* (communalism) encompassed *mararamiro* (the way of life), *zvitendero* (beliefs) and convictions and attitudes of people towards life. It had to do with everything that contributed to the well-being of the community. It involved *kubatana mukuita, mupfungwa, zvinangwa nemugwara* (consciousness of oneness, commonness of purpose and direction) and *humwe* (organic unity). Communalism was central in the sense that the community was its utmost concern; that for which individuals could sacrifice even life; it involved commitment to one's group. Hence, Mbiti (1989:106) captures the centrality of communalism when he singled out the maxim, ņi am, because we are; and since we are, therefore I amdiscussion as the expression of the being of an individual among African communities.

Individuals had to work for the edification of the community. They had to be conscious of the communal nature of their being. Even in time of adversity, they had to come back to the community. The Shona have proverbs which explicitly reflect intimate ontological relationships, for example, *Chara chimwe hachitswanyi inda* (United we stand, divided we fall) or *Mazano marairamwa, zano ndoga akapisa jira* or *Rume rimwe harikombi churu,* which can both be translated into the English proverb: ņThe reason why a flock of guinea fowls moves together is because one pair of eyes cannot see everything on its owndiscussion* (Furusa, 1996; Onyewukenyi, 1993). Emphasis is on communal approach to social
and personal problems, reflecting an awareness of a collective destiny. This emphasis on communal identity, on belonging to the group, was again in keeping with the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*.

The communalistic tendencies in Zimbabwean indigenous education were also manifest in the socialisation of children. The mother, by the nature of her immediacy, resulting from her giving birth to the child, and suckling the infant, became the primary socialiser of the child. Her primary responsibilities included the initiation of the infant into the aesthetic and sanitary values of the community, hence, the principle of preparationism in indigenous education. The values inculcated in preparation for adulthood included *kugara kwazvo* (seating properly), *kumhorosa vakuru* (verbal greetings and the accompanying gestures, for example, shaking hands with peers or prostrating to elders when greeting them), eating habits and good decorum in relating to others. It was through the primary socialisation from the mother that the child acquired language, both verbal and symbolic, as well as appropriate moral dispositions (Gombe, 1986).

For the education for *hunhu/ubuntu* to continue, the young child from the mother was placed under the care of the grandparents. The assumption of this responsibility by the grandparents and subsequently by other members of the family was intended to make the child outward oriented to enable the child to function within society. It was impressed upon the child, both implicitly and explicitly, that every member of the community was important to him or her and, therefore, that he or she had to relate well to everyone. That is why any male member of the community of the same age as the father of the child was
to be addressed as *baba* (father) and had to behave like the father he was, and any female member of the community of the same age as the mother of the child was to be addressed as *mai* (mother). Those who were of the same sex but young adults were to be addressed as *madzikoma* (brothers), *vakoma, hanzvadzi* (sisters). All old men were *vanasekuru* (grand fathers) and all old women were *vanambuya* (grandmothers). The awareness of these relationships created in the child a consciousness of his/her social proximity to others and instilled a sense of identification with the community. It was this relationship which can best be described in terms of the `I-We' that characterised *hunhu/ubuntu* which shaped the moral character of the child and enabled him/her to function within his/her community.

**Female education**

In terms of *tsika* (moral principles), women were regarded as the custodians of those essential values enshrined in *hunhu*. They were, thus, entrusted with the responsibility to inculcate those values that were considered central to the continued existence of the community. Chidyausiku (1971:7) notes that:

*Munhukadzi haasiri mai vemhuri yavo chete. Ndiyewo mai vorudzi. Kuti rudzi ruve nenduramo hunge mai vorudzi rwacho vainve nduramowo. Mbudzi kudya mufenje hufana nyina- mune zvakanaka kana mune zvakaipa.* (A woman is not just a mother to the immediate family. She is mother to the nation. The moral tone of a nation is determined by the moral worth of its women. Like mother like daughter in good or bad).
Hence, Chidyausiku maintains that the education of women was extremely valued and great care was taken to ensure that it was adeptly done. What Chidyausiku did not bring out is that, as in many patriarchal societies, women were considered as the weaker sex, always vulnerable and, thus, desirous of protection. Indeed, this did not mean that women were always treated as inferior beings. In some circumstances, women commanded respect and men listened to them. This was the case with aunts (*vana vatete*) and queen mothers who advised kings on issues of governance. However, generally, the education of women had to be especially comprehensive to enable them to survive. Because they were regarded as weak physically, they had to be strong morally, so that they were esteemed as the epitome of virtue. It was only those who had acquired that wisdom which was characteristic of *hunhu*, the seasoned elderly women that could instruct future mothers who would be able to survive the ravages of life. A lot of responsibility was expected of women as they were perceived as responsible for determining the measure of moral development of the community. They were entrusted with the guardianship of society's ethical and aesthetic, cultural and traditional values which was no easy responsibility. Chidyausiku (1971:7) is instructive when he says:

_Vanhurume vorudzi vangave vane tsika dzinonyangadza, asi kana vanhukadzi vorudzi irworwo vaine tsika dzakururama pangave nechitarisiro chokuti rudzi irworwo rungazova rudzi rwavanhu vane nduramo._ (Men in a particular society may not have enviable behaviour but if the women of that society are morally upright, expectantly that society would be redeemable).
Thus the education of women for *hunhu/ubuntu* was thorough, rigorous and strict. It was also in this sense that indigenous education was essentialist, transmitting those values that were regarded as central to the survival of the community.

According to Chidyausiku (1971), great care was taken to educate the girl child. It was the responsibility of the maternal or paternal grandmother or aunt, who themselves would have lived up to society's expectations, to educate girl children. As women were entrusted with the role of determining the moral tone of the community, girl children were taught to be decent, to preserve their virginity, to be good women who knew their place in society, faithful wives capable of satisfying their husbands and dependable mothers well schooled in child rearing practices. Of necessity the education of girl children emphasised moral and aesthetic values, courtesy and cleanliness. The education of girl children was regarded as very important, since, as future mothers, girls will be responsible for the initiation of children into societal values. It was deemed important that each child start off on the right note. This was only possible if mothers were well schooled in moral rectitude and other values eminently cherished by the community; for example, a girl could not make advances towards a boy even if she loved him. She had to wait for the boy to approach her, and even then, she had to pretend, at first, not to be interested in him. This reflects a society which did not encourage women to express their love emotions freely. It was an education that prepared women for their decent role in society.
Though men also were expected to assimilate the above values, emphasis was not as strong as it was for women. Though men could be virgins, it was not insisted upon that they, in fact, be so, as rigorously as it was for women. Perhaps this can be explained by the fact that African societies were and still are patriarchal and so patriarchal values were to be upheld, what Marx and Engels mean when they proclaim, ‘The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas’ (quoted in Tucker, 1978:172). While this can be interpreted as chauvinistic, to the indigenous people the adage, to educate a woman is to educate the nation, was exemplified by these educational requirements for women. Special skills were also set aside for women. These skills were in keeping with the dignity accorded to women. These skills were based on the sexual division of labour. Women were to specialise in weaving, cooking, knitting, pottery, basketry, beadwork, that is, those skills that were intricate and delicate.

**Male education**

Men as well as women were expected to be conversant with the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*. According to Gombe (1986), the onus of educating boys lay on both the *babamunini* (paternal uncle) and the *sekuru* (maternal uncle or grandfather) who inculcated the values of patriarchy which developed inflated egos in boys. The boys were conscientised about societal expectations of them within the context of *hunhu/ubuntu*. The *dare*, (a place where male members of the family sat discussing important issues relating to the family and also a form of informal school) invariably referred to as *chivara*, the centre of being among Mashona men, was a very important institution in the education of boys and the inculcation of *hunhu/ubuntu*. Indicating the importance of the *dare* and lamenting
its disappearance, because young boys spend their time at school, or at cinemas, discos or at bottle stores drinking beer, and urban settings which do not allow the designation of the dare, one Mashona elder is quoted as having said:

\[
\text{Vana kana vasingagari pachivara vanodzidzei chaizvo? Ndiani achavadzidzisa 'unhu' netsika dzedu? (If the young boys no longer sit at the chivara, what is it that they can learn exactly? Who teaches them hunhu and our traditions, moral values and customs?) (Gombe, 1986:7)}
\]

The argument here is that it was at the dare that the young boys received instruction on how to function in society. In the absence of the dare a void is created in the education of the young male members of the community. This is to be interrogated in the Western model of education as it was applied to Zimbabwe.

The contention here was that the Mashona education was in accordance with the Mashona concept of a person. It was an education that addressed the felt needs of the people by focusing on tsika (ethics, tradition, moral values and customs), kurodza pfungwa (developing the intellect) and dzidziso dzemibato yemaoko (the development of psycho-motor skills). Under tsika (ethics, tradition, moral values) is subsumed kukudza vabereki navamwe vakuru (respect for one's parents and other elders), and mutauro wakanaka (the use of correct register). The development of the intellect encompassed the teaching of mitemo yenyika (the nation's legal system), shumo (proverbs, and other wise sayings) and madimikira (idioms). Under zvemaoko (skills) are included kuruka tswana (basketry),
kuveza (carpentry and carving), kupfura mvuto (black smithing), kuridza mbira (playing the mbira musical instrument) and kuridza ngoma (drumming) among other things. The education of boys started here and continued throughout life. The intention was to provide a holistic education that developed all aspects of the individual including sport. This resulted in the production of a person with hunhu/ubuntu.

In the early mornings, the men of the family gathered at the dare to organise the day's chores and how they were to be accomplished. In the evenings the dare was again the rendezvous for the assessment of the day's tasks. The dare was the primary agent of the socialisation of boys into manhood. It was intended to create kubatana (unity), kunzwisisa (understanding), kuwirirana (harmony) and kubata pamwe chete (co-operation) among family members as they discussed issues affecting the family and the community. It was at the dare that important decisions were made, family and social problems were resolved. Boys learnt how to participate in the discussion and decision making process at the dare.

The tsika (social etiquette), whose foundation was laid by the mother, was reinforced at the dare. It was essential that boys were initiated into the nhoroondo dzedzinza (history of their community), the achievements of prominent people in their community so that they could emulate them. Knowledge of the history of one's community was believed to be essential in cultivating social identity as aptly summarised in the proverb Ziva kwawakabva mudzimu weshiri uri mudendere (Know your roots, the birds' security is in their nests). In a society that was based on patriarchy, knowledge of one's genealogy was very important as it gave one knowledge of one's identity. As future heads of families, they had to learn to relate and interact with the spiritual world. Boys were expected to be tough and to be able
to fight for and defend the family. They had to develop the ability to endure hardships without any signs of fear or surrender. They had to develop a fighting spirit. Boys, unlike girls, were expected to be adventurous, courageous and demonstrate creativity. All this was intended to cultivate *hunhu/ubuntu* in the boys, for to know one’s history, to be able to deliberate objectively, and to appreciate the importance of participation in communal activities were all aspects of *hunhu/ubuntu*. While the curricula for boys and girls were different in the sense that it prepared them for their social roles, they were both intended to cultivate *hunhu/ubuntu*.

**General education**

*Religious education*

The Mashona believe that human life does not terminate at the death of the individual, but continues beyond physical death. Death is viewed as the transition into the realm of invisible existence. Death becomes a transformation into another form of existence, an avenue into immortality. The individual becomes immortal by entering the invisible world of *vadzimu* (ancestral spirits). As the *vadzimu* (ancestral spirits), they are alive and do participate in the activities of the embodied living providing security and order. Thus, the dead are also described as *vari kumhepo* (those in the air), *vari pasi* (those underground), and it makes religious sense for a Mushona to speak to a lump of mute, speechless soil, the grave, as if it hears and can respond, indicating that the departed are dead yet alive, present yet invisible. In this sense the ancestral spirits are immortal. That is what Ramose (1986:1) means when he talks of *the ontology of invisible beings.*
Hunhu/ubuntu demands, from the embodied living, a proper relationship with both the corporeal and the spiritual worlds to establish "cosmic harmony" (Ramose, 1986), that is, appropriate relations throughout the visible and the invisible orders of experience. The spiritual beings who, on the ontological scale inhabit the realm between Mwari/Mlimo (God) and vanhu/abantu (physical beings) mediate and intercede on behalf of the living, a fact misunderstood by initial writers on African traditional religious beliefs and practices who interpreted them to constitute ancestor worship, animism, totemism or magic. Mwari/Mlimo/God is unknowable, immanent, transcendent, awe-inspiring and revered and as such must be approached through the hierarchy of the ancestors. Nevertheless, the realm of spiritual beings whose indestructibility, immortality and eternity comes from Mwari is knowable. Hence, "The ontology of invisible beings is the basis of ubuntu metaphysics" (Ramose, 1986).

The maintenance of correct relations entailed the observance and participation in ritual practices both at the individual level and as a community. An awareness of this was cultivated through education for hunhu/ubuntu which also reinforced the omnipresence of spiritual beings. Such knowledge was essential as it was believed that an imbalance will not only affect the individual concerned, but the society as a whole for the invisible beings were not only benevolent, but could also punish and inflict harm on the living. Even more important was the belief that munhu/umuntu could not attain hunhu/ubuntu without the intervention of the invisible beings. The invisible beings were revered for their omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence which derived from their proximity to Mwari/Mlimo. This, the corporeal beings, could harness to their advantage.
The relations between spiritual beings and the living were reciprocal with each making demands on the other and the reciprocity differing in that the embodied had no way of punishing the invisible beings, except perhaps by withholding sacrifices, libation and prayer but at their own peril. This, however, did not mean the living were completely at the mercy of the invisible beings, for hunhu/ubuntu even required the invisible to respond appropriately to gestures by the embodied living. For the living, moral education was one way of ensuring the observance of correct relations with the invisible world.

**Moral education**

Kudadjie's (1997:20) argument apparently applies to the Mashona and Matabele when he writes:

> Every human society desires a community of moral persons. To have such a moral community requires a threefold system; (1) of moral education, to inculcate concepts of rightness and wrongness, and desirable values, (2) an enforcement of moral, and (3) of moral recovery and reform.

This is also attested to by Samkange and Samkange (1980:78) when they write:

> When a passerby, any elderly man, saw goats grazing in a cornfield, he drove them off the field. If he recognized some boys as the delinquent herd boys, he gave them
all not only a scolding for neglecting their duty, but also a sound thrashing with a supple mutowa switch. After that he went on his way.

This reveals an interesting relationship between the old and the young people and the responsibilities our society imposed on an individual. Here was a man who saw damage being done to property, someone's crops, someone he did not know, and proceeded to help by driving the goats from the field. Realising that the damage to the property was due to the negligence of the little boys, he proceeded to discharge his duty to society by doing what the parents of those boys would have done in the circumstances and that is thrash them. Here he was acting as a parent because anyone of the age of the boys' parents was addressed by the boys as ḋfather and acted as such. This, our society expected and accepted.

No charges of assault or physical abuse were preferred since what was socially reprehensible had to be punished. It was recognized that children cannot be continually under the direct supervision of their parents or immediate family. Every adult was conscious of the dictates of hunhu/ubuntu, and, therefore, had an obligation to safeguard the preservation of the correct values and attitudes by the young to ensure that hunhu/ubuntu was not negated. The emphasis in the area of morality was to transform the individual's orientation from the ṭO centredness to the ḋWe centredness, that is, the pursuit of communalism as opposed to individualism (Tedla, 1995).
The apprenticeship system

Diverse specialist subjects were offered to widen the education of the young. These included *kuveza* (carpentry), *umhizha* (metal fabrication), *kurima* (agriculture) and *kupfuwa mhuka* (pastoralism), *kuvhima* (hunting), *kuredza hove* (fishing), *migodhi* (mining), *kuveza* (carving), *kushambadza* (trading) and so on. If parents had special skills, the child was trained within the family. However, if there was no specialist in the family, often one was found for the boy. At times this required the boy to go and stay with the specialist for the duration of the training. As indigenous education recognised that each person had his/her own capabilities, there was no attempt to force a pupil to train in an area in which he/she had no interest. This was mainly because, according to Njobe (1990), indigenous education had to serve individuals' felt needs in conformity with societal rules. Because learners appreciated what they were learning, they were highly motivated and this resulted in lack of dropouts. Disheartening competition was not encouraged as all learning activities were within the social context.

Special note should be taken that specialists closely guarded the secrets of their areas of specialisation. A specialist normally had between one and two students at a time. This afforded the specialist close supervision of the students and quality products. The relationship between the student and the trainer was based on mutual respect as dictated by *hunhu/ ubuntu*. It was often the student who identified the area in which he/she wanted to specialise. Naturally, the advice of the parents was sought as the teacher had to be a person with *hunhu/ ubuntu*. In specialist vocational training, the aim was to develop a healthy attitude towards honest labour. Hence, every child had to follow or have a trade in which
he/she specialised so as to be able to lead a life epitomised in hunhu/ubuntu. Some of the specialist areas were traditional medicine, orature, priesthood and mining. These were valuable trades to the people.

**Intellectual development (Kurodza pfungwa)**

Hunhu/ubuntu philosophy was also fostered through general education which was accomplished through oral literature in the form of *shumo/tsumo* (proverbs), *madimikira* (riddles), *nziyo* (songs), *ngano* (stories, myths) and *mitambo* (plays). Proverbs, pregnant with philosophical meaning, were part and parcel of everyday speech, but they were mostly used by elders as they tended to be abstract. The abstract nature and the types of messages they conveyed that were literal, coded, cultural and evaluative rendered them intelligible and meaningful only to those schooled in their use as linguistic devices (Pongweni, 1996). Proverbs provided a unique way of communication between experts. They could also be used as a device to exclude those not schooled in the use of proverbs from conversations. According to Finnegan (1977), proverbs were utilised to assist in the transmission of cultural traditions since they were replete with meaning acquired over generations. This view is shared by Chimhundu (1980) who regards the main function of proverbs to be socialization.

It is Sifuna and Otiende (1994:10) who note that:

> A judicious use of proverbs was usually regarded as a sign of wit. Proverbs were condensed wisdom of great ancestors. In a given proverb one or two moral ideas
were contained in a single sentence. Most of them referred to different aspects of
the socio-economic and political life. There were proverbs dealing with co-
operation and personal human qualities, others were related to authority and
domestic life, while others referred to a particular mode of production, and
relationships between children and parents and wives and husbands.

As in all other communities, Mashona proverbs reflect the Mashona’s understandings of the
world around them. Furusa (1996) argues that in Mashona proverbs, one can discern the
history of the Mashona people and their culture, their vision of the future and those values
which they cherished as they were the products of observation and reflection on their
historical experience. The same conviction is expressed by Pongweni (1996:6) who notes
that proverbs express thoughts, ideas, beliefs, values and attitudes and that they are a summation of experience and empirical observations of real events and actions. In this
way, they transmit the collective wisdom of the Mashona. To this, Fortune (1976) adds
that proverbs are a very important tool for the proper understanding of Mashona thought
and expression. Mashona proverbs are also replete with precise moral and religious
meaning, warning, and advice that could not escape the attention of the learner resulting in
heightened awareness of ethical discernment. Chimhundu (1980) argues that the didactic
and juridical functions of proverbs were considered as very important. To demonstrate this
he quotes Nyembezi, who, when discussing Zulu proverbs writes:

In the passage of the race through many years of happiness and misery, of joys and sorrows, the people accumulate more and more experience, and this vast store of
experience tends to affect their outlook, and regulate their behaviour. As a social unit the people have certain definite ways of behaviour, or conduct which are expected of the individuals comprising the social unit. *Some models of conduct are embodied in proverbs, which serve the purpose of instructing the younger and ignorant generations, or serve as reminders to the old, who have been remiss in their observance of the rules of conduct expected of the society* (Chimhundu, 1980:39).

That proverbs are also instructive about the Mashona conception of political power and human relations, in the context of *hunhu/ubuntu*, is amply demonstrated by the Mashona saying: *Munhu munhu haafanani neimbwa* (A human being is worthy and cannot be compared to a dog). In the context of power, this maxim cum injunction was caution against excesses in the exercise of political authority. The politically powerful were cautioned to treat their subordinates with respect. This is further reinforced by the axiom, *Ushe idova hunoparara* (Chieftainship is like dew, it evaporates), which also brings into light Mashona awareness of the temporality of power, which should not be abused. *Hunhu/ubuntu* dictates a conception of power that does not result in the dehumanization of the ruled. The emphasis is on always treating people as *vanhu/abantu*, with dignity and respect irrespective of their social or political status in life.

*Zvirabwe* (riddles) with their hidden messages were intended to sharpen pupils' intellectual skills. They were used as media for developing the child's reasoning power and skill in decision making. Riddles were always a group activity fostering oneness and co-operation
as their successful interpretation in the shortest time possible was always a communal activity.

_Ngano_ (tales) were inseparable from indigenous education. They were narrated to the pupils to excite their imagination, develop strong powers of memory, impart to them narrative skills and they were based on everyday happenings and calculated to inculcate _hunhu_ through the moral lessons imparted by the story (Sifuna & Otiende, 1994) even though they were told without moralising. Pupils were expected to listen carefully with a view to an examination which required pupils to be able to retell the story creatively. Story telling itself was an art that also included the participation of the listeners. The _ngano_ always started with the story teller's _Paivapo..._ (Once upon a time ... followed by, _Dzepfundè_, or Indeed, from the audience). The story teller always had to make sure he/she had the listeners with him/her. According to Bishop (1985), success as a story teller depended on the ability to creatively retell stories and the ability to capture the attention of the listeners. Hodza (1979) argues that to make story telling lively the stories were often accompanied by singing. Sifuna and Otiende (1994:8) add that messages in folk tales included "communal unity, hard work, conformity, honesty and uprightness", all being attributes of _hunhu/ubuntu_. Human frailties were exposed to put children on guard against them. The same view is expressed by Hodza (1979:8) when he writes, “_kuvimbika norudo nevamwe vavo, kutumika nekuva netsitsi kune vanotambudziuka_. _Ngano dzinodzidzisa vana vaduku tsika dzokufarira nokugarisana navamwe zvakanaka_. _Vana vaiwana ungwaru kana njere dzakawanda chaizvo zvavainge vachiitirwa ngano_.” (Faithfulness, love, obedience,
empathy. Tales teach respect for others. The young acquired intelligence and wisdom from tales.

To develop verbal artistry, new words were used by story tellers and these were explained.

The Mashona loved *nziyo* (songs) and *nhetembo* (poetry), as demonstrated by the fact that every occasion had its own *nhetembo* (poem) and *nziyo* (song). *Hurudza* (successful farmers) had their poems, and *vadzimba* (outstanding hunters) also had their own poems. Even sex had *zvireverere kana kuti nhendo yegudzagadzi* (poems of the blanket to be recited by men during sex) or *madanha kana kuti nhendo yegudzagono* (recited by women) (Pongweni, 1996). However, poetry and song were predominantly employed in the teaching of local history and legends to foster identity as indicated by Hodza (1979:13) when he writes, ÒThese provide both men and women with an important part of their identityÓ. The poems were also used in connection with rites, ceremonies, feasts, funerals and festivals. Perhaps it is important to note here that songs could be used in conjunction with tales, proverbs and riddles to relay messages. So, these devices were used concurrently. There were also totemic poems that called for strong powers of memory and imagination. These had to be recited to the accompaniment of appropriate gestures in conformity with the principles of *hunhu/ubuntu*. Outstanding achievements of the members of the clan were constantly incorporated into the totemic poem and epics enhancing the creativity, verbal dexterity and artistic skills of the people.
Sifuna and Otiende (1994) argue that myths were another tool used in teaching. These were used to teach such subjects as the origin of human beings, natural phenomena, the supernatural and such things as the elders found difficult to explain. They were also employed to teach moral issues and explain abstract ideas. Such subjects were also difficult for the young to comprehend, for example the origin of man.

Proverbs, riddles, tales, songs and myths all called for interpretative skills. They all contributed to the development of the intellect of the learners. *Njere* (wit) accompanied by *zvidavado* (verbal dexterity) was highly valued among the Mashona people. Hence, the verbal arts were an important instrument in the cultivation of *hunhu*.

**Physical Education (Kusimbisa muviri)**

*Kuimba* (singing), *kudzana* (dancing), *kuridza ngoma* (drumming), acrobatic displays, and *mutsimba* (wrestling) were some of the outstanding recreational activities and sports among the Mashona. These recreational activities had both religious and moral significance always within the limits of *hunhu/ubuntu*. They were also intended to synchronise movements. Physical fitness was regarded as essential in a society which survived on farming, hunting, mining, and trading. This also meant that pupils had to learn about the weather, the terrain, animals, and herbs found in their environment. This was intended to enable them to control their environment to their own benefit (Sifuna & Otiende, 1994:5).

Though they were writing about indigenous education in Africa in general, Sifuna and Otiende (1994:130) capture the holism of education for *hunhu/ubuntu* when they wrote:
Indigenous education, therefore, embraced character building as well as the development of physical aptitudes and the acquisition of both those moral qualities felt to be an integral part of adulthood and the knowledge and techniques needed for active participation in social life in its various forms. In broad terms indigenous education emphasised social responsibility, job orientation, political participation and spiritual and moral values.

Methods of learning among indigenous people

Learning among the indigenous people in Zimbabwe was basically through:

a. *Kuona/ kuongorora (Observation)*

Kuona or Kuongorora (observation) entailed attention to detail, an engagement with that which was being observed. Observation also entailed the observer being able to see themselves in the position of those they were observing. Immersed in the culture of their people, and aware of the significance of everyday activities, children in most cases moved around with elders and creatively participated in their daily chores. The children were expected to keenly observe, learn and model what the adults were doing. The observation and learning could be conscious or subconscious. For example, they observed how elders related to others, how they communicated with others, how they performed certain tasks. It was not mere passive observation, but active observation in dialogue with the elders that yielded understanding which was the hallmark of *hunhu/ubuntu.*
b. **Kuedzesera (Imitation)**

Together with observation, the child had to imitate the elders to see if he could do it right. The elders at times asked the child to observe with a view to asking him to imitate. This was when observation was conscious and the instruction formal. This, in a way, was participatory learning. For example, when elders went to cultivate the fields, the child was given a miniature hoe and actually learnt by participating in productive labour. Often they were given work commensurate with their age and ability (Raum, 1967). At other times children imitated elders of their sex when at *mahumbwe* (playing house). For example, they could cook, hunt, fetch firewood and water and so on. Play was regarded as very important in indigenous education (Sifuna and Otiende, 1994).

c. **Kudzidziswa (Instruction)**

Direct instruction was mainly employed by specialists in the field of basketry weaving, farming, fishing, hunting, leather-tannery, and metal fabrication (Njobe, 1990). This means that the apprenticeship system was predominant. The specialist had one or two students and rarely more. This gave the advantage of close supervision, maximum interaction and comprehension of problems encountered by the pupil. Njobe (1990) points out that since the pupil was largely responsible for determining the area of specialisation, motivation of the pupil was not a problem. This was also mainly because the pupils chose their field of specialisation at a relatively mature age. Above all, *hunhu/ubuntu* had to characterise the whole learning situation.
**Summary**

While the discussion tended to use examples from the Mashona experience, these can to some extent be extended to the Amandebele. I concur with Samkange and Samkange that the Bantu culturally share a lot in common, and Ramose (1999:50), who argues that philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu* "goes from the Nubian Desert to the Cape of Good Hope and from Senegal to Zanzibar." This is not to dismiss some differences that may be due to some peculiar experiences. The importance of the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu* as a shared heritage has been emphasised by Ramose (1999), Makuvaza (1996a, 1996b), Samkange and Samkange (1980) to name a few philosophers. Thus, it has been argued that the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu* was the foundation of the type of education that was provided by the Mashona and the Amandebele to their young ones.

I have argued that *hunhu/ubuntu* was the philosophy of education that determined the content of the education as well as its methodologies that were used in imparting knowledge in indigenous education. The principles that have been seen to inform and constitute the foundations of indigenous education, that is communalism, holism, preparationism, functionalism and essentialism were deeply rooted in, and geared toward the inculcation of *hunhu/ubuntu*. In this sense the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu* is dialectical, that is, it informs African practice and is in turn enriched by the same practice. The education based on this philosophy aimed at preparing the child for life as a full member of his/her community and assisted the learner to acquire what Sifuna termed, "*communal identity*". In other words, it was humanistic as well. Consequently, among other things, indigenous education emphasised social responsibility as well and initiated the
child into the philosophy that informed the community in which he/she lived. The child learnt the moral code, laws and taboos of his/her society and acquired those skills that his/her society cherished in accordance with hunhu/ubuntu. It was in this context that the education based on hunhu/ubuntu seemed to adequately address the needs of the Mashona and Amandebele people as it was the education of the heart, the head, the hand and the body as a whole. It was a holistic education, an education for life and living.

It is the extent to which missionary societies in Zimbabwe attempted to build upon this philosophy that I will determine whether missionaries were in fact collaborators with the colonial regime or benefactors of Africans. Before a discussion of the perceptions and attitudes of the different missionary societies towards Africans and their education, it is important to discuss the two contending theories in the interpretation of missionary activities in Zimbabwe, the theory of collaboration and the theory of benevolence, in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 3

CONTENDING THEORIES ON THE ROLE OF MISSIONARIES IN THE PROVISION OF EDUCATION IN ZIMBABWE

Introduction

Most missionaries who came to Africa from Europe had their own conceptions of Africa and Africans. It was these conceptions that influenced the role they perceived themselves to be playing when they provided education to Africans. Africa then was viewed as on the fringes of civilization and in need of being exposed to civilization through, among other things, western education. Yet Africans had their own civilization which shaped their own understanding of themselves as informed by the philosophy of hunhu /ubuntu as has already been argued in chapter two. The Africans had education systems that gave them their identity and equipped them to survive as maintained in the previous chapter. As I argued in the preceding chapter, it was the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu that determined the perceptions Africans had of the world around them, including the role played by missionaries in Africa. Given the fact that the conceptions that both missionaries and Africans had emanated from their own philosophies and unique existential circumstances, the encounter between them was inevitably bound to result in the struggle for existence and, where possible, dominance or supremacy between the two groups of people. Furthermore, their perceptions on the role of education were bound to be different. The interaction between the missionaries and Africans generated a number of theories on the nature of relations between the Africans and the missionaries as scholars tried to understand and explicate how these people from different cultures were to be able to live together. It was these theories that informed the evaluation of missionary activities,
including the provision of education, to Africans. It is the origins and the nature of the two major contending theories that this chapter seeks to discuss.

The theory of benevolence and the theory of collaboration have been chosen as they are the major contending theories scholars have engaged in trying to understand how Africans and missionaries have interacted in Africa. They have also been chosen because their starting points are very different. While the theory of benevolence has been largely expatiated and supported by Eurocentric scholars, the theory of collaboration has been adumbrated by radical scholars. It therefore appeared useful to use these theories to evaluate missionary provision of education in Zimbabwe in the context of the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu as they have the potential to unmask missionary inclinations, and intentions in the provision of education to Africans in Zimbabwe.

Eurocentric writers often create the impression that African contacts with people from Europe and other continents began in the 15th century when European missionaries established contacts with southern Africa. This establishment of contact is then presented as the beginning of development in educational and other areas of life to the benefit of the Africans who were supposedly being rescued from this isolation. This reasoning gave rise to the theory that regarded the provision of education to Africans as an act of benevolence. However, contrary evidence seems to suggest that the 15th and post-15th century encounters were not the first intercourse between Africans and people from other continents. Arab writers like al Bakri, al Idrisi, Ibn Battuta and Leo Africanus (Hassan ibn Muhammad al Wuzzan) confirm the contacts Africa had with Asia, China and Arabia and
even with Europe before the 15th century. That Africa has traded with Arabia and India for a long period is manifest. The evidence is reflected in Chinese porcelain, Indian glass beads, Arabian glass bottles and Nigerian iron bells that were discovered by historians and archaeologists at excavation sites in Zimbabwe, especially at the Great Zimbabwe (Summers, 1966). These provide evidence of Africa’s development before the 15th century encounter with Europe. This evidence led scholars to come up with the theory of collaboration that presents missionaries as collaborating with the colonial regimes when they provided education to Africans. Given the contradictions of these two theories in explaining the same phenomena, it is essential to understand how they developed.

It is difficult to disagree with Randolph’s argument (1985) that the missionaries, no matter their ideological or philosophical orientation, were children of their own time and culture. This, in essence, is corroborated by Majeké (1986:1) when she contends that:

> It is important to know the womb from which sprang the missionary movement in Southern Africa and indeed all the colonies of the British Empire, for Southern Africa was but one of the vast networks of missionary activity.

The same interpretation is also expressed by Maravanyika (1986) who asserts that when missionaries came to Africa they already had an impression of the continent, the people and cultures they were going to encounter, this having been formed on the basis of the views commonly espoused in their countries of origins. This gives rise to the need to examine the conceptions Europeans had about Africa that gave rise to the two contending theories, the
theory of benevolence and the theory of collaboration, in evaluating missionary activities, including the provision of education to Africans. It is these theories and their origins that the researcher is going to discuss in the following paragraphs.

**The Development of the theory of benevolence**

The theory of benevolence maintains that Missionary presence in Africa was intended to benefit the Africans who lived in the Dark Continent. Missionaries are portrayed as having been impelled by philosophic, humanitarian impulse and benevolence towards Africans who were heathen, uncivilized, and who had no knowledge of God (Flood, 1973). It is further held that missionary activities, especially the provision of education to Africans, did, in fact, benefit Africans as it brought them into the fold of the world of civilization. Therefore, it is contended, central to the civilizing vocation of the missionaries was the provision of education to Africans. It is the intention in this section to trace the historical evolution of the theory of missionaries as being impelled by benevolence when they provided education to Africans.

Quite often the impression is created of an historical hiatus in the development of African history. This an historical hiatus, it is argued, was brought to an end by missionaries when they introduced education to Africa. Hatch (1959:9) suggests that:

> The most important single factor dominating the history of the African peoples is the isolation of their continent from outside contact. It is not until the second half of the 19th century that any serious attempt was made to discover what lay within
the continent and to bring the majority of the African peoples into contact with the rest of the world.

The proposition seems to be a representative description of the views of Africa and its people commonly espoused by European intellectuals, travellers, hunters and missionaries of the early 19th century up to mid 20th century. These European intellectuals, travellers, hunters and missionaries were responsible for the development of the theory of benevolence. The provision of education to Africans was seen as part of the process of bringing African people into contact with the rest of the world. Africans are portrayed as living in isolation. It is this isolation that is said to partly explain why very little about Africa was known by the Europeans. Knowledge about Africa was a matter of conjecture. The impression is that Africans took no initiative to interact with other parts of the world. They were there waiting to be discovered and initiated into civilization. Hence, the theory of benevolence that regarded the isolation of Africa as having been brought to an end by missionaries who devoted their energies to the education and Christianization of Africans. By being presented as ending the isolation of Africa, European missionaries are presented as benefactors to Africans.

Also with this myth of an historical hiatus, developed another myth of Africa as a dark continent that manifested itself in the unwillingness, among European scholars, travellers and missionaries, to accept that Africa could be the origin of any semblance of civilization. Artefacts that attested to Africa's association with other continents and that pointed to positive development in Africa were interpreted as evidence that the originators of these
artefacts were or could, in fact, be the people who were responsible for the civilizations found in Africa. This resulted in yet another myth about the intellectual inferiority of Africans to all other races (Mungazi, 1982) and the impossibility of the development of culture and civilization in Africa (Indire, 1974). What this myth did was to strengthen the theory of missionaries as benefactors of Africans since they, through the education that they provided to Africans, were uplifting the intellectually inferior and unproductive Africans.

Davidson (1994) argues that the acceptance of the notion of “separate but equal” between Africans and Europeans existed up to the Middle Ages. Acceptance of equality was reflected in European art, and sculpture that had positive portrayals of Africans. Davidson contends that it was chattel slavery with its dehumanization of the Africans after 1600 or 1650 that altered European perceptions of Africa. The practice of the dehumanization of other people required justification through the creation of myths portraying those being dehumanized as sub-human. Once created, the delusion had to be buttressed by descriptions of Africans as savages, barbarians and primitive, eating raw fruit and sleeping in trees as well as consorting with apes (Onyewuenyi, 1993). While missionary portrayals of Africans did not deviate from these descriptions, their views and perceptions will be examined in the course of the next chapter. For the present the discussion focuses on the views of prominent philosophers which informed those Europeans who came to Africa, and who were most likely expressing the views extant in their societies. It was these and such similar views that formed the bedrock of the theory of benevolence that presented missionary provision of education to Africans a basically an act of benevolence. The
provision of education to Africans by missionaries was viewed as an act of benevolence because the education was regarded as having a civilizing effect. Indeed the views expressed by philosophers cited below justify missionary provision of education to Africans.

Hobbes (1588–1679), as cited in Mudimbe (1988:1), paints a picture of a pre-European Africa in which there was no account of Time; no Arts; no Letters; no Society; and which is worst of all, continued fear, and danger of violent death. What this meant was that Africa needed to be introduced to civilization and for this there was need for benevolent agents. The missionaries who came with western education, introducing writing in many parts of Africa, would be viewed as bringing civilization, that is, sanity in the otherwise chaotic Africa. Hence, the theory of missionaries as benefactors of Africans.

Hegel (1956:91-99), a prominent German philosopher of the 18th century, in his *The Philosophy of History*, denies the historicality of Africans when he says:

Africa must be divided into three parts: one is that which lies south of the desert of Sahara; Africa proper; the Upland Africa ...: the second is that to the north of the desert; European Africa ...: the third is the river region of the Nile... Africa proper, as far as history goes back, has remained for all purposes of connection with the rest of the World; shut up; it is the God-land compressed within itself; the land of childhood, which lying beyond the day of self-conscious history, is enveloped in the dark mantle of Night.... The second portion of Africa is
the river district of the Nile ñ Egypt: which was adapted to become a mighty centre of independent civilization, and therefore is as isolated and singular in Africa as Africa itself appears in relation to the other parts of the world... This part was to be ñ must be attached in Europe....

The peculiarly African character is difficult to comprehend, for the very reason that in reference to it, we must quite give up the principle which naturally accompanies all our ideas ñ the category of universality. In Negro life the characteristic point is the fact that consciousness has not yet attained to the realization of any substantial objective existence ñ as for example, God, or Law ñ in which the interest of man's volition is involved and in which he realizes his own being. This distinction between himself as an individual and the universality of his essential being, the African in the uniform, undeveloped oneness of his existence has not yet attained; so that the Knowledge of an absolute Being, an Other and a Higher than his individual self, is entirely wanting. The Negro, as already observed, exhibits the natural man in his completely wild and untamed state. We must lay aside all thought of reverence and morality ñ all that we call feeling ñ if we would rightly comprehend him; there is nothing harmonious with humanity to be found in this type of character....

At this point we leave Africa, not to mention it again. For it is no historical part of the World; it has no movement or development to exhibit. Historical movements in it ñ that is in its northern part ñ belong to the Asiatic or European world ... Egypt will be considered in reference to the passage of the human mind from its Eastern to its Western phase, but it does not belong to the African Spirit. What we properly
understand by Africa, is the Unhistorical, Undeveloped Spirit, still involved in the
conditions of mere nature, and which had to be presented here only as on the
threshold of the World's History.

Hegel (1956) succeeds in presenting Africans as ahistorical beings. He brings to finality the
reification of the Africans. Presented in this manner, Africans were portrayed as in need of
acts of benevolence that would bring them into the fold of world history.

As is argued by Outlaw (1987), the bringing of Christianity and western education, given
the above understanding, was presented as the bringing of progress which would result in
the improvement of individual and social existence in Africa, thereby benefiting
Africans. The spread of Christianity which necessitated the provision of education is
further justified by the absence of religion among Africans as is argued by Hegel. The
context of the above argument presented by Hegel tends to justify the theory of
benevolence as missionary presence and their provision of education would lead to the
development of Africans and their being made more human.

Serequeberhan (1991:5) quotes Hume (1711–1776), the British philosopher, as saying:

I am apt to suspect the Negroes, and in general all the other species of men (for
there are four or five different kinds) to be naturally inferior to Whites. There never
was a civilized nation of any complexion than white.
David Hume, echoing Hegel (1956)’s argument, denies Africans the possession of civilization. The African is presented as intellectually unproductive. Presenting Europe as the model of humanity, the missionaries who came to educate Africans are presented as bringing Africans closer to humanity and therefore benefitting them. They introduced the “Arts” and “Letters” that the Africans lacked. Elsewhere, he presents Africans as having no ingenuity which in a way justified the enslavement of the blacks during his time (Mathews, 2007). This also means that this state of African inferiority would require the intervention of the originators of civilization to improve the African, thereby again supporting the theory of benevolence.

Serequeberhan (1991:6) further quotes the German philosopher, Kant (1724 Ṵ 1804), as saying, “[s]o fundamental is the difference between the two races of men, and it appears to be as great in regard to mental capacities as in color ... this fellow was quite black from head to foot, a clear proof that what he said was stupid.

Blackness is presented as evidence for lack of rationality. If Africans lacked rationality, they had to be under the tutelage of whites. In fact, elsewhere he argues that blacks should be disciplined through threshing (Mathews, 2007-9). He literary meant that Africans were not fully human. Hence, they can be educated “only as servants (slaves), that is they allow themselves to be trained” (Hachee, n.d:25). It would appear that, for the African to develop, he had “to be trained by someone else”(Hachee, n.d:25). This supports the theory of benevolence as those who brought western education viewed it as uplifting Africans to a higher level of personhood.
Tempels (1952), a Belgian missionary in the Congo, follows the same line of reasoning. He maintains that Africans were incapable of forming concepts and knowledge about the world of experience. Africans, he argues, were incapable of "transforming their environment" or influencing history (Masolo, 1995:155). Tempels further argues that, because Africans cannot do the above, it is the duty of Christian missionaries to do these things on behalf of Africans. Thus, he published his book to assist missionaries in their benevolent role of teaching Africans. They help Africans to express their thoughts and experiences. Masolo has labels Tempels' views as a modernized perpetuation of the old Hegelian view of African history.

Marx and Engels also display the same prejudice when they argue that in the long run the colonised people will benefit economically, politically and morally from subjugation by Europe (Tucker, 1978). The conquest of Africa and other developing countries was taken as a necessary prelude to the realisation of the communist ideal. It must be noted that while all these European philosophers may appear to have been writing about their views of Africa, they were in fact, as Nietzsche (1978) points out, reflecting popular prejudice in Europe. What is also significant is that prejudice against Africa existed earlier than is being suggested by Davidson. It was this prejudice that led to the theory that bringing western education to Africa, especially southern Africa, was an act of benevolence. The missionaries, in bringing western education, are cast as benefactors of Africans as they are viewed as rescuing them from a sub-human state to a more human one.
Mungazi (1982), in fact, argues that experiments whose results were published in Europe were carried out to prove the intellectual inferiority of Africans. Scientific investigations were believed to demonstrate that the African's brain was smaller than, and, therefore, inferior to that of the European. Such arguments were propounded by scholars such as S. T. van Soemmering (1785), Charles White (1785) and other craniologists. While there were other researchers like Thomas Winterbottom who argued to the contrary, pointing out the unreliability of the experiments conducted, their disputations were ignored. Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favored Races in the Struggle for Life* (1859) and *The Descent of Man* (1871) seemed, in a way, to support the theory of the intellectual inferiority of the African and provide "scientific" support to imperialism. It was used as justification for the conquest of the "subject races" by the "master race". This was regarded as the logical outcome of the process of natural selection (Uzoigwe, 1985). Loram (1927:1) alludes to a popular story of a journalist who was sent to investigate and report on the manners and customs of the Africans; the report he presented was apparently very popular for its brevity and succinctness; "Manners none; customs beastly". According to this reasoning, since Africans did not have manners and customs, and were regarded as backward, missionaries were justified in bringing western education as an aspect of western civilization which would give African manners and customs. The arguments therefore support the theory of benevolence as informing missionary activities.

Applying the views expressed by philosophers above, Leopold Mottoulle, an administrator of the Belgian Congo could say in 1954:
The coloniser must never lose sight of the fact that the Negroes have the minds of children, minds which are shaped by the methods of the educator; they look and listen, feel and imitate (Davidson, 1994:10).

In other words, Africans needed someone, a benefactor, to initiate them and give them direction about life through western education.

This attitude toward Africa and Africans continued to haunt European intellectual life so that they could not accept "African" or "Africa" as appropriate prefixes for anything that could be said to be genuinely intellectual. Aware that African history had been denied, but realising its existence, Melville Herskovits, whom Davidson (1994:5) describes as "the father of African Studies in the United States" had to find an appropriate term which American intellectuals would find palatable, a term such as African ethnohistory, when referring to African oral history. This usage continued through the 1950s (Davidson, 1994). Similarly, in England, Gervase Matthew, the advocate of the existence of African history, and therefore African education, had to use the term intuitive history (Davidson, 1994:10). What is essential here is to note the attempt to maintain the view of Africans as inferior beings incapable of evolving anything worth to be regarded as belonging to the realm of civilization. Thus, in 1965, Hugh Trevor-Roper, Regius Professor of History at Oxford could claim:
Undergraduates, seduced, as always, by the changing breath of journalistic fashion, demand that they should be taught the history of black Africa. Perhaps, in the future there will be some African history to teach. But at present there is none, or very little: there is only the history of Europeans in Africa. The rest is darkness... And darkness is not a subject for history (Samkange, 1971:11).

Thus, informed by conceptions fostered by such myths, Karl Mauch, on seeing Great Zimbabwe for the first time, concluded that the structure could not have been the work of the inhabitants of Zimbabwe for this challenged popular European notions about Africa. Apparently trying not to cast aspersions on the commonly held belief, he credited the Phoenicians with the construction of the beautiful structures that were evidently a testimony to skilful workmanship. This gave birth to the "Asian theory" of the origins of Great Zimbabwe. Gann (1965) suggests that the "Asian theory" of the origins of Great Zimbabwe was perfectly acceptable in Victorian Europe where the Bantu were regarded as being at the lowest level of the evolutionary process and so incapable of evolving a tradition, or culture at the level reflected in the magnificence of the Great Zimbabwe. They therefore required acts of benevolence, such as the provision of western education by missionaries to lift them to the level attained by the West. The arguments are still in support of the theory of benevolence as Africans were deemed incapable of developing themselves because, so far, history was interpreted to mean that they had not been capable of improving themselves.
Africa and Africans, having been reified, and Africans being regarded as “half devil and half child”, slavery and subsequent conversion and colonialism could be justified as benevolent acts; acts of philanthropy intended to civilize and emancipate Africans (Serequeberhan, 1991:5). The protagonists of slavery, proselytisation and colonization could pose as harbingers of culture and civilization to Africa impelled by a humanitarian impulse. For this interpretation to succeed, the existence of indigenous education had to be denied. Consequently, a number of myths relating to indigenous education had to be fabricated in support of the theory of benevolence. Ocitti (1994) argues that two myths were particularly prominent and more serious. The first myth was that there was no education in Africa. This, he argues, is clearly illustrated by H. J. Baker who writes:

The children of this land (Rhodesia) are nonentities. Nothing at all is done for them. They feed, sit about, and sleep and in this manner they grow until the time come for themselves to do something…. They have no nurseries, no tea parties, no birthdays and no instruction from their parents. They are there, and that is all. Their lives are one big nothing (Ocitti, 1994:14).

While the second myth accepts that there is such a thing as indigenous education, this education is presented as of the primitive type that can best be described as “tribal” or “pre-literate” and, therefore, not an education worth to be described as legitimate education. In the final analysis, this education was as good as no education at all (Ocitti, 1994). Yet, as I argued in chapter two, Africans clearly arranged educational provisions for their children from the earliest age. They had mechanisms to educate their young ones before the
introduction of western education by missionaries. What this means is that the denial of the existence of African education was a way to justify the introduction of western education by missionaries. It was a way to support the theory of missionaries as benefactors as they were presented as bringing in something that Africans did not have.

It has to be acknowledged, however, that there were some, albeit few, Europeans who had positive views of Africans. Of significance to note is that it is those who had interacted with Africans who held positive views of them. Bishop William Tozer of Central Africa contended that the mere possession of railways and telegraphs by Europe does not mean Europe is superior to those countries which lacked these. The lack of these also did not indicate the barbarism or lack of civilization of these people (Davidson, 1994). Unfortunately the views of the few who had a positive perception of Africa were drowned in the mazes of negative descriptions of Africa by Europeans. It also has to be observed that even those who had positive perceptions of Africans subscribed to the view that western education had to be imparted to Africans. Their insistence on the need to convert and educate Africans meant that they subscribed to the theory of missionaries as benefactors of Africans.

According to Jabavu (1927:111), Africans were portrayed as people who ſhived in manifest darkness under the spectre of superstition with traditional healers tyrannizing over the people. Africa, having been labelled as a dark continent, was regarded as in need of opening up and enlightenment. The obvious assumption was that Europe possessed the light ſwith which to illuminate or brighten the Dark Continent (Ramose, 1986:110). This
meant that Europeans regarded themselves as coming from a better and higher civilization, that they employed as a barometer of all other civilizations. For explorers and missionaries like Livingstone, "the geographical, scientific and medical exploration of Africa would in turn open the continent to 'Commerce and Christianity' to Western economic enterprise and thought" (Gann, 1965:42), hence, the Scramble for Africa, and the Berlin Colonial Conference of 1884 in which, according to Oruka (1997:255), Africa became "an object for grabs". In this way, missionaries, in bringing western education, were understood to be bringing light to the darkness that was Africa, and turning Africans from savagery to civilization (Samkange, 1975) and, in the words of David Livingstone, bringing to an end "the great social evils of African Society" (Sheffield, 1971:7). This continued to buttress the theory of missionaries as benefactors of Africans, as agents whose brief was the development of Africa through the provision of western education. What the views expressed by Livingstone indicate is also that in reality the focus of missionaries was not on educating Africans, but on converting them to Christianity, and thus softening them for colonization.

The sole aim of the missionary movement was presented as the evangelisation of Africans, the spread of the Christian message and in the process civilizing Africans. Hence, all the missionaries were seen as having been after spreading Christianity for the benefit of Africans as missionaries were "scattering the seeds of civilization" (Majeke, 1986:9).

To sum up this section on benevolence, I note that the proponents of the theory of benevolence argue that missionaries cushioned Africans against the hard effects of the
process of colonization, and that they brought civilization and education to Africans. I also note that the theory of benevolence was popularised by Eurocentric writers on the role of missionaries in Southern Africa. Missionaries are presented as having come to Africa for benevolent, philanthropic and humanitarian reasons and the provision of education to Africa is understood in that context.

However, there is also another rival theory that views missionaries as collaborators with the colonists and colonialists in the exploitation of the African people. In providing education to Africans, missionaries are viewed not as benefactors to Africans but as another arm of imperialism. Missionary education is presented as facilitating the colonization of the mind of the African. This is the theory whose origins are discussed below.

**The theory of collaboration**

In opposition to the theory of benevolence is the theory that, in providing education to Africans, missionaries were, in fact, collaborating with the colonial settlers and the colonial regime. Under this theory of collaboration, the Africans are presented as victims of exploitation facilitated by the missionaries who were advancing capitalist interests through the education system. Missionaries are presented as having been aware of the role they were playing in the exploitation of Africa by the colonizers. Furthermore, missionaries are said to have been part and parcel of the whole process of colonization and the dispossession of the Africans. This theory is informed by the view that Africans had their own education systems, civilization and culture that informed their world views. They did not need the intervention of outsiders in their historical development. Africans are portrayed as having
suffered more as a result of intervention by the colonizers and the missionaries who accompanied them. The missionaries are presented as having been after working with the settlers and promoting the interests of capitalism so that any benefits Africans may have had were incidental. The education that missionaries provided to Africans is viewed in the context of missionary collaboration with the colonial regimes in Africa. The missionaries, in terms of education, are said to have been after replacing indigenous education with Western education, since for them indigenous philosophies of education did not exist and indigenous education was not education per se. This rejection of indigenous education resulted in conflict between missionaries and the African as their views on education were very different.

Proponents of the theory of collaboration examine the Africans and their conditions in Africa before the advent of missionary involvement and conclude that there was no justification for foreign intervention including the provision of education to Africans. Missionaries are presented as "cultural imperialists incapable of or unwilling to fairly evaluate and respect the cultures of the people with whom they came in contact" (Kaplan, quoted in Mupasi, 1990:2). In fact, Raum (1965:89) argues that missionaries "had an interest in proving the superiority of the western way of life, of its religion and education." He further argues that, that was why they ignored the existence of indigenous education. To understand the development of the theory of collaboration, it is essential to study the historical situation of the Africans before the advent of colonialism and the introduction of Western education by missionaries. This is essential since the theory of collaboration is deeply rooted in the historical development of Africa.
Proponents of the theory of collaboration argue that theories of Bantu migration from the Ethiopian Highlands suggest that the Bantu who are now in Central and Southern Africa migrated through, some, East Africa and others West Africa. The Mashona in Southern Africa who are of Bantu stock are some of the Bantu who migrated from North Africa. They established themselves in what is now Zimbabwe and were responsible for the Great Zimbabwe civilization. It is then argued that at no time were they isolated from the outside world as is claimed by proponents of the theory of benevolence such as Hatch (1959). In East, West, Central and Southern Africa they interacted with Muslim, Arab, Chinese and Indian traders and later Portuguese traders. Muslims came mostly after the Islamic revolution which culminated in the jihads, and the Portuguese came to Southern Africa mostly in the 15th century after the discovery of the route to India via the Cape of Good Hope. Meanwhile, the Bantu had their own education system, that is, the education for hunhu/ubuntu, which served them well. It was an education that was informed by indigenous philosophies. It is then argued that the education that missionaries brought emphasized Christian values that were inconsistent with indigenous philosophy. Thus, they were in conflict with African philosophy while they were in collaboration with the settlers whose values were akin to those emphasised in Western education.

While proponents of the theory of benevolence can argue that when the issue of isolation is raised, it is in connection with Kingdoms of the interior of Africa, proponents of the theory of collaboration can counter argue that the reputation of the Mutapa Empire, as reflected in records by Portuguese traders, is ample evidence that it was not isolated. In fact, Asante
and Asante (1983) maintain that the artefacts found at Great Zimbabwe point to the existence of trade contacts with China and India. In addition, Davidson (1994) argues that there were very successful black merchants from the Munhumutapa Empire at the East African Coast. At the same time, there are reports that at the Munhumutapa's court were found Arab and Muslim traders (Freund, 1984). It is then argued that the isolation of Africa from outside contacts was just a myth designed to make heroes out of those European missionaries who, through their educational activities, were claiming to be bringing Africa into the human fold. Those European missionaries, according to Indire (1974), wanted to portray themselves as the carriers of civilization bringing education to Africa where, in reality, they were collaborating with the settlers. According to Ocitti (1994:9), these European missionaries were refusing to accept the reality of the existence of indigenous education because it was "outside the realm of [the type of] schooling" with which they were familiar. Consequently, as indicated by the statement by Barker on Rhodesian children, these missionaries suppressed indigenous education, hence, the label that they were collaborating with the colonial regime in castigating indigenous education, religion and culture.

Furthermore, proponents of the theory of collaboration maintain that for the Mashona, as for the Amandebele and all other Africans, there was nothing wrong with their indigenous education, world view, their philosophy of life, their social, political and religious institutions and everything that contributed to their being as Africans. Like any other human society, their interaction with other people was dynamic and was determined by their philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu which valued hunhu/ubuntu. No notions of inferiority or
superiority of one group of people over another were entertained. Being munhu/umuntu (person) was enough to warrant respect and being treated as a human being. This, Callaway, quoted by Loram (1927:8), recognizes when discussing ubuntu he writes that ubuntu:

Implies a certain aspect for the dignity of human nature itself, apart from the extraneous advantages of education, wealth, position etc. A man is a person (umuntu) and ought to be encouraged to realise the dignity of human nature. A man cannot despise another without harming himself, without doing despite to the human nature possessed with all other men.

This in essence means all people had to be treated with respect regardless of race, colour, sex or class. This respect for human beings was inculcated through indigenous education which emphasized respect for human life and respect for visitors. The philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu inculcated through indigenous education dictated that the interaction of Africans with the Arabs and Indians be based on mutual respect and equality. They did not question the humanity of these people simply because they were different. Muslims and other people, with whom the Mashona interacted, respected African cultures and traditions, and philosophy of life and the Africans reciprocated. Samkange (1985) maintains that the Mashona extended their hospitality determined by altruism, a cardinal principle of hunhu/ubuntu that governed interaction with strangers. This is summed up in the saying, Mweni haapedzi dura (a passerby on a journey does not spend all your stores of food: so offer him/her as much as you can). The indigenous education that taught the values of
mutuality and respect for other people remained intact. This is why the Portuguese when they came to the Mutapa Empire failed to make progress in converting the local people.

Gann (1965:26) is right in observing that:

Scholars as yet can only speculate as to the causes of this extraordinary resilience; perhaps tribal beliefs still appeared perfectly well-adjusted to a people who possessed land in abundance and felt no particular need to change their accustomed ways; perhaps the white man's Cartesian cast of mind, wont to categorize, and to separate the spiritual and the material aspects of life into separate compartments, could make no headway amongst a people whose philosophy of life was as yet simple and more unified. Perhaps, [the Karanga came to identify missionary with political penetration, and determined to reject both].

It seems clear that the Mashona and Amandebele were not prepared to give up what they believed in, what they cherished and possessed. They maintained their philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu against all pressure from outside. This can be attributed to the efficacy of the indigenous education system that emphasised social cohesion. Moreover, as Ajayi (1965) points out, what the missionaries preached and taught in their schools was contrary to the African's philosophic outlook. According to Loram (1927:1), missionaries preached Christianity as ſu personal and not a community religion ſo and taught values that emphasized individualism as opposed to communalism and holism that indigenous education taught. Christianity thus portrayed salvation as personal and an individual affair.
On the other hand, African philosophy of life, as epitomised in the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*, cherished more *humwe* (communal identity, or oneness) and a communal destiny, and, in African communities, as noted by `b. Nasseem (1992:35), the *fô* is contingent upon the *fô*. Wiredu (1980:4) aptly observes that "Traditional society was founded on a community of shared beliefs in the wisdom of age, the sanctity of chieftaincy and the binding force of the wisdom and usages of our ancestor". The same perception is shared by b. Nasseem, (1992:35). Given the communalism emphasised in the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu* and Indigenous education, any other education that emphasised the contrary, that is, that negated the society in preference to the individual, was likely to be regarded as an alienating experience by the Karanga. Since missionary education inculcated Western values that conflicted with those propagated through indigenous education, Makuvaza (1996) argues that they should be regarded as collaborators with the settlers. He argues that, while African spirituality perceived the individual as a social being, the education provided by missionaries emphasised individualism that was characteristic of western societies. Makuvaza (1996c) further argues that in providing such an education, an education that propagated values contrary to those enshrined in African spirituality, missionaries were in fact collaborating with the settlers.

According to Byaruhanga-Akiiki (1992), religion in many African communities formed an essential part of the cultural expression of the people. There is no conversion in African traditional religion, *Munhu anozvarirwa mumhuri inochengetwa nemidzimu yayo. Saka anenge ari pasi pemidzimu yake. Midzimu ndiyo misimboti yechitendero chavatema* (One is born into a family whose well fare depends on its ancestral spirits. The individual from
birth is under the protection and guidance of the ancestral spirits. Hence the ancestral spirits are central to African spirituality). As Mbiti (1989) notes, religion pervades every aspect of African life. Given the nature of African perception of *munhu/umuntu* (a person), conversion could not occur without self negation. Yet, as is argued by Mbiti (1989), Western Christianity was not prepared to seriously engage indigenous religion and the education that was responsible for its continuation from generation to generation. Those scholars who propound the theory of collaboration also point out that the education provided to Africans by missionaries was intended to destroy African religion and replace it with Christianity (Berman, 1975). In essence, therefore, it is concluded, when missionaries provided education to Africans, they were collaborating with the colonialists in the destruction of African culture including indigenous education.

The Africans’ religion emphasized communal participation and oneness of the community which in essence meant love for one another. The Africans did not see why they should abandon the philosophy of *munhu/ubuntu* which had been so fundamental to their unity for centuries for a religion which offered nothing fundamentally different from what they already knew except a condemnation of their religious and social practices, especially the role played by ancestral spirits. So, on the whole, the Africans were little affected in terms of their religio-philosophic outlook by missionary activities between the 16th and 18th centuries (Zinyemba, 1986). It is also clear that the ancestral spirits exercised a form of social control likely to be resisted by the missionaries. Missionaries, through the education they provided, as is argued by Chief Murinye, quoted by Ndofirepi (1999:56), required through attendance of their schools ... Africans to publicly accept the new faith and
renounce much of their former culture at baptism. It was such developments that led proponents of the theory of collaboration to argue that missionary education furthered the interests of the colonialists by alienating Africans from their cultures and communities.

From the above, the theory of collaboration is based on the view that to understand missionary provision of education to Africans in Zimbabwe, there is need to focus on the whole colonial movement. Since there was really no development within Zimbabwe to justify missionary provision of education to a people who were otherwise content with their culture, education and general existential circumstances, the reasons are to be sought among the missionaries and their kith and kin. In advancing the theory of collaboration, Majeke (1986) argues that the activities of the missionaries, including the provision of education to Africans, have to be understood within a larger context, collaboration in the colonization of Africa. Majeke (1986) further argues that furtherance of commerce and the spread of the Gospel were the undercurrents of Western education provided to Africans by missionaries. The same point is reiterated by Ngugi wa Thiongo (1986). This interpretation is supported by what David Livingstone explicitly stated when he challenged his Cambridge University audience on 4 December, 1857: ÒI go back to Africa to try and make an open path for Commerce and Christianity. Do you carry on the work that I have begunÓ (Tindall, 1967:101). It was this combination of interest that led the British government to proceed to sponsor Livingstone’s Zambezi Expedition in 1858 (Gann, 1965). It is then argued that the spread of Christianity and the provision of western education to Africans were synonymous.
In explaining the theory of collaboration between missionaries and the settlers, Majeke (1986) argues that missionaries were a cog in the capitalist machinery. She maintains that their role can only be understood in the context of the furtherance of capitalism. Hence, on the missionary movement, she contended, "to understand its functions we must view it as part of a great historical movement, the expansion of capitalism" (Majeke, 1986:1). In other words, there is the issue of appearance versus reality. Appearances can be very deceptive as they can mask reality. Majeke (1986) is arguing that, while missionaries appeared to be bent on developing Africans through the education they provided, in reality they were assisting in the colonization of Africa. They were collaborating with the settlers. Along the same line of reasoning, Kane, cited in wa Thiongo (1986:9), argues that behind the Canon was "the new school" which made "the conquest permanent." Ngugi wa Thiongo (1986:9) further adds that missionary education led to the "spiritual subjugation" of the Africans. In other words, missionaries collaborated with the settlers in destroying African religion and tradition through the domination of "the mental universe of the colonized African (Ngugi wa Thiongo, 1986:16).

Having located the position of the missionaries in the colonization process, Majeke argues that their role was to participate in the domination, enslavement and conquest of the African people. To achieve these ends, various strategies and devices were employed, ranging from outright reliance on force, the targeting of African chiefs, the use of African evangelists to the more subtle use of education through the control of ideas and ways of thinking of the colonised. The intention was to convince Africans of their inferiority, while
the agents of capitalism posed as liberators of the African, and being on a mission to civilize them.

Summary

In this chapter, I have argued that there are two main contending theories that seek to explain missionary provision of education to Africans in Southern Africa in general and Zimbabwe in particular. The first theory of benevolence is based on negative perception of Africans, as they are presented as having been living in the dark, being backward, and in need of salvation. So missionaries are presented as the benefactors who ushered the Africans into world civilization, and made them part of the human race through the provision of education. The second theory, that of missionaries as collaborators with the settlers, presents Africans as people who did not need to be civilized because they had their own system of education, civilization, their culture and values. Therefore, it would be instructive to study missionary activity to see whether they were beneficiaries or collaborators in the provision of education for Africans in Zimbabwe.

Furthermore, I have pointed out that missionaries are charged with being part and parcel of the capitalist movement together with the settlers in Zimbabwe. Examining missionary role in Zimbabwe would help in determining the most appropriate characterisation based on the provision of education in Zimbabwe. But the determination of whether missionaries were collaborators with the settlers or benefactors of Africans will depend on the extent to which they recognized, and utilized the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu and those institutions which were rooted in this philosophy. It is with this in mind that in the next chapter I
examine Christian missionaries' views, attitudes and practices in the provision of education to Africans vis-avis hunhu/ubuntu.
CHAPTER 4

CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES’ PERCEPTIONS AND GOALS IN AFRICAN EDUCATION

Introduction

The argument that is central to this thesis is that, to be able to judge whether Christian missionaries, in their provision of education to Africans, were collaborators with the settlers or benefactors to Africans, there is need for clarity on the extent to which they embraced and harnessed or ignored the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu that was explicated in chapter two. However, to be able to do this there is need for an awareness of what missionaries said, thought, wrote and did in relation to the provision of education to Africans. In other words, there is need for an explication of the insider perspective on missionary activities in the provision of education to Africans. Given that initially missionary preaching and evangelisation activities were coterminous with educational endeavours, many of their activities will have direct relevance or connection to the provision of education to Africans. In as much as they were intended to facilitate Africans’ conversion to Christianity, and in as far as education and evangelism were coterminous, they were contributing to the education of Africans. They need to be discussed if a holistic picture is to emerge to enable me to determine whether missionaries were collaborators with the settler regime or benefactors to Africans in their provision of education to Africans.

Informed by what has been said above, this chapter explores a range of questions among them being: Why did Christian missionaries come to Zimbabwe? Did they achieve their
aims? Given that Christian missionaries provided education to Africans, the questions that arise are: What were their motives in providing education to Africans? How were these motives achieved, and what was the nature of the curricular which were given to the Africans? What philosophy informed missionaries in their provision of education to Africans? In addressing these questions, the chapter will rely heavily on what missionaries themselves said about their perceptions and activities to avoid misrepresentation of their views. I will begin by addressing the last question since the philosophy missionaries held was likely to inform their practice.

The philosophy of abstract universality
A closer look at the perceptions of missionaries about Africa will show that the missionary enterprise was based on the thesis that whatever educational, cultural, or religious packages the various Christian denominations were bringing to Africa were superior to what the Africans possessed. Expressed differently, Christian missionaries were guided by what Gould (1976) calls the philosophy of abstract universality while Garcia (1985) calls it universalism.

According to Garcia (1986:210), universalism claims that philosophy is a science (be it of concepts or of reality) as such, the principles and inferences that it establishes are meant to be universally valid and consequently, it makes no sense to talk of a Latin American philosophy just as it does not make any sense to talk about Latin American chemistry or physics. This means that philosophy, as a discipline, can only be philosophy if it is such. Something is either philosophy or not philosophy without
appellation. It is further argued that philosophy, like mathematics and other disciplines of human knowledge, consists of a series of truths and methods of inquiry that have no spatiotemporal characteristics (Garcia, 1985:210). In this sense, philosophy is presented as a mode of universal knowledge (Roig, 1986:248). To call a philosophy Latin American, African or Italian is to use accidental historical designations (Garcia, 1986). Philosophy as such cannot be defined in terms of particular or accidental social or historical differences (Gould, 1976:7-8). It can only be understood in its universal nature.

Applying the same thinking to the field of religion and education, missionaries believed that the civilization and the culture that gave them their religion and education were the civilization and the culture that embodied absolute truth (Garcia, 1986:211). For them, Christianity afforded the only true conception of God and their education provided the only access to God. According to Aguwa (2007:130), the typical missionary possessed an unflinching conviction about Christianity as the universal truth which would leave no room for any compromises. It was the source of all knowledge about God, morality and religion and western education provided the only avenue to an informed appreciation of the only God. It was this philosophy that bestowed legitimacy on missionary efforts, even when the intended recipients tended to exhibit lack of appreciation of what the missionaries were offering as will become clear in the next chapter. This was because the consequence of the philosophy of abstract universality was the denial of indigenous philosophies of education. In other words, hunhu/ubuntu could not be legitimate philosophies of education. The education for hunhu/ubuntu could not
be accepted as genuine education, hence the myths about the non-existence of African indigenous education discussed in chapter three. Furthermore, it was also this reasoning that gave missionaries the justification to embark on the mission to redeem and civilize the African through western education. Without this reasoning, there would have been no justification for their presence and the establishment of schools in Africa.

It is also in the context of abstract universality that missionary provision of education to Africans in Zimbabwe has to be understood since the provision of education to Africans by the missionaries was an off-shoot of missionary activities in Zimbabwe. In their provision of education to Africans, the missionaries were guided by what they perceived to be the aims of their missions in Zimbabwe. The missionaries’ views of the nature of the African also played a significant role in determining the type of education the missionaries offered to the Africans. The curriculum, its aims and objectives as well as the pedagogy were also influenced by the dictates of the colonial regime and to a lesser extent African demand for Western education.

**Missionary Perceptions of Africans**

In describing the Africans in Zimbabwe most Christian missionaries employ phrases which betray an overbearing sense of superiority and racist intolerance (Bhila, 1977:33). These missionaries failed to appreciate the humanity of the Africans and their cultures and traditions because they were informed by the prejudices that were prevalent in their places of origin. As observed in the previous chapter, very little was known about the Mashona and the Amandebele in the countries from which missionaries originated.

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their initial knowledge of the Mashona and the Amandebele, the Christian missionaries relied on accounts of traders and adventurers and academic expressions of the other by prominent European scholars including the philosophers discussed in chapter three whose accounts were not always reliable (Mazola, 1995:3) and were responsible for the development of the theory of benevolence. It was these narratives that spurred them to want to come and work among the heathen, using education to enlighten the Africans. Once in Zimbabwe, the urge was always to maintain the stereotypes in their reports and letters to families and friends in Europe even when what they encountered was contrary to notions about Africa and Africans extent in the Occident. I therefore, proceed to look at what missionaries said about the Africans they encountered in Zimbabwe as these had a bearing on the kind of education they proffered to Africans.

Recording his first visit to the Amandebele, Moffat writes, I had never before come in contact with such savage or degraded minds (Mathers, 1977:66). He further portrays the Matabele as the most savagely glamorous tribe north of the Orange (Chennells, 1977:48). His son further quotes him describing the Amandebele as endowed with savage and degraded minds (Moffat, 1886:155). Following his father, John Smith Moffat (1921:97) describes Mzilikazi as the savage despot and the African savage. Mary Moffat also describes Mzilikazi as an absolute tyrant and the Amandebele as thoroughly barbarous and naturally unpromising people (Moffat, 1886:327). In the same vein, the Reverend Watters (1882:125) describes the Amandebele as barbarians under the barbarian king. Robert Moffat, while in Matabeleland opines: I am among a people living in Egyptian darkness, in beastly degradation; everything in their political
economy is diametrically opposed to the spirit of the Gospel of God (Weller and Linden, 1984:15). In the *Missionary Magazine*, vol. 24 1860, Robert Moffat writes about the Amandebele, "Oh they are savages, they are ignorant and wicked" (Chennells, 1977:53). J. S. Moffat on his return to Matabeleland on 3 August 1889 wrote that the Amandebele had degenerated into "beggars and thieves" (Moffat, 1921:233). It is important to note that the Amandebele, informed by the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*, welcomed the London Missionary Society missionaries. They extended the hospitality enshrined in *hunhu/ubuntu* to the London Missionary Society missionaries for more than three decades without molestation. It was the same kings, Mzilikazi and Lobengula, who allowed them to establish mission stations where the missionaries tried to introduce western education with their blessings. It was such negative perceptions that led missionaries to ignore what Africans already had in providing education to Africans as they were intend on appearing to be benefiting the Amandebele.

Another London Missionary Society missionary, Thomas (1873:63), creates the impression that Mzilikazi was a tyrant when he claims that everything in Matabeleland and Mashonaland belonged to the King, "for the people were the property of the King, in the same sense as the cattle in his kraal". Yet Rasmussen (1977) presents Mzilikazi in positive light as a very considerate leader who valued honesty. The case in point is that of a Mashona chief who allowed Boers to enter the country without informing Mzilikazi. When the chief was called by the king to explain, he indicated that he hated Mzilikazi and wished him dead. Instead of punishing him, Mzilikazi merely said, "You have spoken what your heart feels. Go in peace, only in future let me know when any
strangers approach (Rasmussen, 1977:37). This is unlike the tyrant he is made to be by the Moffats. It can only be surmised that the negative perceptions cited above were intended to justify missionary presence as they could pretend to be intend on converting the kings and their degraded subjects to Christianity through, among other things, the provision of Christian education to Africans. Such perceptions were shared by many members in different denominations working in Matabeleland and Mashonaland. The plausible interpretation here is that the London Missionary Society missionaries, in their descriptions, wanted to maintain their image as benefactors to the Africans. The negative perceptions led them to ignore the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu that led the Amandebele to offer them hospitality. It was these perceptions that fed into the education they provided to Africans.

Hole, for some time secretary of the Church Council of the Anglican Church, describes the Mashona in The Old Rhodesian Days as "the heathen É savages É steeped in witchcraft and the grossest forms of paganism" (Atkinson, 1973:66). For Knight Ņ Bruce (1895:18) the Mashona were "cowards yet of savage brutality, and viewed their culture as strange with huts that were "dark and dirty. He viewed the Mashona as having no knowledge of God (Knight Ņ Bruce, 195:43). The African is presented as "a poor baby who ñought to be protected" (p.144). Knight Ņ Bruce (1895:158) proceeds:

But the untouched native seemed to be a poor child intended to be helped, and possibly, in so far as a child should be punished, but still treated as a child. Sometimes he was more or less a well-behaved child; sometimes more or less
badly-behaved child; sometimes he was clean, sometimes dirty; sometimes brave, sometimes cowardly; but always a child.

Clearly, this was in line with the Hegelian argument presented in chapter three. If indeed, this was the nature of the African, the missionary, in providing education to Africans, could pose as benefactors to Africans. Furthermore, Knight-Bruce argues that while the ÑMatabele are taught from childhood to murder, lie and steal, the Mashona are Ñpossibly morally imbecile Ñ(Lewis, & Edwards, 1934:109). For Archdeacon Upcher one of the roles of missionaries was Ñto keep the white man from becoming black by contact with that predominating colour, and try and make the black man white in heart, that he may be a help, not a hindrance Ñ(Upcher, 1903:9). These negative descriptions of Africans were intended to sway the people in Europe to sympathise with the missionaries whose mission was to civilize the Africans, to raise them to the level of civilized beings through the imposition of Western education. Missionaries could then pose as benefactors to Africans as the provision of Western education would be justified as one of the major ways of uplifting the Africans. These perceptions and attitudes also meant that missionaries had failed to recognize the existence of the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu and African Traditional Religion as well as indigenous education.

While Father Hartmann, a Jesuit priest who accompanied the Pioneer Column, does not completely dismiss African belief in God, he argues that, ÑAmong the Mashona there are only faint traces of religion. They have hardly any idea of a supreme being Ñ(Hartman, 1894:379-384). The same perception is expressed by the Reverend Shimmin of the
Wesleyan Methodist Church who described them as being in most deplorable ignorance of all true religion who have the potential to make sound and intelligent believers (Zvobgo, 1991:26). The Reverend Pluke claims to have perceived in village after village, the grim reality of heathenism which mocks the servant of the holy Nazarene (Banana, 1991:123). The Reverend Shimmin therefore argues that the Mashona's moral nature was so set against godliness (Shimmin, 1892). One Dutch Reformed Church missionary in a verbal report to the Education Commission in 1925 said about the African, He is not equal to us (Maravanyika, 1986:108). Furthermore, Tlou (1975:195) writes of another Dutch Reformed Church missionary at Morgenster who always quoted Ephesians 6:9 to the Africans, Slaves, be Obedient to those who are your earthly masters, with fear and trembling in singleness of heart as Christ?". Father Hartmann further describes the Mashona as lazy, unclean and irreligious, being characterized by idleness as their being (Hartman, 1894:379-384). Prestage described the Amandebele state as founded upon a basis of injustice whose system of government was a system of iniquity and devilry (Zvobgo, 1996:7). Among our pagan savages, wrote Father Biehler at Empandeni mission in 1911, the devil is king, and that under many shapes (Zvobgo, 1996:96). According to the Reverend R. Sykes, a member of the Jesuit missionaries the natives lived animal lives without a single elevating influence; their moral and spiritual natures were dead (Peaden, 1970:2-3). The Zambezi Mission Record of 1911, in its editorial is quite unequivocal about its perception of Africans:

The blacks are, and must for generations to come remain, the inferior race. It is our duty to raise them from the state of barbarism and heathenism; but they
should also be taught to submit cheerfully to the duty so long ago foretold ḍa servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. If rightly brought up, the Native will submit to his lot, and, though naturally indolent and irresponsible, he will work to the satisfaction of his employer, and manage to be happy and content himselfō(p.164).

All these views were in keeping with the philosophy of abstract universality. They had an impact in determining the kind of education the missionaries were to provide to Africans. The education, in line with the arguments that Africans were backward and barbaric, was to emphasize the provision of industrial skills and to introduce God to the Africans. These became the main goals of the education that missionaries provided to Africans.

The same negative view was expressed by Father. Joseph OÔNeil (Nyatsanza, 1997) and Father Burbridge who describe them as Ñthe wild hordeō (Linden, 1980:24). These expressions leave no doubt as to Christian missionariesÔ views concerning Africans. Such perceptions precluded cultural dialogue or mutual borrowing between missionaries and Africans. These perceptions and attitudes clearly show that missionaries, in providing education to Africans, regarded themselves as being guided by the theory of benevolence discussed in chapter three. The Christian education they were to give to Africans was then viewed as a process of humanizing Africans. They were working within the framework of beneficence in relation to Africans. But this is not to imply that all Christian missionaries were not aware that Africans believed in the existence of God. The Reverend George Pluke, in 1927, observed that, ÑAny missionary who thinks he is
going out to the heathen will be surprised to find out God has already gone before him (Banana, 1991:124). Even earlier on in 1917 the Reverend Gray had acknowledged that Africans adhered to their own religion more honestly than Christians did to theirs:

The Bantu people have a religion that profoundly affects the whole of their lives. . . . We say God is everywhere, God knoweth all, seeth all, but what proportion of our race lives that belief? All natives in their natural state live this belief (Zvobgo, 1991:7).

Indeed this acknowledgement is in line with the existence of African indigenous education and religion as noted in chapter two. Along the same lines, Mbiti (1989) argued that in African communities, religion permeates every aspect of life. This is what the above statement by Gray confirms. The Reverend Cripps (1927:42) writes:

When you read philanthropic and disinterested mine-owners’ lamentation over the good-for-nothing laziness of Kaffir mankind and the joyless drudgery of Kaffir women-kind, please be faithful and unbelieving.

Despite this acknowledgement by some missionaries of the existence of belief in God among Africans, most missionaries continued to consider Africans as heathen refusing to build upon African religion, philosophy and indigenous education. It is also clear that had missionaries accepted that Africans had knowledge of God and educated their young ones, this might have brought in question the justification of missionary activities among
the Africans. The missionaries, therefore, had to go along with the theory of benevolence so they would continue to receive financial and material support from home. Africans are presented as in need of western education as a way to Christianisation. This interpretation is in agreement with Chennells’ reasoning below.

Explaining why missionaries held on to negative perceptions of Africans, Chennells (1977) argues that when missionaries wrote for themselves in their diaries, the missionaries were honest. They acknowledged that Africans had knowledge of God, educated their young and were in most cases more upright than whites. However, when they wrote for outsiders, that is those in Europe and their financiers, they tended to want to maintain the stereotypes. "Civilization was the prerogative of the West and the heathen becomes more incorrigibly savage as the century proceeds," argues Chennells (1977:52). Chennells further proposes that this was intended to keep funds flowing into the coffers of the Christian missionaries for the continuation of work, the struggle against the forces of evil among the savages through the provision of education. In other words, they were deliberately not being truthful in maintaining the stereotypes in the face of contrary evidence. That is why in explanation of the terms used by missionaries to describe the Africans, Brown contends that such terms as "savages" and "barbarians" do not tell us much about the Africans. Rather they tell us more about the users of such terms and their intentions (Brown, 1966:1). The terms were meant to justify missionary provision of education to, and other evangelistic activities among, Africans.
It is important to note that with the transformation of society in Rhodesia and Africans becoming more and more politically active, and indicating the type of education that they desired, missionary attitudes towards Africans were also changing. The exception to this appears to have been the Dutch Reformed Church which remained fixated in a racist ideology informed by the philosophy of apartheid prevalent in South Africa from which most of its missionaries came. In the 1950s, Africans began to more seriously challenge the colonial authorities (Banana, 1991:131). In education, the Africans began to demand an education that would empower them, a more academic education as opposed to a rudimentary one. As the colonial authorities refused to accommodate African interests, Africans were forced to resort to war as a means of seeking access to better education for all, justice, equality, and freedom. These developments forced most missionaries to rethink their perceptions and attitudes.

Observing trends elsewhere in Africa, the Christian missionaries opted to move with the tide though this was not always smooth. The Wesleyan Methodist Church had such prominent members of the clergy as the Reverends White, Lawrence, and Carter who criticised negative perception about Africans (Zvobgo, 1991). For the Wesleyan Methodist Church a major change was in 1951 when its Synod declared that HUMANITY IS ONE and that all people should be given the same universal and abiding dignity (Wesleyan Methodist Church Synod Report, 1951:1). The Wesleyan Methodist Church appointed the Reverend Andrew Ndhlela as the first black chairman of the Synod in 1964 (Banana, 1991:131). The Roman Catholic Church established Moto, an outlet for African thoughts and views in 1959 (Linden, 1980; Auret, 1992). It also
established the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace which condemned the marginalisation and oppression of Africans by the colonial government (Linden, 1980). It had such individuals as Father Plangger, Father Traber and Bishop Lamont (Scholz, 1973; Linden, 1980). The Rhodesian Catholic Bishops Conference awakened to ideas of equality gradually stating in 1970, ‘The Church is committed actively to a policy of non-racial free development’ (1970:9). For the Anglican Church, it was too close to the rulers that the bishops never really engaged issues of equality of races. There were two lone voices of Cripps and Skelton (Lapsley, 1986). Though missionary perceptions of Africans changed with time, their goal remained the same, to use education to convert Africans into Christianity thereby introducing them to Western civilization (Madhiba, 2000). In so doing, they perpetuated the tradition of benefaction which ironically involved a negation of African indigenous education, African philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu and African religion. It was not apparent to the missionaries that by providing an education that focused on evangelisation, they were in fact collaborating with the settlers in destroying African identity.

**Goals of Christian Missionaries in Coming to Zimbabwe**

The Reverend Louw, addressing the Southern Rhodesian Missionary Conference, as chairman in 1930, stressed the importance of always maintaining focus on evangelism in their activities in Zimbabwe:

> Brethren, let us get back to that objective, the *only objective* with which we came to the field, the [*only objective*] which helps or should keep us there. All our
secular work, educational, industrial, medical, agricultural or whatever else it may be, should only be as a means to an end and should be done in that spirit. (Maravanyika, 1986:105).

Given that the objective he was referring to was evangelization, it is clear that the main purpose of missionary provision of education to Africans in Zimbabwe was to facilitate the spread of Christianity to Africans. In fact, the same point is reiterated by Mason, quoted by Ndofirepi (1999:46), when he says ņevangelism was the principal aim of mission schoolÔ in Zimbabwe. This, missionaries believed was of benefit to Africans whom they regarded as lost souls. So, in the above statement, Louw is stressing that the goal of evangelisation should always inform missionary activities, including the provision of education to Africans.

For Knight-Bruce of the Anglican Church, Christian missions were a result of the need to evangelize the ņheathenÔ Amandebele and Mashona people. He emphasized the point when he said, ņthe two nations are the greatest argument for the missions I knowÔ (Knight-Bruce, 1895:707). According to Knight-Bruce, the Mashona and by implication the Amandebele, had no religion at all. If the Mashona and Amandebele had no religion, Western education had to be introduced as a means of spreading Christianity to Africans. In this, missionaries were presented as benevolent agents working for the uplifting of Africans. The goal of missionary education, therefore, was the spread of Christianity. In addition to the motives stated above, Knight-Bruce also argues that the Anglican Church wanted to provide a more advanced mode of production and to protect the Mashona from
the Amandebele. Beginning with the latter motive, Ranger (1968) argues that there were some Mashona who did not regard the Amandebele as a threat. Other Mashona had on occasion successfully fought off the Amandebele. Hence they did not need protection from outside. As to the former, since missionaries were to basically confine themselves to the propagation of their religion, it is not quite clear how this was to usher in an advanced mode of production. So the argument by Knight-Bruce may have been pretence since it is doubtful that all the Mashona would solicit for help against the Amandebele or would have appreciated the need for a different mode of production. The Anglican Church could have had the former aim if they regarded themselves as part and parcel of the colonizers and the education that they provided as an instrument in the colonization of Zimbabwe. The only logical way the Anglican Church could introduce an advanced mode of production was through the provision of education to Africans. This was possible given that, as will be pointed out below, missionary education was largely industrial, with agriculture as an important component of the curricular. Such a practical orientation would entail working with the colonial regime in obtaining land on which to teach agriculture. It also entailed a negation of the mode of production to which the Africans were used. Such an education was bound to be an alienating one to the Africans.

The Reverend Shimmin, the pioneer Wesleyan Methodist Church missionary to Mashonaland, observed:
The more I see of the natives, the more do I rejoice at the possibilities before us. They are in most deplorable ignorance of all true religion, but judging from their present attitude, they are most willing to learn and judging from appearances, they are likely to make sound and intelligent believers (Zvobgo, 1991:26).

The above statement is a clear example of how missionaries perceived themselves as benefactors to Africans. From the above statement, the motive of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in providing education to Africans was to convert the "heathen savage" who according to them had no knowledge of God or religion. This conversion was to be facilitated through education as the natives were "most willing to learn." With the absence of knowledge of God and religion among the Mashona established, and with Africans' willingness to accept conversion argued for in providing education to Africans, Wesleyan Methodist Church missionaries viewed themselves as benevolent "messengers of the Gospel," bringing knowledge of God to the Africans in Zimbabwe (Zvobgo, 1991:27). This was because the philosophy of abstract universality did not regard indigenous education as genuine education. Neither did it regard African religion as religion in the proper sense of the word.

The same view is reiterated by the Revd G. Pluke:

It is in the visitation to the villages that we realised most fully that with which the Spirit of Christ is forever in conflict, in village after village, the grim reality of
heathenism shows itself and mocks the servant of the holy Nazarene (Banana, 1991:123).

The thread of fighting heathenism among the Mashona is presented as the motivating factor for missionary presence in Mashonaland. When Shimmin (1892) argues that the Mashona’s moral nature was “so set against godliness,” the battle against moral depravity among the Mashona also becomes another argument for Wesleyan Methodist Church missionary presence among the Mashona. So, for the Wesleyan Methodist missionaries, in providing education to Africans, their main concern for the indigenous Africans was their conversion, in the first instance to Christianity, and then to Methodism and the adoption of Christian moral values. Education was presented as an instrument to fight heathenism. Thus, missionaries believed they were benefiting Africans by exposing them to Christian religious knowledge.

In chapter two, I quoted Livingstone’s speech at Cambridge University after one of his journeys into Central Africa in which he challenged Christian churches to build on what he had started. This was a challenge that the London Missionary Society felt obliged to accept. Furthermore, Livingstone had argued that he had met the Makololo, whose Chief, Sekeletu was willing to welcome Christian teachers in his country. There was therefore need for a mission to be organized to go and work among the Makololo. But the Makololo occupied the flood plains, which were unhealthy. It was deemed necessary to persuade them to move to healthier high ground around Kafue.
But the Makololo had occupied this area for strategic reasons, to avoid perennial attacks by the Amandebele. If the Makololo were to be persuaded to leave this area, the Amandebele threat had to be removed first (Weller & Linden, 1984), hence the Matabele mission (Moffat, 1886:305). The London Missionary Society tasked Robert Moffat to go and persuade Mzilikazi not to attack the Makololo. At the same time he was to seek permission to establish a mission station among the Amandebele. Mzilikazi had indicated that he was prepared to have Christian teachers among his people. So, the Amandebele Mission of the London Missionary Society was a result of the desire to establish peace for the Makololo and embark on educational and evangelical work among them. According to Rea (1961), this move was also partly to ensure the safety of the missionaries who were to embark of educational and evangelical work among the Makololo. It would also appear that the missionaries in Matabeleland would at the same time ensure that the Amandebele honoured their part of not attacking the Makololo.

From the above discussion, it is clear that it was never the intention of missionary societies to build on the philosophical outlook, the ethical values, the metaphysical orientation or indigenous knowledge systems the African had evolved over years. Instead, the whole missionary exercise was based on the premise that Africans were misguided in their religious beliefs, outlook and practices. As noted above, the missionaries were of the view that Africans had no religion, no culture, no philosophy and no education. All the negative utterances cited above were intended to undermine the psyche of the African people. The denouncing of African religion and culture were intended to convince Africans of their inferiority. In this context, it appears it was never
the intention of Christian missionaries to explore and harness the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu* in their provision of education and in activities in Zimbabwe. Instead, their focus was on the use of education to proselytize the Africans whom they regarded as in need of redemption.

**Goals of Christian Education among Africans**

From the discussion above, it would appear that the main objective of missionary presence in Zimbabwe was to use education to replace African Traditional Religion and culture with Christianity and Western culture whose values they extolled as civilised and enlightened. If all missionary activities need to be understood from this perspective then the education provided by the Christian missionaries to Africans must also be viewed from the same perspective. This means that education provided by the Christian missionaries to Africans was a tool used to achieve missionaries’ objectives. Thus, Western education was used to ‘civilize’ Africans, to place them within the orbit of Western civilization. It must also be recognized that to educate, civilize, Westernize, and Christianize basically meant the same process of converting Africans to Christianity through Western education.

**The Dutch Reformed Church Mission**

As I have pointed out above, while Christian missionaries were guided by different denominational doctrines in their activities, on overall, the goal of missionary education was to facilitate the spread of Christianity. In 1925 the Reverend Andrew Louw argued that, ‘Evangelisation and schools are inseparably linked together’ (Mutumburanzou,
In spite of this realisation, the Dutch Reformed Church regarded the provision of education to Africans as more of a philanthropic duty and not a social or moral obligation (Maravanyika, 1986:99). Thus, the Dutch Reformed Church intended to provide to Africans a general education on a religious basis (Maravanyika, 1986:99). For the Dutch Reformed Church, the provision of education to Africans was basically the responsibility of the state. The Church was in it in so far as it facilitated the evangelisation of Africans. The above argument is clearly corroborated by Maravanyika (1986:99) who writes:

Education was seen not as an end in itself, less still as a human right as far as blacks were concerned, but as a means of enabling converts and potential converts to read the Bible to themselves and also to those the missionaries could not reach. It was regarded as a tool for evangelization. This limited view of education for non-whites tended to influence the DRC's education policies....

This interpretation is also reinforced by the Dutch Reformed Church Mission Council that in 1965 declared:

In principle education is the responsibility of the state and not the church. Taking into consideration the great opportunity for evangelization and church building which is being offered by education, the mission council desires to avail itself of this opportunity (Mutumburanzou, 1999:71).
What is apparent from the above statement is that the Dutch Reformed Church, in providing education to Africans, was aware that it was collaborating with the colonial regime in the education of Africans. However, they believed that this was for the benefit of the Africans. This perspective was also shared by other missionary societies like the Anglican Church, the Roman Catholic Church as well as the Wesleyan Methodist Church as will become apparent in the next paragraphs.

**The Anglican Church Mission**

When the first Anglican Church school, the Knight Bruce Memorial College, was opened at St Augustine’s, it was intended to be one “where a good plain education would be given, with specialised departments for giving instructions in trades and agriculture, and for training ordinands and evangelists” (Atkinson, 1973:89). It would appear that during this period, as has already been argued, education was synonymous with Christianization which as we have seen was also synonymous with westernization (Weller & Linden, 1984).

While the aim of the college established at St Augustine was to provide industrial education to Africans, the main objectives were:

a) To further the extension of the religious life in South Africa;

b) To extend God’s Kingdom among the thousands of natives yet untouched by the Gospel;
c) To provide pastoral care of more than 3000 ŋnative Christians and 1 200 adherents over a district of about 2 200 kilometres;
d) To provide pastoral care of the 300 white people on the gold mining district of Penhalonga valley;
e) In addition, to train promising ŋnative boys who wish to become teachers (Mandimutsira, 1986:5).

Bishop Gaul put it more succinctly when he wrote:

Our whole future development under God depends on our training the choicest of our pupils from the various schools as catechists and schoolmasters. Teachers, teachers, teachers, are what natives are demanding. Are they to be Christian or heathen teachers? The answer must come from the church or from secularism. At present, the future is with Christianity. We have the first generation in our hands, and therefore all the generations to come. Shall we close our eyes to the sight and dull our ears to the call of the Amandebele and the Mashona nations, however far from the Englishmen’s original righteousness they may be? (Atkinson, 1973:89).

It is clear that while the African demand for education played an important role in compelling missionaries to provide education, the overall goal of missionary education remained the evangelization of Africans. It is clear from Gaul that education and Christianization were inseparable. The missionaries were further using education to train
Africans converts as teachers who were to assist them in teaching and preaching to the African people. Furthermore, Archdeacon Upcher writing in 1903 states that:

Our main object is to bring people to believe in worship and to serve Christ and learn moral duty and not simply to make readers, writers and arithmeticians of them. These latter requirements often overbalance simple minds, why then press them on them? Native Christians who can work in garden, house or mines, cheerfully and industriously and honestly, without their heart full of what they have heard and learned by the ear, will be as good witnesses of the Lord as those who can write `the fat cat' read political speeches, and do vulgar fractions. We do not want to keep anyone down, but we are bound to try and fit each for the place God intends him to occupy in this world as a preparation for heaven. (Upcher, 1903:22).

This indicates that the curricular prescribed in education for Africans were not intended to liberate or enlighten the African, but only to enable him to function in a subordinate position in colonial society (Zvobgo, 1996). The curricular were largely going to be religious oriented. That is why, as Nadofirepi (1999:55) argues, "The basic curriculum in all schools consisted principally of the four RÂÔ Reading, Writing, (A)Rithmatic and Religion. In the process, by engaging in the education of Africans, the missionaries were collaborating with the system, providing cheap labour for the colonial society. This suited the missionaries as long as this facilitated the spread of Christianity to Africans. This was further reinforced by the Reverend Gates in 1921:
Our educational method, must maintain as its supreme objective the Christianization of those who are taught in almost every instance our day schools and boarding are holding to this standard and so earnestly is the work done that above 80% of those who accept Christianity are first and for some time attendants upon the school (Zvobgo, 1996:150).

In line with the above views, African pupils were subjected to extended periods of religious instruction and indoctrination during which they were expected to renounce old customs. In addition, missionary education was intended to play the dual role of producing assistants to missionaries as well as placing African children in a state of readiness for the conversion to the Christian religion. Thus, the school was designed to prepare the groundwork for the conversion of the African child to the Christian religion and participation in the colonial society. In so doing, what missionaries did was contrary to indigenous education or education for hunhu/ubuntu which was intended to make Africans conscious of their cultural heritage.

Again in 1923, the Reverend Gates wrote, "the aim of ours schools is to train Christian leaders. To this end, we train and send out men who will return to their own people to preach and to teach" (Zvobgo, 1996:150). Atkinson (1973:87), in his discussion of missionary contribution to early African education in Zimbabwe, argued that, "Anglican thinking on education was dominated by the need to establish a comprehensive school structure capable of teaching Anglican beliefs. What can be deduced from the foregoing
is that the provision of education to Africans was strategically designed to weaken the influence of African culture and religion. In the process education was used as an instrument to destroy African cultural values and beliefs, that is, African identity. Education was seen as the best instrument for this job as it got the African children in their tender years when they had not been exposed to many African cultural influences. Missionaries perceived themselves to be benefiting Africans, but, as will be pointed in the next chapter, Africans did not regard them as such, at least initially.

The Roman Catholic Church Missions

The discussion of the Roman Catholic Church will be centred on the Jesuit Order as it was the section of that church that pioneered and dominated the provision of education to Africans in Rhodesia. In their provision of education to Africans, Jesuits were guided by the *Ratio atique Institution Studiorum in Societatus Jesu* which was the guiding document in Catholic education from 1599 to 1832 (Curtis & Boulwood, 1956:152). Unlike the Dutch Reformed Church, the Roman Catholic Church viewed education as the responsibility of the church, inseparable from evangelization. The *Ratio Studiorum* provided a set of rules for the organization and teaching in Jesuit colleges. It stressed teaching religion in Jesuit Schools. The *Ratio Studiorum* among other things states:

> Religion ought to be the base and summit, the centre and soul of all study, of all education. It is necessary first of all that the young man makes progress in the knowledge of his creator and his saviour, and that he increases on morality as he develops in intelligence (Nyatsanza, 1997:16).
A good teacher is presented as a model worthy of emulation by the students. He who knows how to excite emulation has found the most powerful auxiliary in his teaching (Nyatsanza, 1997:16). Such reasoning by the Jesuits was logical given that most of these teachers were members of the clergy. The outcome of Jesuit education was expected to be a mature commitment to values and self-discipline to live by these values, as well as tolerance to diversity of perspective and a critical respect for one’s cultural tradition. These were to be manifest in the development of skills of analysis, judgment and expression.

The Jesuit General wrote to Reverend Sykes who was already in Zimbabwe in 1896:

The most important work of all is the education of the Africans. Other work, if necessary, must yield to this because all missionary work among the Africans will be barren unless the young are carefully instructed in the Faith and thoroughly imbued with religious principles. This however cannot be done except by means of schools. Therefore no residence should be without a school, and if a school is impossible, a residence should also be considered impossible (Jesuit Archives 10 June, 1896).

The success of the school was the success of the church. So the strategy was to target the young before they could be grounded in traditional beliefs that would be difficult to supplant as was evidenced by the lack of progress among the older generations. They
feared traditional culture and ancestral veneration, hence, the need to nip them in the bud. As already noted, the Jesuits believed that once they have had access to the young, they would remain Catholics for the rest of their lives. It is in their plastic days, wrote Father Sykes, that the lessons of our holy religion can best sink into the minds of the natives and influence their hearts and their actions before ingrained prejudices and vicious habits have acquired a permanent hold (Zvobgo, 1996:150). A similar view was expressed by Dachs and Rea quoted in Zvobgo, when they wrote: there would be no missions, no African attendance, no adherents; no success Pupils meant catechumens and converts (Zvobgo, 1996:150). It can be concluded therefore that education was at the centre of the Roman Catholic Church activities in Rhodesia as elsewhere to facilitate evangelisation among Africans and the alienation of the Africans from their culture. Missionaries regarded this alienation of Africans from their culture as in the interests of the Africans who were being initiated into what missionaries regarded as genuine civilization.

Further pronouncements on the importance of education to evangelization came in the form of Pope Pius XI's Encyclical Letter of 1929, Divini Illius Magistu that declared that education is first and super-eminently, the function of the church (Domenec, Dunn, & Tulasiewicz, 1993:92). This document is important since it provided a theoretical basis for Catholic education in terms of the three agents in education the church, the family and the state (Domenec, Dunn, & Tulasiewicz, 1993:92). The Roman Catholic Church was aware that each of these agents had to play its part if the education of the youth was
to succeed. Thus, for the Roman Catholic Church, collaboration between the Church and the State in the provision of education to Africans was a given.

The Second Vatican Council of 1965 revisited the *Ratio Studiorum* and came up with the *Gravissimum Educationis* that states:

> True education is directed towards the formation of the human person in view of his final end and the good of that society to which he belongs and in the duties of which he will as an adult have a share (Domenec, Dunn, & Tulasiewicz, 1993:92).

The focus is on developing a complete human being. The Roman Catholic Church did not consider that this could not be possible without harnessing the indigenous philosophy of education. They did not see the contradiction inherent in Christian education in that it was bound to alienate Africans from their philosophy of life, and in the process could not result in a holistic education. A holistic education in the Zimbabwean context necessarily involved an engagement of the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*.

In line with the views of other missionary societies discussed above, the Jesuit perspective was that *Schools offered the greatest possible service to the church by moral and religious instruction, by making devotional life accessible to the young and by teaching the Gospel message of service to others* (*Jesuit Educational Tradition: Inspired by the Spiritual Exercises, n.d.*). So, education was not an end in itself, but a means to an
end, a means to spread the gospel. Jesuit education therefore included "an appreciation of the arts to appreciate beauty; grammar to learn how to read; rhetoric to express oneself; mathematics to enable one to think; and theology with its hand maiden philosophy, to find God." (Jesuit Educational Tradition: Inspired by the Spiritual Exercises, n.d.). Thus, church schools provided "the main locus for evangelisation." (Jesuit Educational Tradition: Inspired by the Spiritual Exercises, n.d.). This was in keeping with Jesuit philosophy of concentrating on education as a weapon for evangelization and westernization (Cubberley, 1948:337). These twin processes that culminated in the provision of education to Africans by missionaries were regarded as benefiting Africans who were being subjected to enlightenment in the process.

Randolph points out that the Roman Catholic Church did not embark on African education "for the sole reason of teaching academic or industrial skills," but "to teach Catholic faith and morals." (Gundani, 2001:27). Along the same vein, Murray views the aim of Catholic education as "to produce Roman Catholics." (Murray, 1967:251). Linden (1980:41) points out that "to go to school and, to go to church were synonymous. For this reason, unlike the Dutch Reformed Church and the London missionary Society, the Roman Catholic Church was prepared to pour resources into the development of African education. So, as far as Roman Catholic Church missionaries were concerned, the provision of education to Africans was intended to facilitate the spread of Christianity as well as the teaching of Christian morals. Basically, the provision of education to Africans was motivated by religious considerations as amply demonstrated above. Thus, Randolph (1971:12) argues that the fundamental purpose of Roman Catholic Church
missionaries being in education on an academic basis has been, not that they can do the academic side and produce the academic results as well as or better than anyone else, but that they can teach Christian principles effectively at the same time. Indeed, it would appear that evangelization was part of the hidden curriculum.

The Wesleyan Methodist Church Missions

On 18 May 1899, the Reverend Shimmin observed, “It is with the children that our main, and indeed our sole hope of building a Christian community in this country rests and from the beginning it is our aim to endeavour to provide them with Christian education” (Zvobgo, 1991:16). In fact, Shimmin (1892) made it clear that the founding of a school at Epworth in 1902 was for the purposes of, “the training of evangelists and teachers for the native work”. This view on the purpose of Epworth is also reiterated by Rea (1961). The same view informed the founding of other mission stations. In this context, education was intended as a means to an evangelical end (Samudzimu, 1981:83). But the process involved the denial of the existence of African indigenous education and religion thereby destroying the self-confidence of the African people. In the process, the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu was also denied by missionaries in their provision of education to Africans.

With reference to the same strategy of using education to target young Africans for conversion, the Reverend Butler observes, “win the children for Jesus and you win the world for Him” (Zvobgo, 1991:86). The reasoning was that the young would not have been initiated into African epistemologies, metaphysics as well as aesthetic and ethical
orientations sufficient enough to thwart the inculcation of Western knowledge and value systems. Thus, the Wesleyan Methodist Church declared in 1930:

The schools may be a problem but they certainly give us one of our finest opportunities. It is almost impossible to present the Christian message to raw Africans apart from some measure of education. Moreover, education is a most important factor in undermining their old belief in witchcraft; and it is the only practical method of opening up to these people the opportunities which we believe should be given to every man to live the fuller life that God purposes for him. Again, our schools give us our opportunity because of the religious instruction we are able to give through them to old as well as young (Zvobgo, 1991:86-7).

It is clear from the above statement that the Christian education was intended to destroy African culture and values in the young Africans. The conversion of Africans through education meant the negation of African moral and religious values enshrined in the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu. In such circumstances, it is difficult to maintain that such aims are in line with the theory of benefaction. In 1933, the Wesleyan Methodist Church Synod still noted that "practically every teacher is an evangelist and thus the message is made known . . ." (Samudzimu, 1991:82). It would appear that all knowledge imparted in Wesleyan Methodist Church schools was wrapped in religious message. Thus, the
spread of Christianity was intended to permeate the whole spectrum of the education system.

The Wesleyan Methodist Church further reiterated the importance of the school as an agent of evangelism in 1935:

In Rhodesia, they are not asking for the Gospel itself alone; they want schools. This gives a tremendous opportunity, for a school means a foothold in the Kraal and a prestige that is of very great value for evangelist purposes. In the overwhelming number of cases the school is the forerunner of the church, and it is often found that if a school is closed in a village the church dies out (Zvobgo, 1991:87).

The Wesleyan Methodist Church missionaries acknowledged that Africans, in going to school were interested in the education that they could receive. They were aware that the Africans were not really into converting to Christianity. But the missionaries also realised that they could, in the pretext of providing education to Africans, utilise the opportunity to expose Africans to the Christian message while castigated indigenous philosophies in which African belief system were rooted. In the process, to some extent, both the Christian missionaries and Africans got what they wanted. This is further confirmed by the Reverend Stanlake (1936) when he argues, in more than one instance
at places where we have had established churches we have seen that failure to provide a school has meant that the church has practically disappeared.

What the above seem to confirm is that the school with its focus on literacy was just an adjunct to evangelisation which was the main purpose. It was also realised that Africans were also after education not the religion. But the missionaries wanted religion as part of the package so they could preach the Christian message to the Africans. So the provision of African education in this instance was a necessary expense that enabled Wesleyan Methodist Church missionaries to carry out their work while Africans were also able to access the education they were seeking. That, for the Christian missionaries, education and evangelism were inseparable was attested by the 1939 Report of the Wesleyan Methodist Church which states:

> There is always the danger in our work of making a distinct division between evangelism in winning converts for Christ and what is sometimes regarded as the work of education. But the division is not as distinct as some think. The noblest kraal school in the hands of a Christian teacher is an opportunity for presenting the Gospel story in many ways (Zvobgo, 1991:87).

It is recorded in the *African Education Policy of the Wesleyan Methodist Church* in Southern Rhodesia that the aim of education was to help create an atmosphere in which the heart of the youth will turn naturally towards God.
Wesleyan Methodist Church, 1946). It also pointed out that Christian education aimed at teaching Christian truths as well as the acceptance of Christian faith as a personal faith. So, for the Wesleyan Methodist missionaries, at the micro level, their main concern for the indigenous Africans was their conversion, in the first instance to Christianity, and then to Methodism (Samudzimu, 1991:81) and the adoption of Christian moral values. At the macro level, they were operating within the wider scheme of westernizing Africans. This meant the negation of indigenous education and the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu that informed it.

The London Missionary Society Missions

According to Flood (1973), the London Missionary Society from its inception in 1795 recognized the natural partnership between church and school. He maintains that the school provided the church with reliable members:

This worked in two ways. Schooling provided the literacy essential to a scripturally based faith, and it provided the social engineering necessary to produce church members able to adapt their life to an approved pattern of humble thrift and usefulness. The tradition that arose from this was therefore of elementary education, consisting mainly of the three R’s supported by certain basic manual skills. With the expansion northwards of the London Missionary Society in the 1850s, this tradition was carried into Ndebeleland, where however for nearly forty years it failed to take root or develop (Flood, 1973:98-99).
The same claim is reiterated by Bone who argued that for the missionary movement in general: “It has become characteristic of the missionary movement from its beginnings that it has regarded schools not as a helpful adjunct merely; but as part and parcel of their work - an essential element in itò (Moyo, 1985:2). Contrary to what Flood and Bone claim above, it was not certainly the case in Matabeleland before 1893. On the contrary, Robert Moffat argues:

Much has been said about civilizing savages before attempting to evangelize them. This is a theory which has obtained an extensive prevalence among the wise men of this world; but we have never yet seen a practical demonstration of its truth. We ourselves are convinced that evangelization must precede civilization. Nothing less than the power of Divine grace can reform the hearts of savages, after which the mind is susceptible of those instructions which teach them to adore the gospel they profess (Moffat, 1886:357).

From this statement, it is clear that Robert Moffat did not believe in introducing education to the Africans before they had accepted Christianity. He views those who argued for the introduction of education first as mere theorists whose reasoning was rendered futile by the experiences of those practically involved in the conversion of the "savages". It would also appear that he did not favour combining education and religious instruction. Education was to be introduced later after the acceptance of the Christian religion by the Africans. According to Robert Moffat, it was evangelization that was the business of the London Missionary Society missionaries first and foremost. It appears
that this was the strategy that was initially adopted by the London Missionary Society missionaries in Matabeleland. It was only later when it had become apparent that the Amandebele had no interest in converting to Christianity because their culture was intact that attempts to combine evangelization with education were made. Education was used to castigate and weaken African value systems based on *hunhu/ubuntu* with a view to replacing these values with Euro-Christian values.

In fact, Cullen Reed was very forthright in stating the purpose of the education the London Missionary Society provided to the Amandebele and the Makalanga:

> You must educate the native to break down superstition, to give information of the natural laws of life and health which will explain much that is now attributed to witchcraft. You must educate if your converts are to understand the Bible and if your evangelists are to be intelligent preachers and guides of the people (Zvobgo, 1996:150).

Quite clear from the above statement was the intention to use education to denounce African culture and to use education to install Christianity in the mind of the Africans. The Christian missionary believed he was doing Africans a service, "liberating" them from what they viewed as superstition. Writing in 1928, Smith comments on the London Missionary Society education at Hope Fountain and Inyati:
It is recognized that the various scholastic and industrial activities are like parts of an arch supporting each other while in the centre and at the highest point is the keystone the bringing in of these youths to our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ (Smith, 1928:54).

Whatever one perceives to have been the state of affairs, whether education preceded evangelization or evangelization preceded education or both were introduced simultaneously, it was generally accepted that education, as provided by the London Missionary Society in Matabeleland, was intended to facilitate the evangelizing objective. In other words, the aim was not to empower the Africans economically or politically, but to convert them to the Christian religion. That is why Clinton (1959) argues that the aim of the pioneer missionaries of Inyati was to prepare the people for citizenship of the Kingdom of God as Africans were perceived as outside the Kingdom of God. The London Missionary Society missionaries viewed themselves as benefiting Africans by bringing knowledge of God through the education they provided to Africans. This was in line with the philosophy of abstract universality that presented western education as the only true education that could be regarded as real education.

**The Education of Girls**

On the education of girls, the aims of the Girls Homes were stated as:

- To bring the girls to accept Jesus Christ as their personal saviour; to cultivate in the girls good Christian character by teaching them the principles of obedience,
regularity, orderliness and cleanliness and also by teaching them hard work, for example, housework, agriculture and industry (Maravanyika, 1986:115).

The values emphasized here are similar to the values that the African philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu* sought to inculcate in the learners. In other words, western education was not introducing values that were new to the Africans. What differed were the sources, or, the philosophical foundations of these values. While African values emanated from *hunhu/ubuntu*, western values emanated from Christian abstract universality. The motive for the introduction of education for girls in 1894 was evangelization, but the argument has been that Mrs. Louw was concerned with the emancipation of African women through education. She involved herself in the establishment Girls Homes that would produce prospective wives for educated African Christian men (Maravanyika, 1986). The same motive informed the Anglican Church (Smith, 1928), as well as the Roman Catholic Church (Randolph, 1977). This would prevent African Christian men from marrying ‘heathen’ women. But the main idea was to ensure ‘stable’ African Christian homes and secure the gains made by missionaries. It was also to be acknowledged that such an education was for domesticity as African women were taught that their place was in the home not outside, that the outside, politics, commerce and industry were for men. The girls were taught that they were to be content with looking after the children while men went out to look for work. This was reflected in the goals and curricular of schools that catered for girls that are discussed below.
According to Schmidt (1992), the Wesleyan Methodist Church missionaries realised that there could be no meaningful success in attempts to convert Africans to Christianity as long as the women and girls had no appreciation of the new religion. Schmidt (1992:115) quotes a Wesleyan Methodist Church missionary as having said, "The women are keeping Africa back. You see it almost everywhere you turn." This was because women were viewed as responsible for immoral and ignorant habits, unhygienic conditions at home, sexual depravity, and the lack of a work ethic among Africans. According to this perception, it was therefore necessary to educate African girls. According to Randolph (1977:13), this would facilitate the production of an educated and cultured man, a new man. In this, the missionaries viewed themselves as benefiting Africans as they were introducing them to European culture through education. They saw themselves as removing Africans from backwardness.

The Reverend Hardaker had a twofold argument for the education of African girls. In the first instance he maintained that it was the well-known truth that a nation cannot rise above the level of its women (Zvobgo, 1991:128). In other words a nation is as educated as its women. A measure of the level of education in any nation is reflected in the level of education evident among its women. Secondly, he argued that the African household needed improvement. The dirt, bad cooking, the lack of variety in food, the moral atmosphere of the home, the simple childish ailments ignorantly treated all these things cry aloud for improvement, wrote Hardaker (Zvobgo, 1991:128). Consequently, these perceptions resulted in a curricular for girls that included practical hygiene, sewing, handy work, house - wifery, cooking, spinning and weaving, raffia and making mats from
mealie products, and gardening. These were the subjects that were perceived to be able to improve the quality of life in African households.

For Palin (1933:13-14), education for girls was intended to inculcate a “spirit of gratitude and willingness to serve into the minds of the girls and a very definite idea of the nobility of work.” According to Schmidt (1992), this reasoning among the Christian missionaries was informed by the values of the countries the missionaries came from. In other words, Christian missionaries were imposing Western conception of womanhood on Africans. According to their Victorian Christian ideals, good mothers stayed at home raising their children according to Christian values, while the fathers went out to work in order to feed the family. wrote Schmidt (1992:129). Thus, the education of girls was to make African women proper mothers and teachers for young children (White, 1915). It thus appears that evangelisation was still the over-riding factor in the provision of education to African girls.

In addition, the Reverend Stanlake points out that “the helplessness of many of the wives of the evangelists in the direction of assisting the native people to a higher standard in their home life is a serious drawback to the progress of the work” (Zvobgo, 1991:124). It would appear that the Christian missionaries were afraid that the African Christian men would look for either the uneducated African girls or girls educated by other churches whose teachings were not likely to accord with theirs. This was likely to lessen the hold the church had on their products. In preparing girls for their role in a colonial society through education, missionaries were collaborating in producing workers for the
capitalist system and in making home the proper place for women. However, in the process the missionaries were also able to create women professionals in teaching and nursing. To that extent, the missionaries benefited Africans through the education they provided to them.

**The Success of the School as an Agent of Conversion**

Christian missionaries recognised that the school was an agent for converting those pupils who came to school as non-converts to Christianity. Education and evangelization were presented as inseparable, two sides of the same coin. The 1938 Marshall Hartley Primary School Report states; "Many pupils who came only for education, have been led to Christ during their stay with us and are now in our class meetings" (Samudzimu, 1981:81). Commenting on the role of the Church in evangelization and as evidence that schools played a crucial role in the process, the Rhodesian Catholic Bishops' Conference Newsletter (1972:2) states, "many children were baptized before the end of the course [É ]. The largest number of catechumens came from among primary school pupils." Thus, phenomenal increases were reported in the 1950s and 1960s. The increase in converts meant an increase in the number of Africans who were alienated from their traditional education, culture and way of life and the philosophy of *hunhuubuntu* on which all these were based.

Gundani (2001:29) proposes a number of factors that explain the increase in conversion or baptism among school pupils as follows:
(i). Due to denominational competition, some missionaries adopted the policy of 'No Religion, no place in school'. So there was pressure on pupils to join the church to secure school places;

(ii). Pupils were not given a chance to decide whether they wanted to become Christians or not. They asked for and accepted baptism as part of their schooling and never realized they were voluntarily attaching themselves to Christ;

(iii). The youth were captured into the routine of Catholic prayers and liturgy. Young boys longed to serve at the altar and this was reserved for Catholic boys. So others converted for this reason;

(iv). Others converted out of peer pressure. Whatever the reason, the Catholic register of converts was enriched.

The same argument can be proffered for conversion in other mission schools. What the success of the mission school in converting Africans to Christianity reflects is the extent to which mission schools contributed to the alienation of Africans from their culture. Missionaries perceived this to mean they were succeeding in uplifting Africans from heathenism and traditional ways of dealing with reality.

**Denominational Rivalry as an Impetus to African Education**

Denominational rivalry was indeed one the forces behind the provision of education by missionaries. As the Anglican Church Bishop Gaul observed:

This education question is an *imperial one*. The Roman church reads history, current events, and the future carefully, and *knows its business*. It is, therefore,
suffusing, pervading and enclosing the Anglo-Saxon race with its institutions and religious orders in America, Australia, Africa and the British Isles, in the school, the hospital and the missions. However, our Roman brethren do their work, and on carefully thought-out lines, shall we do our work on freer voluntary principles, badly or weakly? God forbid! (Atkinson, 1973:17).

The above quotation can be interpreted to mean that the Anglican Church was partly impelled into providing education to Africans by denominational rivalry. The Anglican Church, in its provision of education to Africans, was also pushed by the desire not to be out-performed by other denominations. It was also based on the desire not to lose its converts to other churches. Thus, the provision of education was not so much in trying to uplift the Africans but to demonstrate that the Anglican Church was capable of matching if not surpassing other denominations in the provision of education to Africans.

In spite of realising the importance of African education, the Dutch Reformed Church regarded the provision of education to Africans as more an act of benevolence than obligation (Maravanyika, 1986:99). Furthermore, the provision of education was also intended to forestall the influence of other churches, especially the Roman Catholic Church. As the Dutch Reformed Church stated, "Our incapability offers a golden chance to the Roman Catholic Church to build on our work in the primary school" (Maravanyika, 1986:132). Some schools had to be constructed for the education of Africans to retain Africans who were under the Dutch Reformed Church's sphere of influence. Apart from the above considerations, real commitment to the provision of
education to Africans was lacking. Thus, from the very beginning Africans were intended to receive a "general education on a religious basis" (Maravanyika, 1986:99).

Denominational rivalry had a lot to do with the establishment of Thekwane in Matabeleland in 1897 (Zvobgo, 1991:138). According to Samudzimu the establishment of Thekwane was not motivated by the need to spread the gospel alone. "Part of the impetus came from the spirit of competition, the fear of being outdone by other church groups," argues Samudzimu (1981:93). The Wesleyan Methodist Church had requested 10 000 acres of land from the British South Africa company in 1895 and was only able to establish Thekwane as an industrial school with the training of evangelists introduced in 1915 (Zvobgo, 1991:24).

Even the establishment of Secondary education for Africans was determined by denominational rivalry. While the colonial government wanted missionaries to pull their resources together to establish an interdenominational school, this failed to take off. It was this failure that led the Anglican Church to go it alone and establish the first secondary school for Africans in Rhodesia at St Augustine's in 1939. This spurred other missionary societies to follow the Anglican Church's example. Having determined that education was to serve as an instrument for evangelism among Africans, Christian missionaries came up with a number of strategies. Among these strategies were the targeting of African chiefs, the use of African evangelists, and the translation of scriptures, the creation of Christian villages and the establishment of schools. It is these strategies that I now discuss below.
Missionary Strategy of Targeting African Chiefs

Initially there was a belief that African chiefs determined the religious, political and moral tone of African communities. It was therefore believed that to convert the king/chief was the easiest avenue to win the hearts and minds of their people. The Christian missionaries were of the conviction that African chiefs were generally the custodians of African traditions, religious beliefs, cultural values, and customs. It was in this context that it was reasoned that, "If the Mutapa was converted to Christianity he would influence his people to become Christians as well" (Mudenge, 1986:3). In other words, the king would create conditions conducive to evangelization and education among his people. Explaining this, Linden (1980:17) argues thus, "European experience had taught the Jesuits to seek the locus of power within society . . . where there was power, there the Society of Jesus wished to be, to channel it to the greater glory of God." Accordingly, the missionaries either encouraged African chiefs to send their children to schools or established schools for sons of the chiefs which ultimately were also attended by children from the locality. The missionaries perceived themselves to be benefiting the African by introducing western education and religion at the chiefs' courts. But they did not incorporate any values from the Africans' philosophy of life, the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu. This, as was pointed out above, was because the missionaries did not recognize the existence of indigenous education, religion, culture and philosophy.

While Silveira and subsequent Roman Catholic missionaries targeted the Mutapas, the London Missionary Society targeted Mzilikazi and Lobengula (Moffat, 1921:99-100).
The focus of the Wesleyan Methodist Church was on Chief Chiremba (Zvobgo, 1981:118), Chief Abedinigo Simondo (Zvobgo, 1996:69), Chief Majila (Zvobgo, 1996:69), Chief Kwenda (Zvobgo, 1996), Chief Gambo (Stanlake, 1899:394-396), and Chief Nenguwo (Brigg, 1899:95-99) among others. While the Anglican Church targeted Chief Mangwende (Snell, 1986), Chief Makoni and Chief Mutasa (Atkinson1973:7), the Dutch Reformed Church targeted Chief Chibi (Louw, 1951:5) and Chief Mugabe among other chiefs. This strategy had limited success as only a few chiefs accepted missionary teaching. Such chiefs include Chiremba who is said to have discarded heathen practices and customs such as healing and polygamy, and Simondo who converted to Christianity and became a local preacher (Zvobgo, 1996:69). Indeed Mzilikazi did encourage the Amandebele to attend the London Missionary Society church services but did not convert (Thomas, 1863:11). Lobengula refused to convert arguing, "I believe God made the Matabele just as he wished them to be, it is wrong for anyone to seek to alter them" (Clinton, 1959:54). He even refused to compel children to attend school arguing, "I am not the father of those children, and cannot say anything about it" (Carnegie, 1894:102). Some of the African chiefs like Nenguwo and Kwenda moved away from their towns to avoid missionaries while others refused to convert to Christianity. What this strategy achieved was to enable the construction of many schools which were to be used later when Africans became interested in Western education.

It would appear, therefore, that on initial visits by missionaries, African chiefs were prepared to give missionaries an ear which the missionaries mistook for acceptance of their teachings. However, once the African chiefs understood the true import of the
Christian education and religion, they realised they could not accept them without renouncing their positions. They realised that the new religion and the education accompanying it undermined their culture, traditions and religion, even their offices. To most African chiefs, missionaries were collaborating with the colonial regime in destroying African traditional way of life, hence, the African chiefs began to oppose missionary presence at their courts.

**The role of African Evangelists**

The success of Christian missionaries in both the proselytisation and education of Africans could not have been achieved without the work of African evangelists. This view is supported by King (1959:27) who argues that the success of the Anglican Church "was made possible by the ordination of Africans to the priesthood." Christian missionaries attested to this. That is why any serious discussion of Christian missionaries' work in Zimbabwe cannot ignore the role played by African evangelists. It must be recognised that because missionaries were ignorant of the cultures and traditions of the African people among whom they were to work, the assistance of the African evangelists was indispensable.

On the arrival of eight teacher-evangelists from the Transvaal in 1892, Shimmin acknowledged:

That Africa is to be saved by Africans themselves is a favourite theory of most Christian workers out here and in this new mission we are proceeding on these
lines. Under the careful and consistent supervision of the minister, the native evangelist can become the most effective missionary, and especially in a country like Mashonaland (White, 1899:29).

The Reverend Morley-Wright viewed African teacher-evangelists as the “vital factor” in the education and proselytisation of Africans (Zvobgo, 1991:27). The 1923 Wesleyan Methodist Church Report states, “Our missionaries in Rhodesia tell us that they find that the most effective method of presenting the Gospel is by Africans witnessing to Africans. The European can never get at the back of the native mind” (Report, 1923). This was further reinforced by the 1926 Report (Report, 1926). In recognition of this, the Wesleyan Methodist Church brought Moleli and Anta from South Africa. The Dutch Reformed Church brought eight evangelists among them Michael Maghato, Lukas Mokoele, Jozua Masoha and Zakaria Ramushu (Van der Merwe, 1953:10). Among outstanding African evangelists of the Anglican Church were Bernard Mizeki (Snell, 1986) and Frank Ziqubu (Chitando, 1986). The London Missionary Society made use of Rachel Masinga and J. L. September (Bhebe, 1979). These were later to be assisted by locally trained African evangelists. The relations between missionaries and African evangelists though largely based on collaboration in educating fellow Africans were in some instances strained by racism as will be pointed out in the next chapter. These foreign and local Africans, in addition to preaching and teaching, laying the foundations of African education, played an important role in another aspect of missionary activities that facilitated the provision of education to Africans, that is the translation of the Bible and Scriptures into African languages.
Translation of Scriptures

The Christian missionaries’ involvement in the learning of African languages and the translation of scriptures was intended to facilitate the spreading of Christianity. Missionaries had to understand African languages for them to understand African thought patterns, values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviour. They had to enter the African worldview. That language is important in understanding a people and its culture was appreciated by Mrs. Louw of the Dutch Reformed Church when she quotes Westermann thus:

The most adequate exponent of the soul of a people is its language É If this conception of language is a true one, and we missionaries want to reach the soul of the African, his inner life, and to enter into his mental and spiritual world, it becomes a necessity to acquire the only means of bridging over the gulf there is between ourselves and him Í namely his own language. The language of a people is the sanctuary of its soul, no language other than the mother tongue has entrance into the innermost chamber (Maravanyika, 1986:106).

Indeed, those missionaries who seriously engaged African language and thought were able to identify *hunhu/ubuntu* as the philosophy that informed Africans in what they did. Such missionaries include Loram (1927) and Gelfand (1973). However, negative perceptions and attitudes missionaries had towards Africans precluded the realisation that the values enshrined in *hunhu/ubuntu* were the same values that missionaries sought to
inculcate in Africans. This was a classic example of a missed opportunity to establish dialogue between the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu* and Christian philosophy. Instead, in studying African languages and reducing them to writing, the missionaries intended to come up with educational strategies that would ensure the supplanting of this philosophy. Meanwhile, the Africans appreciated the importance of their own languages. Munyai waShe of March 1- April 1948 states that, *saka tingati rurimi chipo cha Mwari kurudzi*. *Kana rudzi rusingakudzi rurimi rwarwo runozvimhura vuye runofanira kuti rumurwe navamwe vo.* (We can say that language is a gift to a people from God. A people that have no pride in its language will be a laughing stock to the world) (Munyai waShe, 1948:8). The editor argued for unadulterated Chikaranga and its teaching in schools. The Dutch Reformed Church, as pointed out above, supported this policy. While the Dutch Reformed Church argued that it did not want to disrupt the culture of the African people, the real reason, it can be surmised, was that most of the Dutch Reformed Church missionaries, being Afrikaners, identified with the Africans on the language issue. Most of the Dutch Reformed Church missionaries struggled to master the English language but were able to gain good command of Chikaranga (Mutumburanzou, 1999:106). Naturally, they also wanted to safeguard their own language, Afrikaans, in the face of the onslaught by English, which was the language of the rulers. That the Dutch Reformed Church did not want to disrupt African culture is not a convincing argument since there were many aspects of this same culture that they condemned, described as backward and discouraged. There were many other important aspects of Karanga culture which the missionaries rejected and condemned even in the face of African resistance.
It was a result of the above policy that Mrs. Louw produced a Chikaranga Reader in 1902 and a Manual of the Karanga Language in 1915 (Mutumburanzou, 1999, Smith, 1928). The Reverend Louw translated Psalm 23 and the Lord’s Prayer into Chikaranga in 1894 and together with Dr. Helm translated Mark’s Gospel, with the assistance of a local young man who remains nameless, having been educated at Zoutpansberg (Munyai, 1950:1). The Reverend and Mrs. Louw were being assisted by two Africans (only known by their adopted names), Caxton and Wycliff, who typed the translations. In 1919 the Reverend and Mrs. Louw translated the New Testament into Chikaranga with the assistance of John Hungwe (Munyai, 1951:4). A complete Shona Bible, now incorporating Chikaranga, Chizezuru and Chimanyika was introduced in 1950, after seventeen years of hard work by a team led by Bevan (Munyai, 1951).

It would appear that in as far as the reduction of Chikaranga into writing was concerned, there was no conflict of interest between the Karanga and the missionaries. What is evident is the conservative nature of both the traditions of the Africans and the Dutch Reformed Church in that they both advocated what they viewed as unadulterated Chikaranga. Both complained about the slang that was coming from the towns, polluting Chikaranga and how the slang was being assimilated by the young Africans. They argued for the preservation of pure Chikaranga through writing to guide those involved in the education of the youth. There were also some Africans who felt they had to understand the Dutch Reformed Church missionaries. They therefore advocated the teaching of Afrikaans to the Africans. They were also of the view that knowing the language of the missionary would facilitate greater understanding through improved
communication between missionaries and Africans. Thus, Kujinga (1947) and Somerai (1948) advocated the teaching of Afrikaans to Africans in a move they believed was going to improve race relations and promote mutual understanding between the missionaries and the Africans. It was equally important for the African to understand the world of the Afrikaner. For the Dutch Reformed Church the reduction of Chikaranga to writing and the translation of scriptures into Chikaranga were intended to further the evangelistic aims and further the colonialist goals of cultural colonization of the Africans.

As we have seen among the Dutch Reformed Church missionaries, the Anglican Church missionaries embarked on translating religious materials into ChiShona. They were informed by the same principles on the relationship between language and culture. The purpose was also similar, the evangelization of the Mashona. Again, as among the Dutch Reformed Church, in this exercise, African evangelists played a crucial role. This was mainly because translation work was intended to facilitate the provision of education by the missionaries. It was realised that the translation of religious materials into the local languages was indispensable if success was to be attained in the education and conversion of the African people to Christianity.

Like other Protestant missionaries, the Wesleyan Methodist Church missionaries recognised the value of literacy in converting Africans to Christianity. It was essential that Africans were able to read the scriptures in their own languages. It was this realisation that compelled Wesleyan Methodist Church missionaries to embark on the translation of scriptures into local African languages. The Reverend John White, with the
assistance of Jonas, an African, pioneered the work among Wesleyan Methodist Church missionaries when he translated St Mark into Shona in 1897 (Zvobgo, 1991). This was intended to ensure that the convert would continue to strengthen his faith even in the absence of missionaries. This way, the Gospel would find its way into the homes of the believers. Translation therefore was a tool to facilitate the evangelisation of the Mashona and the Amandebele and was seen as a benefit to the African converts.

While the London Missionary Society, like other missionary societies, appreciated the importance of the translation of scriptures into Sindebele, this was to lead to conflict between Thomas Morgan Thomas and William Sykes as Sykes seemed to favour the use of Zulu translations while Thomas was for embarking on Sindebele translations. When Thomas, Sykes, Elliot and Helm all engaged in the translation of aspects of scriptures into Sindebele, the main aim was to enable the Amandebele converts to read the scriptures for themselves. In fact, Thomas (1873) argues that the absence of written materials in Sindebele contributed to the lack of success in the conversion of the Amandebele to Christianity in the early years. So in 1863 he published a hymn book and a first elementary text-book in Sindebele. This was followed by a small catechism, a second handbook and an improved lesson book in 1866. Thus, translation work was intended to facilitate the introduction of Western education to the Matabele.

While the study of African languages and the translation of scriptures afforded Christian missionaries the opportunity to be familiar with African philosophy of *hunhu/ ubuntu*, there is no evidence that missionaries attempted to come to terms with it. In fact, they
behaved as if it was nonexistent. Instead, in their provision of education to Africans, and in their attempts to convert Africans to Christianity, missionaries were guided by the philosophy of universality elucidated above. While translation of scriptures into African languages may appear to have been to the benefit of Africans, it was also of great benefit to the Christian missionaries. This was largely because protestant Christianity relied on the ability of the converts to read and understand the scriptures for themselves.

In their endeavour to achieve their goals in education, missionaries also created Christian villages.

**The Utilization of Christian Villages**

Christian villages were established as a strategy to sustain converts. Often they served as centres for African education. It is therefore essential to examine this phenomenon. In fact, Christian villages were used as an instrument to counteract the impact of indigenous modes of thought and practice. The focus of Christian missionaries in creating Christian villages was on transforming the metaphysical, epistemological and axiological orientations of the converts. They were intended as a complete attack on the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu* that traditionally informed the converts before their conversion as they were calculated to isolate converted Africans from the *corrupting* influence of African indigenous education and culture, and abstain from beer drinking, polygamy, heathen dances, and ancestral veneration. These were regarded as unchristian by the missionaries. Thus, the converts had to adhere to Christian ideals (Manyoba, 1991). Consequently, indigenous philosophies of religion were disparaged while indigenous
moral and aesthetic values were deprecated. Indigenous epistemologies were dismissed as superstition. A look at what missionaries said about Christian villages lends credence to the above contentions.

The aim in obtaining farms was to create model Christian communities which would be islands of light in a sea of heathen and superstitious darkness, writes Read from the perspective of the Roman Catholic Church (Linden, 1980:42). Along the same lines, the Revd Alfred S. Sharp of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in 1900 says:

Our objective is to establish a mission village on each of the farms we occupy, where the English missionary resides, and to work the surrounding villages from these centres. To these centres we seek to gather the best of our people, the majority of them being our own converts. These villages will be essentially Christian villages, where we make our own civic laws and social rules. They will thus present a striking object lesson to the surrounding heathen (Manyoba, 1991:66).

Such thinking precluded any positive regard for African thought and practice. With this thinking in mind, some of the Wesleyan Methodist Church Christian villages were established at Epworth Mission, Nenguwo Mission and Altona Mission, while those of the Roman Catholic Church were at Gokomere Mission in Masvingo, Empandeni Mission, Chishawasha and Kutama Mission (White, 1895; Hone, 1909). While the Dutch Reformed Church established some of its Christian villages at Morgenster and Gutu, the
London Missionary Society had Inyati and Hope Fountain, and the Anglican Church had St Augustine’s Mission as well as St Faith’s Mission (Atkinson, 1973; Clinton, 1959; Maravanyika, 1986; Zvobgo, 1996). Young Christian couples were encouraged to leave their families to settle in these villages where they lived according to Christian principles. The idea of Christian villages was to isolate converted Africans from the “corrupting” influence of African culture, to ensure that they would not backslide as they were now a new family, a new community united by a common belief in the Christian faith. The Africans in such locations were expected to internalise colonial values and morals.

In as far as the provision of education to Africans as a means of uprooting Africans from their cultures was concerned, Christian villages were very successful. However in as far as inculcating Christian values, that is, protecting their converts from “pagan” influences was concerned, Christian villages failed as the educated Africans were absorbed by the urban areas where they acquired those tastes and values the missionaries were at pains to discourage. It was also bound to happen that as converts in outside villages increased, the importance of Christian villages was bound to wane (Weller & Linden, 1980:89-90). However, the fact that such entities as Christian villages were created was evidence of the destruction of African ways of life wherever they were. It is difficult to consider such a development as being of benefit to those whose culture was destroyed.

Using the above strategies, missionaries set about to covert the Africans through the educational curricular which they designed for them.
The Nature of the Curriculum

In line with their goals as well as government policy, the education provided to Africans by the Christian missionaries was intended to make the Africans literate so they could read and comprehend the scriptures. It was also intended to impart some form of rudimentary industrial knowledge only sufficient for them to survive in rural areas but not enough to enable them to compete with white artisans on the job market. In this, they were collaborating with the colonial regime that did not want a black population competing for the same jobs with Europeans or viewing itself as equal with the settler population. Consequently, instruction in the three R’s was rudimentary but deep in the 4th R (Religion). Half the day was devoted to industrial work as was required by the colonial policy on African education. The trend was the same in all schools (Zvobgo, 1996; Randolph, 1974).

As argued above, because Africans were viewed as inferior to Europeans, there was very little input by Africans into the school curricula. In the Dutch Reformed Church schools, even in the development of the Chikaranga syllabus, it was the Dutch Reformed Church Mission Council, in which the Africans were not represented, that designed school curricular. It was again the Dutch Reformed Church Mission Council that determined the resources that were to go into the implementation of the curricula. As a result, the Dutch Reformed Church Mission Council came up with Zvakatarwa which constituted the syllabi and schemes of work distributed to all schools. Consequently, the curricular were predominantly Christian. The curricular were intended to develop functional literacy and numeracy. While the Dutch Reformed Church was the first to introduce printed schemes
of work in book form for a three-year course prior to Standards 2 and 3 in Zimbabwe, these were used by a cohort of largely untrained semi-literate teachers. So, this innovation failed to pay off as the quality of education provided was very poor (Maravanyika, 1986:118).

Mutumburanzou wrote of five categories of schools under the Dutch Reformed Church. The first category was the Home School which according to Van der Merwe (1953:40) were feeders to the Central Primary Schools. In the Home School there were four groups (i) Beginners (ii) Ngano (iii) Shumo (iv) the study of Tesitamende Itsva (the New Testament) as well as Munyai Washe. Their class activities included studying the word of God, verses of the Bible, Singing, Reading, Spelling and Writing, Arithmetic, Hygiene and Physical Education. Instruction in this category of schools was in Chikaranga in Masvingo and Chimanyika in Manicaland among the Anglican Church (van der Merwe, 1953:169). The second category was the Ward school, in which, in addition to what the Home School offered, also included traditional subjects like English, and singing of notes, writing of letters and handwork and hygiene. Maravanyika (1986) collates these two categories into one which is the Out-Schools. He also argues that in the Out-Schools, the pupils were taught to read without writing. The Reverend Brigg (1906:24) calls them ìbush schoolsî. From the Reverend Morley-Wright (1943)îs perspective, the bush schools provided poor quality education due to poor teaching. The third category, according to Mutumburanzou, was the Mission School, made up of boarding schools for those studying from Standard 1 to 4. Maravanyika (1986:118) calls these Primary Boarding Schools which were for boys. The pupils studied English, Arithmetic,
Moulding, Geography, Boundaries and Towns as prescribed in *Zvakatarwa* (Mutumburanzou, 1999:70).

The Intermediate school constituted the fourth category which was found at the two schools at Morgenster and Gutu (Mutumburanzou, 1999:69). This was not very different from Mission schools. The Fifth category was the Normal or Teachers’ school which covered schools with Standards four up to six. In addition to what the other schools taught, in the Normal Schools students learnt Methods of Teaching (Mutumburanzou, 1999). So Maravanyika (1986:116-119)’s categories are (i) Girls’ Homes Schools, (ii) Christian Girls Homes (iii) the Primary Boarding School and (iv) the Out ì Schools.

What is important to note about the education provided in most of these school is that it hardly met the expectations of the African people. In the absence of the necessary resources and the requisite skills, it is not surprising that Africans viewed education in Dutch Reformed Church schools as substandard.

Within the Dutch Reformed Church schools, Grades 1 ì 3 used slates provided by the government. Those in higher grades had to purchase the slates for themselves. In the Dutch Reformed Church schools, every three years, a school was entitled to a copy of *Tesitamende Itsva* (New Testament), *Bhuku yevana* (Children’s books), *Nziyo Dzechikoro* (School Hymns), *Katekisimo* (Catechumen) and a pen. Only once were the schools each given an ink-pot and a whistle. It was reported that 53/97 enrolled students shared one teacher and six slates. A school of 66 pupils was open for a year without a school-room or where 48 pupils spent 3 months staring at Chart I to the point where they
could recite it by heart but not read it (Summers, 1998). Because of these basic provisions, teachers developed the attitude that all they had to do was to provide basic minimum education. This is supported by Maravanyika (1986:119) when he points out that:

These basic requirements were seldom met and as a result, primary education in DRC schools was probably the poorest in the country in terms of the provision of manpower and other resources.

The situation was made worse by the fact that the core-business of the five types of primary schools was religious work in the form of Bible study, memorisation of verses and singing and vocational training in conformity with governmental expectations (Maravanyika, 1986).

In most mission schools, the curricular for academic education included Religious instruction, Chimanyika, English, Arithmetic, Writing and Singing History and Geography and Bible study in first class schools (Zvobgo, 1996: Maravanyika, 1986: Mutumburanzou, 1999: Randolph, 1977). The academic curriculum at Nenguwo in 1903 consisted of Reading, Writing, Dictation, Geography, and Scripture which included Sermon preparation, Morality and Evangelical work as well as Poetry, and Tonic Sol-fa (Zvobgo, 1991) added over the years. The industrial curricula for girls included washing and ironing, cooking and pottery, needlework, spinning, knitting and crotchety as part of
industrial training. This was seen as being in line with African culture in which girls were assigned mapindu or small plots at home.

As for the boys, they were involved in cutting stones, forming bricks or constructing buildings, tree planting, woodwork, crop rotation, paddocking, livestock farming, metalwork, and leatherwork (Brigg, 1906; Ketterer, 1938; Samudzimu, 1999; Tariro, 1975; Weller & Linden, 1984). As an indictment of the rudimentary industrial curriculum offered to African boys, Wilkerson of the London Missionary Society asserted, “My boys have not the chance to become expert in any particular branch but I try to turn out Christian lads, tidy, clean, sharp and useful, teaching them to be thus by labour which may be building, gardening, etc mixed with a fair education” (Clinton, 1959:69). He argued that he was not producing skilled African graduates but “cheerful Christian handymen, able and willing to turn their hands to building, carpentry, leather work, any skills guaranteed to help church and people” (Zvobgo, 1996:155). The curricular were largely industrial in line with missionary belief that Africans needed to be taught to work. The missionaries were also convinced that by providing Africans with such an education system, they were benefiting the Africans.

On Anglican Church education, Knight-Bruce, argued, “We prefer educating them to work by degrees” (Atkinson, 1973:88). “One of my chief aims ever since I took over this station, has been to instill into the Natives under my charge, love of work in general, and in particular the love of useful manual trades” (Zvobgo, 1991:162). Smith argued that white settlers preferred that African be taught
good manners and a proper respect for the white man as well as to keep themselves clean and to do a bit of work (Smith, 1946:66-67). Thus, the industrial education availed to Africans was largely rudimentary. As Maravanyika (1986) notes, more emphasis was apparently put on industrial and spiritual training in line with the view that Africans did not have knowledge of God.

I have constantly urged the opening of an industrial school for the young, and giving employment to as many as possible of those who were grown up. By enforcing habits of industry and systematic labour, idleness is diminished, and consequently the evils resulting therefrom. The mind is also gradually trained to grasp spiritual ideas; and little by little Christian doctrine is caught up by the people,

writes Father Prestage (1891) to Father Kerr. What he is saying in essence is that the education of African had to be heavily tilted towards manual system of education. This was corroborated by Fr Hartmann who argued, We teach them how to work and also religion. He continued, but we do not teach them how to read and write, this is fifty years too soon (Linden, 1980:14). So, for him, education for Africans was to facilitate evangelization as well as providing labour force to the colonists.

Consequently, in 1938, Ketterer wrote that the education they provided to Africans was in the lines of agriculture and craft work, with a minimum of academic schooling (Ketterer, 1938:121). So in the schools, especially village schools, in addition to being
taught the rudiments of reading and writing, the pupils were allotted plots they had to attend to. That is where they produced mealies, monkey nuts, rapoko, beans, and some vegetables that were used to sustain the mission schools. Manure was brought from their homes. Such an approach would have justified the theory of benevolence had missionaries aimed at imparting lasting skills that would enable Africans to survive. But this would have been contrary to what the settlers wanted taught to Africans.

So, for African education, the Christian missionaries’ thrust was to enable Africans to read and write with a view to making them able to comprehend the teachings of religious education. Africans were also educated to provide cheap labour for commerce and industry. The curricular were Eurocentric in outlook. The curricular failed to give due attention to Africans’ historical and cultural circumstances. From missionary utterance quoted above, it is clear that the provision of poor quality education to Africans was deliberate. This discredits the theory of benevolence that presents missionaries being driven by the humanitarian impulse in their provision of education to African. In fact, once Africans realised the inferior nature of the education missionaries gave them, the missionaries were discredited in the eyes of the Africans.

**Secondary Education**

It was noted at the 1938 Joint Conference of Missionaries that there was no secondary school for Africans in Rhodesia. Teacher Training Colleges were producing teachers who could teach only up to Standard 3. There was need for teachers who would teach in upper Primary Standards. In addition, the ministerial, nursing and teaching professions
needed people with a wider general education than Standard Six (Van der Merwe, 1953). Furthermore, the pupils eligible for secondary education were getting much younger and it appeared undesirable to send such young people to South Africa for their secondary education. It was also noted that most of the institutions of higher learning in South Africa were interdenominational. So, the churches realised they were losing their converts (Zvobgo, 1991). The principal of St Augustine observed that African teachers from South Africa did not find it easy to settle in Rhodesia (Zvobgo, 1996). Yet there were demands for secondary education from the Africans. In fact, there were some Africans from Southern Rhodesia who were already going to South Africa for their secondary education and brought with them ideas of political equality with the whites (Zvobgo, 1991; Zvobgo, 1996). So, missionaries lobbied the Government for the establishment of a secondary school for Africans but the Government was not willing to commit any money to this exercise.

The Government gave permission to missionaries to establish a united missionary college but this never materialised (Zvobgo, 1991). Denominational rivalry precluded such a development. While the staff at Waddilove recommended that secondary education be introduced in 1939, they were discouraged from doing so by the Department of Native Education which insisted on the idea of an interdenominational secondary school serving and supported by all missionary societies in Southern Rhodesia (Zvobgo, 1991). The Wesleyan Methodist Church was only able to establish its first secondary school at Waddilove in 1966 (Samudzimu, 1991). However, on the insistence of Father Alban Winter, whom Langdon-Davies described as a pioneer of African education, mainly
secondary and teacher training, the first secondary school for Africans opened its doors at St Augustine in January 1939 (Langdon-Davis, 1971).

According to Langdon-Davies (1971), Winter, who was the headmaster of St Augustine, managed to convince the Governor, Sir Herbert Stanley and the Native Development Department, to give St Augustine a grant. Father Winter had opposed the idea of a government secondary school which was being advocated by the Governor, Sir Herbert Stanley. "Our secondary work at St Augustine's will grow naturally out of the work we are already doing. In fact, we have already the nucleus of a small class waiting for us to begin" (Zvobgo, 1996:269). He argued that the Anglican Church could not wait for the Government to provide secondary education to Africans. He further argued that it was essential that secondary education be provided to Africans immediately (Zvobgo, 1996:269). Thus, St Augustine pioneered in the provision of secondary education to Africans. This, however, can be attributed to the singular vision of Father Alban Winter who insisted on offering the academics to Africans in education (Rakale, 1971:14). Once the Anglican Church successfully established its schools, other denominations followed suit.

While the Dutch Reformed Church was of the conviction that higher education was not of primary importance to Africans, it realised that it could not avoid offering secondary education if it wanted to retain its sphere of influence, hence it noted that; "The Secondary School cannot be postponed for longer than 1952 if we want to keep our influence in the education field" (Maravanyika, 1986:32). Thus, the Dutch Reformed
Church established Zimuto Secondary School in 1952 (Van der Merwe, 1953:50). The Dutch Reformed Church viewed secondary education in the light of its original philosophy of education, providing "an excellent opportunity for evangelisation and the building of a strong church" (Maravanyika, 1986:133). According to Clinton (1959:77), the London Missionary Society was able to establish its first secondary school at Inyati in 1953. While the aim was still to prepare its students "for citizenship of the Kingdom of God" and always kept this in sight, conditions demanded more secularization of education (Clinton, 1959:79). The Jesuits had their first secondary school at St Ignatius' in 1962 which was to be an African replica of St Georges' (Catholic Herald, 1962). As an institution aimed at producing a black elite, it was more academically oriented than other schools. St Ignatius' was intended to "contribute to the creation of a managerial and executive African middle-class" (Linden, 1980:69).

Because secondary schools were meant to produce teachers, evangelists, clerks, orderlies and other professionals, they had to have a higher dose of academic education. But such schools were deliberately very few. Also the quality of education in each of these schools depended on the preparedness of the particular missionary societies to commit resources to African education. In general these schools were constructed with the assistance of government grants (Linden, 1980:69). The introduction of secondary education, like all other activities of the Christian missionaries, was intended to bolster the missionary work in Southern Rhodesia. If indeed missionaries were driven by the humanitarian and philanthropic impulse as claimed in the theory of benevolence, they would have constructed more such schools as there was demand for them among Africans. But
collaboration with the settler community meant that not many such schools would be provided to Africans.

The rise in demand for secondary education among Africans was not well received by the colonial regime which came up with the 1966 Plan for African Education which developed a two tier system in the provision of education to Africans (Zvobgo, 1994). The result was the F1 which was the ‘normal’ academic secondary school designed to provide a ‘quick and smooth ascent to the educational summit for a minority of able, eager and ambitious children’ (Atkinson, 1972:139), and the F2 or Junior Secondary School, which was industrial oriented (Education Newsletter, 1974:3), described in the Judges Report as providing an education ‘enough to give its recipients a sense of intellectual security’ (Judges Report, 1963:67). African pupils who were regarded as intelligent were sent to academic schools while those who were viewed as less academically inclined went to industrial schools. The F2 system was intended to obviate African demands for secondary education by offering them an inferior type of technical education. For the construction of these schools, missionaries received grants from government. This was in line with the recommendations of the Phelps Ń Stokes Commission that missionaries focus on secondary education and leave primary schools to local authorities. This saw a proliferation of F2 secondary schools run by missionary societies in Rhodesia. But these were not popular among Africans as will be made clear in the next chapter.
While most missionaries cherished the grants they were receiving from the colonial regime, there were a few who felt uncomfortable with the extent of cooperation with government. They felt that this relationship created a dilemma for the missionaries. In the Anglican Church, the Reverend Cripps refused government support for the two schools he established for Africans. “We are faced with a seeming dilemma,” wrote Father Collingridge, “Are we missionaries or are we Government servants?” he asked. “We have accepted conditions of control by accepting Grants. Having taken service, we must honour the contract. We have virtually subscribed to the Government’s view of Development along the lines laid down” (Linden, 1980:29). On the part of the London Missionary Society, Neville Jones resigned disillusioned by the level of collaboration with the Government. But from the perspective of missionaries, all education was intended to facilitate evangelization of Africans.

**Summary**

In this chapter I have argued that the Christian missionaries who came to Zimbabwe were informed by the philosophy of abstract universality which evolved from the anthropological and philosophical writings by scholars from the Occident, some of whom had never been to Africa. The philosophy of universality enabled Christian missionaries to claim that, by providing education to Africans, they were bringing civilization and culture to an area that was bereft of any development. The African other, that they encountered did not present or instantiate the possibility of dialogue. The African other was perceived as having no education, no religion and no culture, hence the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu* which they possessed was never really acknowledged. Rather, the other
was already labeled, named without a possibility of creative instantiation. The Africans were the Lockean *tabla rasa*, empty slates that presented the opportunity for the missionaries to unbank and deposit the knowledge that they possessed (Freire, 1972) through the imposition of western education. Thus, the missionaries contrived to use African chiefs, African Evangelists in the provision education for evangelization among other things in their activities in Zimbabwe. Consequently, the education they provided to Africa was in line with their goal of converting Africans to the Christian religion, which was regarded as superior and informed by reason. The education they provided was largely industrial but rudimentary. There was no attempt to infuse the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu* into the curricular that were given to Africans. Thus, the interaction was indeed a struggle for reason (Ramose, 1999). As will be established in the following chapter, initially, Africans had difficulties accepting the education that the Christian missionaries were bringing to them which was foreign and unappealing, since it had no connection with their philosophy of life, the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*. 
CHAPTER 5

AFRICAN PERCEPTIONS OF AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS MISSIONARY PROVISION OF EDUCATION

Introduction

As observed in chapter two, African perception of reality before the advent of colonialism was informed by the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*. This meant that *hunhu/ubuntu*, as a holistic philosophy, permeated African metaphysical, epistemological and axiological orientations. This further implies that the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu* governed Africans’ perception of the self and their relatedness to the other. *Hunhu/ubuntu*, being inseparable from African identity, fostered self respect, and mutuality. It is, therefore, the contention in this chapter that the manner in which the African approached the different other was dictated by the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu* which made them aware that they affirm their humanity by affirming the humanity of others. In this context, *hunhu/ubuntu* determined the manner in which Africans initially interacted with missionaries and the settlers who constituted the different other. It was the way missionaries and settlers responded to or reciprocated the gestures of generosity and altruism of the Africans, as dictated by *hunhu/ubuntu* that determined relations that developed during the initial and subsequent phases of interaction throughout historical eras in Zimbabwe. The African attitude towards missionaries, as informed by *hunhu/ubuntu*, ranged from mutual respect to disdain and strategic accommodation. Even the Africans’ attitudes towards the education introduced by missionaries in Zimbabwe were determined by the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*. 
Mutual Respect

In spite of numerous reports by hunters, traders and missionaries that Africans, in what is now Zimbabwe, were willing to accept Christian education and that in some cases it was Africans who invited missionaries to come and teach them, there was no success in either converting or educating Africans by the missionaries before the advent of colonization (Maravanyika, 1986; Lewis & Edwards, 1934; Rea, 1962; Stanlake, 1899). While the Africans warmly received the missionaries as dictated by *hunhu/ubuntu*, this was with circumspection as they were not prepared to accept the new religion and its teachings which tended to threaten their religious identity and uproot them from their culture. It threatened their religious identity in the sense that conversion required the converted to assume a new identity, which entailed a negation of one’s religion and culture. The teachings by Silveira and the Dominicans after him had no success in derooting the Mashona. The education provided by the London Missionary Society, the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglicans had no success with either Mzilikazi or Lobengula or the Amandebele people in general (Rasmussen, 1977; Ranger, 1968; Zvobgo, 1996; Rea, 1970; Rea, 1962). The Mashona and the Amandebele, though they allowed the missionaries to preach to them, were aware of the alienating influence of missionary teachings. They therefore refused to convert and proceeded to initially reject western education.

While Mzilikazi is said to have attentively listened to some sermons (Moffat, 1921) and even summoned some of his people to listen to the sermons preached by missionaries, he refused to convert (Carnegie, 1894). So even when Mzilikazi is reported to have said to
Robert Moffat, ìBy all means let me have teachers é I shall be happy if you bring teachers,î his focus might have been on literacy not evangelism (Rea, 1962:6). According to Moffat (1886), Mzilikazi hoped that he could engage in profitable commerce with the missionaries. This perception is corroborated by Bhebe (1979) and Rasmussen (1977). Bhebe (1979) and Bhila (1977) further surmise that Mzilikazi hoped to utilise missionaries’ knowledge of the use, and repair of guns and wagons. According to Blake (1977), Mzilikazi was of the view that he could rely upon missionaries as interpreters in this intercourse with traders who were coming to his kingdom. The Indunas in Matabeleland perceived missionaries and their teachings as ìa threat to their social orderî and ìthe advance fifth column of an occupying powerî (Blake, 1977:21). They detested missionary teachings which castigated their beliefs.

The same position that Mzilikazi adopted towards missionary education was also adopted by Lobengula who, even when he was leaving his kingdom, had to ensure the safety of the missionaries by advising his indunas that, ìthese vessels must not be destroyedî (Flood, 1973:1). The Wesleyan Methodist Church struggled among the Mashona (Zvobgo, 1991). While the people listened to what missionaries were teaching, they were not interested in the new teachings which threatened to upset the beliefs that they were used to (Thomas, 1863; Zvobgo, 1991). The warm reception which the missionaries mistook for readiness to accept western education and to convert was a manifestation of the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu which requires the extension of hospitality and altruism to visitors, whether they are familiar or strangers, a point that was recognised by Gelfand
The Africans generally remained circumspect with reference to the acceptance of western education and conversion to Christianity.

Thus, because they allowed Christian missionaries to teach and preach, the Africans expected missionaries to respect their religion, cultures and being in the same manner as Africans also respected those of the missionaries and the traders who accompanied them. That is why Lobengula argued, ‘I believe God made the Matabele just as he wished them to be, it is wrong for anyone to seek to alter them’ and that ‘God has left His people so long I feel sure that He intends them to remain as they are’ (Clinton, 1959:54). In other words, Africans were better off with indigenous education and culture rooted in *hunhu/ubuntu* than imbibing an alien education, culture and a foreign religion whose values were contrary to what they believed. This suggests that Africans, though guided by the principle of mutual respect which made them in the words of Berry (1985:ix) ‘at home in the world’ had negative perceptions and attitudes towards western education.

By exhibiting the propensity to condemn everything African, including African indigenous education, religious beliefs and value systems, missionaries were negating the principle of mutuality. The principle of mutuality, as embodied in the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*, entailed an orientation of one person towards the other, an evocation of the humanity, the being of the other in human encounters. Mutuality, as an *hunhu/ubuntu* principle, demands that interhuman experiences or encounters be informed by trust, love, dialogue, empathy, respect, protection of the weak, as well as the ability to live together. These values were inculcated through indigenous education which, as I pointed out in
chapter two, was an education for hunhu/ubuntu. Mutuality provided the opportunity for Africans and missionaries to reach out to each other, to work out an education that Africans would appreciate from a combination of elements from indigenous education and western education. However, the missionaries’ contempt for the African indigenous education, religion and culture in general precluded any appreciation of the attributes of mutuality explicated above. The result was that Africans developed negative perceptions of western education as it was being presented by missionaries.

As a result Africans saw no reason for them to accept an education that inculcated beliefs in alien religion that condemned everything they believed and held so dearly when Christian missionaries failed to demonstrate the veracity of their own religion. Christian education proved to be an education system that negated the possibility of mutuality which was a very important aspect of hunhu/ubuntu. Mutuality, as reflected in hunhu/ubuntu, was epitomised in the aphorism kunzi munhu vanhu or umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu (we affirm our humanity through the affirmation of the humanity of others). This, according to Ramose (1999:154) was concretised in ōbeing humane, respectful and polite towards other human beings. Furthermore, mutuality entailed dialogue, ōthe totality of things and beings that meet us and that we meet in the world. In addition mutuality implies, in the Buberian sense, the possibility of ōgenuine meeting between human beings. Mutuality is a negation of the reifying ōi it relationship in favour of the affirmation of the humanising ōi Thou or better still ōi We relationship (Buber, 1958). It was this philosophy that informed the Africans in their encounter with the missionaries. Yet, it would appear missionaries lacked the ōinstinct of communion that
would have developed mutuality between them and the Africans (Berry, 1985:x). That Christian missionaries failed to recognise this, meant they could not succeed in providing an education that Africans could find relevant to their existential situation, and that they could not succeed in converting the Mashona and Amandebele at least in the early years.

When Coillard passed through Inyati in 1876, he observed, "You will ask me what influence the Gospel has had up till now in this savage nation. Apparently none whatever. (They) have laboured for twenty years in this country… In spite of all efforts and sacrifices, *there is no school, no church, not a single convert*" (Wills, 1964:100). It can only be surmised that during this time, the African philosophy of life, the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*, had not proved inadequate in enabling Africans to confront existential problems. Again, the missionaries failed to understand this philosophy and to relate it to their activities, including the provision of education, because they had no intention of knowing and respecting the other or to develop mutual acceptance. They held on to the belief that they had come as philanthropists and humanitarians benefiting Africans through their education. According to Keto (1979:602), quoted in Lewis and Steyn (2003:103), "the missionary viewed the African as a malleable spirit ripe for the noble onslaught of civilizing and christianizing endeavours. Such an attitude is a clear negation of dialogue, mutuality, and openness to the richness of the other they were encountering. This attitude led missionaries to develop what Lewis and Steyn described as the *subject–object* or the *I–It* relationship that precluded the development of that cultural dialogue that would have fostered mutual respect and understanding. They were convinced of the superiority of their race (Dunch, 2002:310) as informed by the
philosophy of abstract universality explained in the previous chapter. This was further exacerbated by Christian missionaries’ failure to realise that “pre-colonial African education matched the realities of pre-colonial society and produced well-rounded personalities to fit into that society” (Rodney, 1972:262). In addition, Africans observed the contradictions and inconsistencies extant among the products of Christian education which Lobengula was able to identify and point out. As a result, they were suspicious of the education missionaries were bringing to them.

Lobengula, having developed a negative perception of missionary education, aptly critiqued attempts to present western education by missionaries before colonial rule. “Of what use is the teaching?” Lobengula queried, “All the white men here read and write but their knowledge does not make them good” (Illustrated Missionary News. March, 1873:40). This was after he had observed what Carnegie (1894:105) describes as “the immoral lives of white men who have been in the country,” and Moffat, quoted in Bhebe (1979:65), referred to as “the unscrupulous, degraded and irresponsible white residents whose way of life was a complete negation of Christian teachings.” Weller and Linden (1984:21) also say this group of white traders and concession seekers drank and kept “black mistresses.” In addition, Africans were aware of the personal incompatibility between Thomas Morgan Thomas on the one hand and John Smith Moffat as well as Sykes on the other (Haille, 1951), which resulted in Thomas’ expulsion from the London Missionary Society (Thomas, 1865). Of these hostilities, the Africans were aware (Thomas, 1865, Thomas, 1869). The Africans were aware that while these Christian missionaries claimed to be preaching peace, love and brotherhood through their
education, they were not leading by example. So, the behaviour of the whites betrayed that lack of consistence that Africans associated with a deficiency in *hunhu/ubuntu*. The situation was aggravated by the fact that Christian missionaries presented Christianity as a part of the western way of life (Weller & Linden, 1984:21) which required Africans to abandon their own way of life. This, it would appear the Africans were not prepared to do, at least in the early days.

In support of this, Berman (1974:532) observes, “Africans were well aware of the contradictions contained in Christianity, of the distinction between the platitudinous Christian pronouncements and the actions of the missionaries themselves. Africans could therefore not convert to a religion whose adherence contradicted its teaching and who were not keen on observing its tenets. In fact, Bhila (1977:57) argues that this association of ‘rustic, venturesome hunters, settlers and traders could not but create doubts in the minds of the Africans. Thus, Africans held on to their culture, religion, and indigenous education. There was no eventful or catastrophic challenge to compel them to review their philosophy of life. There was no gap or vacuum that Christianity and Christian education could fill. This resistance to conversion and Western education by Africans convinced Christian missionaries that no success in establishing schools could be achieved before the advent of the fall of the Amandebele kingdom (Van der Merwe, 1953; Knight-Bruce, 1895; Zvobgo, 1996; Moffat, 1921; Bhebe, 1979; Murphree, 1975). However, even after the establishment of colonial rule, some Africans for some time resisted Western education which they perceived to be a process that would alienate them from their cultures and traditions. They perceived western
education, being part and parcel of evangelization, as inseparable from the process of colonization of Zimbabwe. The Africans also identified missionaries with the settlers. After all, missionaries, like the settlers, were participating in the massive expropriation of their lands (Ndlovu ÌGatsheni, 2001:53).

**Africans and Land Alienation**

Another area in which Christian missionaries ignored mutuality was on the question of land ownership. Fowale (2009, para, 5) argues, "The importance of land in pre-colonial (Africa) is explained not by its economic value, but more by its spiritual importance. This, he says, quoting Elizabeth Colson, was because of Africans' conception of land as a sacred object existing independently of men. Thus, to Africans, land had both a material as well as a spiritual value. The land was where *rukuvhute* (the umbilical cord) was buried. It was where the living and dead, the ancestors, were buried. It was on the land that Africans poured libation (beer and snuff) in veneration of the ancestors (Ramose, 1999). Land formed the basis of African survival as it was from the land that they obtained food, water, medicines, animals, and minerals, in short, their livelihood (Nkosi, 1999). It was on the land on which they educated each other. They taught their children to work the land for food, they taught them to hunt on the land, they taught them to worship on the land. In other words, land was central to African indigenous education. Land was therefore the basis of African existence that defined their being in the world. It gave Africans their identity and their location in the universe. It was this understanding of the meaning of land to the African that informed Cripps' observation that "Separation from their land means a severance between the dead and the living members of the
community, with an inevitable slackening of the moral obligations which that community entailed (Cripps, 1927:30). Land was, therefore, as pointed out by Moyana (2002:3), “the most precious commodity among both the Shona and Ndebele”. Banana (1991:143) observes, “to temper with an African’s land is to temper with the heart of his faith, his culture, and his livelihood”. So, when they were dispossessed of their land by the colonial regime, Africans became bitter culminating in first the First Chimurenga and later the Second Chimurenga wars. Defeat in the First Chimurenga war saw Africans being confined to Native Reserves which were on unproductive sandy soils (Moyana, 2002).

By accepting land forcibly expropriated from the Africans, which was among the most fertile soils, Christian missionaries were viewed by the Africans as identifying and collaborating with the colonizers. The argument the missionaries advanced that they were holding on to the land for future use by Africans did not convince the Africans as not much land was surrendered for African settlement by the missionaries during the colonial era. In other words, the missionaries were claiming to have been impelled by benevolence in acquiring land which they claimed they were going to give to Africans. The missionaries’ identification with the settlers was compounded by missionaries’ support for legislation such as the Land Apportionment Act and the Land Husbandry Act that entrenched the dispossession and incapacitation of Africans (Cripps, 1927, Zvobgo, 1991). Ironically, the missionaries also wanted the land on which to establish mission stations where they would build schools for Africans. Mission schools would not have been possible without missionary acquisition of land. However, the Africans identified
missionaries with the settlers since the missionaries were taking the land on which the Africans were already settled.

According to Linden (1980), the Roman Catholic Church received 180 000 acres of land from the British South Africa Company. The Dutch Reformed Church, in addition to Morgenster which totaled 6000 morgan (12 000 acres), further acquired Zimuto, Gutu, Alheit, Makumbe, Nyashanu, Chibi as well as Pamushana mission stations (Louw, 1951; Maravanyika, 1986; Mutumburanzou, 1999). The Anglican Church was promised 3000 acres of land everywhere where they established a mission station (Lewis & Edwards, 1934). The Wesleyan Methodist Church also received large tracts of land from the British South Africa Company. Apart from Inyati (8000 acres) and Hope Fountain (6000 acres), which were secured from Mzilikazi and Lobengula respectively, the London Missionary Society also received a lot of land from the British South Africa Company (Zvobgo, 1991). The lone voice against the Land Apportionment Act and subsequent land legislation was that of the African clergyman, the Reverend Amos Mzileti who argued:

Many people have been moved to the Shangani and elsewhere (by government). This has forced us to close down some of our schools and our church people have been scattered. This shifting and re-shifting of people leads to a growing sense of insecurity, indifference to all efforts made for the development of the Africans, bitterness and disillusionment, and loss of confidence in the Government. This birth of an anti-European feeling may have far-reaching repercussions not only
for the future of the country but on the work of Christian missions in general (Flood, 1959:78).

Mzileti is pointing out that the colonial land policies that the missionaries supported were interfering with the provision of education to Africans as schools in land alienated from Africans were forced to close. The question of land was, therefore, central to the provision of education to Africans by missionaries. Those Africans on land allocated to missionaries became squatters (Mazobere, 1991) on their former homes. They resented the missionaries who became some kind of landlord to them (Gann, 1965). The Africans were compelled to provide cheap labour if they wanted to continue staying on land that used to belong to them and their forefathers, yet they were aware that the missionaries did not buy the land (Maravanyika, 1986). As noted above, land in Africa was inseparable from African spirituality. Moyana (2002:3) notes that Africans were subjected to high rental charges or eviction from their lands. The loss of land among Africans was viewed as a challenge to African spirituality (Nkosi, 1999). Thus, the missionaries were seen as being in complicity with the colonists in dispossessing Africans of their land. They were regarded as having rejected working with the Africans in favour of identifying with the settlers. Thus, for some time, Africans continued to resist Western education and conversion to Christianity as missionaries were viewed as collaborating with the colonial regime to dispossess them.
African Reaction to Western Education and Evangelisation after Conquest

The onset of colonialism saw a proliferation of mission schools in Zimbabwe. Christian missionaries had hoped that the defeat of the Amandebele would lead to a boom in the conversion rates among both the Amandebele and the Mashona. But the Africans were generally suspicious of the motives of the missionaries who were teaching and preaching an alien religion and offering an education rooted in a foreign culture, an education that failed to incorporate those values that epitomized the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu. The Zambezi Mission Record in 1906 confirmed of the Africans at Empandeni that, Ŧthough they came to the Sunday instruction, absolutely refused to abandon their pagan lives and habits and to allow their children to be instructed for BaptismÔ (Zvobgo, 1991:66). The Editor of the Zambezi Mission Record wrote in 1906, ŦEven after the missionary has resided in their midst for years, and devoted himself day after day to the work of their regeneration, he is often looked at askance by many who are persuaded that self-interest must have brought him as it brings other white men Ŧto their countryÔ (Zambezi Mission Record, 1906:100-101). The Zambezi Mission Record of 1909 indicated that the Africans Ŧhave not the slightest intention of changing their lives and embracing Christianity Ŧthe majority of the young men and women are Ŧpast conversionÔ (quoted in MacKenzie, 1993:72). The Reverend Shimmin lamented that though Africans attended and listened to his sermons, they Ŧonly smiled, and looked puzzledÔ and that they were Ŧvery difficult to understandÔ (Zvobgo, 1991:30). Carnegie (1894:99) reports on the Amandebele saying, Ŧthey are cold, indifferent, and unconcerned in all that is related to Christian teachingÔ. ŦTo persuade these people that we have come among them for their good, have left kith and kin for their sakes is simply impossibleÔ, writes
Father Neil, a Jesuit missionary in 1909 (Zvobgo, 1996:91-92). He further points out that
the older people listened to missionary teaching with "incredulity and contempt" (Zvobgo, 1996:91-92). The 1903 Wesleyan Methodist Church Report at Majila stated, "Many of the people are indifferent to us, and some are hostile" (Wesleyan Methodist Church Report, 1903). About people under chief Gambo in Matabeleland, another Wesleyan Methodist Church Report states, "The people are indifferent, and betray no anxiety to change their old manner of life" (Zvobgo, 1973:66). The Reverend Grantham is quoted by Zvobgo (1991:65) as having reported in 1908, "The people of Nemakonde are recognised to be uncompromising in their attitude against Christianity. It is clear that western education initially failed to attract the Africans to Christianity. The Africans did not find western education of any value hence, their refusal to convert.

While in some instances Africans allowed their children to attend services, they were, paradoxically, "determined that the young should keep to the old revolting customs in spite of what they learn from us" (Brigg, in 1906, as cited by Zvobgo, 1991:68). From the views expressed above, it appears clear that Africans rejected the Christian message (Van der Merwe, 1953; Weller & Linden, 1984) as missionaries had failed to relate their teaching to the African philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu. This failure meant that what they were imparting to Africans did not have direct relevance and appeal to the African people, hence, the African people's indifference to missionary teaching and preaching.

Furthermore, Africans were not convinced that Christian missionaries were driven by concern for the souls of the African people as missionaries did not seem to want to
engage in dialogue with them. Instead of dialogue, missionaries cherished the banking approach in their dealings with Africans. In this approach, the Africans were viewed in terms of the Lockean *tabla rasa*, as gnosiologically bankrupt. They were therefore expected to submissively absorb western religion and education. But this could only have succeeded if there was a void in African spirituality. Yet, it would appear that African culture and therefore indigenous education remained intact and adequate for the material and spiritual needs of the African people. Furthermore, this indicates that African culture and religion retained strong influence among the Mashona, and the Amandebele. The Africans were aware of the alienating and negative impact of Christian education on African culture, religion and indigenous education, for example, Ndofirepi (1999:60) quotes Headman Matimbe, one of Chief Nyajena’s advisers, as having argued that:

> Through their education and the new gospel of Christianity, the missionaries É destroyed our whole philosophy of life É Everything we valued was denounced. We had our God of whom we believed worked in us and so we did not need mediation of a foreign culture. They were a threat to African traditional religions.

Along the same lines Banana (1990:15) argues:

> To denounce African traditional religion amounts to drowning the very African personality and thereby threatens the destruction of African culture and the cherished cultural values that are the cornerstone of African life.
In line with their negative perception of Africans, missionary teachings castigated Africans' established beliefs, customs and practices, and relegated them to the periphery. Missionaries condemned polygamy, beer drinking, African religious rites and rituals, moral values and principles. The Reverend Stanlake wrote in 1909, "Witchcraft must go. The orgies of beer-drinking must go. These things have deep roots in Africa" (Zvobgo, 1991:65). On the other hand, the Africans were aware that what western education required, that is conversion, meant abandonment of their culture and embracing a foreign culture with different values that often clashed with their own and which objectified their existence. This was going to result in alienation and uprootedness from their culture and their people and a loss of identity as Africans. The Africans therefore resisted missionary activities, including education. This resistance to missionary education by Africans will be discussed below under Africans’ rejection of poor quality education. In fact, Weller and Linden (1984:84) argue that after the First Chimurenga, Africans viewed missionaries as "instruments of Europeanization." Africans were, therefore, not keen on receiving Christian education, which, in the early years, did not seem to have any clear benefit as it was decontextualised and failed to speak to their historicity and existential circumstances.

Furthermore, to use Stambach’s term, the indigenes were aware that Christian schools imparted "religified norms" (Stambach, 2010:362). This was corroborated by what Berman (1974:535) had said when he contended that mission schools cultivated "Christian ideals, morals and lifestyles." In addition to this, as indicated by Ojike, as
cited by Berman (1974:532), African converts were compelled to take western names at Baptism as a sign of the rejection of their African origins. Chief Gordon Murinye from Masvingo (cited in Ndofirepi, 1999:56) elucidated this point when he argued; "The DRC missionaries, through attendance of their schools, required the Africans to publicly accept the new faith and renounce much of their former culture at baptism." In other words, this was a symbolic severance from the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*. At the same time, missionary education, through its insistence on conversion of students, accelerated the splintering of traditional society (Berman, 1974:532). This was resented by Africans.

Africans appear to have been quite content with their indigenous education which, being rooted in African ontology and epistemology, appeared to efficiently cater for their emotional, spiritual, economic, political, and intellectual well being. The strength of indigenous education was in its *relevance* to Africans (Rodney, 1972:262), that is, in its ability to tap into the experiences of the Africans. Rodney (1972:262) argues that the outstanding features of African indigenous education that made Africans hold on to it were its close links with social life, both in a material and spiritual sense: its collective nature; its many-sidedness; and its progressive development in conformity with the successive stages of physical, emotional and mental development of the child. In other words, it was its rootedness in the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu* that made it relevant to the African people.

It was, as I have pointed out in chapter two, a holistic and humanistic education, an education that did not separate manual from intellectual education. Thus, Africans were
content with their indigenous system of education which fostered unity, reciprocity as opposed to Christian education that negated the "principles of reciprocal recognition" (Bhebe & Ranger, 2001:xv). African indigenous education was an education that mirrored the reality of African societies. However, as colonialism became embedded, Africans realised the need for accommodating some aspects of European culture without abandoning their own. Before looking at the general African reaction, we discuss the responses by African chiefs to western education.

**The Perceptions and Reactions of the African Chiefs**

From the previous chapter, we noted that many African chiefs, once they realised that the Christian education was at odds with African religion, and their philosophy of life, they became strongly opposed to missionary education and presence among their people. When they became conscious of the alienating influence of values propagated by Christian missionaries through their education, some chiefs even discouraged their people from attending church services. The chiefs realised that the new teaching undermined their culture, traditions and religion and even their offices. Many chiefs who found themselves with missionary settlement in close proximity demonstrated their rejection of missionary influence by abandoning their settlements (*Mashonaland and Rhodesia District Summary*, 1898, Samudzimu, 1991). Among such chiefs were Kwenda, Nenguwo, Ranga, Mutasa, Zimunya as well as Nyajina (Zvobgo, 1996). I will discuss just a few of these chiefs.
While Zvobgo (1996), reports that Wesleyan Methodist Church missionaries claimed that Chief Kwenda himself convinced Shimmin of the need for Christian teachers to work among his people, Samudzimu (1991) argues that the Chief attempted to drive away mission workers while at the same time discouraging his people from attending and listening to missionary teaching. When attempts to expel the missionaries failed, the Chief and his people opted to move away (Samudzimu, 1991). The Kwenda Mission Report states, “Here we have had uphill work. The Chief, perceiving now the effects of the new faith, is strongly opposed to us. After trying unsuccessfully to drive us away, he has decided to move himself” (Zvobgo, 1991:84).

The 1898 Report of the Wesleyan Methodist Church on Kwenda indicated: “They have discovered that the new religion interferes with some of their cherished heathen customs” (Mashonaland and Rhodesia District Summary, 1898). In his 1899 report, the Reverend Brigg (1899:233) states, “The Chief .... had done all in his power to hinder us.” Another chief whose village became a centre of missionaries’ activities was Chief Nenguwo in whose village the Nenguwo Training Institute was established. However, Reverend Brigg (1899) reports that chief Nenguwo vacated his town after failing to drive out the Wesleyan Methodist Church missionaries. Chief Ranga, like Kwenda and Nenguwo, also worked to frustrate Christian missionaries. “We have continued to work for years in the face of the secret opposition of a wily and powerful chief. At both church and school the attendance is small” wrote White (Zvobgo, 1991:64). In 1904, White reported that Ranga frustrated missionary work in every way (Zvobgo, 1991).
The reaction of Chief Gambo, one of the most powerful indunas before the defeat of Lobengula, who had commanded an impi against the British South Africa Company forces in 1893, was ambivalent. While he is said to have become friendly to missionaries and to have approached the Revd Stanlake for a teacher to be sent to his village and allowing missionaries to preach and teach, Gambo himself resisted conversion to Christianity pleading old age (Stanlake, 1899; Zvobgo, 1991). Gambo asked Reverend Brigg the question, "Can you change the growth of the horns of an ox when he is already old? Can the horns which have grown backwards for many years, be suddenly changed to grow forward?" (Zvobgo, 1996:99). Sharp (1901) further points out that the people under Gambo were not keen to convert to Christianity.

Thus, in all the above cases involving African chiefs and their people, while they extended hospitality to missionaries as demanded by the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu and allowed them to teach their people, traditional religion and culture precluded conversion to Christianity. This was even more so with the chiefs who recognized what missionaries taught to be incompatible with African culture and religion. Because of its holistic approach to life, traditional culture made African chiefs political, judicial, religious as well as spiritual leaders who had to work closely with traditional religious leaders. They were the custodians of the axiological and aesthetic values of traditional society. They were, through the ontological hierarchy, the guardians of the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu that informed African communities in Zimbabwe. Thus, African chiefs were aware that they could not renounce traditional education, religion, culture and philosophy of life.
hunhu/ubuntu without renouncing their right to rule. Conversion to Christianity was, therefore, almost impossible for many African chiefs.

**Industrial Education as a Means of Exploitation**

In the previous chapter, it was noted that missionaries claimed to utilise education as a panacea for African indolence, slovenliness, and moral degradation (Berman, 1974:534). In other words, they regarded themselves as Africans’ benefactors as they were bringing salvation to the Africans. According to Peaden (1973:79), missionaries argued that manual work had a civilising effect on Africans. Yet, as I argued in chapter four, it was part of the curricular obligations stipulated in the Education Ordinance of 1899 which made a considerable amount of industrial education essential in the provision of education to Africans (Lawrence, 1962:2). The Africans resented this as it resulted in the exploitation of their labour by missionaries. As is pointed out by Berman (1974:534), the emphasis on manual labour served the interests of certain individuals among the missionaries. Outstanding cases were those of Orlandini and Murray of the Dutch Reformed Church who amassed a lot of personal wealth (Maravanyika, 1986; Summers, 1998) under the pretence of providing education to Africans. The Chief Native Commissioner of Victoria argued:

> From my own observation of various Dutch evangelists and teachers of the Dutch Reformed Church over a period of years, I can say that confirmation is lent to allegations made against them of personal exploitation of the natives by the fact that they arrive in this country from the Union obviously poor men, but after a
few years, one notices that they dress better, they acquire motor-cars to travel in
and final sign of prosperity with many of them is to invest in house property in
Fort Victoria not to live in, but to let to tenants and now it appears that the wealth
of some of them has become so considerable that their investments in real estate
are being extended to the Union. By a process of elimination, one is driven to the
conclusion that all this money comes out of the products of the Natives
(Maravanyika, 1986:131).

The argument is reinforced by the Native Commissioner at Gutu:

A mission wage said to be around £20, 00 enables the purchase of motor-cars, a
three months holiday out of the country every two years, the upbringing of
families running up to six, education well up to, if not above what the ordinary
citizen can manage, certificated holdings running up to about £300, 00 at a time,
loans made, said to be in four figures, house property etc (Maravanyika,

While this may have been specifically with reference to Dutch Reformed Church
missionaries, it applied to missionaries in other denominations as well. It is an indication
that Dutch Reformed Church missionaries were not really after providing Africans with
an education that would make them economically self-sufficient. Rather they were after
enriching themselves at the expense of the Africans. It was common practice that
students studied in the morning while in the afternoons they worked on the farms. In fact,
the 1975 Dutch Reformed Church Report noted that profit was being made from the sale of the products from carpentry and leatherwear production by students at Henry Murray School for the deaf (Wutawunashe, 1975). In the same year, Copota was said to be producing furniture, sisal products and chalk which earned revenue for the church. Zvobgo (1996) argues that the situation was the same with regard to Anglican Church schools. Samudzimu (1991) points out that Waddilove produced surplus grain sold to the Grain Marketing Board while Pakame produced furniture which was sold to both Africans and Europeans. All the money raised went to the mission coffers with African students receiving nothing. The Africans resented this as they would have paid school fees and industrial subject fees. As an indictment against industrial education, du Plessis (1911) reports of the Copota graduates that they do not have sufficient education to be of any service to the community and thus turn to begging, while Wutawunashe, in 1975, pointed out that for six years, the Henry Murray School for the Deaf failed to have students staying for the full duration of the three-year course in the apprenticeship department (Van der Merwe, 1953). This was a form of resistance on the part of the African pupils. Thus, industrial education was premised on the exploitation of African students and Africans were aware of this. In this, Africans regarded missionaries as working hand in hand with the settlers in exploiting them. That is why there was more demand for literary education among Africans as time went on.

**African Accommodation of Western Education**

Once defeated by the colonial forces in 1893 and especially after the First Chimurenga war in 1896-97, while some Africans were out-rightly against missionary education, an
increasing number of Africans adopted a cautious and strategic acceptance of Western education (Flood, 1973:100). They realised that they could not successfully continue to resist the new civilization and its teachings. Defeat during the First Chimurenga exposed the limitations of indigenous metaphysics and epistemologies that were rooted in *hunhu/ubuntu*. As pointed out by Sabelo Ndlovu Ŭ Gatsheni (2009), those Africans who had faith in traditional religion were disillusioned by defeat in 1896-7. They realised that indigenous philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu* and indigenous education needed to be supplemented by ideas from the new knowledge systems being introduced by the conquerors. The new economic, political and social systems confronting them needed the skills, the know how, values and attitudes inculcated by the new education system. It dawned on the Africans that it was beneficial for them to get acquainted with its tenets, and to learn the ways of the conqueror if they were to defeat him. For instance, Chief Chikava Chekai of Masvingo (cited in Ndofirepi, 1999:44-45) explains:

Many é reasoned that attendance at Morgenster Mission and its outposts was no guarantee of mobility within the modern sector, but it presented more opportunities than staying at home and accepting their immutable status in the traditional sector.

Thus, Africans awakened to the advantage of sending their children to Christian mission schools. It became clear that they could rely on Western education for better employment opportunities within the new economic dispensation. It dawned on them that participation in the new economy required Western education. Western education,
Despite its limitations in terms of its failure to come to terms with the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*, could initiate Africans into Occidental political and economic knowledge systems that would enable them to challenge the settlers in their own territory. This was aptly expressed by Samkange in 1935 when he said, “Education will ultimately, enable us to meet the white man on his own ground and to topple him from his pedestal” (Ranger, 1995:138). Western education would provide Africans with access to Western epistemologies thereby equipping him with the means with which to attain freedom from colonial rule. Thus, employment in the new economy also became a motivating factor in seeking Western education. This was because it was now the education of the dominant group, the ruling elite. It was therefore futile to continue to resist it. This is clearly recognized and expressed by MacKenzie (1993:96), when he writes:

> In a sense, therefore, the ‘option’ of missionary education is not really an option at all. If colonial occupation is to be made in any sense tolerable for the local inhabitant, then formal missionary schooling is, *de facto* if not *de jure*, obligatory since it is the only institutional mechanism available that can provide the training and literacy skills necessary for advancement.

Thus, *hunhu/ubuntu* receded into the background, as part of informal indigenous education, yet it survived as is indicated by recent calls to include it in formal education in Zimbabwe.
Another classic indication of strategic acceptance of western education was a speech that Induna Mazwi gave in 1899 on the occasion of the opening of a new church at Centenary:

What has been left to us this day? Shields? They are eaten by rats. Assegais? We cut grass and pumpkins with them. You see that book (pointing to the New Testament in Mr. Carnegie’s hand), that is our shield (Zvobgo, 1996:119).

This pragmatic acceptance of the practical value of missionary evangelization which was identified with Western education resulted in increased demand for Western education among the Africans (Flood, 1973:100). This was coupled with the fact that the Africans did not only lose their political power, but as was argued in a previous section, their land which was their main means of sustenance as well. It was now quite clear to the Africans that no other viable option was left for them except embracing Western education. But they were also aware that the new education system lacked some of the values enshrined in hunhu/ubuntu. That is why, as was noted in chapter two, one African elder lamented that the disappearance of the dare threatened the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu since missionary education did not include the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu.

According to Zvobgo (1996), the Reverend Bowen Rees also reported that Amandebele young men were buying books for literary education with a very strong determination to learn. However, in so doing they were selective and were after the education that Africans perceived to enable them to survive. Those missionaries like the Dutch Reformed Church and the London Missionary Society missionaries which provided poor
quality education encountered a lot of resistance from the Africans, while others like the Roman Catholic Church and to some extent the Anglican Church and the Wesleyan Methodist Church, which seemed to provide the kind of education that was more appreciated by the Africans, proved popular. In this case, missionaries were providing an education that was perceived to be of benefit to the Africans.

Initially confronted with strong resistance to their activities, especially education among Africans, missionaries resorted to a number of strategies. In a number of instances, missionaries resorted to the use of force and intimidation to recruit pupils (Maravanyika, 1986; Mutumburanzou, 1999; Stanlake, 1899). For example, the Dutch Reformed Church introduced compulsory school attendance policies intended to boost the number of children in school and ensuring that the government grant was secure presumably for the church. According to Zvobgo, the African pupils detested the strict discipline and a "rigorous and exacting regime" to which they were exposed (Zvobgo, 1996:167). Therefore, some pupils did not stay long at the school. This had the effect of playing havoc on attendance statistics (Atkinson, 1972). Some missionaries, for example those from the Dutch Reformed Church, employed school attendance officers who went around forcing pupils to go to school. Pupils were either fined for absenteeism or compelled to work on mission farms providing cheap labour (Maravanyika, 1986; Mutumburanzou, 1999). This could hardly be said to have been in line with the theory of benevolence that the intention was to benefit Africans. The Assistant Native Commissioner of Gutu explained:
I am given to understand that children by intimidation and other means have without regard to their parents’ wishes been compelled to have their names registered by the kraal school teachers who, it appears, have received instructions to enforce thereafter under penalty of chastisement the attendance at school of children thus registered. Instances were cited of parents having been threatened with violence should they interfere (Maravanyika, 1986:126).

The Dutch Reformed Church had to resort to such techniques because Africans regarded the education provided in its schools and those of the London Missionary Society as backward and substandard as will be substantiated in the next section. That the London Missionary Society provided poor quality education was affirmed in 1918 by Anderson, a district missionary at Inyati who wrote:

I found the educational side of the work very backward. This is largely due to the fact that nearly all the teachers are themselves backward. It is not a case of the blind leading the blind, but the inability of the partly enlightened to impart more light than they possess. Only two of the present staff of sixteen have gone beyond Standard II while most of them have not passed Standard I (Clinton, 1959:71).

That is why, according to Zvobgo (1991), some of the London Missionary Society missionaries also resorted to bribing pupils to come to school by giving them sweets and clothes, a practice that was earlier on condemned by Sykes. The intention was to encourage regular attendance. But the Africans were more interested in an education that
would enable them to survive, one that would equip them intellectually and in terms of the skills they were to obtain. This, some mission schools failed to provide and this was in line with what the settler community wanted.

**African Rejection of Poor Quality Education**

According to Maravanyika (1986), Africans were aware that the curricular designed for their schools by Christian missionaries, in addition to being informed by an alien culture, and being decontextualised, were much narrower than those for European schools run by the same missionaries. The education designed for Africans by Christian missionaries in line with stipulations enunciated by the colonial administration was for subservience, an education that was intended to reorient Africans away from their culture, especially epistemological, metaphysical and axiological orientations. The intention was to dissuade Africans concerning the veracity of their knowledge systems, worldviews and values that were aspects of the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*, thereby rendering them open to ideologies from the Occident while at the same time making the Africans to accept the inferior status to which they had been relegated in relation to the settlers. It was intended to foster dependence and docility. But the Africans were able to see through this as they felt alienated in a system that had no representation of their values. It was clear that by proving inferior education to Africans, missionaries were in fact collaborating with the colonial regime in ensuring that Africans would not compete with the settlers on the job market. Yet, the missionaries were posing as benefactors of Africans.
According to Yahya (2001:152), the Africans perceived an anti-intellectualism inherent in the mission education system. While the curricula for European children were intended to enable them to secure white collar jobs, those of African children were intended to keep them at the bottom of the colonial society, to erode their sense of being. Consequently, for example, in 1929 Gutu parents petitioned the government to provide a school that provided skills that would enable their children to secure employment. The parents argued that the Dutch Reformed Church schools were staffed by unqualified and inefficient teachers who could not teach English (Chimombe, 1945:12). It was pointed out that by 1930 the highest level of primary school under the Dutch Reformed Church was sub B. By 1944 it was Standard III (Zezai, 1944:12). In spite of the introduction of English as a medium of instruction in the teaching of history and Geography from Standard III in 1948, the teaching of English as a subject remained poor. There were poor English results in 1954 to the extent that the concerned teachers were threatened with lack of salary increases. This vindicated fears by African parents. While Maravanyika (1980) attributes poor performance in English to the church’s language policy that encouraged the use of Chikaranga as a medium of instruction, it could also have been equally a result of poor teaching as pointed out above. The missionaries themselves were Afrikaners whose proficiency in English was not good. In addition, many Dutch Reformed Church schools did not qualify for the government grant, hence, they could not afford to pay highly qualified teachers. Consequently, they were only able to enroll poorly qualified teachers. Hence, their English was not good either and Africans were aware of this. If they could not teach English, it is doubtful they were able to handle all the other subjects which were taught through English. This reflected on the training of
teachers in Dutch Reformed Church institutions. The provision of such substandard education can hardly be considered an act of philanthropy, humanitarianism or benevolence.

This is especially the case when it is pointed out by Maravanyika (1986) that the training of teachers was also poorly conducted. That the training of teachers was poorly done is corroborated by Summers (1994) who reports that candidates in teacher training in 1927 did not merit being trained as teachers as they were below the required calibre. They lacked the minimum requisite academic qualifications for one to enroll into a teacher-training program. These were the teachers who on graduation were sent to Dutch Reformed Church schools. According to Clinton (1959), the same situation obtained within the London Missionary Society. The Community of the Resurrection Quarterly Letter (June, 1929:7) reports the same about the Anglican Church institutions, especially at St Faith where the student teachers were said to be unable to `do a simple addition sum, and scarcely know a word of Englishô. In 1933 the Inspector of Schools noted that lessons in teacher training at Inyati needed more ômeat in themô and that there was insufficient class activity (Clinton, 1959:74). The Wesleyan Methodist Churchô teacher training college at Waddilove failed to be accredited with the University of Zimbabwe in 1981 because it failed to meet the conditions set out by the University of Zimbabwe for it to qualify for an Associate College status (Samudzimu, 1991). These conditions had profound effects on the quality of education in schools manned by products of these institutions.
Furthermore, the quality of education could not have improved given that some of the African teachers were not happy with their conditions of service, especially that they were lowly paid and that they were paid at the end of the term rather than at the end of the month (Brand, 1950). At the same time the teachers resented having to teach catechism classes, Sunday school and preaching in villages as well as having to preach Christianity even during lessons. Furthermore, the African teachers detested attending prayer meetings with pupils and elders (Chimombe, 1945). For example, that most teachers in Dutch Reformed Church schools left as soon as their contracts with the church ended was also confirmed by Chiwewete (1947:20) who wrote, *Haiwa hama dzaMwari mutinyengeterere panashe. Vatendi vedu vazhinji vabuda vachiinda kuzimwe zvikoro* (Oh! Friends in the Lord! Pray for us. Many believers are leaving for other schools). The teachers were promised a pie in the sky, *A teacher must set a good example wherever he or she is* (Mutamba, 1957:1-2). Yet, Africans were aware the missions were generating a lot of wealth. Thus it was clear to African teachers that they were being exploited and that they were being used as instruments to destroy their own African culture and values enshrined in the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*.

The unpopularity of the Dutch Reformed Church schools was noticed by the Superintendent of Natives in Gutu in 1930, forcing him to remark, *In my opinion, were any missionary body to open schools in that district, the Dutch Reformed Church would close its doors* (Maravanyika. 1986:128). Indeed, some disgruntled Africans who viewed missionaries as collaborating with the colonial regime, such as Mutendi in Gutu and Bikita, Abisai in Zaka, and Zvobgo in the Mutirikwi area, to use Berman
(1974:530)’s term, bolted the mission church and school and established their own schools which resulted in massive exodus from Dutch Reformed Church schools by pupils. The success of this African initiative compelled the Native Commissioner to remark, The establishment of open air schools by some natives had succeeded in practically emptying the Dutch Reformed Church schools leaving them devoid of pupils (Maravanyika, 1986:128). These new schools benefited from the services of some teachers who were dismissed by the Dutch Reformed Church for minor offences.

It would appear that missionaries were aware of the poor quality education they provided to teachers. As I pointed out above, it was a matter of collaboration between the missionaries and the settlers. Steyn, the Dutch Reform Church Education Secretary, in 1975 writes:

G.A.B. [meaning the General Administrative Board] must take note of the fact that there are serious short comings at our two colleges, which if not rectified may result in failure to qualify for associateship status and consequently the closing down of our colleges (Annual Report. May, 1975:10).

Steyn is referring to associateship status with the University College of Rhodesia. He was acknowledging the poor quality of their teacher training programmes at Morgenster and Gutu. Already, I have pointed out that this was the case with the Wesleyan Methodist Church teachers college at Waddilove.
According to Samudzimu (1991), it was from the 1950s that the education provided by Christian missionaries began to shade off its religious content as the teacher-evangelist courses came to an end. Education was becoming more and more secular with religion being reserved for Sundays and special religious class sessions. It was also during this period that the desire for Western education among Africans was further increasing. Already in 1944, the Reverend Morley-Wright, who was then the Wesleyan Methodist Church Secretary of the Education Committee, reports that Africans were also asking for a wider curriculum (Morley-Wright, 1944). The Reverend Frank Noble had in 1934 argued that since the Christian missionaries had become involved in African education, it was essential for them to go all the way in providing quality education. Half measures were out of the question (Noble, 1934). Yet, it was government policy not to allow Africans to receive an education that would enable Africans to compete for jobs with the settlers.

At the same time Africans were now able to decide the kind of education they desired. They were asking for skills. Africans were now demanding academic education because of the perception of the different rewards accorded to individuals within the occupational structure (Foster, 1965, as cited in Berman, 1974:530). According to Berman (1974:530), Africans perceived that they would be better paid, and have greater mobility if they received an academic education. In other words, academic education was viewed as opening the doors to power, wealth and prestige. The Africans rejected what Berman (1974:530) describes as narrow vocationalism. They were demanding more and more academic education in response to the development of a capitalist
economy that required people with academic education (Tindall, 1984). Rapid industrialization required more people who had advanced beyond mere literacy and numeracy. The economy required African semi-skilled workers. During the same period, especially from the 1960s, the colonial administration was endeavouring to wrestle control of African education from the missionaries. All these factors favoured the secularization of African education. Such a development was one the Christian missionaries could not stop as it was being dictated to by the march of events in Rhodesia.

The Reverend Mzileti, working at Inyati in 1950, argued that there was need for the missionaries to make their education consistent with the needs of the Africans. ÓOur people are living in two worlds - the old world and the new. They need three things:

1. The saving power of the Gospel of Christ which will restore their broken moral life and give them a new life;
2. A liberal education - education which liberates, broadens and expands itself;
3. They must be taught to look to themselves for their own help, and to their own people for leadership.

In short, give them the education of the heart, the head and the hand (Clinton, 1959:56). In other words, Mzileti is arguing that Africans desired a holistic education that was informed by their situatedness and historicity, an education that developed a complete human being, one that was world affirming. It would appear that, as an African,
Mzileti’s vision of education was inspired by the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*. That is why he argued for a holistic education. Mzilethi’s critique of missionary education is an indication of the dissatisfaction among Africans with the quality of education that was being made available to Africans. The Africans were aware that the education they were receiving did not issue out of their historical, existential circumstances. As Rodney (1972:264) argues, “Colonial schooling was education for subordination, exploitation, the creation of mental confusion and the development of underdevelopment.” It failed to engage the African realities and African philosophy of education, which, as the researcher argued in chapter two, was holistic. However, it is doubtful that most Africans who went to schools shared the Reverend Mzileti’s concern with the Gospel. Being a priest, his concern with the Gospel in African education is understandable. Nevertheless, his statement indicates that the Africans felt betrayed by the missionaries in as far as the provision of quality education was concerned. The education was not living up to the expectations of the African people. While Africans viewed Western education as essential, they paradoxically viewed it as alienating them from their culture as it propagated moral, aesthetic and religious values that were at odds with Africans’ moral aesthetic and religious values. In this context, missionaries could hardly be described as philanthropists who were after benefiting Africans when they were not prepared to give Africans exactly the kind of education they were searching for.

Rodney (1972:263-4) explains why colonial education had an alienating effect when he argues, “The main purpose of the colonial education system was to train Africans to help man the local administration at the lowest ranks and to staff the private capitalist firms
owned by Europeans. In effect that meant selecting a few Africans to participate in the domination and exploitation of the continent as a whole. This explanation was in line with the 1966 Plan of Education in Rhodesia discussed in chapter 4 which made post primary education inaccessible to the majority of the Africans. What this meant was that the majority of African pupils were excluded from the education system. The Africans felt betrayed by this policy as it further sought to limit the missionary influence in the education of Africans at a time when there was an increase in demand for Western education.

On 2 September 1969, Ian Smith's government, stunned by some missionaries' criticism of the Unilateral Declaration of Independence in 1965 as well as their support for the nationalist movement, announced that beginning 1971 grants for the salaries of primary school teachers would be reduced by five percent (MacKenzie, 1993). The churches were to make up for the five percent if they wanted to retain control of their schools. Otherwise they were expected to relinquish control over primary schools to local authorities administered by Africans. This was a strategy intended to force the churches out of the provision of primary education to Africans. But the argument presented was that the move was to compel missionaries to accept the idea of community development among Africans which involved Africans taking over these schools. While most Africans at this stage desired missionaries to continue running the primary schools, the churches opted to surrender most schools, holding on to those that were of strategic importance to them. The effect was that Africans felt betrayed by the missionaries as they did not have the resources to sustain these schools. Most Africans preferred the primary schools to remain
under the Christian missionaries. The frustration of the Africans was expressed clearly by Father Patrick Chakaipa who protested:

How do you expect Africans under these conditions to stop believing that the church represents the whites’ religion? For financial reasons the Bishops gave up control of the African primary schools but to guard the property of the European secondary schools they do not hesitate to disregard Christian principles (Gundani, 2001:155).

In other words, it was clear to Africans that missionaries were not really after the welfare of the Africans. This development indicates the weakening of the practice of collaboration that had existed between the settler regime and the missionaries. It was the government that wanted collaboration but on its own terms.

MacKenzie (1993:39) observes, “By 1970, with three minor exceptions, denominational education in the country had largely ceased to exist.” So from 1971 missionaries were now focusing on secondary education. But these secondary schools, because of the 1966 Plan on Education, were very few. Even this education, as has been argued, was not informed by the values of *hunhu/ubuntu*. The aim and conduct of secondary education was still informed with the same values that had informed the provision of primary and teacher education. Thus, Africans still felt alienated though they were now convinced of its usefulness in the new economic situation in the country. Tlou expresses frustration when he said missionary education “made it difficult to revitalize and reincorporate into
our Christian belief system those of our cultural traits which are worthwhile (Berman, 1974:536). Thus, while the Africans appreciated the literary education they were receiving, what they really desired was a liberative education, an education for critical consciousness that would enable them to confront the reality that obtained in Rhodesia. This, it would appear, the missionaries were unwilling, in line with settler demands, to provide to the Africans.

**African Perception of Girls’ Education**

In this section I focus on girls’ education because it is usually neglected area whereas talk of education in general tends to refer to male experience. In chapter four I noted that the education of African girls developed as a response to male (African) interests and perceived male needs (Leach, 2008:335). Thus, their curricular was invariably infused with an ideology of gender bias and differentiation consisting of such feminine subjects as Needlework, Cookery, and Domestic Science. While this appeared beneficiary to Africans, the curricular entrenched the ideology of gender difference with female being regarded as inferior. They were posited as existing to provide service to men. That is why women expended their intellectual, emotional and physical energies to the private and personal sphere of the home and family while their male counterparts doubled in commerce, politics, civil administration (Leach, 2008:336).

Initially, the education of African girls was strongly resisted and criticized by African parents who felt that it did not develop ethical and moral values enshrined in *hunhu/ubuntu*, such as respect for elders and obedience to parents. One parent argued,
Our girls attend schools, they are continually getting in the family way; we do not get cattle for lobola and have no redress, while another also complained, Our children are taken away by the teachers, they do not obey us (Maravanyika, 1986:128). Leach (2008:337) points out that some missionaries claimed to be sheltering runaway girls from evil customs and demeaning practices and rituals such as polygamy, the payment of bride price and initiation ceremonies. Yet according to Atkinson (1972), these same girls ended up being impregnated by either teachers or students at the mission schools. Another parent told the Reverend Hardaker in 1924, You teach the girls disobedience to their parents (Schmidt, 1991:22). To the African parents, Christian education undermined traditional beliefs and values and corrupted their children, instilling into them foreign values and beliefs. The girls were not being educated for hunhu/ubuntu. To the missionaries, education tended to paradoxically emancipate women from what was perceived to be the bondage of tradition while at the same time preparing them for marriage and domesticity (Bhebe, 1979) having been taught Euro-Christian values in schools.

However, with time, as education became more secular, creating job opportunities for both sexes, Bhebe (1979) argues that Africans realised that girls could also earn a living without resorting to prostitution or defiance towards their parents. There was also increased demand for educated black women as nurses, teachers and domestic workers. Thus, in the end, African parents were able to allow their girl children to go to school, especially after the school had become more secular. But still the education did not prepare the girl child to challenge the patriarchal system on which Rhodesian society was
based. Instead, the girls were educated to "take their place in the new Christian monogamous family, to provide moral and practical support for men and bring up their children in the new faith," a position most women appeared to have accepted (Leach, 2008:335).

The African Clergy

In looking at African perceptions and responses to missionary education and evangelization, it is also important to be aware that there were those Africans who converted to Christianity, those who appeared to have given up belief in African religion. Such converts include people like Bimha (1952), Chimombe (1945), Chiwewete (1947), Mutamba (1957), Tinofirei, (1953), and Napata (1944), who all regarded themselves as collaborators with the Dutch Reformed Church in the provision of education to Africans, while Shisho Moyo and Matambo Ndhlovu worked with London Missionary Society missionaries in the provision of education to Africans. The exception among Dutch Reformed Church members was Kujinga (1947) who, noting suspicions among the Africans and Europeans, urged Africans to learn Afrikaans as a means to understanding the missionary in his cultural context. He also urged missionaries to appreciate the cultural values of the Africans. In other words, he advocated mutual respect between Africans and missionaries.

Others like Francis Nyabadza, Samuel Muhlanga and Nechironga who, even not happy with the way they were treated by the Anglican Church, remained loyal to it and regarded their role as important (Sundkler & Steed, 2000; Weller & Linden, 1984). For the Roman
Catholic Church, Vambe as well as Nyatsanza (1997) recognize racism and other inconsistencies within the church. This led Vambe to leave the priesthood (Veit-Wild, 1993). African evangelists among the Wesleyan Methodist Church included Chiota, Mtshede, Rusike (1971), Samkange, Zvimba, Mantiziba, Kona, Nemapare and Mwazha (Banana 1991; Peaden, 1973; Zvobgo, 1991). While the majority identified with the Christian missionaries and could criticize them from within, some like Zvimba, Nemapare and Mwazha, convinced that missionaries were collaborating with the settler, opted to leave the Wesleyan Methodist Church and establish their own churches with their own schools. While Samkange remained within the church, he condemned white racism and always demanded to be treated as an equal (Samkange, 1946). He was convinced that it was wrong for missionaries to condemn African culture and religion. As for Zvimba, he argued that Zimbabwe belonged to Africans and had to be given back to them (Hallencreutz, 1998). According to Banana (1996:88), for Nemapare, the Bible "affirmed the dignity and equality of all humankind before God." Among later members of the African clergy who became nationalists who participated in the liberation of Zimbabwe were Banana, Nkomo, Muzorewa, and Sithole. So among those Africans who accepted Christianity and became co-workers with the missionaries some were able to retain their identity. In fact, Mbiti (1989) argues that it is not really possible for Africans to completely renounce their culture and adopt Christianity. Rather most Africans imbibed aspects of both African religion and Christianity, leading to what he calls the Afro ï Christian Dilemma. In other words, during the day, they are Christian and during the night they revert to African religion. This, in essence, is the manifestation of an alienated and inauthentic existence, but also an indication of the resilience of African
culture. What is crucial to note is that missionary provision of education to Africans could not have succeeded without the African clergy. As I indicated in the previous chapter, it was the African clergy that played an important role in the translation of scriptures and other educational documents into African languages. Furthermore, it was the African clergy who initiated the education of Africans in many mission schools.

Summary

It has been argued that during the early years of contacts between Africans and Christian missionaries, Africans, guided by the philosophy of *human ubuntu*, welcomed the Christian missionaries and listened to their teaching as visitors to their country. They expected missionaries to reciprocate the hospitality they extended to them. Instead, missionaries, viewing themselves as philanthropists and benefactors, were after converting Africans to the Christian religion which they viewed as at a higher level of development than African religion and the culture from which it emanated. However, as the Africans felt comfortable with their culture and all that it entailed, they did not see the need to convert to Christianity or to accept Western education. Even after conquest in 1896, initially, the Africans continued to resist western education and Christianity and all that it stood for, for some time. It was only gradually when they had been dispossessed, when they no longer had other means of viable sustenance that they realised that their only hope for a bright future lay in Western education. Thus, from around 1919 up to the period of the Second World War, there was a steady increase in desire for Western education among Africans in Rhodesia. This was to further increase after the Second World War to the extent that missionaries could not meet the African demand for
Western education resulting in agitation among Africans. It has also been argued that the failure to meet African demand for education was deliberate. Missionaries were collaborating with the colonial regime in providing the kind of education stipulated by the colonial regime. Even if they had no option, that does not lessen the charge that they were collaborating with the colonial regime. On the other hand, the increased desire for education amongst Africans alarmed the colonial government which instituted policies that ensured that Western education would not be readily available to the majority of the Africans, compelling missionaries to give up the primary schools they had established among Africans. Africans felt betrayed as they were not economically in a position to run the schools. But generally, the education that missionaries provided to Africans was not holistic; it was not in keeping with the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*. It was an education for subservience that alienated them from their culture by dint of its inherent foreignness (MacKenzie, 1993, para 51). Yet, Africans appreciated that it was the only means for political and economic empowerment available to them prior to the attainment of independence.

The period between 1946 and 1980 was characterised by the growth of political consciousness among Africans. Africans became more critical of the activities of missionaries. There was a more explicit demand for academic education as there was an increasing demand for educated Africans from the developing capitalist economy. Thus, from the above discussion missionary education was a double edged sword. While it introduced Africans into western religion, values, and ethical principles that resulted in the alienation of Africans from their culture and traditions, it also gave Africans the
necessary knowledge for them to liberate themselves. While it was not meant to be liberative, it made Africans aware of the avenues open to them for liberation. In other words, as is pointed out by Leach (2008:344), ‘Africans were not always passive consumers of education’ they sometimes helped shape it, and ultimately used it to free themselves.
CHAPTER 6

COLLABORATORS OR BENEFACTORS? WEIGHING THE EVIDENCE

Introduction
In chapter two, the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu* was discussed as constituting the philosophical foundations of indigenous education in Zimbabwe. Chapter three is a discussion of the two competing theories on the role of missionaries in Zimbabwe. While chapter four focused on missionary perceptions of Africans and the missionary goal in providing education to Africans, chapter five examined African attitudes towards missionary education. This chapter attempts to determine, on the basis of arguments made in the above chapters, whether missionaries can be regarded as having been benefactors to Africans or collaborators with the colonial regime and the colonists with respect to the provision of education. To arrive at an appropriate characterization, some aspects of missionary provision of education to Africans, that is the goals of missionary education, the curricula offered to African pupils, the arguments that missionaries introduced education to Africans, the question of language and literacy, missionary attitude towards the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu* will be considered. This discussion is an evaluation of the two contending theories, that is, the theory of benevolence and the theory of collaboration, on the role of missionaries in Africa in general and Zimbabwe in particular. This evaluation is in the context of the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*.

According to the theory of benevolence, the intention of the missionaries, in providing education to Africans, was to benefit Africans, to redeem them from backwardness,
barbarism, primitive living, and moral and technological stagnation (Ramose, 1986, Makuvaza, 1996c). According to this theory, it was philanthropy and humanitarianism that were driving forces to missionary presence and educational provision in Africa. Furthermore, proponents of this view have argued that through philanthropy and humanitarianism, missionaries were able to precisely accomplish what was beneficial to Africans. That missionary activities may have had negative effects on the Africans is largely ignored. The focus is on the positive intentions of the missionaries and the "backwardness" from which the Africans were being "redeemed" through Western education.

In contrast, according to the second theory, while it is recognised that there were some benefits that accrued to Africans from missionary education, it is then argued that missionaries were more of collaborators with the colonial regime and the settlers and were therefore "willing participants" in the exploitation of Zimbabweans. It is argued that in providing education to Africans, missionaries were collaborators working within the broad spectrum of capitalist imperialism and they were aware of this. In fact, Majeke (1996), argues that missionaries took an active part in ensuring the success of colonization of Africa. They facilitated the entrenchment of capitalism together with its cultural trappings and values in Southern Africa, including Zimbabwe, under the pretence of civilizing Africans. Consequently, the argument is that missionary education had more negative effects than positive ones among Africans.
Missionary education, it is further argued, was intended to serve the interests of international capital so that any benefits that accrued to Africans were accidental. It is also suggested that as agents of capitalism, missionaries also actively exploited the Africans under the pretence of providing education to them. Along this line of reasoning, it is then argued that Christianization and Westernization were synonymous. As a result the activities of missionaries are presented as not having been primarily intended to benefit Africans.

To be able to make a conclusion on which theory best explains Christian missionaries’ role and activities, it is essential to revisit the goals that informed the missionary enterprise in Zimbabwe.

**Goals that Informed Missionary Activities in Zimbabwe**

David Livingstone, the missionary turned explorer, who "opened up" central Africa, to the European mind through mapping up the sub-continent, advocated further opening up of Africa through a combination of Christianity and Commerce (Tindall, 1967:102). It was in this context that some missionaries seem to have taken his advice literally and engaged in teaching and preaching to the Africans while at the same time trading with them. At least the London Missionary Society mission to Matabeleland was a direct response to Livingstone’s challenge to begin work in Africa.

As acknowledged in chapter four, the Reverend Louw of the Dutch Reformed Church, when addressing the Southern Rhodesia Missionary Conference in 1930, stated that the
main missionary objective was evangelization, a conviction confirmed by the Dutch Reformed Church Mission Council in 1965. According to Lewis and Edwards (1934:109), the Anglican Bishop, Knight - Bruce viewed the aim also as the evangelization of ëthe untouched heathenë. The same view is also expressed by Greenstock (Upcher, 1973). According to Father Hartmann of the Roman Catholic Church, the goal of the missionaries was to convert the Africans to Christianity. Among the Wesleyan Methodist Church missionaries, the Reverend Shimmin, the Reverend Pluke, as well as the Reverend Gray, all expressed the same conviction on their role in Zimbabwe (Banana, 1991; Zvobgo, 1991). Some of the London Missionary Society missionaries, as indicated in chapter four, were also of the same conviction. So, the manifest aim of most of the missionaries was seen as evangelizing the Africans. If evangelization and westernization are synonymous, as argued by proponents of the theory that missionaries were collaborators with the colonial administrators, the latent goal of missionary activities would appear to have been the Westernization of the African people through the provision of Western education to Africans. From the same position, evangelisation can be seen to imply the inferiority of the religion of those who were to be converted to a foreign religion, for it appears to have been premised on the belief that God had revealed himself only to those who were bringing the Gospel to Africans and that whatever Africans held as religious belief was spurious (Ramose, 1999:31). Christianity, as part of Western culture, was, therefore, presented as the only true religion and the education through which it was propagated as the only true education. As a result, missionaries came up with an education that was largely religious. In as far as the conversion of Africans to Christianity was the goal of missionary education, missionaries
can indeed be categorized as collaborators with the settlers for conversion implied African converts turning away from their culture and adopting a foreign one.

**Missionary views of African Religion and Morality**

Once the missionaries were in Africa, they *either* had to confirm European views and ideas about the situation in Africa *or* revise and present an accurate depiction of the situation as they encountered it and so portray Africans as people with their own religion, culture and civilization. The latter option would not have augured well for them since it would have undermined the need for missionary work in Zimbabwe. They, therefore, opted to confirm the erroneous views as a way of justifying their presence in Zimbabwe. This option is reflected in the similarity between European philosophers’ and missionaries’ descriptions of Africans.

It was noted in Chapter three that Hegel described Africa as enveloped in the *dark mantle of night* (Hegel, 1956:95). He subsequently maintained that Africans had no knowledge of *an absolute Being, an Other and a Higher than his individual self* (Hegel, 1956:95). As for Immanuel Kant, Africans were *a spiritually decadent race* while for Lucien Levy Bruhl Africans had a *primitive mentality* and were pre-scientific (Masolo, 1995:4). Another western philosopher, Hobbes (as cited in Mudimbe, 1988), also argued that Africa had made no contribution to the world while Hume described Africans as barbarous and uncivilized (Serequeberhan, 1991). If it is acknowledged, as is argued by Nietzsche, that philosophers are children of their times and express views extent in their times, it can be surmised that it was such perceptions that were dominant in Europe in the
19th and early 20th centuries. These were the very same philosophers whose views entrenched the theory of benevolence.

Since most missionaries were coming from Europe during the same period, it would appear that it was such perceptions that informed missionaries who came to Africa with the mission to "civilize" Africans through the provision of education. This explains why the terms missionaries used to describe Africans and their culture were of the same genre as those used by these philosophers. To support the above argument, a few instances can be cited. For instance, the Anglican Bishop in Rhodesia, Knight-Bruce, described the Africans as "a poor baby who ought to be protected" (Knight-Bruce, 1895:144). The same view is expressed by Kendal (1935:109). A missionary of the Dutch Reformed Church, in evidence to the 1925 Education Commission with reference to Africans said, "He is not equal to us and we cannot make him so!!" (Kendal, 1935:109). Again, Bishop Knight-Bruce described the Mashona as "of savage brutality, dirty" (Knight-Bruce, 1895:34). Father Biehler of the Roman Catholic Church described the Amandebele in 1919 as "pagan savages" and Amandebele religion as "devilish" (Zvobgo, 1996:96). For the Reverend R. Sykes, Africans had no religion and no morality (Peaden, 1970:2-3). As for Father Burbridge, the Africans were "the wild horde" without religion and morality (Linder, 1977:24). On the Mashona, the Reverend Shimmin argues that their morality is "so set against godliness" (Shimmin, 1892). The discussion in chapter four has also shown that Robert Moffat, John Smith Moffat, Thomas Morgan Thomas as well as all other early missionaries described the Amandebele and the Mashona in similar terms. Thus, almost all missionaries described Africans in Zimbabwe in similar terms. The
result of such perceptions was the provision of an education system that did not come to
terms with African experiences. The resultant education system ignored the African
philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*.

In describing Africans in such terms, the missionaries were justifying their mission as they could now pose as benefactors to the Africans among whom they worked. By painting such a picture of Africans as having no education, no religion, and no morality, missionaries made it appear as if it was their *duty* to pull the Africans within *the* range of culture and civilization (Masolo, 1995:9) by introducing Western education. There was a deliberate distortion of the reality in Africa in order to create the image that fit the Westerners’ belief of Africa as a continent of people who were uncivilized, who were going to benefit from contact with European civilization.

The above observations made by missionaries on Africa and Africans are crucial if it is considered that not only did missionaries precede colonialists in Zimbabwe, they created images of Zimbabwe, which were invariably adopted and concretized by the colonialists in their everyday interactions with Africans. They formed and influenced settler opinions and attitudes towards Zimbabweans as missionaries were regarded as the experts in knowledge concerning Africa and Africans. Consequently, as is argued by Ebousi Boulaga missionaries formed degraded perceptions of Africans and it was these that were adopted by the colonialists (cited in Keita, 1986:155). The formulation of such perceptions can hardly be said to have been of benefit to Africans.
It is also quite apparent that the descriptions of Africans by missionaries were quite in keeping with the views and perceptions that had been expressed by Hegel, Kant, Hume and Levy Bruhl. It is this adoption of European descriptions by missionaries that led Masolo, and I am inclined to agree with him, to observe that "whether theoretically unacceptable or not, the application of the Hegelian views to the study of history, anthropology, philosophy and religion promoted what became the popular European view of Africans as people with inferior forms of religion, law, economy, government, technology and logic" (Masolo, 1995:9). As was argued in chapter four, this was because Christian missionaries were informed by the philosophy of abstract universality that excluded all that was different from Western conceptions of reality. Convinced of the inferiority of Africans, missionaries and the settlers came up with an inferior education for the Africans as inferior beings. That is why, as I have indicated, the education for Africans was largely rudimentary, insisting on basic literacy and numeracy.

While it was noted in Chapter two that the Mashona and Amandebele believed in God whom they called Mwari/Unkulunkulu, it has been observed that the missionaries initially expressed a general attitude of scepticism about the reality of African religion and morality by refusing to recognise this being as God. It was also argued in Chapter two that the Mashona and Amandebele believed in life after death and the immortality of the soul, that is, that human life does not end with the physical death of the individual, but continues beyond bodily death. This was reflected in their belief in a hierarchy of spiritual beings, which included belief in God, to whom they communicated through prayer, libation and various religious expressions. In other words, Africans believed in
the ontology of invisible beings (Ramose, 1999) enshrined in the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*. In short, they had a religion, which revolved around belief in God and ancestral spirits. In fact, John Mbiti, an African theologian, was later to argue, "Religion permeates into all the departments of life so that it is not easy or possible to isolate it so that anyone who cared to seriously study African communities, let alone to live among them, could not have missed it (Mbiti, 1989:1). However, the philosophy of abstract universality explained in Chapter four precluded the recognition of any religion that fell outside the paradigm of the Christian religion. The result of such thinking was that African Traditional Religion was left out of curricular missionaries came up with for the education of Africans. In giving such an education to Africans, missionaries cannot be said to have been benefiting Africans.

**The Philosophy of Hunhu/Ubuntu as it Relate to Missionaries and African Education**

It was also argued in Chapter two that the Mashona and Amandebele had moral values informed by the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*. The moral and aesthetic values emanating from this philosophy include courtesy, cleanliness, respect for other people, courage, fairness, honesty, integrity and, above all, respect for human life. All these were inculcated through indigenous education, which, as was maintained in Chapter two, was an education for *hunhu/ubuntu*. By refusing to acknowledge African values and the philosophy in which they were rooted, missionaries were in effect refusing to acknowledge the reality of African culture. They were reflecting their lack of education in African culture. It was this lack of education that inclined them towards ignoring
aspects of African culture and to even develop a negative view of this culture. They were refusing to acknowledge the being of the Africans. Consequently, they could not have been said to work for the benefit of Africans whose culture and philosophy of life they were refusing to acknowledge.

The reason for the refusal to acknowledge the reality of African religion and culture by missionaries was clarified by the Reverend Sykes when he stated, “Christianity must be exclusive: if Christ be the Son of God, no heathen deity can be of God” (Mckenzie, 1993:69). If this reasoning is taken to represent the line of thinking among missionaries, it clearly explains the reluctance of early missionaries initially to acknowledge the existence of African religion and later to accommodate aspects of this religion and the philosophy that informed it into Euro-Christian culture as it was presented in educational and religious institutions in Zimbabwe. This further explains why African values and practices were ignored or viewed with scepticism by missionaries in as far as they were portrayed as aspects of African culture. Practices such as beer drinking, traditional dances, polygamy, which were not peculiar to Africans in Zimbabwe, were all castigated as devilish, heathen, and lusts of the flesh. In other words, missionaries condemned African culture and traditions as backward and devilish. This was mainly because missionaries were uneducated on African culture and tended to ignore the underlying values and beliefs in African culture. It is also important to note that the view of divinity explicated above may no longer be held by modern day theologians who are more tolerant of other views of divinity.
It would appear that by derogating African culture and traditional practices, and repudiating African religion and morality, missionaries worked for radical transformation of African societies in Zimbabwe (Masolo, 1995:194). They directed their efforts towards the destruction of pre-colonial societies and their replacement with a new Christian Society informed by Euro-Christian value systems which were clearly alien to Africans. This interpretation is also made by Mudimbe when he argues that missionaries contributed to the transformation of African societies into fundamentally European constructs (Mudimbe, 1988:1). This resulted in a dichotomy of traditional versus modern; oral versus written and printed; agrarian and customary versus industrialised economies. The result was cultural tensions as that which was perceived to be rooted in African culture was castigated as backward. Consequently, as is argued by Mudimbe (1988), the activities of missionaries resulted in the destruction of the culturally unified schema of most African traditions.

As I argued in Chapter five, the initial response by Africans was an outright rejection of the Christian religion and culture including Western forms of education. It was only after conquest by the settlers that they came to terms with the reality of colonization and realised that to survive in the new dispensation they had to accept Western culture, religion and education. The Africans had also been dispossessed and found it difficult to survive in the new economic system. The experience of Africans who participated in the Second World War convinced Africans that Western education was the only avenue to highly paying jobs as well as political careers in Zimbabwe. Western education was now perceived as capable of lifting Africans to the same level as colonists. Africans began to
view Western education as a means to empower them so as to be able to liberate themselves from colonialism. Another reason was that their land had been taken and they no longer had viable means of sustenance except to seek employment. And employment could only be secured through a good Western education, hence increased demand for Western education.

An accompanying myth to the denial of the existence of religion and morality among Zimbabwean Africans was another myth about the non-existence of education among Africans as was noted in Chapter three. In their initial contacts with Zimbabwean Africans, some missionaries claimed to have perceived an absence of the transmission of knowledge in Western form, in other words, there was a perceived non-existence of writing and physical buildings signifying schools among Africans in Zimbabwe. They then proceeded to conclude that since there was no writing and no buildings labeled schools, there was no education in Zimbabwe.

However, a reading of Gelfand (1973), Ocitti (1994), Fafunwa (1974) and Sifuna and Otiende (1994), among other writers, clearly demonstrate that Africans indeed had their own systems of education. Gelfand, for instance, recognizes that the Mashona had an education whose main focus was the inculcation of *hunhu/ubuntu*. "The parents teach their children unhu", writes Gelfand (1973:57). Mbiti (1989) also argues that Africans had an education that among other things manifested itself in the form of initiation rites among African communities. In these initiation rites, Africans introduced their young ones into traditional knowledge systems that enabled them to survive. Ocitti (1994) also
argues that Africans had their own systems of education ranging from formal, non-formal to informal education.

Furthermore, in the second chapter, it was argued that African indigenous education was informed by the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu that defined the being, the identity of the people of Zimbabwe. This education was characterized by emphasis on principles emanating from this philosophy, these being holism, humanism, communalism, perennialism, essentialism, functionalism as well as preparationism (Ocitti, 1994, Fafunwa, 1974). It was also argued that indigenous education was moral, intellectual, spiritual as well as practical. It was further argued in Chapter two that the aim of indigenous education was to, among other things, produce munhu ane hunhu, (a person well grounded in the spiritual, intellectual, ethical and physical realms of his/her existential circumstances, a person conscious of his/her identity and destiny). The focus was on providing a holistic education. On the other hand, the education that missionaries provided to Africans was fragmentary, focusing on developing either the mind or the hand, never the totality of the person who was being educated.

In the inculcation of hunhu/ubuntu, the devices used included tsumo (proverbs), madimikira (idiophones), and ngano (tales). It was through this education that Africans in Zimbabwe imparted the social, moral, religious and political values to their young ones. It was also through the same system of education that they inculcated survival and productive skills in their young people. In short it was an education the Africans found relevant and responsive to their needs. But all these aspects, ideas, aims and devices as
well as philosophical principles were castigated as backward, primitive and were sidelined by the missionaries in their provision of education to Africans. Thus, missionary education in this regard was a complete negation of the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*.

So, it can be surmised that it was not that Africans had no education, but that they did not have education as it was perceived in the Western tradition. In other words, for the missionaries, because of their philosophy of abstract universality, anything that did not fit into the mould or paradigm of Western education could not be regarded as education. It appears logical therefore to concur with Jerome Kiwia, a Tanzanian journalist that Missionaries did not introduce education in Africa; they introduced a new set of formal education institutions which partly supplemented and partly replaced those which were there before (McKenzie, 1993:7). Missionaries brought with them Occidental forms of education with reading and writing and this for a purpose, which, as has already been argued, was the facilitation of evangelism, in the first instance, and, in the words of Sartre (1968:31), the manufacture of a native elite.

Thus, it seems clear that the education provided by missionaries to Africans was not intended to be an end in itself but a means to religious and economic ends. So it can be concluded that the idea was not really to benefit the Africans, but to facilitate missionary work and ensure success in the proselytisation of the Africans and their incorporation into the European economic systems. This may explain why the philosophy, goals and content of African indigenous education were neglected in the education provided by
missionaries. They were replaced by the goals and content of Western education. It has to be acknowledged that through these activities, missionaries did leave a major impact on the fundamental beliefs of Africans. They affected the African intellectual life dramatically as they introduced new intellectual skills and thought forms. This was to have far reaching effects especially in the area of politics.

If it is accepted, as argued by Freire (1973), that education as a product of culture seeks to respond to the needs of those from whose culture it evolved, it can be surmised that Western education was meant to cater for the needs of Westerners. It would follow then that it was alien to Africans and had the effect of alienating Africans from their culture. For example, a look at the content of missionary education tends to support this view. At the initial stage, in what was Sub Standard A, pupils were inducted into individualistic values when they were taught, “Ini ndini; Iwe ndiwe” roughly translated Ń ū am me; You are you. The emphasis was on the individual as an entity separate from the community. While this was in line with Christianity that made conversion an individual affair, this was contrary to the communitarian ethos from which the pupils came. At both primary and secondary school levels in Geography, the pupils studied European and American geographies. As an example, pupils were made to learn about the Prairies of Canada, the Great Lakes, and capital cities of European countries as well as the glaciers of Iceland. Such an education was alienating to pupils who hardly knew anything about their local geographical set-up.
Even in the teaching of History, the pupils studied European and American history, for example, the French Revolution, the American war of independence, and the First and Second World Wars. They were also taught English history. When it came to Africa there was very little and much focus was on European activities in Africa. Such activities included the colonization of Africa, the Slave trade and the abolition of slavery, and the pacification of tribal wars. These processes were presented in such a manner as to create the impression that Europeans were working for the benefit of Africans. The net effect was the creation of the view that Africa had no history. Under such circumstances, in providing education to Africans, it is difficult to sustain the thesis that missionaries were benefiting Africans. If anything, they were collaborating with the settler regime.

In literature, the pupils were to study works by European and American writers like William Shakespeare, William Makepeace Thackeray, Geoffrey Chaucer, and Thomas Hardy. While the study of Literature in English was separate from the study of the English Language as a subject, African Literature and African languages were not separated but studied as a single subject. This reinforced the myth of the inferiority of African languages and literature. In the religious sphere it was all Scripture and Bible Knowledge and nothing on African religion. The intention appears to have been to uproot the African from his/her culture as the impression was created that nothing worthy of study could come out of Africa. Such an approach hardly qualifies to be regarded as beneficial to Africans.
For African women, as is argued by Gaidzanwa (n.d:1), education focused on "domesticity, divorcing women from the political, public and lucrative spheres of the colonial economy." While it is true that missionaries uplifted the position of women in African societies, it is also true that African girls were educated to make them good and obedient wives for African evangelists. The whole idea was to create the possibility of a wholesome Christian home for African evangelists. It was with this aim that they were taught the upkeep of the home and caring for children. Though with time some of them were trained to become teachers and nurses, in general African women were left in weaker positions. Theirs was an education for servitude.

Given what has been discussed in the preceding paragraphs, it is difficult to maintain that missionaries were more of benefactors within the area of education given that no attempt was made to incorporate essential aspects of African education as enshrined in the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu. Instead missionaries were informed by a combination of the philosophies of their denominations as well as the philosophies of the colonial regime. As a result Western education led to the alienation of African pupils from their culture, religion, moral values, epistemology and metaphysical orientation. Yet they could not completely identify with the alien culture, religion and moral values into which they were being inducted. This created confused individuals since, to use Sartre’s (1968:8) phrase, their values and the true facts of their lives did not hang together. A system of education that creates confused individuals can hardly be said to be beneficial to the individuals concerned.
Considering what has been argued above, missionary education appears to have been negative and destructive to African traditional institutions, knowledge and value systems. It is with this in mind that Karim Hirji writes: "It was missionary education which facilitated the separation of the African from his traditional society for absorption into the socio-economic system." (Mckenzie, 1993:6). Jerome Kiwia also writes, "The principal role of the missionaries was to prepare Africans spiritually and mentally for physical domination." (Mckenzie, 1993:7). This is also the conclusion reached by Majekoe in her analysis of the role of missionaries in the conquest of Southern Africa. It has also emerged that in all the churches, traditional African practices like polygamy, lobola, music, art, systems of inheritance and ancestor veneration were condemned as pagan and therefore to be abandoned by African converts. As was argued above, with time, Africans responded by accepting Western education as an avenue to access the new society created by the settlers. However, their adherence to African education and values always acted as a critique to western education they were receiving. That is why there has recently been a call to inculcate the values that are grounded in the philosophy of hudhu/Ubuntu. Western education has always been and continues to be regarded as defective in so far as it fails to inculcate the values enshrined in the philosophy of hudhu/Ubuntu.

In preceding chapters, I argued that one of the strategies that missionaries used was to establish boarding schools as institutions in which African pupils could be introduced to Euro-Christian values in their tender years in isolation from the corrupting influences of the adults and their pagan practices. In some instances, as was the case with the Roman
Catholic Church and the London Missionary Society, and the Wesleyan Methodist Church to some extent, those Africans who accepted Christianity were further isolated in Christian villages where they were expected to lead virtuous lives insulated from the ‘pagan’ influences of their kith and kin and their ‘traditional cultural, social and religious background’ (McLaughlin, 1996). Thus, these individuals were de-rooted as their identity was destroyed by being separated from their people and culture.

Symbolically, this was achieved through the assumption of new Christian names, a symbolic severance of the ‘spiritual umbilical cord’ that linked them to African traditional value systems and beliefs based on hunhu/ubuntu and the conferment of a new Christian identity. However, as noted in the previous chapters, this strategy failed since after attaining education the Africans went to urban areas in search of work. Once in the urban areas, they ignored those values the missionaries would have imposed on them, but they no longer could identify with African culture. In a way, missionary education created individuals whose cultural roots had been destroyed and who had no direction as to their future.

**Missionaries, Colonists and Africans**

It has to be acknowledged that when missionaries went beyond basic literacy and numeracy in the provision of education to Africans in Zimbabwe, they incurred the wrath of the colonists and the colonial regime. The dissonance between missionaries, and the settler regime and the colonists in the provision of education can partly be explained by differences in the conception of the function of education among Africans. While
missionaries generally held a "spiritual conception of the school" (Berman, 1975:18), the settler authorities and the settlers had a secular orientation focusing on shaping a specific and subordinate role for Africans within the increasingly segregated society of the region (Summers, 1994:6). While missionaries were contented with producing a pool from which they could recruit teacher-evangelists, the settlers felt threatened by this pool of educated African elite which industry and commerce found convenient.

The tension can further be explained in terms of the desire among the missionaries and the colonial regime to have more influence among the Africans than the other. The settler regime loathed a situation in which, being the governing authority, missionaries had more influence in African education than it had. On the other hand the missionaries, having pioneered and done the groundwork, were not ready to let go of the influence they had over African education as it provided the best opportunity for them to make converts. Another development that was also now clear was that, while in the early years both sides were prepared to compromise; later colonial administrators were not willing to accommodate the missionary perception. This readiness to compromise in the early period could also have been because the intention of the missionaries in offering education was understood to be to offer "no more than a modicum of literacy in the vernacular" (Summers, 1998:8). As such their products could not have been a threat to the interests of the settlers. But in later years this was no longer the case. In other words, there was an informal understanding of collaboration between the settlers and the missionaries as they interacted with the Africans. Missionaries, through their education, contributed to the mental colonization of the Africans.
It can also be surmised that in the earlier years missionaries and colonists knew each other on a personal level. This was no longer the case given the numbers of both missionaries and settlers. Some missionaries in later years were recruited directly from Europe. At the same time there was a large influx of colonists into Rhodesia. In addition to this, the economy was expanding. As capitalism developed, the economy began to require African workers with higher qualifications. It was these who constituted competition for the settlers and were therefore perceived as a threat. But again the degree of conflict depended on individual missionary societies. Yet, still missionaries were operating within the armpit of the capitalist system providing the much needed labour force.

Another very important factor in the conflict was the African people themselves who were forcing missionaries to provide more academic education. Africans were demanding an education that provided an avenue to economic and political empowerment. They protested against poor education. In the Masvingo, region they were able to point out the faults in Dutch Reformed Church schools while in Matabeleland they protested against the London Missionary Society. The Roman Catholic Church was strongly biased towards involvement in the provision of education to Africans, since in 1896 a directive had been issued by the Jesuit General to utilize education in missionary work. International experience had made it apparent to the Roman Catholic Church over the years that schools provided the means to success in evangelisation. The Roman Catholic Church therefore regarded education as the
responsibility of the church (Domenec, Dunn and Tulasiewicz, 1993:92). Its education was popular among Africans. Thus, missionaries found themselves having to respond to African dictates in the provision of education. The result was conflict with both the government and the colonists.

However, from the early period of conquest it was the colonial regime that primarily determined educational policy in a bid to determine the kind of education to be provided to the two races in the colony. As the authority responsible for the administration of the colony, it had to give directions in education, labour, as well as other spheres of life. In colonial Zimbabwe, in education, initial indications of this phenomenon occurred in 1899 when the British South Africa Company administrators came up with the Education Ordinance that was intended to determine the type of education missionaries were to provide to Africans. Among other things, the Ordinance set conditions which mission schools had to satisfy if they were to receive financial assistance from the regime. In other words, the colonial authorities indirectly influenced missionary provision of education. These grants were to be given to schools:

where a Native Mission school is kept for not less than four hours daily, of which not less than two hours shall be devoted to industrial training by a teacher or teachers approved by the Administration, and the average daily attendance is not less than 50, there shall be allowed annually for and in respect of each pupil, who shall during the preceding year have attended the school on at least two hundred
occasions, the sum of ten shillings provided that in no case shall such annual allowances succeed fifty (McKenzie, 1993:43).

Missionary societies endeavoured to meet these conditions and others stipulated in subsequent legislation so as to benefit from the Government grant. They even negotiated for the relaxation of some of the requirements so that as many of their schools could qualify for the grants. In this way, the colonial authorities exercised indirect influence on educational policy. The idea was to regulate African entry into the labour force and so ensure job security to the colonists. Some missionaries like those of the Dutch Reformed Church established schools specifically to benefit from such grants. The Dutch Reformed Church established 'rudimentary kraal schools' (Summers, 1994:8) which provided sub-standard education. Summers (1994) argues that when Africans realised that the Dutch Reformed Church schools were providing sub-standard education, Africans sought alternatives to Dutch Reformed Church schools, either going to schools run by other missionary societies or establishing their own schools. For example, from the Dutch Reformed Church, Reverend Zvobgo left and established his own school at Shonganiso in Masvingo. From the Wesleyan Methodist Church Reverend Nemapare established his own church with its own schools. Missionaries, by virtue of adhering to the Government's expectations in the provision of education to Africans, were collaborating with the colonial regime.

However, while in general, all missionaries worked within the framework defined by the colonial regime, there were some individual missionaries who were not comfortable with
collaborating with the state in the provision of education to Africans. For example, Reverend Cripps urged the Anglican Church not to accept government grants, arguing that this would compromise the church’s position. He refused to accept such grants for his two schools. But the Anglican Church ignored him. Among the Wesleyan Methodist Church, the Reverend White was also not comfortable with the partnership but was not as radical as Cripps. Among the London Missionary Society the Reverend Jones complained that the partnership with the government reduced missionaries to the status of government workers and that it was now the church that was at the periphery of the educational enterprise rather than being at the centre. In the Roman Catholic Church Father Collingridge complained that the partnership with the Government reduced the missionaries to government servants (Linden, 1980:29). However, in general, the education which missionaries provided to Africans was for subservience (O’Callaghan, 1977:15). African education was more industrial as opposed to literary in line with government policy. A majority of the schools that provided education to Africans were in Classes 2 and 3 where there were no stringent requirements on what was to be taught and the number of hours pupils had to receive instruction. Only in the Class 2 were pupils required to receive two hours of instruction every week day. O’Callaghan points out that in these two classes, teachers were poorly trained, and the curriculum was badly organised (O’Callaghan, 1977:15). Thus, the education for Africans, concludes O’Callaghan (1977), was to fit the African for his/her lowly position in colonial society and this was what the settlers wanted.
In the case of Southern Rhodesia, McKenzie’s (1993) argument that financial assistance was not the sole determinant of the type of education missionaries provided to Africans is weakened by the events of 1970-71. When the Rhodesian Front government reduced its financial support to teachers in African primary schools by five percent, missionary societies were asked to either make good the five percentage deduction or if they could not afford, to surrender the schools to local African Councils under the Ministry of Local Government. Missionaries very well knew that local African Councils neither had the experience nor the capacity to handle such a huge responsibility. In spite of this most missionary societies opted to surrender over ninety percent of their primary schools to the local authorities well aware that these were not yet ready to run such schools. The major consideration for this option was financial. That missionaries claimed that they were not prepared to be tax collectors on behalf of the Government was secondary (Gundani, 2001:28). If indeed they were benefactors, missionaries would not have surrendered their schools to inexperienced and ill-equipped administrators of local authorities.

While McKenzie (1993) recognized that missionary education could be seen as facilitating cultural colonization, he is of the view that the spread of the Gospel to any culture also meant the adaptation of the Gospel to that culture. So adaptation was not one sided, he argued. Yet it has to be recognized that missionaries and colonists shared in their ‘foreignness’ to Africans. They shared cultures, identities, values and beliefs. It was their cultural values and beliefs that schools propagated while suppressing those of Africans. While it is easy to generalize about mutual borrowing, it is important to indicate which aspects of ‘backward’ ‘primitive’ ‘barbaric’ and ‘pagan’ African cultures
were incorporated into Christian culture and are evident in African education. Mutual borrowing can only occur where cultural encounters are not mitigated by the denial of other cultures as "non–culture," where there is dialogue between the cultures. Negative attitudes and perceptions of Africans precluded meaningful exchanges between Christianity and African religions. It was only after independence that attempts were made to incorporate some aspects of African culture into Christianity. It has also been noted that the school was a tool for the conversion of the Africans. So, in so far as the mission school was a means of conversion, it was also an agent of foreign religion and culture. Hence, the educational benefits to the Africans were incidental to the rationale of the school.

Still within the sphere of education, Christian missionaries are often praised for having introduced literacy and numeracy into the African communities in Zimbabwe. The argument presented is that pre-colonial Africa was pre-literate, had no writing and therefore no education. It is also argued that it was the missionaries who translated the scriptures into African languages thereby making the scriptures accessible to Africans (Weller and Linden, 1984:69). While this may be true, the question that needs to be asked is why this ought to be viewed as an act of benevolence when its focus was the facilitation of the evangelization of Africans. Weller and Linden (1984) as well as Lewis and Edwards (1934) argue that missionary education was intended to further missionary objectives.
The missionaries were aware of the importance of language in self-affirmation and identity. It was quite clear to the missionaries that without the introduction of writing as well as the translation of scriptures into African languages they had little hope of success in their endeavours. Another point is that, in spite of having reduced African languages to writing, at school missionaries discouraged African pupils from using their languages. African pupils were subjected to punishment and humiliation for speaking their languages at school. As is reported by Tlou, anyone who was found speaking indigenous languages at school was punished (Tlou, 1975:190). It is such contradictions that make it difficult to conclude that this particular process was more of benefit to Africans than the missionaries themselves as well as the colonial regime.

It also has to be noted that the act of translation in itself conferred supremacy to the English language that became the referent point. It was the English language that was elevated to the official language while African languages together with what they symbolized were branded inferior (Tlou, 1975:190). There was the supposition that English was the only language most suited to higher order thinking. In fact, Bewaji (2002:6) maintains that language "protects the traditions of those that have distinct languages from invasive tendencies, enhances the independence of linguistic groups and is a basis for developing national pride and identity in relevant situations." Ngugi wa Thiongo (1986:13) maintains that language "is both a means of communication and a carrier of culture" and history. In other words, language influences the way people perceive reality. If this is the case, the act of translation was an indirect attack on the cultural and linguistic identity of the African people. It was an act of imposition of
English culture, history and identity on the African people through emphasis on the use of English in official business in colonial Zimbabwe. It was part of the process of alienating Africans from themselves through forcing them to view reality from the perspective of the conqueror.

In the context of the discussion above, it was inevitable that Africans identified the Christian churches with the colonial enterprise. Evidence in other spheres tends to support the view that missionaries were forerunners of colonialism in Zimbabwe.

Beginning with Gonzalo da Silveira up to 1890, missionaries were among the first Europeans to establish contacts with African chiefs. What Enrique Dussel wrote about Latin American experience equally applies to Southern Africa, “the church identified its life with that of Spanish civilization and its culture” (Ngugi wa Thiongo, 1986:13). This was the attitude which pervaded the colonial period and dramatically marked its life. Silveira came with Portuguese traders and hunters. After his death, the Portuguese government even tried to avenge his death. In other words Silveira was viewed and regarded by the Portuguese traders and colonists as one of them, one whose work was complementary to theirs. Later Jesuits and Dominicans who followed him also worked hand in hand with Portuguese adventurers in the Mutapa State.

In the nineteenth century, the London Missionary Society worked with the British South Africa Company to dislodge Lobengula. The other churches were in fact invited by Rhodes to come along with the British South Africa Company into the new territory. The
reason for Rhodes to invite the missionaries was to gain respectability for his adventure into Zimbabwe. The evidence from Majeke and the examination of the missionaries suggest that missionaries were not unwilling or unwitting accomplices in their provision of education to Africans. They were well aware of their role within the scheme of capitalistic imperialism which required them to teach Africans punctuality, cleanliness, orderliness, self control, respect for authority, and service to the community (Majeke, 1986) while destroying indigenous philosophies based on *hunhu/ubuntu*. This is not to imply that Africans did not already have these values, but that they were now being anchored in a different paradigm, a different philosophy and culture.

**African Politics**

Turning to the crucial issue of land, some of these missionaries were given large tracts of land in the Mutapa state by their Portuguese government and were on the government payroll. Some became merchants and slave traders (McLaughlin, 1996:6). Later missionaries in Southern Africa identified with the settlers from Europe. It is also important to note that it was David Livingstone, a missionary-turned-explorer, who mapped out Southern Africa for occupation by Europe and who was also the architect of the strategy of combining commerce and Christianity. As I argued above, Christianity entailed the provision of education to Africans since these two were inseparable. Missionary education was never meant to make Africans politically conscious. Political awakening was therefore an unintended by-product of Western education as Africans began to question their status in colonial society.
It was Rhodes, as testified by the missionaries themselves, who granted missionaries thousands of acres for their mission stations on which they constructed schools. To continue receiving money missionaries had to implement curricular obligations stipulated by the colonial regime as has already been indicated. So it was their mutual benefit that necessitated collaboration between missionaries and the colonial regime. It was this which prompted Mutumbuka to observe: the colonists were the paymasters of the missionaries; and the missionaries supplied the trained human resources needed to sustain colonialism through the education they provided to Africans. Kaunda echoed the same view when he argued that missionaries were central to the economic plans of colonialism (McKenzie, 1993:40). So collaboration between the missionaries and the colonial regime was a matter of expedience.

Missionary societies supported the crushing of the Amandebele in 1893, and again the subjugation of both the Mashona and the Matabele in 1896-97. While some missionaries may have had reservations, in 1893 they were agreed that if missionary educational and evangelical work was to succeed in Zimbabwe, the Amandebele had to be humbled. While some missionaries were of the view that the Mashona and the Amandebele had genuine grievances in rising against the British South Africa Company in 1896-7, they were also of the view that the Mashona and the Amandebele had to be subjugated. As a result of the 1897 war, the Amandebele and the Mashona became a conquered people ready to receive the education and religion of the conqueror while their own education for hunhu/ubuntu and traditional religion receded into obscurity.
As far as Africans were concerned, they were aware of the level of cooperation between the missionaries and the settlers from the 1893 war up to the attainment of independence. In the 1896-7 war, a number of missionaries, including African evangelists like Moleli, Mizeki and Anta, were killed as they were identified with the settlers. Their schools were viewed as agents of alienation of the Africans from their culture and were facilitating the onslaught against African values. The Africans were also aware of those missionaries like Cripps and White, who lived, ate and identified with them. Throughout the colonial era, as Africans fought the colonial regime, many other missionaries were to be killed as they were viewed and identified with the establishment.

The reason why missionaries did not initially criticize legislation that discriminated against Africans and that which pertained to land was because they were beneficiaries of the colonial land policies (Moyana, 2002). With the exception of Inyati, Hope Fountain and Shiloh, which the London Missionary Society obtained from the Amandebele kings, and St Augustine which the Anglican Church obtained from Chief Mutasa, all other missionaries obtained land from the British South Africa Company, even against the wishes of the Africans whose land was being expropriated. Missionaries acquired the land on the authority of the British South Africa Company, not that of African Chiefs thereby rendering African Chiefs irrelevant in the process. It was on these farms that mission schools for Africans were constructed. It was on such farms that Christian villages were also established as centres of education and other missionary activities. However, the result of this land acquisition by missionaries was that they became part and parcel of the colonial machinery that dispossessed Africans of their land. In this
context it is difficult not to view the missionary fervour as allied rather than opposed to the commercial motive of the colonizers while at the same time opposed to the interests of the Africans (Mudimbe, 1989:46). It was also in this context that Africans viewed missionaries as collaborators with the colonial regime and attacked some of them during the wars and the subsequent struggle that led to independence in 1980.

For missionaries the general picture in African politics was that temporal reality deprecated while emphasis was on the spiritual purity, shunning worldly pursuits that included politics. In general it would appear that the Christian religion was promising the Africans a pie in the sky while encouraging them to bear the hardships they were experiencing in this world as a result of repression by the colonial regime. Consequently, Tlou (1975:176) concluded, “Missionary schools generally emphasized obedience, morality and service at a local level. In this way these schools conditioned their students to be good followers, obedient servants, and to think in narrowly provincial terms. So involvement in politics among Africans was discouraged. In this context Christian missionaries were collaborating with the colonial regime trying to maintain the status quo in which Africans remained oppressed.

However, the greatest indictments against the missionaries were mission-educated Africans. These were the most prominent critics of missionaries and their activities. It was the mission-educated Africans who, after being aware of the contradiction between missionary objectives and practices, the unfavourable conditions to Africans in the political and economic landscapes, initiated African nationalism. Such African
nationalists included Leopold Takawira who was raised at Gokomere Mission; James Chikerema who was brought up at Kutama Mission where his father was instrumental to the founding of Kutama mission, and Charles Mzingeli who was trained at Emphandeni Mission. All these lived in Christian villages set aside for converts by the missionaries. Other prominent African clergy involved in politics included Bishop A. Muzorewa, and Reverend N. Sithole. It appears that almost all African nationalists were mission educated. In spite of this, the general despondence of missionaries against African involvement in politics led some nationalists to view the church as supporting the status quo and argue that the church ‘softened the people into acquiescence to the settler Government’. In this context the church was identified with the settlers.

Summary

The available evidence indicates that there were few individual missionaries whose views challenged those of the establishment when it came to the welfare of the Africans. It also points to the fact that these were very few compared to the number of missionaries in the various denominations. There were some churches like the Dutch Reformed Church in which there was no missionary who advocated the welfare of the Africans. Surprisingly most African clergy in the Dutch Reformed Church were visibly absent in African politics. Perhaps what stands out in Dutch Reformed Church activities as beneficial to Africans was the efforts it made to provide special education to the blind and the deaf. There were also others like the Anglican Church in which priests like Cripps were ignored or rebuked by their superiors for advocating the interest of the African people. The Wesleyan Methodist Church had the Reverends White, Carter and Lawrence whose
positions have already been discussed above. Among its African clergy involved in politics were Reverend Banana who became the first president of independent Zimbabwe, and Joshua Nkomo, who later became the Vice President of Zimbabwe. As for the Roman Catholic Church, it was divided depending on whether the missionary worked in the rural area or in the urban area. The Catholic Church, through the rural church, appeared to be the only church that struggled to understand the African people better. It evaluated its activities on the basis of Catholic social teaching. In education it was guided by a philosophy that evolved over centuries of work in colonies. But, none of these missionary societies critically engaged the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*.

If we take a micro perspective, focusing on some individual missionaries, it is clear that there were very few exceptions to the view that missionaries were more of collaborators with the colonial regime rather than benefactors of the African people in their provision of education to Africans. At a micro level, there were missionaries who were well meaning who tried to protect the welfare of African students and argued that they needed a new holistic education. But there were also individuals who put the missionary movement into disrepute, who used education to exploit Africans. These included such individuals as Orlandini and Murray and others who became economic opportunists.

However, at the macro level the missionary movement, in providing education to Africans, tended to collaborate more with the settlers. As a movement, they were part of the system that oppressed and exploited the Africans. This is not to imply that missionary education in Africa in no way benefited Africans, but that the tendency of the missionary
movement was inclined more to the promotion of cooperation with the settlers than in cooperation with the Africans. This was especially the case during the early years of colonial settlement. The missionaries then still had memories which they shared with the settlers, when their entry into the colony was facilitated by the settlers and when they traveled on transport provided by the settlers. In other words, colonial administrators and missionaries assisted each other. With time, the situation became more complex and marked by contradictions and vacillations as at times missionaries were forced to cooperate with Africans. But in most cases this tended to be shadow boxing.

That the missionary movement was likely going to be more aligned to collaboration with the colonial regime was predicted by J. S. Moffat when he observed:

There is no blinking the fact that the tendency of Christianity is to overturn native governments. The process of the enlightenment is not rapid or general enough to bring a new order as, an immediate substitute, and the result is a pitiful confusion and disintegration of the tribal system without any better system to take its place, a state of things for which there is no remedy but annexation by a civilized power (Weller and Linden, 1984:22).

Missionaries therefore favoured the subjugation of the Africans in Zimbabwe. Domination of Africans was the driving force of the missionary movement. They put into place an education that though it facilitated the integration of Africans into the new economic and political systems, was alien to the African people as it was not grounded in
the African indigenous philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*. This education system also introduced them to the values of the colonial settlers which Africans were compelled to imbibe. The content of this education was alien as it was not from the culture of the African people. Missionaries and settlers viewed themselves as involved in the same mission which was to *civilize* Africans through domination. The language, the culture and the values that were central to the whole enterprises were from Europe. In so far as missionaries participated in:

the procedures of acquiring, distributing, and exploiting lands..., the policies of domesticating natives; and the manner of managing ancient organizations and implementing new modes of production and the domination of physical space, the reformation of the natives’ minds, and integration of local economic histories into the western perspective (Mudimbe, 1989:2),

they were more of collaborators with the colonial regime than benefactors of the Africans. They were instrumental to the destruction of African traditional, political, social, religious, and educational institutions which were grounded in the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu* and replacing them with those grounded in the culture and traditions of the West. They were informed by the philosophies of essentialism and universalism that saw Western culture and Western religion as the *Culture* and the *Religion* and precluded any fusion with African philosophy of life. Western culture and religion were universalized while African culture and all its facets were suppressed. In this context,
missionaries were more of collaborators than benefactors of the Africans. They were identified by most of the Africans as such.
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

If, as I have argued in chapter two, *hunhu/ubuntu* constitute the philosophical foundation of indigenous African education in Zimbabwe, for any imposed or adopted education system not to be described as an alienating one, it has to either encompass the whole or aspects of this philosophy. As I also maintained in chapter three, Western philosophy, because it was based on abstract universality that manifested itself as philosophical and spiritual racism which precluded the recognition of the ñdifferent otherñ as human beings, it became difficult for missionaries to embrace African cultures and philosophies of life. Abstract universality meant that being and existence were defined in Occidental terms.

The consequence was the imposition of education systems that negated African ways of life and ignored those African principles rooted in the philosophy of *hunhu/ubuntu*. The results were education systems that alienated African scholars from their culture. The lives of these African scholars who were products of Western education displayed mimetic and inauthentic existence.

The Report by the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education popularly known as the Nziramasanga Commission (1999) points to the Zimbabweansñlack of satisfaction with the current education system in Zimbabwe. The present discussion has attributed this dissatisfaction to the fact that the education system continues to be grounded in an alien philosophy of education that promotes alien values. As I noted in the previous chapter, Western philosophy as epitomised in the Cogito ego sum emphasise individualism. On the other hand, *hunhu/ubuntu* emphasise communal well being. From this I recommend that there is need for a conscious and deliberate option for
hunhu/ubuntu as the foundation of Zimbabwean education system. This will render the education system in Zimbabwe relevant and contextualised as it will be able to engage African experience. It will lead to the promotion of the values enshrined in hunhu/ubuntu such as respect for human life, love for one another, fraternity, patriotism, honesty, integrity, hard work. So what I am recommending is the liberation of education and its authentification by the provision of a firm philosophical foundation rooted in Africans’ existential circumstances.

My recommendation is further prompted by recent discoveries in quantum physics on how the world works. Von Eck (2010:7) argues, ‘Physics has now proven that there is more truth in the philosophies that traditionally embraced the philosophy of interconnectedness. Ubuntu is an example of these philosophies. The understanding that I am because you are, that we are all connected, is now being presented as scientific fact.’ Hence, the recommendation to adopt the philosophy of hunhu/ubuntu as the foundation of Education in Zimbabwe. This would entail infusing the values of hunhu/ubuntu into the school curriculum as well as making the exploration, attainment and manifestation of hunhu/ubuntu the focus of educational and other institutions in Zimbabwe.
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