

**AUTONOMY OF THE IGREJA PRESBITERIANA DE  
MOÇAMBIQUE (IPM)  
PASTORAL CONCERN FOR LIBERATION**

**By**

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**THESIS**

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**Supervisor: Prof. MJS Masango**

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## DECLARATION

I, **Felicidade Naúme Chirinda** (Rev Mrs.) declare that the thesis on **Autonomy of the Igreja Presbiteriana de Moçambique (IPM) – Pastoral Concern for Liberation**, which I hereby submit at the University of Pretoria, is my own work. I also declare that it has not been submitted by me for a degree at this or at any other tertiary institution.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Felicidade Naúme Chirinda

(St n 26342822)

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor: Prof. M J Masango

## DEDICATION

With warm thanks I dedicate the present Thesis to my late Mother **ELISA NKONWANA (Nkanyezana)**. Mummy, you have been an especial friend, mentor, guide and counsellor.

Mummy, thank you!

**1925-2009**

**Rest in Peace**

Felicidade Naúme Chirinda (Rev Mrs.)

## DEDICATION TO THE IPM

Pfuka pfuka pfuka IPM

**Coro**

Pfuka pfuka hikuva bzixile

Pfuka pfuka pfuka IPM

Pfuka pfuka nkuku wuringile

Ulavisa lomu uyaka kone

Pfuka u hlamba a matihlo

Pfuka pfuka pfuka IPM

Emanuel svosvi ni masiku

Hekwini la ungakone svosvi

Hebzini a vumundruku bzaku

Xana svitirho unyikiwile

Lesvi ngata fambisa ntirho

Amahlweni famba IPM

Ungatxave svona svikarhatu

Hosi Yesu akuyimelile

Kukuhlulisa Xihambanwen

Hymn dedicated to the fiftieth anniversary of Lumuku - When the IPM commemorated 50 years of Autonomy in 1998, held at Chicumbane, Gaza Province – Mozambique.

Author: Rev. Valente Tseco,

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I thank God for having called me to the Ministry of His Word. I also thank Him for giving me health, time and courage to conduct research on the Autonomy of the IPM.

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### To the University of Pretoria, Wits and other Archival Services

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### **To the Co-researchers**

It is not easy to know who has the knowledge we need from afar. This was true in my case. Many times I found myself being unsure about whom to interview. However, now I am happy for having met my co-researchers on my journey of seeking information regarding Autonomy of the IPM. Thank you very much for your openness, sincerity and willingness to help. Thank you for having helped me to discover my church, and its rich

and at times contradictory history.

### **To my Sons and Daughter, Brothers and Sister**

My family deserves my respect, especially my children **Angelo Domingos Manuel, Sandra Felicidade Domingos Manuel, Domingos Manuel Junior** and his spouse **Carmina Maria dos Santos**, who allowed me to be an absent mother during a time when their physical health was not good and there was no food for them to eat at home.

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At the Temple of the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Alexandra, the Masters and Ph.D. students of Professor Maake Masango met every three months to help each other with their research projects. There, I found support from colleagues who read and corrected my work, and gave me ideas that helped me grow and to improve my thesis. Others showed their concern during the troubled moments that threatened my life and helped me through their prayers and words of comfort to overcome them.

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Writing a thesis is an exercise that one cannot undertake alone. I do not have the appropriate words to thank all the scholars from whom I gained experience of conducting research and who made it possible for me to write the present thesis.

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The list of those from whom I owe this thesis is long. I will not be able to mention all of them but I take the liberty to distinguish some. The **Rev Dr Titus Risimate Mobie** is the current General Secretary of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in South Africa (**EPCSA**). Since he knew that I was studying at Pretoria University, he opened the doors of his home for me to stay when it was needed.

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The **Rev Dr Théo Schneider** is a former Swiss missionary, who gave me the information concerning the places where I could find all documents related to the

Autonomy of the IPM. He also connected me with other former missionaries who helped me to understand the process of Autonomy. Thank you very much.

Last but not least, I also thank all those who in different ways walked with me during the four years of this research. These are:

**Rev Pascal Hickel, Rev Dr Edouard Kitoko Nsiku, Rev Dr André Chitlango, Rev HD Masango, Mrs Rina Roos**, my nephews **Lito** and **Eddy** who used to fix my computer for me, my nieces **Nyeleti** and **Arsénia** who prepared cakes for my tea break, **Julia Anabela Matsinhe** at Wansati Pfuka and Scripture Union, my cooks **Beatriz Bandze**, and **Agostinho Duzenta Nguluve**, and all those who accompanied me through prayers, smiles, material, financial support and words of encouragement. To all of you, I say **KHANIMAMBO. ALITHO DRINWE ADRINUSI HOVE!**

## ACRONYMS

<b>AACC</b>	: All Africa Conference of Churches
<b>BMS</b>	: Swiss Missionary Bulletin
<b>CEVAA</b>	: Community of Churches in Mission
<b>CCM</b>	: Christian Council of Mozambique
<b>BUKU</b>	: Book that contains some texts of the Old and of The New Testament. It also contains hymns
<b>DM</b>	: Missionary Department
<b>EPCSA</b>	: Evangelical Presbyterian Church in South Africa
<b>FRELIMO</b>	: Mozambique Liberation Front
<b>IPM</b>	: Presbyterian Church of Mozambique
<b>MSAS</b>	: Swiss Mission in South Africa
<b>MPHAMU</b>	: Stipend
<b>NTSOMBANO</b>	: The Pastors' Council
<b>PIDE / DGS</b>	: International Police of the Defence of the State / General Directorate of Security
<b>SM</b>	: Swiss Mission
<b>SUR</b>	: United Seminary of Ricatla
<b>WCC</b>	: World Council of Churches
<b>WCRC</b>	: World Communion of Reformed Churches

## ABSTRACT

The present thesis is about the Autonomy of the Igreja Presbiteriana de Moçambique (IPM). The IPM was started by Mozambicans who had heard the message of the gospel in South Africa (Spelonken) since 1870. Yosefa Mhalmhala, one of the Mozambicans converted in Spelonken, went to Mozambique in 1880 and spread the gospel. In 1882 an African Church was born in Mozambique. Five years later, in 1887, Swiss missionaries joined the African Church in Mozambique and founded the Swiss Mission. Since then, the African Church has been known as the Swiss Mission.

Step-by-step, the Swiss Mission established schools, hospitals, agricultural settings and other services that helped Mozambicans to grow and to identify themselves with the image of God.

Pastoral schools trained African ministers and evangelists. In 1948, the Swiss Mission declared Autonomy of the church under the Swiss Mission and baptized it as 'Igreja Presbiteriana de Moçambique' (IPM). Since 1948, the leadership of the church that had previously been exclusively in the hands of Swiss Missionaries was systemically handed over to Africans. The handing over was finalized in 1970 through the signing of a Convention, exactly twenty two years after the declaration of Autonomy.

In 1998, the IPM celebrated fifty years of Autonomy. This Autonomy, however, is perceived as '**a heavy burden**' by leaders, workers and members of the IPM. Workers feel as though the leadership is failing to meet their rights, while the leadership accuses workers of not performing their job adequately. While the leadership and workers fight with each other, church members relax. As a result the IPM is financially weak and dependent from her mother church.

The present thesis aims at challenging this phenomenon of dependency disorder that is affecting the IPM, and to call her to accountability while bearing in mind that she is called to care for God's flock that has been entrusted to her responsibility.

The IPM is reminded that in her search for liberty, she has trust in Christ; who is a liberator of the oppressed, gives sight to the blinds, heals the heartbroken, and

proclaimed the acceptable year of the Lord (Luke 4: 18-19).

Gerkin and Pollard methods of Pastoral Care and of Positive Deconstruction were employed in order to help the process of liberation take place within the IPM, so that she can reaffirm herself as an authentic and autonomous church.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Chapter One

Chapter one introduces the thesis to the reader, by sharing the author's knowledge of the context she is researching, namely the Autonomy of the IPM. The chapter also shows how the author's personal history links with that of the context as it has been lived within the IPM.

Beyond the relationship between the author's history and the IPM context, the knowledge also developed through her interaction with other key players. Some of the players are the actual church workers, while others were revealed through the literature. However, they share a common history: The church pays them low stipends; they perceive this practice as an abuse and insult to their intelligence and calling.

### **Problem statement and aims of the research**

Having identified that the practice of the IPM of paying low stipends (mphamu) to her workers is a traumatic one that fosters a sense of dependency and impedes her from getting Autonomy, this research study aims at:

- Liberating the IPM from her practice of paying low stipends to her workers (and thus from dependency);
- Liberating the IPM from the failure of getting Autonomy;
- Empowering the IPM leaders and Members; and
- Introducing Pastoral Care Ministry of healing and liberation.

## Chapter Two

Chapter Two is dedicated to the literature review concerning the Autonomy of the IPM. By 'literature review' the author means all information that she was able to collect and that is relevant for this research study.

The chapter seeks to understand the meaning of the mission of the church and the way in which this mission gave birth to autonomy of a local church. The chapter will show how this process started, how it developed, which challenges it encountered, and how these challenges were surpassed.

The chapter will begin by defining 'mission'. The author found it important to define mission, because one of the problems that affects the Autonomy of the IPM is linked to the designation Swiss Mission.

The IPM, which before Autonomy was called Swiss Mission, has difficulties in assuming the leadership of the church especially in relation to its finances, because she believes that the money has to come from the Swiss Mission.

As the aims of the research study are liberation, empowerment and pastoral care that need to be introduced and worked out in order to help the IPM to affirm her as an authentic and autonomous church, the author will look to the literature in an effort to determine what has happened and why the IPM is currently struggling.

The Autonomy of the IPM contributed to the birth of ecumenism in Mozambique. The author will also look at the literature in order to find what it says, with a particular emphasis in understanding how this coming together contributes or not to the strengthening of the IPM's Autonomy

The Autonomy of the IPM is recognized as having contributed to the birth of a nationalism conscience of the Mozambicans (Teresa Cruz e Silva, Patrick Harries & Robert Faris).

The IPM Autonomy developed in a hostile environment, because the country (Mozambique) was under the governance of the Portuguese regime (Colonized). The

colonizer was linked to the Roman Catholic Church and has a political policing body (PIDE). The author looked at the literature in order to find if the IPM's Autonomy was in fact affected by such an environment, and if so, the extent to which it had been impacted (Manuel Vieira Pinto, Teresa Cruz e Silva & Robert Faris).

The independence of Mozambique in 1975 introduced an ideology called Marxism. This ideology seems not to recognize the existence of God. The author looked at the literature in order to find out how this ideology affected and may have contributed to the phenomena of dependency disorder that affects the IPM (Simão Chamango, Synod reports & Robert Faris).

The chapter also explored the impact of Autonomy of the IPM, by examining both her positive and negative attributes, as well as her challenges for the future.

### **Chapter Three**

Chapter three details the methodology of the present research study.

In order to be able to rationalize the methodology employed, the author had to begin by defining her theoretical argument (Epistemology) that helped her choose between qualitative and quantitative research paradigms. Ultimately, the author determined that a qualitative research paradigm was most appropriate for the study.

A qualitative research method explores the “ways in which human beings encounter their world and offers new ways of understanding and interpreting this world” (Swinton & Mowat).

The author explored the various qualitative research methods. Then, she selected the models that she deemed to be most suitable for her research.

The author chose Gerkin's model of Shepherding and Pollard's model of Positive Deconstruction. She also looked at Liberation Theology as developed by James Come, Gustavo Gutierrez, Ketey and other scholars.



The employment of the qualitative research, Gerkin's model of shepherding, and Pollard's model of positive deconstruction allowed the author to bring to the fore issues that for any way could have been anticipated. They also allowed her to develop a model of liberation suitable for the IPM.

## **Chapter Four**

Chapter four was dedicated to the gathering of information concerning Autonomy of the IPM from Co-researchers.

The aim of the chapter was to find out how Co-researches defined Autonomy of the IPM (Dream or Reality). This definition was given by information shared through Case Studies, Interviews and Workshops. The questions that formed the interviews had been formulated by the author beforehand.

After having collated all information provided by her Co-researchers, the author divided it according to the aims outlined in chapter one. After this exercise, she further narrowed the information to enable her to discover which new areas would be most suitable to be researched.

## **Chapter Five**

This chapter is dedicated to the application of the research methodology and to the therapeutic healing.

The author analyzed the impact of the Autonomy of the IPM on workers, members, and on the leadership of the IPM in the light of the gospel. The author challenged the theology of 'self denial' that was adopted by the IPM and wrongly interpreted, by the story of the man healed in the pool of Bethesda by Jesus Christ (John 5: 1-8) and by the Liberation theology as it is interpreted by many scholars.

The shepherding model developed by Charles Gerkin and the positive deconstruction

model developed by Nick Pollard were helpful in deconstructing belief. They were also aided in showing the author possible steps to move the IPM forward and in instilling a sense of hope within the IPM.

## **Chapter Six**

Chapter six was dedicated to the analysis of the findings and the research process, and concludes with the author's recommendations.

The analysis of the findings confirmed the existence of the phenomena of dependency disorder. This phenomenon resulted from the theology of self denial that the IPM adopted and was supported by the Constitution. This theology was revealed to be harmful to the African culture, thus its devastating effects.

The analysis of the process of research showed how the author grew while interpreting literature and stories, and while interacting with people from diversified background and culture and collating and interpreting the information collected from these interviews.

The conclusion shows how the author understood the research process, while the recommendations show her concern about the Autonomy of the IPM.