

## CHAPTER TWO: HISTORY OF CHRISTIANISATION OF ZIMBABWE AND THE ORIGIN OF UNDISPUTED AICS

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In Chapter One, we delineated the central study's focus that delved deep into the inculturated African spiritual elements of faith by the JMCN which is an African Indigenous Church (AIC) founded in Zimbabwe. The study hypothesised that JMCN appropriated incompatible African spiritual elements of faith resulting in a disputed AIC presenting an unclear Church spirituality. Thus, it is against this background the chapter discusses a major theme in African Church history; which is, Christianisation of Africa. Christianisation of Africa is seen as the first step for Africans to receive the Christian gospel which was brought by western missionaries to Africa. But this step led to step two in Church history that is the Africanisation of Christianity which in turn gave birth to what can be termed as undisputed AICs which can be defined as an enterprise of African Christian theologians. This step again led to the third one which is the Christianisation of African Traditional Religions by other AICs hence the notion of disputed AICs particularly in Zimbabwe. Accordingly, the chapter will begin by discussing the history of Christianisation of Zimbabwe, followed by a discussion on the Africanisation of Christianity in Zimbabwe. That will take us to a discussion of authentic AICs, their typologies and central spiritual elements in Zimbabwe.

The history of Christianisation of Zimbabwe is very long and complex. It can be effectively traced back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century with the arrival of the Portuguese missionaries from Europe (Mudenge 1986:12). Throughout the Christian epochs, western missionaries established various Christian denominations such as the Roman Catholic, Anglican and Methodist Churches (Baur 1994:417-422). These Western missionaries had their bases in England, Germany, Portugal, America and other countries. Apart from converting Africans to Christianity, Western missionaries established numerous mission stations, schools and hospitals for the nourishment of Africans (Zvobgo 1996:16). These include Gokomere in Masvingo, Waddilove in Marondera, and Hama Mission, Chinyika Mission, Drefontein all in Chirumhanzu District.

Murphree (1969:6) contends that in the southern part of Zimbabwe, “Roman Catholic missionaries were the first to arrive and establish several mission stations”. For Murphree (1969:6) “the first endeavor to introduce Christianity to the Shona populace was by a Portuguese Jesuit missionary, Gonzalo da Silveira, at the courtyard of the Mutapa empire until he was assassinated as a result of court scheming in 1561.” However, Bhebe (1979) noted with concern that this first missionary group’s attempt to evangelize Zimbabwe in particular did not materialize because of various reasons:

“Firstly, the Shona and the Ndebele saw no moral supremacy of monogamy over polygamy and could not see why missionaries denounced their customs. Secondly, Christianity did not seem to offer practical answers to the daily problems of Shona and the Ndebele people, but answers were provided by their traditional religion. Thirdly, a high God of love did not match with the droughts and disasters they were now experiencing” (Bhebe 1979:38).

Missionaries condemned the rain-making cultic worship as a mere wasting of time by the Ndebele and the Shona people. Coincidentally, in 1561 the Mutapa Empire experienced droughts for the first time ever (Isichei 1995). The blame was leveled against white missionary’s religion. The people of Mutapa Empire confronted the missionaries to explain that:

The Ndebele and the Shona did not believe that killing an ox or burning particular herbs makes rain, but these were the means by which they asked for the rain, just like missionaries do by reading the bible and recite a prayer (Isichei 1995:114). However, it was also unfortunate that the main purpose of the first group of missionaries who came to Africa, particularly to Zimbabwe, were more focused on trading than genuine preaching of the gospel. For instance, Gonzalo da Silveira’s coming to the Mutapa Empire was primarily for trading in gold and ivory (Mudenge, 1986:13). The other reason that was more political, was to expel the Arabs who were already in control of the trade (Mudenge, 1986:13). Above all, missionaries were, “regarded as emissaries sent by their white rulers to divorce Africans from their custom and traditions” (Zvobgo, 1986:44).

This does not imply that missionaries did not do anything positive to evangelize Zimbabwe. Western missionaries did a great deal to evangelize the country; for instance, they introduced free western education for all, free medical treatment for all and many other health facilities (Zvobgo 1996:16). Nevertheless, and to the contrasting, the locals perceived missionaries’ service as a bait to fish them out of their cultures, depriving them of their resources, and finally destroying their identity (Maposa 2014:141).

Isichei observes that:

The Shona/Ndebele people believed that high God Mwari had given each people the culture he intended for them. He made all things as he wanted them to be. He had made all people and that he had made every country and tribe just as he wished them to remain, he believed God made the *MaNdebele* and *MaShona* as he wished them to be and it was wrong for anyone to seek to alter them (Isichei, 1995:114).

Thus, the Shona and the Ndebele continued to see Christianity as a 'white man's religion' (Taylor 1963). This also was exacerbated by missionaries demanding of the changing of African names to Christian and or European names upon conversion. Even good Shona names like *Kudzaishe*, *Tinomudaishe* and *Tanatswanashe* (all praise names, translated Praise God, we love the Lord and we have been sanctified by God) respectively, were seen as ungodly and had to be changed into male or female Catholic saints as a pre-requisite of becoming a full church member. Such common names to be confirmed on the converted included Gabriel, Mary, Maria, Ezekiel, Daniel and many more. Maposa (2014:78) argues that earliest generation of white missionaries envisaged in bringing a Christianity that was 'clothed' in western cultural garb". He maintains that missionary Christianity was regarded as part and parcel of western culture (Maposa 2014:78).

To some extent, missionary Christianity was only a particular religio-cultural phenomenon. The study notes that this was delusion for missionaries to conclude that, what was good for Europe must be good for the local people they encountered in Africa (Maposa 2014:78). It is out of this fallacy that missionaries construed salvation to mean adoption of European cultures as a pre-requisite to become a bona fide Christian (Wiredu 1996:16). Against this background, European missionaries rigorously fought against African cultures and traditions. For European missionaries, blackness was associated with evil so much that even in their painting, Satan was depicted as a black being with horns and an Angel of God depicted as a white being with wings (Amanze 1998:50). This Satan was, again, perceived as masked and alive through the complex of African traditional practices and local cultural worldview (Amanze 1998:51). Therefore, the total destruction of African tradition and culture would symbolize the fall of Satan in Africa (Amanze 1998:53). The missionary victory would, in the end, signify also the victory of

Christ over the powers of darkness (African cultures) and the coming into being of the light of salvation (European cultures) (Amanze 1998:53).

Again, the study notes that most colonial missionary's agenda appeared as 'an attitude of goodwill,' but with an hidden agenda which was to dislocate African societies by replacing traditional culture with the so-called favorable Christian (western culture) and civilization (Amanze 1998:52). For instance, the, "African people were asked to disregard their cultures to be saved and be truly Christians" (Maposa 2014:79). Salvation was only possible if they renounce their African past, that is, their beliefs and practices and showed willingness to live according to the 'Christian'/western principles" (Amanze 1998:52). Polygamous marriages were denied and condemned as unbiblical. Accordingly, the Jesuits missionaries expelled polygamists from attending church services resulting into many polygamous men being stripped off from benefits accruing to Catholic members (Zvobgo 1996). In 1902 many polygamists from Empandeni near Bulawayo were barred from being members of a Jesuit Catholic Church arguing that, "it is better to lose in numbers, but registering in the minds of the locals that we mean business and that there is no negotiation between Christianity and pagan religion" (Zvobgo 1986:46).

Adding to that, Mbiti (1980:26) observes that western missionaries were reluctant in adopting African names for God, though in a big way various African names for God were closely related to reflect biblical teachings. Like all names, African names have meanings; hence names are not just randomly given either to their Children or even to places. Most of these names are very spiritual showing how these African people are connected to the spiritual world. They show the way of life of people. Sometimes they give their Children names of the departed member authenticating their strong belief of re-incarnation of life. However, the majority of names given to Children today among the Karanga people of Chirumhanzu are praise names such like *Makanakaishe*, you are good God. Their connectedness to the Supreme Being is also indicated by names they give to their God. Name like *Musiki*, (the creator), *Samatenga*, (Owner of heaven), *Mutanga kugara* (Alpha and Omega) and many others (Van der Merwe 1957:8). These names are indicative that the

Shona already worshipped God before the European missionaries 'introduced God' to them.

Hence missionaries' negative attitude towards African culture and worldviews *inter alia* gave rise to African Indigenous Churches. Waruta (2000:125) notes that missionary Christianity did not touch the hearts of the locals because it failed to become indigenous enough to the Africans and therefore, was condemned by locals as irrelevant. Muzorewa (1991:96-97) agrees with the above and observes that imported theologies did not touch the hearts of the African believers because they were couched in a religious language foreign to locals. For Taylor (1963:13) Christianity which was presented in Africa was offered as a White man's religion. For him:

It is bad enough that religious pictures, films and film strips have almost universally shown a white Christ, child of a white mother, master of white disciples; worshipped almost exclusively with European music set to translations of European hymns, sung by clergy and people wearing European dress in buildings of an archaic European style; that the form of worship should bear almost no relation to traditional African ritual nor content of the prayers to contemporary African life; that the organizational structure of the Church and its method of reaching decisions modeled more closely on Western concepts rather than deviating from them (Taylor 1963:13).

To this view, Idowu as cited by Sawyerr (1996:87) concluded that prefabricated theology did not quench the thirst of the indigenous Africans. Later, Orobator (2008:11) concurred with these views when he noted that the form of Christianity which was presented to Africans by Western missionaries was 'cooked in a western pot', hence there is need to 'brew it in an African pot'. According to him, 'theology brewed in an African pot' presents an invitation to taste of theology in an African context" (Orobator 2008:11). Western missionaries required Africans to give up their traditional heritage to become Christians. Accordingly, this model of approach denotes that, for one to become Christian, one must become culturally European. This is why Kwabena Nketia (2009:10) quoting K.A. Busia queried western missionaries approaches to mission by demanding that Africans give up their traditions, their celebrations and ritual cycles and discard their spirituality before they become Christians.

These missionaries' approaches to *missio Dei* (the mission of God) led Africans to initiate a 'home grown Christianity' (African Christianity), a Christianity exhibited by AICs. This term African Christianity suggests that though Christianity is universal there are some features that when looked at one can denote that this Christianity is now an African Religion. Thus, the term 'African Christianity' was first used in the 1960s and gained popular usage after it was used by Pope John Paul VI at a Pan African Episcopal meeting of Roman Catholic Bishops and Priests held at Gaba, Uganda (Shorter, 1975:20). During that conference, Pope John Paul VI concluded by saying:

From this point of view, certain pluralism is not only legitimate, but desirable. An adaptation of the Christian life in the fields of pastoral, ritual, didactic and spiritual activities is not only possible, it is even favoured by the church; the liturgical renewal is a living example of this. And in this sense, you may, and you must have 'African Christianity' (Shorter, 1975:20).

The above quotation indicates the introduction of the second phase of 'Christianisation of Africa' with African Christians 'Africanising Christianity'. This Africanisation of Christianity by African Christians is seen in form of African Indigenous Churches (AICs). Therefore, the main aim of these AICs in Africa was, to ensure that Africans could be Christians without feeling that they are living on borrowed religion and borrowed culture. Mbiti (1977:183) also observed that at first European missionaries Christianised Africa while African Christians later Africanised Christianity. This is how the study conceptualises the second phase of evangelization of the gospel in Zimbabwe which gave birth to the emergency of AICs, Africanisation of Christianity by African Christians.

We reconstruct the second phase of the history Christianisation of Africa particularly in Zimbabwe. This second phase is commonly known as Africanisation of Christianity. This is the enterprise of African Christians as they took over the propagation of the gospel from western missionaries. The main agenda of these African Christians was to make Christianity an African Religion. We have already noted that missionaries presented a gospel tinged in western clothes and hence in Africanisation of Christianity, the intention was just to remove the western garments but keeping the universal Christian gospel as it was from the beginning with its centrality on Jesus Christ and the

Bible. For Gehman (1987: 2) “Africanisation of Christianity is the quest to make Christian faith authentically an African Christian faith”.

Further to the foregoing, Gehman argues that Jesus Christ must be interpreted to the Africans in such a way that HE is both true to the scripture and meaningful to the African man. It is in this milieu that Nyamiti (1984) popularised a new tag for Christ that is Christ our ancestor. Nyamiti posits that the cult of ancestors should control how the Church in Africa understands its life and operations (Kaoma 2015:45). Through incarnation and redemption, Christ has become our kin our mediator and our example (Kaoma 2015:45). About eight years later Benezet Bujo further developed Nyamiti’s school of thought of Christ being our Ancestor. However, for Bujo Christ as ancestor can only be used metaphorically since Jesus Christ transcends all ancestors (Bujo 1992:87). It is against this argument that Bujo labels Christ as our Proto Ancestor (Bujo 1992:87). By Proto ancestor Bujo implies that Jesus is the first to resurrect from the dead, evidenced by HIS Christophanes, ascended to heaven and hence the vehicle of a new life between the weak human beings and the supreme God, the creator (Bujo 1992:89). In a way, Bujo is presenting to an African man Jesus Christ as an ancestor par excellent who transcend over all other ancestors. By so doing Africans will feel at home both in Church and in their African cultures. This is how Africans perceived and constructed praise names like *Mudzimu mukuru* (Great Ancestor), *Chidza chepo* (The One who has no beginning), *dande mutande* (the one who is everywhere), being accommodated in Christianity though during ‘Christianisation of Africa’ such words were deemed to be evil and unwelcome by the Church. Thus, we argue that the Africanisation of Christianity is a by-product of western missionaries failing to inculturate the gospel into the African worldviews.

As we have already noted that inculturation is the process whereby cultural values can be transformed through exposure to the Christian message and the insertion of Christianity into indigenous cultures (Duncan 2014:11). This suggests a dual process whereby the Christian gospel adapts and adopts the new African environment at the same time maintaining its central tenets. Thus, western missionaries’ rigid approach to Christianisation of Africa triggered the migration of church members from missionary Churches to start

their own African Independent Churches. By the time many African nations gained freedom from colonial governments, African Indigenous Churches were getting to be more and more visible in many of these African countries. The main purpose of these AICs was to redefine Christianity from an African perspective and through African thought forms and idioms but still continuing to be in tandem with the rest of the Christendom (Muzorewa 1985). This is what Orobator (2008) referred to as “brewed theology in an African pot” Thus, resulting in a Christianity that was influenced by and conceived from an African worldview, African Philosophy, African Tradition and African Cultures (Fielder et al. 1998:34).

We posited in the study that in this process of ‘brewing’ Christianity in an African pot some AICs went on to accommodate incompatible African spiritual elements hence presenting suspicious Church spiritualities. This suggests that there are two broad categories of AICs: Undisputed and Disputed. For us to reach to this conclusion, firstly we need to agree on what constitute an authentic Christian Church and what characterised a disputed Church. BurrIDGE (2001) gives us a tentative working definition of a true Christian Church. Thus, a genuine Christian Church is a group of people that follows the doctrine of Jesus Christ, His death burial and resurrection for the salvation of humankind (BurrIDGE 2001:10). This doctrine of Christ is found in the Bible, mostly in Old and New Testaments (BurrIDGE 2001:11). Basing on this working definition thus, any Church that does not teach the Doctrine of Christ; and does not use the Bible for its theology is presenting a questionable non-Christian Spirituality. Below is a discussion on the origin of authentic AICs in Zimbabwe. A selection of the disputed AICs shall be undertaken in Chapter 3.

It is factual that this phenomenon called AICs came to the then Rhodesia from South Africa. The simple reason to this assumption is that the first and second AICs in Zimbabwe were all from South Africa. According to Daneel (1987:51) the earliest AIC in the then Southern Eastern Rhodesia was the ‘First Ethiopian Church’ (FEC) which was founded by Mupambi Chidembo from the Ndaui tribe of Chipinge in 1910. Chidembo returned from the then Transvaal and now Limpopo province of South Africa) and established an independent Church first among the Karanga people of Bikita, then Gutu and finally his home area Chipinge (Daneel 1987:51). The second AIC was the Zion



Christian Church (ZCC) (Daneel 1987). Zion Christian Church of the Zimbabwean chapter was founded by Samuel Mamvura Mutendi of Bikita district in Masvingo province in 1925 as he broke away with Enginase Lekganyane (Chimininge 2014:33-48). After the establishment of FEC and ZCC, many more emerged such as Johane Marange in the early 1930s, and Assemblies of God Africa (AOGA) now called Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa Forward in Faith (ZAOGA FIF) Church founded by Ezekiel Guti in 1960 among other AICs in Zimbabwe. Since then, AICs continued to spread so that today they are numerous in Zimbabwe.

*Table 1:* Examples of undisputed AICs, their founders and years they were founded

African Independent Church	Founder	Year
First Ethiopian Church	Mupambi Chidembo	1910
Zion Christian Church (ZCC)	Samuel Mamvura Mutendi	1925
Johane Marange Apostolic Faith Church	Johane Marange	1935
African Apostolic Church	Paul Mwazha	1951
AOGA now ZAOGA FIF	Ezekiel Handinawangu Guti	1960

Arguably, as these AICs continue to multiply the study also argues that the typologies given to designate these AICs need to be revised. This is so because for Anderson (2001:107) the typologies given overlooked the complexities of the subject hence causing confusion and wrong interpretation of the phenomenon. Anderson further argues that earlier scholars of these AICs were shortsighted because their typologies of AICs do not match the intricacies of the subject matter and are very misleading (Anderson 2000:107). Thus the study shares the same sentiments with other scholars like Dana and Daneel (2007) who argued that the tendency of studying one movement and presupposes that all AICs are the same should be discouraged.

It is important to highlight that this research was carried out among the Vapositori (Apostolic) Christian Churches in Zimbabwe. Still, the researchers of the study admit that one cannot carry out meaningful research if one targets the Vapositori as a whole because there are enumerable number of Vapositori denominations in Zimbabwe. Among the Vapositori Churches, there are those of the 'Book' and those of the 'Spirit'. By those of 'the Book' the study refers to those Vapositori who use the Bible for their theology.

Examples of these are: *Positori yekwa* Johane Marange (the Johane Marange Apostolic Church), *Positori yekwa* Mwazha (African Apostolic Church) and *Positori yekwa* Mugodhi (the Mugodhi Apostolic Church) among others. And another group is Vapositori of the 'Spirit'. These Vapositori normally referred to themselves as 'Christians who do not read the Bible' but rely on direct communication from God (live and directly) (Matthew Engelke 2007).

As of 2016, there were commonly known as *vekumasowe* (wilderness) or *chechi dzekuMadzibaba* (Fathers Churches). Therefore, in an attempt to fill up the academic *lacuna*, our submission is that, the earlier scholars who researched on Vapositori of the 'Spirit' or *Madzibaba* or *Masowe*, the likes of Dillone-Malone (1978) Mukonyora (1998), (2007) and Engelke (2007) among others did not account for variables amongst the Masowe religious groups. It appears as if there is one unified Johane Masowe weChishanu Church in Zimbabwe. Yet there are numerous Johane Masowe weChishanu Churches in Zimbabwe. Perhaps during their time of study Johane Masowe weChishanu Church was still a unified religious group. The study observes that after the death of Johane Masowe in 1973 resulted in many splinter groups emerging but they all continued to be designated by the preface Johane Masowe weChishanu. The study shall provide a list of these Johane Masowe weChishanu Churches in Zimbabwe and their identity. It is among the numerous lists of the Johane Masowe weChishanu Churches that Johane Masowe weChishanu yeNyenyedzi has been explicitly selected to be the case study of this research. The reason why we are carrying a research among this religious group is that the Church attracted thousands of followers in Zimbabwe and its neighboring countries hence attracting scholars to discuss its Church spirituality. Below is a brief study on the typologies of undisputed AICs.

The term 'typology' in the study is used to imply a classification of AICs according to certain specifications. A typology is a genre or class that helps to characterise a certain phenomenon (George 2012:3). It is on these grounds that scholars who studied AICs identified some broad categories. These categories are based on certain features of the church. Convincingly, the study notes that although there has been an extensive literature on AICs, Bengt Sundkler (1948) is credited with being the first to systematise the study of

AICs (Anderson 2001:12) into two broad groups; the ‘Ethiopian’ and the ‘Spirit-type’. This two-fold distinction of AICs, of Sundkler was later developed by Turner (1967). However, though Turner adopted the two-fold categories of AICs, he noted that there are some AICs which do not fit into the two broad subdivisions. These according to Turner were disputed AICs hence he categorised them as Neo-pagan movements and Hebraic movements (Daneel 1987:34-35). For Him any other AIC that does not fit into the two main broad categories ‘Ethiopian’ and ‘Spirit-type’ is Neo-pagan or non-Christian. Seemingly, the discourse on the authentic and non-authentic Christian Churches is central to the study hence Chapter three of the study will pursue Turner’s argument that “some AICs are non-Christian and others are more obviously Christian” (Daneel 1987:35).

So, the two-fold distinction of AICs propounded by Sundkler (1948) supported by Turner (1967) and later by Daneel (1987), was further subdivided by Anderson (1997) into three broad categories-Ethiopian, Spirit-type and Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches. The Pentecostal Churches, according to Anderson, are those that emerged after Zimbabwe became independent of colonisation in 1980. Thus, the chapter discussed the three broad categories of AICs - Ethiopian, Spirit-type and Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches.

Table 2: Typologies of AICs according to Turner, Daneel and Anderson

Church typology	Examples
Ethiopian	1.The First Ethiopian Church (FEC) of 1910 2.African Congregational Church of 1953
Spirit-type	1.Zion Christian Church 2. Johane Marange Apostolic Church of 1935
African Pentecostal Churches	Assemblies of God Africa (AOGA) Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa Forward in Faith Church of 1960 Worldwide Family of God (FOG) Church 1985

These typologies are studied for three main reasons; first, to find out whether the categories of AICs added more knowledge to the academic study of this phenomenon or has caused much confusion; second, to locate the JMCN Church group in Zimbabwe; third, whether the three-fold typologies: Ethiopian, Spirit-type and Pentecostal is a full representation of AICs in Zimbabwe.

The first group, as observed by Sundkler (1961:53), is a generic group of what he termed 'Ethiopian Churches.' For him, these churches are linked ideologically to the Coptic Church in the medieval kingdom of Axum in Ethiopia. It was the first Christian Church established at Alexandria in Egypt before it was rooted in the Latin North Africa (Daneel 1987:38). However, for Sundkler (1961:53), these Churches are not significantly different from most of the 'parent' mission churches in terms of their theology and liturgy. He argued that the chief dissimilarity is that they are led and controlled by Africans. In other words, for Sundkler (1961) the main reason for their emergence has been to empower Africans into Church leadership. For Anderson Ethiopian Churches are AICs that do not claim to be prophetic or to have special manifestation of the Holy Spirit but emerged on racial and political grounds (Anderson 2001:16). The term is derived from Ethiopia, the only African nation that had successfully rejected colonialism by defeating Italy in the battle of *Adwa* which was fought on 1 march in 1896 (Anderson 2001:16). Apart from Ethiopia defeating Italy in a war, it is the one of the few African countries mentioned in the Bible (Psalm 68:31), (Anderson 2001:16). Thus, Daneel (1987) the leading exponent on the study of AICs in Zimbabwe outlines the main spiritual elements of faith of the Ethiopian Churches:

- They lay no claim to manifestations of the Holy Spirit;
- They have a political outlook based largely on Africa for the Africans;
- They claim a close connection with the New Testament Christianity through the Coptic Church of Ethiopia;
- The label Ethiopia occurs prominently in the names of the Churches (Psalms 68:31);
- They stress the reading of the Bible;
- They value Biblical exegesis following patterns of the mainline Churches;
- Their teachings are very close to the theology of missionary churches (Daneel 1987:54);

The examples of the Ethiopian Churches in the Zimbabwean religious landscape are as follows:

- The First Ethiopian Church of Zimbabwe (*Chechi yaMatopia*) by Mupambi Chidembo founded in 1910;
- African Congregational Church founded by Mheke Semwayo in 1942;

- Apostolic Faith Mission of Africa International by the late Rev Sibanda now led by Tony Tshuma in 1985;
- African Reformed Church founded by Rev Jonas Zvobgo.

For Daneel (1987:51) the first Ethiopian Church (FEC) in the Zimbabwean Chapter was founded by Mupambi Chidembo, a *MuNdau* from the Bikita district in Masvingo province who worked as a migrant labourer in the then Transvaal in South Africa from 1890 to 1910 where he came into contact with the South African “Ethiopian Church.” What is noteworthy in the study is the origin of the founder. Mupambi was *Ndau* but located in Bikita area, an area of the Karanga people. Most *Ndau* people in Zimbabwe are from Chipinge, not from Bikita. Also the name Mupambi Chidembo is not a *Ndau* name but a Karanga name. This could imply that if this man was a *Ndau* he could have migrated from Chipinge and forcefully grabbed a piece of land in Bikita hence the nickname Mupambi meaning someone who grabs things by force. Chibembo is an animal that smells a lot that no one is comfortable staying close to. So by him being so named, the locals were not amused by his grabbing of the land and forcing his way to stay among the Karanga people. It is this man like Saul of the Bible who was a killer but turned to be a great preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Mupambi Chidembo despite his displeasing background started a Church and people followed him. This church, is no longer functional as it used to be during its hey days when it was then popularly known as *chichi yamatopia*, meaning the Ethiopian Church mostly among the Gutu, Ndanga, Bikita and Chipinge districts (Daneel 1987:51).

The second group identified by Daneel (18987:53) of the Ethiopian Church was the African Congregational Church founded by Semwayo, a *muRozwi* from Chipinge district in Manicaland province. Semwayo left the American Board Mission to start his own Church among his people as result of leadership disputes (Duncan 2015:213). The dispute arose at Mt Silinda because White Missionaries were supporting the colonial regime that was there in Zimbabwe. It was during this time that most African country were advocating for Pan- Africanism (Duncan 2015). It is interesting to note that most Church founders are from Chipinge and are of the *Ndau* tribe. On contrasting views Chipinge district is commonly known for witchcraft and

sorcery (Kelso 1993:4). Kelso raised that his Editor friend Maxwell Chivasa informed him that powerful sorcerers reside in Chipinge (Kelso 1993:4). Surprisingly most great Church founders are from Chipinge. However, the primary focus of the study is not discussing the origins of African Indigenous Church leaders but to discuss the typologies of AICs.

The second group of AICs after the Ethiopians was the Spirit-type Churches (Daneel 1987:53). Historically, these churches are related to the Zionist movements in South Africa and *en route* to Zion City of Illinois (United States of America) (Sundkler 1976:16ff). Spirit-type churches are more dissimilar and different from the missionary Christianity in the area of theology and liturgy. For Daneel (1987:54) “the prevalence of such terms as Zion, Jerusalem, Apostolic, Full Gospel, Pentecostal and the like as the designations of African Spirit-type Churches in itself indicates that most of them are strongly inclined, or at least pre-eminence to the work of the Holy Spirit.” Daneel (1987) summarised the main tenets of the Spirit-type Churches as follows:

- They are Spirit type Churches;
- They ideologically pride themselves as Amazonia who emanate from Mt Zion in Jerusalem;
- They emphasise prophecy under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit;
- They value the power of revelation, visions and dreams;
- They emphasise the authority of the Bible;
- They emphasise exorcism and healing; and
- They affirm some aspects of traditional society.

Examples of Churches which fall under Spirit-type in the Zimbabwean Chapter according to Daneel are:

- Zion Christian Church (ZCC) founded by Samuel Mutendi
- Zion Church (*Zioni reNdaza*) Zionist of the sacred cords founded by Andria
- African Apostolic Church of God founded by Paul Mwazha
- Johane Marange Apostolic Church founded by Johane Marange

However, it is important to note that the third category of AICs was later introduced by Anderson (1997). For him though the second group of AICs (the Spirit -type) is spiritual in nature, there are distinctive features that are

there between the old Spirit-type Churches of the 1910-1970s with newly Spirit-type Churches which came as the aftermath of the Zimbabwean independence (Anderson 1997:3). This is how the third categories of AICs were introduced particularly on the Zimbabwean Christian landscape.

The third group of AICs is the African Pentecostal Churches. African Pentecostal Churches are the third fastest growing phenomenon among the AICs in Zimbabwe. For Martin (2008:9) Pentecostalism represents the third great force of Christianity. Mapuranga (2013:172) as quoting Togarasei (2010:20) argues that the emergence of African Pentecostalism was largely facilitated by Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) which entered in Zimbabwe in 1915 through a South African Evangelist called Zacharius Manamela. AFM Church brought Pentecostal revivals in the country which gave birth to many African Pentecostal Churches in Zimbabwe. The oldest of these African Pentecostal Churches emerged from AFM is Assemblies of God Africa (AOGA) of Ezekiel Guti of the 1960s (Machingura 2011).

This term Pentecostal is taken from the Day of Pentecost experience of the Acts Chapter 2:1ff (Anderson 2001:18). This strand of Christianity in Africa, particularly in Zimbabwe, is characterized by its emphasis on the outpouring of the power of the Holy Spirit on its ordinary members who thereafter break through both cultural and economic limitations (Maxwell 1998:350-373). David Maxwell (1998:350-373) who studied ZAOGA FIF one of the Zimbabwean oldest Pentecostal Churches, argues that African Pentecostal Churches seek to cultivate a theology that attends to the needs of Africans. For Maxwell these African Pentecostal Churches emphasize deliverance from the spirit of poverty since Africa from time immemorial is characterized by poverty, disease and wars (Maxwell 1998:350-373).

For Duncan Pentecostalism is a globalized form of faith expression, a transnational, worldwide form of Christianity (Duncan 2014:1-11). Further Duncan argues that African Pentecostal Churches are innovative where scripture is used to speak into existential situations of believers and in response Church members believed it will act in their favor (Duncan 2014:9). More so, unlike the 'Spirit-type, spiritual-healing Churches', African Pentecostal Churches (APCs) emphasize the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This baptism is for all Church members. For Musoni (2014) all members are

baptised by the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in other languages popularly known as speaking in tongues (*glossolalia*). This is different from the Spirit type Churches which believe that the gift of the Holy Spirit is for special individuals in the Church. The study posits that African Pentecostal Churches propagated a theology of priesthood for all believers basing their theology from Acts 2 which states in part that:

... And they were ALL filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. (Acts 2:4 (KJV)).

The study observes that African Pentecostalism was increasingly becoming a force to reckon in Zimbabwe after 1980s (Anderson 2004). One thing that has been a mirage among scholars who studied this strand of Christianity in Africa is that African Pentecostalism is not static but is dynamic. Maxwell (2007) described African Pentecostal Churches as ‘transitional’ African Pentecostal Churches. For him African Pentecostal Churches are characterized by vacillation especially when it comes to political issues. Maxwell observed that the leader of one African Pentecostal Church the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa’s leader Ezekiel Guti draws towards Mugabe at one stage and moved towards the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) at another stage (Maxwell 2007). Following is a discussion on types of APCs and their Church spiritualities in Zimbabwe.

According to Ukah (2007:1), “African Pentecostalism have taken the African south of the Sahara by storm”. Kalu (2008:6) added that these Pentecostal Churches built mega-center of worship; use attractive and expensive places such as stadiums and cinemas; organize well attended crusades and revivals; own radio and television stations. Dovlo (1998:52-69) summarize the major tenets of the APCs emphasis on:

- Success (material prosperity), prosperity that comes through giving and paying of tithes;
- A life of mission (suffering for the gospel);
- Deliverance from evil spirits;
- Use of mass media;
- The Bible as the source of their theology;
- Emphasis on speaking in tongues (*glossolalia*) *Spiritometer*;
- The priesthood for all believers;



- All night prayers, praying in the name of Jesus Christ Dovlo (1998:52-69), (Musoni 2014:15).

Examples of these African Pentecostal Churches in Zimbabwe are as follows:

- Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa (ZAOGA F.I.F) by Ezekiel Guti of 1960;
- Worldwide Family of God (FOG) Church led by Andrew Wutawunashe of 1985;
- Faith World Ministries founded by Bartholomew Manjoro 1993;
- United Family International Church (UFIC) by Emmanuel Makandiwa 2008;
- Prophecy Healing and Deliverance Ministry (PHD) Walter Magaya 2012.

However, it has been noted in the study that some other scholars used the term New Religious Movements (NRMs) or New Religious Right Movements (NRRMs) to refer to African Pentecostals Churches. In the Zimbabwean setting (Mpofu 2013) in his unpublished doctoral thesis used (NRRMs) to refer to this group of Christian Churches in Zimbabwe as movements that have deviated from preaching the true gospel of Christ. Arguably, the term NRRMs or NRMs used to refer to this brand of Christianity is derogatory and raises more questions than answers. The reason for this submission is that it appears as though those scholars who use NRRMs to refer to African Pentecostal Churches follow the armchair theorists and critics of the West, who question phenomena without proper empirical appreciation of the phenomenon. For instance, the immediate question one can ask is: is the term 'Religious movement' synonymous with the term 'Christian Church' or what constitutes a Church, Christian or Religious Movement? Can the word 'Movement' used interchangeably with the word 'Church' without confusing? For Galgalo and Peter (2012:76) what makes a Church Christian is the proclamation of the gospel of Christ, His death and resurrection. Considering the theology of these Churches that are referred to as Religious Movements-a theology that is Christ centered, drawn from the Bible, scholars like Mapuranga (2013) prefers to use African Pentecostal Churches than New Religious Movements. The term New Religious Movement lost significance because of its ambiguity and lack of clarity. For George the word 'new' is so confusing because for him the so

called 'new religious movements' are certainly not new phenomena (George 2006:3). For example, a Church that has existed for over five decades cannot be still referred to as New Religious movement. Anderson (1997:4) decided to designate a new tag for this strand of Christianity particularly in Zimbabwe. Instead of being New Religious Movements Anderson termed them 'New Pentecostal Churches'. For him they are New Pentecostal Churches because they emerged after Independence in 1980 (Anderson 1997:3).

However, the only error that Anderson made at first was to assume that Churches like ZAOGA started after 1980 (Anderson 1997:4:3) which he corrected later in his 2001 publication citing that the Church started in the 1960s (Anderson 2001:179). Perhaps what confused him earlier was the initial 'Z' on Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa (ZOAGA). Maxwell adds that the Church was founded between the 1950s and 1960s by Guti and a small group of believers who were dismissed from the Apostolic Faith Mission Church (AFM) because of Guti's charisma (Maxwell 2006:13). This group joined Nicholas Bhengu of South Africa's Assemblies of God (AoG) before Guti started his Assemblies of God Africa (AOGA) in the 1960. Therefore, its name then was 'Assemblies of God Africa' (AOGA) before it was renamed after Independence to be Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa. As this Zimbabwean Pentecostal Church continued to reach out for other nations outside Zimbabwe, it was again renamed the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa Forward in Faith Church (ZAOGA FIF). This is why Maxwell referred to this Church as African Zimbabwean 'Transitional' Pentecostal Church (Maxwell 2006:13).

George and Wilkins further argued that the term New Religious Movement is misleading because all the ancient religions were once new, even mainline Christianity. However, for Turner (1987:13) the term New Religious Movements (NRMs) is a substitute of the pejorative term 'cult'. George and Wilkins (2006:3), Saliba (2003:3) defined New Religious Movements as: Any religious movement that is organizationally distinct and has doctrines and or practices that contradict those of the Scripture (Bible) as interpreted by traditional Christianity as represented by the major Catholic and Protestant denominations, and as expressed in such statements as the Apostles' Creed.

Guided by this definition the study posits that some Churches which were labeled 'New Religious Movements' need to be correctly called 'African Pentecostal Churches (APCs)' The reason for this submission is that these Churches that are typically identified as New Religious Movements or cults subscribe to the traditional Christian spiritual tenets.

There is a gross conflation between New Religious Movements (cults) and African Pentecostal Churches. These denominations that are typically identified as New Religious Movements (cults) subscribe to the traditional tenets of Christianity (George 2006:3). A case in point is ZAOGA FIF. However, for Mpofu (2013) ZAOGA FIF is New Religious Right Movement because Guti as the founder of the movement is glorified to the level of a demi-god (Mpofu 2013:63).

Further Mpofu argues that too much power in one person has led to many splits within the ZAOGA FIF movement giving birth to many ministers starting their own Churches for instance, Prophet Uebert Angel of Spirit Embassy Ministries (Mpofu 2013:64). The study posits that a misinterpretation of facts by some academic scholars resulted in the disseminating of false information to the corporate world. For example, it is a misinterpretation of fact that Uebert Angel broke away from ZAOGA FIF. Similarly, that ZAOGA FIF is a New Religious Movement because the ordinary followers of the Church revere a person as the 'son of God' in Christological stature is again empirically unproven. In fact, what can be empirically proven is that Guti teaches who he is and what his members should do. Guti taught his members that he is not Christ nor claimed to be equal to Jesus Christ but just a servant of Jesus Christ. As Guti wrote:

I never preached myself to be Jesus or pretend to be Jesus. I am a servant and Messenger of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, who died and rose for you and me. Amen. (Guti 2014:17).

In a continuous endeavor to clarify this misunderstanding, The History of ZAOGA Forward in Faith, (2014) is a book that is read to all members of the church on every Church anniversary. Therefore, to argue that ordinary followers of Guti see him as a 'son of God' with Christological stature (Mpofu 2013:64) is a theologically and doctrinally misleading statement. Therefore, apart from the few scholars who preferred to name African Pentecostal

Churches New Religious Movements, the chapter posits that the majority of scholars unanimously agree that the above mentioned categories of AICs- Ethiopian, Spirit type and African Pentecostal movements are authentically Christian Churches. Below are the criterion used to distinguish disputed AICs from undisputed AICs by previous scholars in this domain.

The study notes that though there are many different Church denominations displaying variable Spiritualities what makes them Christian are certain boundaries. For Holt (2005:13) Christianity has a very big playing field, but there are also boundaries outside which the 'game' is no longer Christian. Holt further argues that in this modern era, demarcation lines are not always as clear as they used to be in the past centuries hence there is need to critically discuss on criteria of Christian spirituality (Holt 2005:13). For him 'not every spirituality is a type of Christian Spirituality' (Holt 2005:13). Therefore, the study is necessary for the identity and integrity of undisputed AICs in an environment where everyday a new Church is being started particularly in Zimbabwe.

The study continues to argue that while religious dialogue is necessary, Christians should not lose the central spiritual Christian elements. The study posits that boundaries are set to define parameters and identities. It is reasonable to argue that Christianity like any other religion has boundaries that should be preserved to safeguard its integrity and identity. Clark (1998:38) observes that "boundaries protect what is at the heart of the matter for a community of faith, that an assault on boundaries is an assault on the heart of the matter". He adds, "Boundaries also define the shape and extent of an entity, and distinguish between what is inside and what is out" (Clark1998:44). Further, Clark gave examples of boundaries.

Some boundaries are like the Berlin Wall - fronted by land mines, topped with barbed wire, guarded by machine guns. Others serve to facilitate interaction with the environment. Other boundaries are elastic and semi-permeable, define the self and require bonding with the other, points to the reality of mutual inter-connectedness. Such communion attests that we inhabit a single context, and within that context we live deeply within one another's boundaries. The only way to in-habit is to co-habit. The fantasy of the impermeable self or religious boundaries is a snare and a delusion. With

such understanding of boundaries might encourage those willing to cross over and return, and create the conditions for peace between traditions long separated from each other? Semi-permeable boundary protects the authentic identity of an entity and generates creativity and community (Clark 1998:44).

For Smith, “boundaries define us; they define what is me and what is not me” (Smith 2011:2). Further Smith argues that “boundary shows me where I end and someone else begins, it leads me to sense of ownership”. Therefore, the study on inculturated African spiritual elements in the JMCN Church looks into what the Church has adopted from African Traditional Religion to shape their Christian spirituality in Zimbabwe.

Accordingly Clark (1998) and Smith (2011) definitions of the ‘boundaries’ can be equated to central religious spiritual elements which define the essence of a religion. For Bruce (1999:1) Christian spiritual elements are the very mystical essentials which form the line of demarcation between undisputed Church Movements and Disputed Church Movements. For him though there are many these Christian doctrines; seven doctrines are undisputable and all Christian denomination should uphold them. The study maintains the same perspective in dealing with African Indigenous Churches. Religious scholars are aware of the contestation on the criteria for distinguishing undisputed Church denominations from disputed Church denominations. The study subscribes to the seven undisputed spiritual elements according to Bruce (1999). Following are the summarised Christian tenets according to Bruce (1999):

- Salvation through Jesus Christ;
- The Bible is the inspired word of God;
- The doctrine of the Trinity, God Father, Son and Holy Spirit;
- The Doctrine of Christology;
- The Bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ;
- The Second coming of Jesus Christ to Judge the World;
- The sacraments, i.e., Eucharist and Water Baptism.

For Moodley (2008:78) one set of criteria to accurately evaluate the authenticity of Christian spirituality in a Church organization is its

Christological beliefs. Moodley summarized Peter Beyerhaus (1967)'s orthodox Christology as follows;

- Christ must be proclaimed as *Christus Victor*, the one who triumphs over evil forces (Colossians 2:15) (ASV)
- Christ must be proclaimed as the *Crucified One* who took the curse of our sins upon himself
- Christ must be proclaimed as the one who is present, still working powerfully among his people and assisting them in their needs, dangers and temptations
- And Christ must be proclaimed as the one to come who will appear at the full revelation of God's kingdom (Moodley, 2008:79).

The chapter argues that the emphasis on the person and work of Christ by the above discussed AICs Ethiopian, Spirit-Type, and Pentecostal Charismatics particularly in Zimbabwe is an important criterion in concluding that these AICs are undisputed Christian Churches. The study posits that there is plethora of other AICs whose theology and spirituality is questionable. It is against this locale that chapter three of the study discussed the theology and spirituality of the disputed AICs in Zimbabwe. The chapter will start by looking at other disputed AICs outside Zimbabwe then moves on to discuss the ones in Zimbabwe.

This chapter has posited that there are two phases of the Christianisation of Zimbabwe. The first phase was European 'missionaries' enterprise (1561 to 1900). The second phase is the African Christian's initiative (about 1910 to present). The study observes that while the initiative of evangelisation of the Christian gospel shifted from European Missionaries to African Christians, the centrality of Christian spirituality continued to be noticeable i.e. they continued to proclaim *Christus victor* (Amanze 2002:34), using the Bible as the source of their theology, preaching and waiting for the second coming of Jesus Christ to judge the world, and they continue to fellowship in the Pascal mystery of Jesus. It is to these results the groups of AICs discussed in the chapter are designated as undisputed AICs in Zimbabwe. However, the purpose of the study is to discover the authenticity of JMCN Church spirituality. We have noted that the JMCN Church was not listed among the undisputed AICs hence a need to selected other groups of AICs in Zimbabwe.

This selection of other AICs is done to ascertain the place of Jesus Christ, His mediatorship role, His death and resurrection, His second coming and primarily the place of the Bible for their Theology and spirituality.