

CENTRE OF AFRICAN STUDIES.

THE MALAWI DIASPORA AND ELEMENTS OF CLEMENTS KADALIE

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The Central Africa Historical Association

Local Series 24

C.A.S.  
Cen. Box 2

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Three years ago a distinguished Africanist spoke at an international history conference on "The African Abroad or The African Diaspora". On that occasion, Professor George Shepperson described the two concentric circles of dispersion, the outer and the inner, and discussed the former: the forcible and tragic movement of persons of African origin chiefly into the slave-holding complexes of the Western Hemisphere, resulting in the settlement there, according to one authority,(1) of over forty-one million people. In our own part of Africa an internal movement started much later, almost when the western slave movement had ended, involved fewer persons, was less revolutionary in its traumatic effects but nonetheless held a commanding influence over regional affairs at individual and institutional levels. When Malawi became the first state in Central Africa to gain full independence on 6th July, 1964, the occasion marked a historical succession to a long line of historical firsts.

What was it that sustained the line and fed the movement of dispersion or diaspora? We see a host of factors which include the geography of movement and settlement; the stimulus of the book and the cross; the parsimonious policy of Government departments; the vigorous individuality and assertiveness of a section of the country, and the examples of success.

Geographically, the lake region was the meeting place in the nineteenth century of incursive elements, some friendly, others not. Two centuries earlier the extended settlement of the Maravi peoples under the Karonga had already begun to divide itself into separate units, one under the Karonga in the western lake region headquarters and the other under Undi in the Kapoche River area further westwards. The lack of control over the trade routes seems to be the root cause of the decline of central authority.(2)

The important point in this situation for the future movement of peoples away from the regions of original and related settlements is that the path was cleared for the dynamics of the Tonga, a later composition from an amalgam of peoples from Tumbuka, Maravi and east lakeshore elements,(3) and for the entry of the Ngoni and the Yao, invading groups from opposite directions. These three groups, more

than others, played a significant role in the Malawi diaspora. As a starting point, therefore, geography and settlement must be considered a causative factor in the coming dispersion.

The book and the cross were two sides of the missionary programme of education and evangelisation set in motion in 1875. Add to this the type of education offered, particularly in the Scottish Missions with their emphasis on vocational training, and the rapid growth in the number of schools, pupils, pastors, artisans and teachers, especially in the Northern region, which had extremely limited employment opportunities, and one sees clearly the most important reservoir of labour in Central Africa before the twentieth century. Already in 1886 a labour force of twenty-five Tonga had set out for Blantyre as porters for the African Lakes Corporation; eight years later the number had increased to 1,400. In addition, about 4,000 Tonga were in the employ of planters in the Shire Highlands. (4) In 1893 an internal dispersion of another kind was taking place: Harry Kambwiri Matecheta, later to become first ordained Minister of Blantyre Mission, was posted from Blantyre to Angoniland and John Gray Kufa was posted to the Kongoni mouth region of Mozambique as teacher-evangelists. (5) Statistics tell the story of a phenomenal expansion, given the situation preceding it. (6) What is remarkable about this is that by 1897 there were almost ten times as many pupils in schools run by the Livingstonia Mission and six times as many teachers in comparison with schools run by the Blantyre Mission. This pointed inevitably to the disproportionate number of northerners trained in skills which were in short supply in Central Africa. And within the northern structure Tongaland stood out in spite of harassment at the hands of the invading Ngoni. From the time of the setting up of the first missionary post there in 1878 onwards, this area took a keen interest in education and far outstripped anything approaching it in Central Africa. The Tonga were ready and willing for paid employment within the country, and outside. (7) They certainly qualify for the label of vigorous individuality and assertiveness. Harry Johnston saw this quality at an early stage: "There is a race of singular usefulness to the European settlers which should not pass without mention; the country it occupies does not appear as a very large area on the map; I mean the Atonga ... By the judicious payment of a small tribute to the Angoni Chief and friendly remonstrances the missionaries, to a great extent, stayed the advance of the Angoni to the lake shore, and thus safeguarded the existence of the Tonga ... In return for this, the Atonga have peculiarly identified themselves with the white men's interests. They come to the extent of 1,000 to 2,000 ... to work in the Shire Highlands, and they are to be found constituting the bulk of the porters and irregular police at all the European stations between Nyasa and Tanganyika." (8)

One outstanding Tonga was Ernest Alexander Muwanba who was born at Chifira Village in Nkhata Bay district in 1892. His career is

indicative of the vigorous role of erstwhile Malawians abroad. The son of the first African licentiate of Livingstonia Mission, Muwamba started his career as a teacher in Nkhata Bay in 1907. Six years later he resigned and left for Northern Rhodesia where he obtained employment at the Bwana Mkubwa mine. He entered government service in that country in 1914 as a clerk and interpreter in Ndola and later at Broken Hill, Mkushi, Lusaka and Serenje. During the war of 1939-1945 he acted on two occasions as District Commissioner at Serenje, the first African civil servant in Northern Rhodesia to serve in this capacity.(9) Together with Thom Manda, a fellow countryman from Nkhata Bay, Muwamba became the first African civil servant in Northern Rhodesia to be appointed member of the African Education Advisory Board. In 1930 Muwamba founded the Ndola Native Welfare Association and remained its chairman for many years. About the Association, he writes: "This Association was formed in order to promote the welfare of Africans. One of the results it achieved at Ndola was the establishment of the Railway halt on the Ndola-Luanshya line. This is named after my name "Muwamba Halt".(10) After thirty years of meritorious service in Northern Rhodesia, Alexander Muwamba, the recipient of multiple honours in that country, returned home to Nyasaland in 1944 and held in this country every conceivable important post open to Africans, including membership of the district council, Provincial Council, Protectorate Council, and, in 1949, together with Ellerton Mposa, he was the first African to sit on the Legislative Council in this country. He brought to bear in these council chambers the vastness and variety of his experiences abroad.(11)

Muwamba's is by no means an isolated case. In the appropriate place we shall discuss the roles outside Nyasaland of his district fellows like Elliot Kenan Kamwana and Clements Kadalie. A not insignificant fact of Muwamba's life is that he acted as Chief Chiweya from 1944 to 1953. This points to the place of leadership in Tonga society. Every Tonga freeman considers himself a potential chief; any one freeman is as good as any other. In Tonga society a man with a title must have personal influence and proven qualities of leadership to back his title if he is to earn respect and following.(12) The strictures in Tonga society, together with mission influence, played no small part in the development of individuality and assertiveness. Part of this development is attributable to mission education. In looking at missionary evangelical influence as a causative factor in the Malawi diaspora we are confronted largely with a negative reaction: with a plan gone wrong, though due allowance must be made for the refining and often intangible influences of religion on peoples' lives, such as was evident in Muwamba's opening his Welfare Association meetings with a prayer and Biblical injunction calling for righteous action, and for the enterprise of a man like Rev. Hanock Msokera Phiri, educated at Livingstonia Mission, who, after a few years in South Africa, returned to Kasungu to start the African Methodist Episcopal Church and school in 1924, spreading later into Northern Rhodesia. When we

look at evangelisation and the diaspora we see at once the rise of the Watchtower Movement in Nyasaland, the "Mwana Lesa" Movement in Northern Rhodesia, the African National Church in Northern Nyasaland and the Watchman Healing Mission of Tongaland. The tendency today is in the direction of labelling breakaway church movements with a Christian base as independent churches and to look at them further to see whether they came into being through secession, through the work of a prophet or because of theological differences.(13)

One of the foremost influences in Nyasaland in the promotion of African discontent and disenchantment against the existing order of church and state was, paradoxically, a missionary who came to the country in 1892. Joseph Booth started the Zambezi Industrial Mission at Michiru and subsequently became somewhat of a freelance crusader involved at various times in the foundation and work of about eight different missions. His base of operations shifted relentlessly from area to area in Central and South Africa, depending on the political climate, which he often succeeded in stirring against himself. His programme of activities was an extremely tight one: in 1896 he took with him to Natal a Yao, Gordon Mathaka, in order to introduce him to the Zulus from whom he was to ascertain whether the white man was a cannibal or not. The Zulu reaction to the white man at a time of diminishing powers following the defeat suffered in the war of 1879 was not the complimentary view helpful to Booth. Nonetheless, Booth used his stay in Natal to form the African Christian Union whose final objective was "to pursue steadily and unswervingly the policy Africa for the Africans and look for and hasten by prayer and united effort the forming of the African Christian Nation by God's power and in his own time and way." There were twenty other aims of a similarly radical nature.(14) The foremost Boothian plan of the nineteenth century was a petition which he organized on behalf of chiefs and headmen and others resident in British Central Africa in 1899 in which he posited five pressing points calling for the hut tax to be used for African education alone; for a guarantee that the British Government would never give up the Protectorate except to an African Government; that a superior education be offered free to no less than five per cent of eligible African scholars; that the Protectorate pass under African control in not more than twenty-one years' time; that exemption be granted to Africans from taking up arms locally or elsewhere.(15) The editorial of the newspaper which carried the petition pointed out "the danger of irresponsible people like Mr. Booth being allowed to foist such things upon the natives. The natives here are not Christian, not one in a hundred pretends to be..." The Protectorate officials in Zomba took serious note of the petition; so did the Zambezi Industrial Mission, the employers of Booth. Temporarily, Booth found himself without a job.(16) By the end of the year, after having stirred up mischief in the West Shire District and having skipped the country for Portuguese territory(17) to escape deportation, a superficially contrite Booth, supported by his new employers, the Sabbath Evangelising and Industrial Association of New Jersey, U.S.A., offered terms to keep the peace in the Protectorate.(18)

Joseph Booth did not keep the peace, but enough has been said to present the man and his motives. We need only to consider his influence on Elliott Kenan Kamwana, the founder of the Watchtower Movement in Nyasaland, to see the external influences impinging upon local society, in other words, the diaspora in reverse. Kamwana was a Tonga who started school at Bandawe and ended at Livingstonia Mission in 1901 after having passed Standard III.(19) Two earlier versions say that he left school because of the introduction of school fees or because of ill-health.(19a) His Tonga biographer and protege, however, notes in a work which has just come to light that Kamwana left Livingstonia because of deep frustration. "During each lesson in class at Khondowe, European teachers made provision for questions from their pupils. Masokwa(20) was fond of asking such questions as:- 'What was the main purpose of the birth or coming of Jesus?' 'What type of baptism does Jesus refer to?' 'What is righteousness?'" Kamwana was so persistent that he not only infuriated his teachers but also offended his classmates, of whom he was in fact the youngest. To them he appeared as an upstart and a fledgling, but he resolved the position for everyone, including himself, by leaving both school and country.(21)

Kamwana's first job in Rhodesia was that of a medical aid at a hospital. It was here that he learned of the Watch Tower Church in South Africa.(22) He joined the Church in 1903 in Capetown, was impressed by the answers given him on the nagging questions he had been asking at Livingstonia, gained a postal introduction to Pastor Russell of Watch Tower headquarters in the United States and enrolled as a student for the correspondence course offered by U.S. headquarters. All this happened within two years of his leaving Livingstonia. After a rift with Booth in the same year, Kamwana was baptized by the Negro pastor, Branch, in December 1903. He was ordained as a pastor in 1906 and was asked to return to Nyasaland to establish the Watch Tower Movement in the country. He began his teachings in the southern region, in the populous area between Cholo and Chiradzulu. He taught his followers that true baptism required the immersion of people in water; that the dead do not go to heaven but lie buried in their graves on earth; that his followers should seek first the Kingdom of Heaven.(23) Ten years later the Nyasaland Governor summarized the Kamwana religious manifesto as one calling for the end of taxation; the disappearance of British rule, the final Advent in October 1914, and the formation of an African state.(24)

The detailed story of Kamwana's three local arrests, deportation and detention at Mauritius and the Seychelles, his return home on 16 October 1937, and his founding of the Watchman Healing Mission at Msuli, with congregations in all regions of Nyasaland as well as in South Africa and East Africa, carried through till the time of his death on 31 July 1956, must form the subject of a subsequent study. Even at this cursory glance at Kamwanaism in Nyasaland the missionary influence of the radical Booth runs through and through. Through tragedy and desperation, through loneliness and frustration, the questioning spirit

of Kamwana which was dulled at Livingstonia but re-awakened by Joseph Booth, stirred actively at Seychelles. With his wife mortally ill in the island hospital, a fortnight removed from death, Kamwana could still make the following entry in his personal diary: "The steamer of May 24th, 1932 brought 7 volumes of Watch Tower Reprint from America. Cost £1.6.0. These found my wife in Hospital, who heard about them, but never saw them, and was glad."(25)

In the context of the Malawi diaspora, Kamwanaism must be seen as part of a pervading and expansive influence with ramifications in South Africa, Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland and the Mozambique and contiguous areas. Professor Ranger has already referred to the possible links: "...South African independency was present from the effective beginning of the story of Christianity in Southern Rhodesia. Moreover the beginning of the mining industry there and the consequent influx of Nyasa labourers and clerks brought the ideas of Northern independency into Southern Rhodesia at a very early date..."(26) Detailed studies have yet to be undertaken on many aspects of general influence. Here we need to recall possible links between Kamwanaism and similar movements set in train by Kamwana's countrymen: it was in 1917 that the Watch Tower movement came to notice in Southern Rhodesia. By then Kamwana was already at Mauritius, beginning his twenty-year exile from Nyasaland.(27) The movement was at the beginning largely a Nyasa concern. In 1923 a membership count along the Salisbury-Bulawayo road showed that all but two of the 173 members were Nyasas. The Native Commissioner in Mazoe reported in that year that the root cause was "the spread of education of a fairly high standard in Nyasaland leading to a desire for control by their own people in religious matters."(28) The movement continued to grow under Nyasa influence even to the point of reference to Nyasa heroes (one of whom was dead, the other in exile but of whose existence at Seychelles there would have been hardly any knowledge). Reports had it that John Chilembwe and Elliott Kenan Kamwana would "rise out of the water and come to the people in the 'Mbudzi' moon. They will give the people a potent to drink from a cup. This will send the recipient to sleep for seven days. When they awaken they will be white and have amassed wealth. They will not need to work."(29) VXX

Another Nyasa who spread, this time in Northern Rhodesia, the new faith and the new expectation was Tomo Nyirenda, a Henga from Northern Nyasaland and a Livingstonia product. Grounded in Watchtowerism, Nyirenda took it to the extreme of claiming for those who were baptised that they would never die; that those who "floated" were not possessed but that those who "submerged" were bewitched and therefore if killed it was only the "witch" who was killed. Nyirenda assumed for himself the title of "Mwana Lesa" ("Son of God"). The sequel to Nyirenda's work was that he was sentenced to death after a trial in the High Court in which Mr. Alexander Muwamba, a fellow countryman, was appointed interpreter.(30)

MWANA LESA Church

And so the story of the Malawian involvement abroad grows into a picture of many-sided hues but leaves withal the image of a vigorous participation in local affairs, mostly at the level of educated leadership as clerks, civil servants, teachers, religious leaders and even small-time politicians, for the era of the political kingdom had not yet dawned.

We have mentioned so far three factors promoting the Malawi diaspora: that of movement and settlement; that of the stimulus of the book and the cross; and that of vigorous individuality and assertiveness. We need now to look briefly at the parsimonious policy of Government departments and the examples of success.

It is now an established fact that the British Government was reluctant to get involved in the administration of Nyasaland; that if Rhodes' company had not stepped in to provide financial backing things might have been different. In effect, the British South Africa Company voted £17,500 a year for five years to meet the costs of administration. Harry Johnston, the first British Consul and Commissioner found himself faced with two masters, the reluctant one advocating a policy of conservatism; the covetous one pushing forward a policy of economic stranglehold. Johnston did not relish his position, as we note in a confidential minute:

"In this world you get nothing for nothing... Well, you have only the Treasury to thank for the awkwardness of the situation. Had not this odious, short-sighted, soulless miser in 1890-91 refused absolutely to entertain the idea of a subsidy to start the new Protectorate, you would not have had to appeal, as a last chance of saving the country for Great Britain, to the generosity of a Chartered Company."(30a)

Given the parsimonious policy, which continued even when subsidies from the chartered company were discontinued as from 18 January 1896, first the Foreign Office and later the Colonial Office failed to put into Nyasaland any schemes for economic development through which the taxes which were introduced in 1891 could be met without hardship to the taxpayer for whom the institutions of a money economy and of tax paying were alien. The hut tax of 1891, first introduced in Southern Nyasaland, was fixed at six shillings. The missionaries and planters protested that it was too high and it was reduced to three shillings. A few years later a "labour tax" was introduced. This provided for the lower rate to be paid only by those who could produce a certificate signed by an employer to the effect that the labourer had worked for a European for at least one month.(31) At about the same time as the introduction of the "labour tax" the Nyasaland Government was authorized by the Foreign Office to permit the recruitment of a trial batch of 1,000 labourers for employment by the Witwatersrand Native



WNLA

1st batch

no! unless talking about Southern Africa only! S.T. took out more, though into obscurity!

Labour Association

The first batch of labourers left Nyasaland on 10 June 1903. For the purposes of our present study we need to look at the effects of this dispersion of peoples, which represented the biggest stream numerically of the Malawi diaspora. For example, for the period 1901-1919 the official figure given for labourers recruited in British Central Africa is 12,295.(32) Yet the Transvaal Chamber of Mines produce the figure of 9,556 for the period 1910-1914 alone. Whatever the reliability of statistics of labour - and this has been questioned before - the fact remains that a very large number of able-bodied men left Nyasaland to work in various neighbouring areas. Did they leave because they wished to on the basis of pure volition or, as has been suggested, because migration was a way of life of the people? One writer has asserted that "Migration was nothing new to the Bantu of Central Africa."(33) To claim that because one's forefather had travelled a long way and one's father had had to be on the move because of the hazards of the slave trade one inherited the mantle of migration is to put the world into disarray. A second writer has held the opposite view, saying that the African in general was under "the spell of Kwatha" - a spell which made him reluctant to leave his home.(34) Krishnamurthy, following van Velsen, excludes the Tonga from the second view.(34a) In addition, it is argued for the Tonga that home is where his settlement is and that labour migration is but a necessary interlude to a continuing allegiance to the tribal society.(35) While this last view on a people who represent the most remarkable single group in the context of the Malawi diaspora has much to commend it, one recent view introduces a new variant in the previously held general assumptions. In his "Memoirs" Alexander Muwamba writes: "During my period as an acting Chief I visited my subjects including other Tongas, in Northern Rhodesia, the Congo, Southern Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa. I went to find out the conditions under which they were working, more especially in the mines... I found Compound Managers co-operative. I reminded the Atonga about their homes and their parents and families, as a result those who neglected or seemed to have deserted their families appreciated my visit and started sending their support home and even returned home on holiday."

Some did out of volition

X.B.

Whatever the view on causes of labour migration the fundamental factor of changing and challenging economics cannot be gainsaid. Tom Soper gives a useful summary: "The African labourer wanted it because he was at heart a peasant whose home was the rural area. It is understandable that he returned to his home as soon as he could. But having returned there he went back again into wage employment either because the deficiency in his tribal economy that moved him originally appeared again, or because the new experience of wage earning was enticing... Further, by contact with economically more sophisticated peoples his wants had been enlarged, and this in turn made the products of his traditional rural economy seem that much more inadequate..."(36)

XX

This is an aspect of the diaspora which is not unimportant. When the negative effects are considered, and there are many, (37)

remittances

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positive aspects become clearer: for example, in 1937 alone, £48,100 was remitted via the post offices to the Northern Provinces of Nyasaland, of which amount £11,800 went to the Tonga of the West Nyasa area. (38) The monetary value of the importation of soft goods into Nyasaland increased from £61,192 in 1909-1910 to £122,127 in 1910-1911 - an increase of over one hundred per cent within the space of a single year. (39)

Whether one speaks of race-relations, of culture contacts, of economic development, of social mobility, of political, social and occupational sophistication, one sees generally in the men who return home from a spell of work outside, however short, the stamp of progress. One writer has put it in these words: "Whatever its defects, the migratory system did have one advantage: most of the men who left to work in remote centres of employment also came back, in many instances as agents of progress. Had their departure been permanent the rural economy might well have collapsed." (40) It is on the note of the agency of progress that I wish now to examine the examples of success as the final causative factor of the diaspora in this study. Of necessity, my examples will be used to show tendencies rather than to examine details. The first stirring example is that of John Chilembwe who returned home in 1900 to start the Providence Industrial Mission at Chiradzulu after about three years of higher studies in the United States. Famous today because of his ill-fated but courageous Rising of 1915, Chilembwe's other efforts have consequently faded into obscurity. His efforts at economic and social change: for example, the formation of the African Industrial Society, his efforts at running his own commercial business, his association with a remarkably successful businessman in Blantyre, a Malawian by the name of Mlelemba who paraded under European names and wished to be known as a negro from outside; his attempts at introducing a social revolution in the role of women in society; his championship of the cause of his countrymen in the battlefields of Africa and abroad, all of these or any number of them would normally have sufficed to show that Chilembwe had returned home as an agent of progress. The man who assumed Chilembwe's mantle when the Providence Industrial Mission re-opened in 1926, Daniel Malekebu, had himself followed in Chilembwe's footsteps to the United States in 1906 and returned with medical and theological degrees. He married his Congo-born wife at Spellman College, Atlanta, Georgia, and together they returned to continue with the work which the Rising of 1915 had cut short. Dr. Daniel Sharpe Malekebu once wrote - and his words re-echo the soundings of continuing progress: "As a minister of the Gospel, I was alone from 1926 to 1938, preaching and baptizing many people as many as 150 to 300 per day. At the end of 1938, I had baptized 17,000 souls. Our work extends all over Nyasaland going up to Tanganyika Territory into Northern Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia, Union of South Africa and Portuguese East Africa. Embracing many, many tribes of East, Central and South Africa into one big Christian family." (41)

In 1967 Dr. Malekebu returned to the United States to receive the highest award of his alma mater, the "President's Award" of Meharry College, Nashville, Tennessee, for fifty years of meritorious service to humanity. Numerous other awards were given him on the occasion, including a special letter of commendation from the White House.(42)

Perhaps not as internationally renowned as Dr. Malekebu is a Tumbuka who claims to have been about sixteen years old when Robert Laws came to the land of the lake in 1875. Kamkati Mkandawire started school at the Overtoun Institution, Livingstonia, in 1896; reached standard six; learnt printing and worked for the Blantyre Publishing Company in 1904. In that year the call from outside drew Mkandawire to the Belgian Congo where he remained off and on till 1917. Since then he has lived at what has been known till recently as Florence Bay, lying at the foot of the winding way leading to his alma mater. It was in this setting that Mkandawire and Robert Sambo jointly started the African National Church in 1928 as one manifestation of the growing discontent felt about the place and values of a European-controlled institution.(43)

Mkandawire spent thirteen years outside his country; Robert Sambo perhaps half that number. The one returned because of illness; the other because he was deported from Southern Rhodesia in 1927 as a result of his activities on behalf of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union. Both brought back from their travels sufficient experience and preparation to launch themselves into an independent church movement at home.

If up till now the emphasis seems to indicate a lack of political dynamism at home and away, within the framework of the diaspora, it is not because of the total absence of it. On the contrary, one of the founders of the first political association in Nyasaland, the North Nyasa Native Association, Simeon Mhango, worked for some time in South Africa prior to its formation.(44) Then there is the example of Nophas Dinneck Kwenje who, after thirty years in Southern Rhodesia where he had a remarkably varied occupational career: teacher, driver, photographer, watchmaker, postal clerk, detective-constable, editor of the Bantu Mirror at Bulawayo, then Works Manager and business manager of the newspaper - a variety which cannot fail to impress - came to Nyasaland on leave to contest the first elections under the new constitution which had come into operation in 1956, setting up the Legislative Council of that year, and won.(45)

The examples of Mhango and Kwenje have been selected to show historically how politically conscious the Nyasa could be. The outstanding example, in the story of the Malawi diaspora, of the first President of the independent state of Malawi would be a fitting finale to the remarkable episode of a movement of people from Malawi into various states both near and distant, carrying with it a vigorous contribution and bringing back from it as agents of progress

an equally vigorous experience. But we must postpone this pleasure for another occasion and take up for the present selections from the life and work of Clements Kadalie, a Tonga, grandson of Chief Chiweyu of Chifira Village, Nkhata Bay.

Like the young Kamuzu Banda, <sup>Kadalie</sup> Kadalie left his country for Southern Rhodesia and South Africa in 1915, but unlike the former who returned in 1958, Kadalie died in South Africa on 28 November 1951. (46)

In the course of some thirty-five years in Southern Rhodesia and South Africa, Kadalie, the man with a standard six education from Livingstonia, stirred the political and industrial climate in South Africa in a way no non-white had succeeded in doing since M.K. Gandhi left South Africa in 1914. (47) It is no wonder, then, that in his Foreword to the Kadalie memoirs, Will Stuart, M.P. wrote in January 1950: "Here is the story of a man who frightened South Africa's fanatical liberals from 1919 to 1930. Read what he did and why. He is actually stabilizing as a gyroscope, using an economic gale to reach a higher level and a wider calm for his people. I know or have known every African leader in the Cape Province since 1904. Clements Kadalie was and is a phenomenon..."

His first achievement was the formation of the Industrial and Commercial Union, with the aid of a European named A.F. Batty, on 17 January 1919. About two years' earlier, in mid-1917, a group of white anti-war socialists had helped a number of African workers to form the Industrial Workers of Africa, but this union failed to organize the growing agitation among Africans on the Witwatersrand in 1918 against rising costs. (48) Therefore non-white labourers looked keenly at the progress of the first strike action called by Kadalie's union exactly a year since it was formed, protesting at the export of foodstuffs. The dock workers strike lasted three weeks, at the end of which some slight wage increases were introduced. (49) Kadalie's qualities of leadership were on trial during this first attempt at organizing trade union activities. On 20 July 1920, the first national conference of non-white trade unions met with the object of setting up a truly national body. The national body was formed and called the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union of Africa (I.C.W.U.) but Kadalie failed to be elected to an official post. Kadalie was left with his Cape Town union until late 1921 when he was elected to the office of General Secretary of the national body, the I.C.W.U. (50), which during Kadalie's period of leadership came to be known as the I.C.U. Within the next few years its organization spread to Durban and Johannesburg, and it even commenced the publication of its own newspaper, The Workers' Herald, in 1923.

Since his election to the leadership of the I.C.U. Kadalie became a public figure of exceptional importance. Even before fame reached him, he was already deemed dangerous and was served with a

deportation order on 24 November 1920. A little over a month later the order was withdrawn after Kadalie had arranged for a brilliant legal team to make representations to the Immigration Board. Kadalie himself attributed his success to political pressure (the country was approaching the General Elections of 1921), and his earlier association with Scottish missionaries in Nyasaland (the Minister of Interior at the time was Sir Patrick Duncan, a Scotsman).(51)

In 1924 Kadalie became involved in White politics over the issue of which party to support in the coming General Elections. There was at this time a small number of non-white votes in the Cape which could be crucial in marginal constituencies. The African National Congress supported the ruling party led by General Smuts. The I.C.U. spokesman, Clements Kadalie, supported the opposition led by General Hertzog, and carried the day. He called this "his first major political victory".(52) Little was he to know at the time that this was to develop into a first class political row. It started with an invitation to Kadalie to meet General Hertzog from whom he had received, three years earlier, a letter together with a donation of one guinea towards the Bulhoek Tragedy Fund.(53) On that occasion General Hertzog had written: "It is for us by our common endeavours to make this country that we both love so much, great and good. In order to do that we must not only ourselves be good and great, but we must also see that there is established between the white and black Africander that faith in and sympathy with one another which is so essential for the prosperity of a nation."(54)

The meeting took place in Bloemfontein, and Kadalie reported favourably on it. He was himself a parliamentary voter in the Cape Province and took an active part in the election campaign. The Nationalist-Labour Pact party led by General Hertzog won the election. Kadalie had for the present backed the right horse. In 1936, when Hertzog introduced his Native Bills, one of his fiercest critics was Clements Kadalie. For the moment Kadalie had made his mark. The Johannesburg Sunday Times of September 1924 referred to him as the "well-dressed Nyasaland Native ... who has also adopted the plan of prefacing his address with an apology for speaking in English.... Kadalie is an astute speaker. He never transgresses the laws regarding public speaking, and is never inflammatory in a sense that would bring him within the law..." The article referred to him as having been educated in America.(55)

But on 12 January 1925, Kadalie delivered a major speech in Bloemfontein in which he outdid the attributes singled out by the Sunday Times. In an open attack on the Chamber of Mines, the European churches and on Parliament, he declared: "I would not trust an Englishman, even if he and I were found in Hell together..." He called, too, for a strong protest so that even "Parliament must tremble".(56)

And whether tremble or not, the press, the Chamber of Mines, the European churches and Parliament noted the Kadalie attack. Kadalie

refers to this incident in his memoirs as follows: "For a long time the 1925 session of Parliament was devoted to discussing Kadalie's presence in South Africa, when charges and counter-charges were hurled at each other by the Government and the Opposition members. The Government was pressed for my deportation while newspaper men came to interview me in Johannesburg in this connection. I was elevated to the status of a 'hero' of the land as the publicity given me in the daily press equalled that accorded to the Prime Minister himself. It was during this time that the Hertzog-Kadalie letter was made public... It is not out of place here to characterise the 1925 session of Parliament as the 'Kadalie Session' or, in other words, 'the I.C.U. Session'."(56a)

Kadalie's claims are not exaggerated. The Hansard of the House of Assembly contain many references in 1925 to the Kadalie affair. One speaker said: "I cannot too much emphasize the seriousness of the logical outcome of what Kadalie's actions portend. There can be only one end to this sort of thing, where a native goes on in the way in which this man is behaving... This troublesome individual claims almost to have some political connection with the Pact..."(57)

In six years Kadalie's name had become legion in South Africa. There was more to follow. The trail in South Africa and abroad was long and challenging. He made an impact with everything he undertook: wage negotiations; national negotiations; immigration regulations; opposition as well as support for government measures; expansion of trade unionism in South Africa and a visit to Britain and the continent of Europe for support and publicity. In an excellent address on "The Aims and Objects of the I.C.U.", given shortly after his return from his first trip abroad, Kadalie said that "...it seems to me that my life can be more usefully employed in endeavouring to improve the lot of my fellow creatures here than bothering about a chimerical life up above, about which there is no certainty and of which you and I really know nothing."(58)

The literature on the life and work of Kadalie in South Africa from 1919 to 1951 is now becoming more readily available. Soon his Memoirs will be published, in fact advance notice has already appeared of this. The issues of The Workers' Herald for the five years it was in circulation, if they can be more easily available, will throw additional light on the vigour, the courage, and the undoubtedly talented approach to South African problems displayed by the Tonga from Chifira Village. For our purposes, Kadalie very adequately personifies all that the Malawi Diaspora ever stood for.(59)

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### FOOTNOTES

1. Frank Tannenbaum, Slave and Citizen (New York, 1963), p.14, cited in the article f.n. 1.
2. J. Bruwer, "Note on Maravi Origin and Migration", African Studies, Vol.9, No.1, 1950; E.A.Alpers, "The Malawi Empire and the Yao: Aspects of trade as a factor in the history of East Central Africa", Mimeo.
3. J. van Velsen, "Notes on the History of the Lakeside Tonga of Nyasaland", African Studies, Vol.XVIII, No.3, 1959.
4. K.J.McCracken, "Livingstonia as an Industrial Mission, 1875-1900. A study of commerce and Christianity in Nyasaland", p.88. Mimeo.
5. Life and Work in British Central Africa, September 1893.
6. Over a ten-year period, 1896-1905, the number of teachers in schools run by the Blantyre Mission increased from 51 to 165; the number of pupils from 1,350 to 5,395. Ibid., January-February, 1907. In February 1897 there were 345 teachers in schools run by the Livingstonia Mission and 11,510 pupils in attendance. Aurora, No.1, Vol.1, April 1, 1897.
7. K.J.McCracken, "Livingstonia as an industrial mission, 1875-1900. A study of commerce and Christianity in Nyasaland", p.88, Mimeo; B.Pachai, "In the Wake of Livingstone and the British Administration", Malawi Journal, Vol.XX, No.2, July 1967.
8. Report by Commissioner Johnston of the First Three Years' Administration of the Eastern Portion of British Central Africa, Africa, No.6 (1894), 31 March 1894, p.24.
9. Unpublished Memoirs of A.E. Muwamba, privately held.
10. Ibid.
11. See, for example, his resolution in the opening session of the African Provincial Council, Northern Province, calling for fees derived from issue of licences to Africans in the rural areas to be paid into Native Treasury funds as in Northern Rhodesia. Record of Meeting, p.8.
12. J. van Velsen, "The Establishment of the Administration in Tongaland", Historians in Tropical Africa, Proceedings of Leverhulme Inter-Collegiate History Conference, 1960, p.178.
13. See for example, H.W. Turner, "A Typology for African Religious Movements", Journal of Religion in Africa, Vol.1, 1967, pp.16-22.
14. Edward Roux, Time Longer Than Rope. A History of the Black Man's Struggle for Freedom in South Africa. The University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, (1964), pp.84-5.
15. Central African Times, 5 August 1899. Colindale Newspaper Library of the British Museum.
16. Alfred Sharpe to Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 5 August 1899, F.O. 2/209.
17. Ibid., 5 September 1899, F.O. 2/210.
18. Foreign Office to Alfred Sharpe, 30 November 1899, F.O. 2/207.
19. The Aurora, June 1, 1901.
- 19a. K.J.McCracken, "Livingstonia Mission and the Origins of the Watch Tower Movement in Central Africa", Mimeo, p.8; George Shepperson, "The Politics of African Church Separatist Movements in British Central Africa", Africa, Vol.24, 1954, pp.233-246.

20. The full name according to the biographer was Elliott Kenani Kamwana Masokwa Chirwa.
21. Rabbi Bayard Muukhwakwata, Elliott Kenani Kamwana Masokwa Chirwa. Founder of the Watchman Healing Mission. Translation of the original by J.X.T. Muwamba, Cited hereafter as Biography, unpublished manuscript.
22. Personal communication: Mr. Alexander Muwamba.
23. Muukhwakwata, Biography.
24. K.J.McCracken, "Livingstonia Mission and origins of the Watch Tower movement in Central Africa", p.1.
25. Kamwana Diary, Unpublished.
26. T.O. Ranger, "The Early History of Independency in Southern Rhodesia" in M.W. Watt (ed.) Religion in Africa. University of Edinburgh (1964), pp.53-54.
27. Two entries in Kamwana's Diary are illuminating: "On 27th January, 1917 we arrived at Port Louis, Mauritius, but we were not landed. On 29th January 1917, we were sent to Flat Island, 22 miles from Port Louis. The Government promised to detain us in deportation until the end of the world's war." And another entry: "We arrived Flat Island on 29th January, 1917, and we remained there till 1st October, 1919, we were transferred to Seychelles."
28. T.O. Ranger, op.cit., p.70.
29. Ibid., p.72.
30. Memoirs of A.E.Muwamba.
- 30a. Harry Johnston to Anderson, 20 June 1896, F.O. 403/185.
31. F.E. Sanderson, "The Development of Labour Migration from Nyasaland, 1891-1914", Journal of African History, II, 2 (1961), p.261. See also Sanderson, F.E. "Nyasaland Migrant Labour in British Central Africa 1890-1939", M.A. thesis, Univ. of London; B.S.Krishnamurthy, "Land and Labour in Nyasaland 1891-1914", Ph.D. thesis, University of London (1964). 11/xv
32. Witwatersrand Native Labour Association Report. Natives Received During the Years 1901 to 1940.
33. F.E.Sanderson, "The Development of Labour Migration from Nyasaland, 1891-1914", p.259.
34. Alexander Hetherwick in Life and Work in British Central Africa, Nov.-Dec., 1909.
- 34a. Krishnamurthy, B.S., "Land and Labour in Nyasaland, 1891-1914", pp.239-240.
35. Van Velsen, J. "Labour Migration as a Positive Factor in the continuity of Tonga Tribal Society", Economic Development and Cultural Change, VIII, 3, (1960) pp.265-278.
36. Tom Soper, "Labour Migration in Africa", Journal of African Administration, Vol.XI, No.2, April 1959, p.95.
37. Such as is mentioned in F.E.Sanderson, "Nyasaland Migrant Labour in British Central Africa", Chapter 9; The effects of Migrancy, pp.146-7: wages kept low because workers are kept at a low level of efficiency; stable development of urban growth hindered; African agriculture slowed down; social disruption; weakening of tribal authority; social insecurity; perpetual emotional attachment to land because of social and economic insecurity in the towns.



38. Ibid., p.144, citing the Bell Report, 1938, p.95.
39. Krishnamurthy, B.S., "Land and Labour in Nyasaland, 1891-1914", p.95.
40. Tom Soper, op.cit., p.98.
41. D.S.Malekebu, M.D., D.D., My Vision. East, Central and South Africa of Today. Printed pamphlet, n.d.
42. The Mission Herald, July, August, 1967.
43. Personal interview, 21 December 1967.
44. Interview with Chief Mopo Jere by Mr. C.N. Mwamlima, Karonga, 2 May 1968.
45. Personal interview, 7 January 1968.
46. Editor's (E. Roux) Preface to Kadalie's unpublished Memoirs.
47. For M.K.Gandhi's work in South Africa, see B. Pachai, The History of Indian Opinion, Archives Year Book, South Africa, 1961. Kadalie was launched on his way by being pushed off the pavement in Capetown; Gandhi by being taken off the train in Pietermaritzburg. See Edward Roux, Time Longer than Rope, pp.153-154.
48. Sheridan W. Johns III, "The Birth of Non-White Trade Unionism in South Africa", Race, Vol.IX, No.2, October 1967, pp.177-8.
49. Kadalie Memoirs, p.14.
50. Sheridan W. Johns III, op.cit., p.8.
51. Kadalie Memoirs, pp.17-18.
52. Ibid., p.29.
53. The Bulhoek Tragedy relates to the killing of 163 and the wounding of 129 members of the African religious sect, the "Israelites", who refused to vacate the commonage on which they had settled at Bulhoek near Queenstown. General Smuts sent a force of police and soldiers who were responsible for the tragedy. See Kadalie Memoirs, p.30, footnote by Edward Roux.
54. Ibid., p.30.
55. Ibid., p.38.
56. Ibid., p.43.
- 56a. Ibid., p.45.
57. Hansard excerpt, Xerox copy, 6 May, 1925, p.2893.
58. The Report of the Proceedings of the Seventh General Missionary Conference of South Africa held at Lovedale, June 26-29, 1928, Lovedale Institution Press, 1928.
59. The writer is grateful to Mr. A.W. Champion of Durban, one-time close associate of Clements Kadalie, for information and material which will be incorporated more fully in a subsequent study.