"A World of Their Own":
Community and Authority at an American School for Zulu Girls, 1860s to Recent Times

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Dear readers,

Hhayibo.

This draft chapter is far rougher than I had intended, as my presentation date was just moved up by a month on account of the schedule change. As I have recently restructured quite a bit of the paper and will expand it considerably in the months to come, I would appreciate tremendously any suggestions you might have about areas in which I seem to provide too little (or too much) information.

For any redeeming features in this work-in-progress, thanks is due to the TAP crew of Jason Hickel, Eva Jackson, Percy Ngonyama, and Jeff Guy.

All best,
Meghan

Chapter One
"If the Mothers Make the Men…"
Women's Work, Familial Idioms, and the Founding of Inanda Seminary

In March 1869, a *kholwa* man named Thomas Hawes brought two of his daughters to the new girls' boarding school on the Inanda mission station. His elder daughter, Martha, was an adolescent who had attended the station's day school for a few years, and he was eager to enroll her in this institution that promised to mould the next generation of teachers, wives, and mothers for Natal's *amakholwa* community. Martha Hawes was, in fact, just the sort of pupil that the missionaries of the American Zulu Mission had envisioned when they had begun urging the American Board to expand higher educational options for male and female converts five years before. Literate in isiZulu and able to read basic English texts, with parents committed to her education, she was one of what missionary Henry Bridgman had called the "'First-fruits' from amongst the children of Believing Parents on our different Stations."[1] For a mission that was still struggling to convert people in a turbulent region that it had entered three decades earlier with absurdly confident expectations of evangelical success, boarding schools seemed essential institutions by which to "secure" this next generation and to "prepare them (as far as human agency can) as an offering to the Lord's service in this land."[2] Mary Edwards, the Ohio schoolteacher charged with operating Inanda Seminary, received Martha Hawes eagerly. Thomas Hawes' younger daughter, Dalita, presented a less ideal pupil.[3] She was nine years old, "a little lame girl" who "did not know the Alphabet and not one word in English" when she arrived at Edwards' door.[4] But Hawes was desperate for his younger daughter to board in the school, as it was too strenuous for her to walk between her home and the day school on his station. So, as Edwards put it, he "begged me to take her."[5] She hesitated to enroll a girl so unprepared for this ambitious school, conceived on the model of Massachusett's Mount Holyoke Female Seminary. Yet ultimately, Edwards explained to her supporters in the Women's Board of Missions, "Her parents were so anxious to have her admitted that we could not refuse. They gave her to me."[6]

Edwards would expel Martha in the school's second year, for reasons that remain unclear. Thomas Hawes briefly refused to speak to Edwards on this account, although he kept Dalita in the school and soon sent another daughter, Ella, to join her.[7] But Dalita Hawes became Edwards' special charge. When Edwards returned to the United States in 1875, Hawes returned to her parents' home; when Edwards returned to Inanda the next year, Hawes came back to the school as a pupil-teacher. In 1877, Edwards paid for Hawes to undergo a series of painful and unsuccessful leg operations in Durban, where she arranged for an English housekeeper to attend to her.[8] Upon Hawes' return to the seminary, the pair sometimes shared a bed, and Edwards wrote of her protégée frequently.[9] In turn,

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[1] Henry Bridgman, Imfume, Natal, to Rufus Anderson, Secretary, American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Boston, 22 June 1864. In American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions: African Missions Records, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA (henceforth ABC), Box 15.4, volume 6.

[2] Henry Bridgman, Imfume, to Anderson, Boston, 22 June 1864, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[3] "Dalita" is elsewhere variously spelled, but this reflects Hawes' spelling of her own name and seems most phonetically apt.

[4] Edwards, Inanda, to Miss Lawson, Boston, 13 November 1876, ABC 15.4, volume 49.

[5] Edwards, Inanda, to Dr. N.G. Clark, Boston, 11 March 1869, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[6] Edwards, Inanda, to "My Dear Young Friends," Boston, 12 April 1869, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[7] Edwards to Hume, Boston, 21 March 1871, ABC 15.4, volume 49.

[8] See Edwards, Inanda, 27 September 1877, to Women's Board, Boston, ABC 15.4, volume 49.

[9] See Edwards, Inanda, to Mrs. Barnes, Boston, 30 August 1880, ABC15.4, volume 49.

she described Edwards as "not any less than a mother to me. I love her dearly."[10]

The Hawes sisters' journey to Inanda Seminary comprised an *amakholwa* adaptation of the ritualized passages long central to African family life. As Jeff Guy has suggested, a young woman's journey from her father's household to this new "home" shared at least one critical feature with a young bride's *umendo* to join a new homestead: Both were premised on her complete transformation within a new network of people and a new set of rights and obligations.[11] While Deborah Gaitskell and Lynn Thomas have related mission schooling to puberty rituals and age-set initiations that also prepared youth for their gendered participation in adult society, another apposite comparison for Inanda's early students is to marriage itself.[12] For while American missionaries expressly hoped that the seminary's graduates would become model wives and mothers heading their own Christian households, the process by which girls left their homes of birth to board at this female-run institution represented nothing less than their fraught passage from one set of familial affiliations and authority to another. En route to the more permanent transformations that marriage demanded, Inanda Seminary girls joined a liminal community that would serve as both site and mode of instruction in Christian domesticity. Under the provisional authority of their "MaEdwards," the girls prepared for lives as monogamous women within the relative seclusion of a self-sufficient, homosocial community. While they were expected to leave agricultural work to their future husbands and their ploughs, everyone hoed the fields at Inanda. Boarding schooling thus signified a complicated new stage within young women's development as daughters, wives, and mothers, rendered through the sorts of familial idioms that had long undergirded women's work in the American Zulu Mission.

After all, this was a mission in which a boy born near Inanda Mountain to one of the station's first converts was baptized Thomas Hawes and became a preacher by way of service in the kitchen of Lucy Lindley, the Inanda resident missionary's wife. *Amakholwa* men and women of Hawes' generation, who had themselves risen to prominence through mission patronage channels, harbored sharp fears and bold dreams for their children's future in a world where their futures remained uncertain. Their concerns resonated with American missionaries, who hoped to reinforce their limited evangelical successes by training the next generation as model Christian teachers, preachers, fathers, and mothers. Crucially, evangelization was a family project. As it inhered at Inanda Seminary, this project would be driven by American women's efforts to eke out space for their leadership on foreign —and particularly on African—grounds by asserting domestic authority, and constrained by the ambiguous position of women's work within the mission and throughout Natal.

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[10] Dalita Hawes, Inanda, to Mrs. Hume, Boston, 28 January 1879, ABC 15.4, volume 49.

[11] Jeff Guy, personal communication, 25 February 2009.

[12] Gaitskell contends that girls' initiation "was not totally unlike mission schooling. It was also about learning skills for household nutrition and maintenance, and preparation for marriage." See Deborah Gaitskell, "At Home with Hegemony? Coercion and Consent in African Girls' Education for Domesticity in South Africa before 1910," in Dagmar Engels and Shula Marks, *Contesting Colonial Hegemony: State and Society in Africa and India* (New York: British Academic Press, 1994), 117. On the other hand, as Thomas has pointed out in an East African context, "Initiation has sought to ground people in local hierarchies rooted in maturity, bravery, wealth, and seniority. By contrast, school education has sought to draw people into broader worlds structured by differential notions of 'civilization,' 'race,' and 'modernity' and by hierarchies rooted in Christianity, Islam, and colonialism." See Lynn M. Thomas, "Gendered Reproduction: Placing Schoolgirl Pregnancies in African History," in Catherine M. Cole, Takyiwaa Manuh, and Stephan F. Miescher, eds., *Africa After Gender?* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007), 53. Neither of these accounts contrast specific elements of initiation rites and boarding schooling. On the limits of comparisons between initiation and schooling, see also Amy Stambach, *Lessons from Mount Kilimanjaro: Schooling, Community, and Gender in East Africa* (London: Routledge, 2000), 77-89.

Beyond the Kitchen: Envisioning Inanda Seminary

While Inanda Seminary would assume remarkable significance in South African women's education, it began as a site at which the Americans hoped they might compensate for their early evangelical failures. For at its onset in 1835, they had aimed to Christianize the Zulu in one generation. The Board's secretary tasked the first American deputation to southeast Africa with cultivating independent and self-perpetuating African Christian communities, led by African preachers and teachers who would rapidly obviate foreign missionaries' work in the region and into the interior of the continent. But as Norman Etherington has described, the Americans' naïve dream of an independent and Christian Zulu kingdom collapsed under the combined weight of white rule, African disinterest in Christianity, and the Americans' inability to yield real authority. Prior to the social dislocations of the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879, the African Christian community in Natal and Zululand remained marginal. By 1880, fewer than 10% of Natal Africans would call themselves *amakholwa*. In the neighboring African regions of Zululand and Pondoland, missionaries would make fewer than a thousand converts by 1880. These figures were depressingly low for all missionaries working in one of the most thickly evangelized regions in the world, and were especially so for the Americans, who had made the first and most ambitious effort in Natal.[13]

Thirty years into this mission, Inanda missionary Daniel Lindley worried that "we shall yet reap the fruit of our <u>not</u> doing in former years." In particular, he fretted that "we ought to have been prepared for the present call for teachers."[14] On stations across Natal, parents demanded that missionaries build more schools; and where missions could not hire instructors fast enough, *amakholwa* pooled their resources to hire primary school teachers themselves.[15] Concerned to control, protect, and enlighten a generation of children who had been born on mission stations but were in many cases less devout than their parents, *amakholwa* hoped to assert more effective authority over their children by sending them to school.[16] And at Lindley's station, Mqhawe, the thirty-year-old leader of the local Qadi chiefdom, had recently appeared at the station's Sunday school with a retinue of men, women, and children and announced that they all wanted to learn how to read. The chief made "as it were, a formal, <u>official</u> surrender to the cause of education," as Mqhawe requested that Lindley send a young African male teacher to his homestead. "We must do so, <u>if possible</u>," Lindley advised, noting that although Mqhawe's request did not reflect interest in Christianity, an educational initiative might open evangelical inroads into the communities surrounding the station. But expanding the mission's educational work demanded more and better African preachers and teachers than its recently formed Native Home Missionary Society could provide. To address this shortage, Lindley recommended that the Board invest seriously in the education of converts' sons at Amanzimtoti on the south coast, where an "infant and short-lived Seminary" had been floundering since its 1853 founding.[17] He added that expanding young men's training would be insufficient either to meet expanding educational needs or to accomplish the more thoroughgoing Christian social transformations that he prayed these educational interventions presaged. "We are beginning to feel the

[13] See Norman Etherington, *Preachers, Peasants and Politics,* 25. See also Etherington, "An American Errand into the South African Wilderness," *Church History* 39 (1970): 62-71.

[14] Daniel Lindley to Anderson, 24 June 1864, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[15] See Etherington, *Preachers, Peasants and Politics*, 131.

[16] See Etherington, *Preachers, Peasants, and Politics,* 140.

[17] See L. Rood, A. Grant, et. al., Amanzimtoti, to Anderson, Boston, 5 June 1865, ABC 15.4, volume 6. Work at the "seminary" at Amanzimtoti had been mainly off since its founding missionary fell ill in 1855.

need of a training school for native girls," he stressed. "A select number of girls should, by all means, be separated from their uncultivated homes, & placed under higher & purer influences than can now be made to bear on them. The heathen here are sunk to the bottom, & the women are the lowest layer. It is wholly possible to make the women respectable even here. Our native assistants will need well trained young women for their wives." After asking for funds, he quickly added, "The material for such a school may be had in all abundance, & many of the parents would, I doubt not, pay nearly or quite all the expense of food and clothing."[18] The Americans thus conceived their single-sex boarding schools at Amanzimtoti and Inanda as two sides of the same coin, both employing "all the grades & helps of modern improvement in teaching" to advance a struggling mission.[19] With more African teachers in more American Board day schools, and with more Christian mothers in more Christian homes, it would be "impossible" for the present generation to grow up "just like the heathen who live outside of such influences," the men of the mission concurred in 1869. "We feel sure that the body of them will, in ten thousand ways, spread the light they are receiving."[20]

Lindley's insistence that Christian social transformations must begin with domestic transformations had deep roots. For the Americans as for contemporaneous Protestant missionaries in southern Africa, "the basis of universal civility was bourgeois domesticity," as the Comaroffs have put it.[21] Pointedly, marriage was a prerequisite for the first Americans to Natal, in line with the Board's general policy of dispatching married couples throughout its mission fields.[22] Amongst missionaries to Natal, this condition "more than once led to an unseemly scramble" to the altar. As Etherington has observed, "It was a strange start for a mission that would concentrate so much effort at stamping out 'forced marriages' among the Zulu."[23] Envisioned as impediments to interracial affairs as well as spectacles of devout monogamy, many of these missionary marriages were psychologically and physically difficult and disappointing for the frequently well-educated women involved.[24] In the 1840s, four of these mission wives were Mount Holyoke alumnae, as was Henry Bridgman's wife Laura, who graduated from Mount Holyoke in 1856 and departed for Natal with Henry four years later.[25] Nearly a decade into her stay, Laura Bridgman claimed that she could not be "much of a missionary" while also tending to her own small children; instead, she resolved that "I am trying my best with God's help to make missionaries of these and if I live till they are grown up, I have hope that I shall then be a missionary too."[26] In fact, she came to serve as matriarch of a leading American Board family, as her son Frederick and his wife Clara would coordinate major expansions of mission activity in Durban and Johannesburg.[27]

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[18] Daniel Lindley, Inanda, to Anderson, Boston, 24 June 1864, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[19] Henry Bridgman, Imfume, to Anderson, Boston, 18 January 1864, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[20] Lindley, et al., Umvoti, to Clark, Boston, 23 May 1869, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[21] John Comaroff and Jean Comaroff, "Homemade Hegemony," in *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination: Selected Essays* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992), 44.

[22] On American missionary marriages elsewhere, see Patricia Grimshaw, *Paths of Duty: American Missionary Wives in Nineteenth-Century Hawaii* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989).

[23] Etherington, "Gender Issues in Southeast African Missions," 138.

[24] Of the twenty-five American Board wives in the 1835-1885 mission for whom information is available, fourteen suffered extreme physical or mental ailments. See Etherington, "Gender Issues in Southeast African Missions," 138.

[25] On Mount Holyoke women in the American Zulu Mission, see Porterfield, 112-138.

[26] Cited in Etherington, "Gender Issues in Southeast African Missions," 139.

[27] The Bridgmans worked in Durban from 1899-1912 and in Johannesburg from 1913-1925. I have described their educational, health care, and social work initiatives extensively in my unpublished paper, "Crises of Maternalism and Missionary Paternalism: The American Board's Social Gospel in Johannesburg" (presented to the Gender History Workshop, Harvard University, May 2006).

Lucy Lindley tried to make missionaries of their eleven children from a tender age. At some point in the 1850s, she decided to release "her faithful and well-trained man-servant Thomas Hawes" to turn domestic service in her household into an opportunity to train African girls on the station in Christian domesticity.[28] For this task, she deployed her daughters to go through "the alphabet of civilization" at her kitchen table.[29] As her husband's biographer recounted,

> She always had four, five, or six of them in the house to be watched over and taught various things, from the use of soap and water, of forks and dishcloths and tablecloths, to the fashioning and putting on of clothes. Everyone in the family had to help in some way. The daughter whose week it was to look after the girls had to transplant herself with her lesson-books into the kitchen and mix history, philosophy, mathematics, and poetry, with pots and pans and dishwater. As soon as the girls were tolerably trained, some young men would be found hovering about quite frequently, and soon there would be weddings and new homes for the missionary to inspect on Saturday.[30]

Through her daughters' unpaid labors, Lucy Lindley sought to cultivate a new generation of African wives and mothers, who could extend the mission's work through their own unpaid evangelical work in their homes and communities. It was a brilliant solution to the mission's constant quest to transform society on a shoestring, but it was not totally unique. In the 1840s and 1850s, American and other missionaries in Natal widely employed a "family system" to secure domestic servants and to train preachers and teachers. At Amanzimtoti in the late 1830s, Newton Adams had pioneered "family schools" in which he paid parents to keep their children in his household, where he employed them as household labor while proselytizing and teaching them to read.[31] Thomas Hawes was presumably trained as a "man-servant" at Inanda in this way. In the 1840s and 1850s at the Wesleyan station at Edendale, near the colonial capital of Pietermaritzburg, converts similarly "apprenticed" their children in the home of the reverend and his wife, who paid parents five shillings a month for their sons' labor and one shilling a month for that of their daughters. Up to thirty children simultaneously boarded with and worked for the missionaries, who had no biological children of their own and often spoke of their apprentices as their own kin—through whose presence in the household they secured cheap domestic and agricultural labor, gathered more converts, and trained teachers. The utility of this fictive kinship reached a limit at Edendale in 1861, when village elders pushed the missionaries out in a dispute over land tenure; station schools would henceforth supplant missionary households as the locus of training in new modes of domesticity and household production there.[32] But there as at Inanda, the "family system" lingered on in the station schools.

But whether they received their educations directly in the kitchens of missionary families or in the classrooms of their station schools, the first generations of *amakholwa* had experienced schooling and conversion through a series of new familial idioms. Some early converts on American Board stations identified with resident missionary couples to such an extent that they assumed the names of missionaries, their friends, or their kin. Thomas Hawes was the son of Joel Hawes, a charter member of the Inanda church who had changed his name from Goba in emulation of Reverend Joel Hawes, the

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[28] Smith, 281.

[29] This was how one of the Lindley girls described her task. See Smith, 281.

[30] Smith, 281.

[31] See Myra Dinnerstein, "The American Board Mission to the Zulu, 1835-1900" (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Columbia University, 1971), 44-45.

[32] Sheila Meintjes, "Family and Gender in the Christian Community at Edendale, Natal, in Colonial Times," in Walker, ed., 129-133.

prominent New England preacher who had presided over Daniel and Lucy Lindley's wedding in 1834.[33] In a similar vein, in 1847, soon after Nembula Makhanya left one of his two wives and remarried the other under Christian rites, they were baptized at Amanzimtoti station as Ira Adams Nembula and Laura Nembula—named after the brother and sister of Amanzimtoti's resident missionary Newton Adams. (The bride's brother, incidentally, was a charter member of the Inanda church who had been baptized George Champion, after another American missionary.) As Eva Jackson has discussed, Christian monogamy brought with it a new set of affective and productive affiliations for the African families involved.[34] The long-term meanings of these new networks remained uncertain for the *amakholwa* parents who demanded more expansive educational opportunities for their children in the mid-nineteenth century. But both *amakholwa* and missionary calls for higher schooling ineluctably drew upon the relations of paternalism and maternalism that had undergirded mission education since its inception.

Denied voting rights within the Board and unacknowledged as evangelists, missionary wives in the 1860s asserted themselves through calls to formalize and expand "women's work for women" beyond such sites as Lucy Lindley's kitchen.[35] They would do so both through their husbands and under the auspices of the new Women's Board of Missions of the Congregational Churches in the United States, which formed in 1868 to mobilize American "King's Daughters" to undertake the sort of women's work that Henry Bridgman had envisioned. The Women's Board emerged as an early instantiation of a trend sweeping American Protestantism more broadly in the postbellum years: Between the late 1860s and the mid-1870s, Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Episcopalians, and members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church also formed women's auxiliaries to support women's mission work. While much of the women's early work centered on the education and indoctrination of freedpeople in the American South, other projects focused on China and Africa, both growing fields thanks to recent imperial interventions.[36] In all sites women's societies to coordinate women's work appeared evangelically efficacious, as mission fathers concurred that women could intervene in converts' social lives in ways inaccessible to men.[37]

Single women teachers offered an untapped resource for the Americans and other Protestants[38] in southern Africa, as they could be paid less than ordained men and would have more time to work in the field than missionary wives. As early as 1836 the men of the American Zulu Mission had alerted

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[33] Smith, 55; and personal communication with Bongi Dhlomo, Inanda Seminary, 8 March 2009.

[34] Eva Jackson, "The Economic Experimentation of Ira Adams Nembula, 1860-1878," unpublished draft manuscript to be included in a forthcoming anthology by Vukile Khumalo, ed. Pp. 1-2 of draft.

[35] See Debra L. Duke, "From True Woman to New Woman: Mary Kelly Edwards, Single Woman Missionary to Natal, South Africa, 1868-1927" (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Princeton Theological Seminary, 2004), 100.

[36] See James Campbell, *Songs of Zion,* 93.

[37] On the emergence and evolution of women's work, see Patricia Hill, *The World Their Household: The American Women's Foreign Mission Movement and Cultural Transformation, 1870-1920* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, 1985); Dana L. Robert, *American Women in Mission* (Macon, GA: Mercer, 1997); and Robert, ed., *Gospel Bearers, Gender Barriers: Missionary Women in the Twentieth Century* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2002).

[38] Etherington mentions that the Anglicans and Methodists attempted to employ single women as teachers in the mid-nineteenth century, but that both experiments were short-lived due to the male missionaries involved. In the first case, Charles Mackenzie led his unmarried sisters from Natal to join his mission to Malawi; in the latter, the first unmarried teacher was so vigorously pursued by a young male missionary that she left Natal, "reportedly insane," while the second teacher married her supervising missionary. Inanda Seminary would thus become the first sustained and "most important mission experiment in girls schooling" to engage single women. See Etherington, "Gender Issues in Southeast African Missions," 142-143.

Boston to the latter, noting that many single women had worked with Native Americans.[39] Indeed, the Board had begun to send single women to the American field in the 1820s, a decade in which they would also send an unmarried African-American woman to Hawaii as a "domestic assistant" (although she in fact ran a school there) and dispatch a white woman to supervise Indian girls' schooling. But while few would follow them overseas, nearly a quarter of the 428 Board workers sent to the Native American field by 1860 were single women—most of them serving as teachers.[40] Early in the 1840s, a handful of unmarried women were sent to cultivate Tamil girls at a boarding school in Ceylon, but few inroads were made elsewhere.[41] Secretary Rufus Anderson remained convinced that a missionary woman was most useful as a helpmate, making her husband "more of a man, a better Christian, a more contented, zealous, faithful missionary"—although even this he occasionally came to doubt, as when in the early 1840s he suggested that women might be costing the mission more than they generated in conversions because they were disproportionately likely to die in the field.[42] The next decade, Anderson pointedly discouraged single women from working "among barbarous people" overseas, largely because he considered their domestic placement in such societies difficult.[43] He assumed that they would lodge with missionary families—a situation which could lead to household conflict and, he feared, give the impression of missionary polygyny![44] Thus with the exception of Kate Lloyd, who stayed on at Umvoti after her husband's death in 1865, single women would not serve in Natal until demands for the expansion of schooling impelled Anderson's successor, N.G. Clark, to reconsider the Board's strategies.[45]

Women's Work and Moral Maps: Girls' Schooling in Natal and in the Benevolent Empire

A characteristic complaint of Laura Bridgman around the time of Inanda Seminary's founding explicates the stakes of American women's work in Natal. Bemoaning what she saw as women's low value within African families, she claimed, "They are married in the family for the cattle it is expected they will bring at their marriage, and not for what they are in themselves or what they may become in this world or another." Here she misconstrued African marriage as bride-buying, a typical misunderstanding amongst most American Board and other missionaries. *Ukulobola* was in fact the socially foundational practice by which a man gave cattle to his father-in-law upon marriage—hardly to "buy" his wife, but rather to solidify "bonds of mutual obligation that were at once more complex and more binding than those embodied in European marriage contracts," as Etherington put it.[46] As such, the centrality of *lobola* underscored how profoundly valuable a woman's productive and reproductive labors were to her families of birth and marriage. Laura Bridgman and most of her peers, however, tended to be too shocked by the sites and scope of women's work within their homesteads to consider its social value. In addition to childcare, cooking, and cleaning responsibilities—of which missionaries approved in the abstract, if rarely in the specific—women performed the bulk of agricultural labor—which tended to incense missionaries, who encouraged men to take over

[39] Cited in Etherington, "Gender Issues in Southeast African Missions," 140.

[40] Duke, 81.

[41] On Ceylon, see "Mrs. Anna Maria White," *Life and Light for Heathen Women* 1, no. 1 (March 1869): 20-24. Journal on file at Killie Campbell Africana Library, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

[42] Cited in Duke, 77. See also Paul William Harris, *Nothing But Christ: Rufus Anderson and the Ideology of Protestant Foreign Missions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 32-33 and 46-47.

[43] Cited in Harris, 32.

[44] See Duke, 79.

[45] Etherington, "Gender Issues in Southeast African Missions," 141-142. Anderson was secretary from 1832-1866.

[46] Etherington, *Preachers, Peasants and Politics,* 63.

agricultural production with the plough and focused women's training on housebound activities. By condemning *lobola* and polygyny and encouraging women to enter monogamous Christian marriages marked by new gendered spheres of production, the Americans hoped to transform wives and mothers and, through them, their world. For however "low" American missionaries considered African women to have been within the structures of their own society and in comparison with iconic American missionary wives, they also believed that women everywhere possessed formidable domestic power to impede or facilitate conversion within their homes and communities. As Laura Bridgman's critique continued, "It is seldom that a heathen woman (unless she is very old and cast off by her husband) will give an ear to the truth. She is wedded to her follies and her filth,—she is wise in her own conceit and thinks the missionary is a fool and all his stories nonsense—really she is to herself her own greatest enemy and it is the mothers rather than the fathers who most often oppose the coming of their girls to school."[47]

Inanda Seminary sought to reshape what Laura Bridgman saw as women's obstinate domestic power into luminous Christian influence. Such influence, the men of the mission rhapsodized upon the school's opening, could set off a self-perpetuating series of social renovations: "If mothers make the men, this institution must be set above all price. Oh, how many times have we sighed to see, on our several stations, even one intelligent native mother, with a good degree of womanly refinement; one who would be a pattern to others in the keeping of her house, & especially in the instruction of her children; one whose cleanly habits & proper bearing others would feel not to be above the attainment of a native woman. Some of us may live to see so great a sight, or at least a great improvement in those who will receive so much wise tuition & judicious training under Mrs. Edwards."[48]

In the context of colonial Natal, this ambitious school "represented not merely something new: for many, both approving and disapproving, it was nothing sort of revolutionary," as Heather Hughes has described. "Inanda Seminary was the first establishment of its kind in southern Africa, embodying a new concept of educational work among young African women. Mission institutions in the Cape such as Lovedale already accepted female students but the Seminary was the first all-female boarding 'high' school—'a complete Christian home' as the missionaries thought of it—to be established specifically for the daughters of African Christian converts."[49] Lovedale College, the famous Glasgow Mission Society institution in the eastern Cape, had opened its Girls' School in 1868.[50] In colonial Natal, however, few schools operated anywhere or for anyone beyond the primary level, and boarding schools were new and uncertain institutions. For education beyond a few years of state-supported instruction in literacy, numeracy, and religion, affluent white boys might attend British boarding schools and white girls of means might study needlework and arts at "ladies' academies" in Natal.[51] A tiny minority of African and Indian children might attend day or Sunday schools on mission stations. But by and large, families educated their children themselves.

Early boarding schools for African males failed to gain a foothold in colonial Natal. When the

[47] Laura Bridgman, Umzumbe, Natal, to "Dear Friends," 10 July 1874, ABC 15.4, volume 49.

[48] Daniel Lindley, L. Grout, et. al., Umvoti, to Reverend N.G. Clark, Boston, 23 May 1869, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[49] Hughes, "'A Lighthouse for African Womanhood,'" 197-198.

[50] On the Lovedale Girls' School, see Jacklyn Cock, "Domestic Service and Education for Domesticity: The Incorporation of Xhosa Women into Colonial Society," in Walker, ed., 90-92.

[51] Hughes, "'A Lighthouse for African Womanhood,'" 198. In 1870, the Anglicans opened a boarding high school for white girls, but it survived for little more than a decade; Inanda would inspire the all-white Young Ladies Collegiate Institution in Durban in 1878.

Amanzimtoti Seminary initially opened in 1853, it predated similar schools for white men in Natal by some twenty years. But it operated unevenly over the next decade, and *amakholwa* of sufficient means preferred to send their sons to the more established, and racially integrated, schools in the Cape.[52] At Ekukhanyeni outside Pietermaritzburg, the Anglican Bishop John William Colenso's boarding school for male sons of chiefs also struggled upon its 1856 opening, as Secretary for Native Affairs Theophilus Shepstone had to pressure parents to send their children. Africans speculated that the boys "were to be hostages for their parents' good behaviour and it was only with the greatest difficulty that Colenso was able to drive their mothers from the precincts of the mission," as Jeff Guy has described. "The boys themselves felt that they had been made 'martyrs for the cause.'"[53] The school closed in 1861 upon fear that Zulu prince Cetshwayo might remove his brother forcibly from the institution.[54]

The boarding school thus had segregated and shallow institutional roots in Natal, leaving the Americans few local models to draw upon. They nonetheless reproduced colonial racial and gendered distinctions apparently without hesitation. Like the "American Zulu Mission" on whole, Inanda Seminary's mandate did not extend to the Indian girls living nearby, nor to the white children of missionaries or settlers; the Board had long ago dismissed the education of those children as the responsibility of the British, and Anglicans indeed took an early lead in Indian education.[55] But while American women sought expressly to uplift African women at Inanda Seminary, their counterparts across American Protestants' "benevolent empire" of social institutions were working to enact a similar set of intimate transformations in Mount Holyoke-inspired schools.[56] Like Mount Holyoke, which had opened in 1837 to cultivate New England girls as teachers, missionaries, wives, and mothers, Inanda taught young women to educate and evangelize other women and children.[57] Seeing women's proper sphere of influence as extending from their homes into churches, schools, and communities in the United States and around the globe, Mount Holyoke's founder Mary Lyon maintained that her students were undertaking "the great work of renovating the world."[58] At Inanda and elsewhere, American women labored to renovate women's domestic value, domestic labors, and domestic power within their families of birth and marriage—to endow them with new sorts of authority within their families and within the broader women's sphere that Mount Holyoke women had envisioned, and to delimit strictly their scope of action within and beyond these spheres.

In 1868, in addition to its sponsorship of Mary Edwards as Inanda Seminary's founding

[52] Etherington, "Gender Issues in Southeast African Missions," 133.

[53] Jeff Guy, *The Heretic: A Study in the Life of John William Colenso, 1814-1883* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1983), 64.

[54] Guy, *The Heretic,* 105.

[55] See Ian Booth, "Natal and Zululand: The Work of the American Board Mission," in Steve de Gruchy, ed., *Changing Frontiers: The Mission Story of the UCCSA* (Gaborone, Botswana: Pula Press, 1999), 88. The first Anglican schools for Indian children opened in the 1860s. See Gerald J. Pillay, "Community Service and Conversion: Christianity among Indian South Africans," in Elphick and Davenport, eds., 289.

[56] The "Benevolent Empire" encompassed the network of American Protestant social institutions—churches, schools, hospitals, homes for women and children—through which their founders hoped to evangelize and uplift American society in the nineteenth century. The American Board extended similar institutions throughout its "fields" around the world. See Richard Elphick, "The Benevolent Empire and the Social Gospel: Missionaries and South African Christians in the Age of Segregation," in Richard Elphick and Rodney Davenport, eds., *Christianity in South Africa: A Political, Social, and Cultural History* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1997), 348.

[57] For an overview of Mount Holyoke's influence in the nineteenth century, see Amanda Porterfield, *Mary Lyon and the Mount Holyoke Missionaries* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

[58] See Barbara Reeves-Ellington, "A Vision of Mount Holyoke in the Ottoman Balkans: American Cultural Transfer, Bulgarian Nation-Building and Women's Educational Reform, 1858-1870," *Gender and History* 16, no. 1 (April 2004), 147-148.

principal, the Women's Board sent three women to the Ottoman Empire, two to China, and one to Ceylon as its first cohort of teachers.[59] The next January, the Women's Board's first annual meeting commenced with a survey of the Board's work in Turkey, where, as a reverend serving in Constantinople insisted, Muslim "women not only stood in the way of their children, but of their husbands. If they had any suspicion that their husbands were about to read the Bible, or to turn Protestants, they knew how to step in, and make the houses too hot to hold them." Like their African counterparts, Turkish women were at once "servants and slaves" within their marriages and troublingly powerful in maintaining their "degraded" homes. Also like African women, however, their familial role could be reconfigured to include only "respectable" domestic activity, and their domestic power redeployed in the interest of Christianity. As the Constantinople missionary concluded, "It was abundantly proved that they were capable of elevation and education, and that the influence of the gospel upon them was exactly the same as upon the women of America." Now, he insisted, more "girls had to be gathered into the schools, of which many more were needed," in order "to train up these girls for teachers, and to make them instrumental in gathering others into the kingdom of Christ"—under the guidance of unmarried American women.[60] Later that year in the mountain town of Bitlis, Turkey, American women began a school where, "as far as possible, we adopt Holyoke modes of teaching." Explaining their plans to expand the school into a boarding facility, one woman reported that "a strong reason for gathering girls together in a boarding-school is found in the fact that Christian influence is much more likely thus to become a saving power, than when, by a daily return to their homes, they hear the truth controverted and ridiculed."[61] In the mountains of Turkey as in the hills of Natal, then, boarding schooling might place girls "under higher & purer influences" than the Americans could trust families and communities to provide. By 1870, the Women's Board would support Inanda along with four girls' boarding schools in the Ottoman Empire.[62]

American women saw the causes of and cures for familial impediments to Christianity as so remarkably similar across disparate regions because they viewed the world through the expansionist and domesticating lens of their "benevolent empire." The contours of this empire came into sharp relief when, in the middle of the second annual meeting of the Women's Board, one Mrs. Winslow unfurled a "moral map" that "plainly delineated the moral condition and religious aspect of the world." Winslow guided her audience through its landscape: "Let us look at the eastern hemisphere: Asia is buried in the night of heathenism and Mohammedanism. Africa about equally divided between the same; Southern Europe is Roman Catholic; Eastern Europe is Greek Church, which also extends into Northern Asia; a sadly small portion of Northern Europe is Protestant. Turning to the western hemisphere, how large a portion of it we find still under the darkness of superstition! while the United States seems like a sun to scatter the moral darkness of the world. For this, God has opened the gates of mighty empires that had been shut during long ages." And if Americans had a special burden and opportunity as bearers of Christian light, American women bore it doubly: "To bear this to them is our privilege; and who that has been eye-witness to the deep degradation of our sex in heathen lands, — that has seen the highest and lowest type of womanhood side by side, and realized the broad moral gulf that lay between,—but would blush at our insensibility to the great needs of mothers and children,

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[59] "Departure and Arrival of Missionaries Supported by this Society," *Life and Light for Heathen Women* 1, no. 1 (March 1869): 33.

[60] "Annual Meeting," *Life and Light for Heathen Women* 1, no. 1 (March 1869): 7-8.

[61] See "Letter from Bitlis," *Life and Light for Heathen Women* 1, no. 3 (September 1869): 83-86; and "The Boarding School," *Life and Light for Heathen Women* 1, no. 4 (December 1869): 119.

[62] These comprised schools at Harpoot (Armenia), Eski Zagra (Bulgaria), Aintab (Turkey), and Mardin (Turkey). See *Life and Light for Heathen Women* 1, no. 5 (March 1870): 172. See also Reeves-Ellington.

numbering four hundred millions,—tenfold the population of these United States."[63] Fundamentally, Women's Board members' sense of themselves as Americans was wrapped up in their membership within a broader spiritual and temporal empire of women—whose work might follow upon or help precipitate the apparently divine "opening" of "mighty empires" in Africa, Asia, and central Europe. And they often worked in partnership with their British Protestant counterparts, whose own "women's work for women" would variously advance, transcend, and subvert British imperial imperatives.[64]

These women experienced their world in terms similar to those by which Ann Stoler has urged scholars to reevaluate the nineteenth century—as "made up not of nation-building projects alone but of compounded colonialisms and as shaped by multinational philanthropies, missionary movements, discourses of social welfare and reform, and traffics in people (women in particular) that ran across state-archived paper trails."[65] The Americans' cartography brings such self-perceptions into vivid relief: American Board mission women, as the "highest type of womanhood," might lead their "degraded" sisters by example and aid in institutions like Inanda Seminary, spreading beacons of American Protestant light into a world of darkness. Quite literally, their map depicts the United States as a golden icon, with only a few exceptional spots in the west—"Protestant" regions of the world are color-coded as yellow, and areas of American Board evangelism are marked with gold stars. Those dominated by the Greek Orthodox Church are striped red; those denoted Roman Catholic, solid red. Regions considered "Mohammedan" are colored green, while the rest of the globe is swathed in brown —to indicate "heathenism."

Obviously, there are multiple factual flaws with their schema. To start, this golden United States effaces all evidence of Catholics, Jews, non-believers, and practitioners of other religions, aside from splashes of brown to reflect Native Americans in the west. The "heathen" brown, moreover, lumps together and so disregards a range of African religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, and other faiths. But then, this map was less about demographic realities than about an imagined community of the faithful, less about differentiating between the beliefs of others than about forging universally workable evangelical models to convert them. In such a schema it was nonetheless the case that some found African "heathenism" of another order than Hinduism, and found both of these on a different plane than other forms of Christianity or Islam. In 1871, the Annual Report of the Women's Board noted, "Missionaries who have spent years in Southern India inform us that the Zulus of South Africa, in comparison with the people of India, are sunk in ignorance and barbarism."[66] As one missionary to Armenia explained to a colleague from Natal, her students "are not heathen, but nominal Christians. We do not have to clear away the rubbish as among the Zulus."[67] And the aforementioned Constantinople reverend complained that parents failed to transmit Islam properly, passing along only its "sensual" and "degrading" cultural elements—but in so critiquing the religion, he implicitly suggested that it was a theology which it was possible to practice properly.[68] On the other hand, girls

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[63] *Life and Light for Heathen Women* 1, no. 5 (March 1870): 165-166.

[64] See Patricia Grimshaw and Peter Sherlock, "Women and Cultural Exchanges," in Etherington, ed., *Missions and Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 184-185.

[65] Ann Laura Stoler, "Tense and Tender Ties: The Politics of Comparison in North American History and (Post) Colonial Studies," in Stoler, ed., *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 55.

[66] "Third Annual Report of the Women's Board of Missions," 1871, p. 7. Bound with 1869-1870 issues of *Life and Light for Heathen Women,* Killie Campbell Africana Library, Durban.

[67] "Echo from Pittsburgh," *Life and Light for Heathen Women* 1 no. 4 (December 1869): 130.

[68] Annual Meeting," *Life and Light for Heathen Women* 1, no. 1 (March 1869): 7.

at schools in India, the Ottoman Empire, and Natal all resided in gold-star places within regions that had not yet alchemized. Their educations therefore embodied a common sense of radiant possibility for the American women who regarded their relative positions in the world.

Yet matters of race overshadowed and overdetermined their view of the world. The Board had initially pursued an African mission in part as an act of contrition for the slave trade.[69] Lucy Lindley, who pioneered "women's work for women" in her kitchen, had decided to embark upon African mission work after evangelizing to slaves on a Virginia plantation in the early 1830s.[70] And for the many members of the Women's Board who had come of age with American abolitionism, this was not the first "moral map" they would have seen. Another had graced the American Anti-Slavery Society's widely circulated pamphlet, "The Legion of Liberty! and Force of Truth, Containing the Thoughts, Words, and Deeds, of Some Prominent Apostles, Champions, and Martyrs."[71] In that abolitionist image, the darkness clouding the American South had signified not heathenism but slavery. The latter-day map thus implicitly referenced the country's dark recent past and situated the missionaries' present labors within an unfolding narrative of women's reformism. Central to this longer narrative lay white, northern American Protestant women's self-styling as representatives of the "highest form of womanhood" on a national and global stage—carrying a burden to protect and uplift women and children who had been literally or figuratively enslaved. Their work with families in Natal would be shot through with the contradictions that such a burden carried.

"It Tries One to the Very Soul": Women's Work at Inanda Seminary

The career of Inanda Seminary's first principal would coincide with, and inform, the elaboration of all-female boarding institutions across the Americans' "benevolent empire" and throughout the British Empire, the slow growth of formal secondary schooling in colonial Natal, and the creeping involvement of the colonial state in funding and overseeing schooling for Natal's Africans and Indians. But upon her arrival in Natal in late 1868, Mary Edwards seemed ill-placed to achieve the transformations that the American Zulu Mission had hoped that her school would engender. She was a middle-aged, childless widow from the American Midwest, with little knowledge of the political or cultural contexts into which her school was intervening. She was the first unattached woman in a male-dominated mission and an American in a British settler colony. She was charged with providing an English-medium education on a Holyoke model to students coming from a range of educational backgrounds, few of whom could communicate with her when they arrived. And she was to do so under conditions of extreme economy. As a matter of necessity and a principle of her pedagogy, Edwards thus demanded a rigid conformity to collective routines and routinely delegated significant responsibility to individual pupils—employing girls as translators, pupil-teachers, cooks, cleaners, farmers, and seamstresses within a practically self-sufficient institution.

Born Mary Kelly in 1829 in a small town outside of Dayton, Ohio, Edwards would die at Inanda Seminary nearly a century later. The fourth of eight children born to a Massachusetts Quaker industrialist and his wife, Mary Kelly grew up working in her father's cotton factory for nine months of the year and attending school each winter. As a teenager, she began teaching at a country school and decided to pursue further training at the Cooper Female Academy, a new boarding high school in

[69] See Duke, 140.

[70] See Smith, 57.

[71] Frontispiece in *The Legion of Liberty! and Force of Truth, Containing the Thoughts, Words, and Deeds, of Some Prominent Apostles, Champions, and Martyrs* (New York: American Anti-Slavery Society, 1847; 1837).

Dayton—a plan about which her father was none too thrilled. He gave her only five dollars toward her schooling, which she bundled with a small gift from her grandfather and the money she had earned teaching to put herself through one semester, whereupon she had to take a break to earn more money. At the academy, Kelly followed a liberal arts course "designed to be complete in all the branches of education usually taught in the first schools for females," and she earned top marks in subjects including "moral science," geometry, ancient and modern history, government, and composition.[72] But she struggled financially until the principal gave her a loan, enabling her to graduate in 1851—at which point her father repaid half of it. After resuming her work at local schools, Kelly applied for a position at a new school in Troy, Ohio, in 1853. There she secured both a post teaching high school Latin and a husband—the gruff, limping, and kind school superintendent, William Edwards, whom she married two years later, when he was forty-four and Kelly twenty-seven. She served as his assistant at Troy until his sudden death in August 1867 of what Mary Kelly Edwards called a "stoppage of his bowels." A month later, Edwards wrote to the American Board asking if she might, "if my age was no hindrance," serve as a foreign missionary, and by January 1868 Clark had appointed her principal of the new girls' school at Inanda. That August, after reading up about the "Zooloos" in missionary literature, she boarded a ship with her worldly possessions packed into forty boxes—including complete sets of furniture for her classroom, bedroom, and parlor at Inanda, a sewing machine, and a cast-iron stove.[73] Three months later she arrived in Port Natal, whence she boarded an ox wagon to her new home at Inanda, in a ten-room school building across from the Lindleys' house.[74]

Within little more than a year, this devout, childless thirty-nine-year-old widow had uprooted her life to open a radically new sort of school in a region about which she knew almost nothing, amongst people whose language she could not speak. Less than a month after her arrival, Edwards struggled to represent her experience. "I have been sitting here more than a half hour dipping my pen in the ink and thinking what shall I say and how shall I say it? If I tell you of the voyage, seasickness, the manner in which my time was spent and my friendship for passengers and sailors, it is an old, old story," she wrote to Secretary Clark. "If I say that I am filled with astonishment at the degree of cultivation, or rather Christianization among the natives, others have written enthusiastically of first-impressions and then in sorrow acknowledged that they were entirely mistaken. (For some inexplicable reason, a restraint, a painful restraint has come over me. I wrote a letter, but it must be rewritten, the second was totally different from the first and it must be rewritten, and so it continued until there are four in my portfolio…)."[75] All the conventions of the missionary epistolary genre felt insufficient in this uncertain landscape.

Over the Natal summer Edwards unloaded her forty boxes, reconstructed an Ohio schoolroom in the African countryside, and sent calls for students to the American station schools. One evening at the end of February, her students began to arrive, in a procession of ten girls, each carrying her belongings in a pillowcase on her head. They had walked from Amanzimtoti and Imfume stations, coming more than thirty-five to fifty miles to attend their new school. Three men and a boy accompanied them, although their identities and relationship with the travelers is unclear. A few days later, four more girls arrived from Umvoti, followed by four from Inanda and one from Umsunduzi.

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[72] See "Cooper Female Academy, Dayton, Ohio," and "Report of the Attendance of Miss Mary Kelly for the Quarter Ending May 15/50," ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[73] See Mary Edwards, Lawrence, Kansas, to Clark, Boston, 7 May 1868, ABC 15.4, volume 6; and Wood, 16.

[74] The foregoing biography draws upon Duke, 67-95. See also Edwards, Inanda, to Clark, Boston, 7 December 1868, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[75] Edwards, Inanda, to Clark, Boston, 7 December 1868, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

Nine more would enroll by July, and a few others attended sporadically in the first year.[76]

It is impossible to reconstruct the expectations that the seminary's first nineteen students harbored when, one morning at the beginning of March 1869, they settled onto the pedestal chairs of the double desks that had come from Troy, Ohio, along with their new teacher. Edwards, however, left a breathless record of frustration. "This is Thursday of the second week of school and this evening if I dared to I would engage passage on the first steamer homeward bound. Unless I can have help I am sure I shall not be here long. There are twenty girls, undisciplined, heedless," she began. "The truth is I am not fit to have charge of all these girls. I haven't strength to whip and not tact or patience to manage them without. But I was going to tell you that Helen, a great, fat, lazy girl, fifteen years old, an only and petted daughter has charge of the cooking this week, the corn has not been well cooked and I have been obliged—but what is the use of filling up a sheet with such stuff—'suffice it to say' that I am thoroughly out of patience." In the next line, as if exhaling, she concedes, "The girls are generally well disposed and are obedient but need constant looking after, but then all children do. After all they are much better than I expected. This sheet is not to be 'put on file' at the Missionary House. I am happier now than when I commenced writing."[77] The next day, she reassured Clark in an addendum, "I have had a delightful day, slept well after I told you my troubles and the scholars have been very good today—I will not leave this month. If anyone inquires about the Inanda school you are at liberty to say there are twenty as good, 'smart' girls in the school as you can find anywhere, that just now I am not discouraged, that there is room for improvement and I think they are improvable."[78]

Even within a canon of some very disjointed, melodramatic, and self-flagellating missionary reports to Boston, Edwards' early letters stand out for their anxious stream-of-consciousness style, revealing a woman who felt forever rushed and very much alone in her post, and for whom making contact with Boston was both a burden and relief. More than once she backtracked on her confessions of frustration, and even requested that the Board destroy her letters.[79] "Please don't be troubled if I write doleful letters sometimes, letters serve as safety valves and I am too selfish to bear all in silence," she insisted in January 1870.[80] As her biographer has suggested, Edwards may have taken comfort in her correspondence with the Board in Boston because she was so isolated within the mission.[81] She was the first woman that the American Board sent to Natal who had not been the wife, daughter, or sister of another missionary in the field; Kate Lloyd, the other widow then serving at Umvoti, would marry into the Lindley family in 1870. In 1871, a single woman named Laura Day came briefly to Inanda to assist Edwards before leaving for the Amanzimtoti Institute, and Miss Gertrude Hance came to Umvoti. In 1877, Miss Fannie Morris and Miss Martha Price joined Edwards at the seminary. But throughout this period, single women remained a novelty who struck many of their contemporaries as both noble and strange. "Said a Christian Zulu: 'I can understand how a missionary and his wife can leave friends & native land for a foreign field, but I wonder when I see young unmarried ladies leaving parents & friends & coming among strangers to live and labor. Only the love of Christ could induce them to do this!'" the men of the mission reported in 1871—perhaps using his reaction to underscore

[76] See Edwards, Inanda, to "My Dear Young Friends," ABC 15.4, volume 6; and Wood, 17.

[77] Edwards, Inanda, to Clark, Boston, 11 March 1869, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[78] Edwards, Inanda, to Clark, Boston, 12 March 1869, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[79] See also, for instance, Edwards, Inanda, to Clark, 20 December 1869, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[80] See Edwards, Inanda, to Clark, 19 January 1869, ABC 15.4, volume 6. See also Edwards, Inanda, to Chapin, Boston, 19 May 1870, where she again describes her letters as "a sort of safety valve."

[81] See Duke, 202-203.

their own ambivalence about the new women in their midst.[82] For single women comprised a problematic category, as they exerted considerable independent authority but could neither vote in mission meetings nor attend their business sessions.

In her first decade, Edwards found this combination of responsibility without authority crushing. She began threatening to leave as early as January 1870, after the mission denied her time off to study isiZulu. "If I could but talk to them!" she exclaimed of her pupils.[83] In the first term, she had been too consumed with the everyday exigencies of her school to learn more than a polite modicum of her students' home language, a limitation that would cause her tremendous stress and shape her pedagogy significantly. In the classroom, students were supposed to converse exclusively in English to master the tongue of both the benevolent empire and the British Empire—but early students' ability to speak English was in fact far more limited than the school's ambitions to be an English-medium high school would suggest. Although Edwards reported in April 1869 that "all but three read easy books in English," she added that Laurana Champion, "one of the most advanced" students, "understands English and speaks it a little"—revealing that Edwards could only communicate with her less advanced students at great strain, as she was "doing scarcely anything in the way of learning the language."[84] That September, she complained, "I cannot converse with them and do not attempt it with an interpreter. I am sure they would be glad to listen, the few times I have said anything, in English of course, some of them turned to Laurana with an earnest look saying Nini? Nini? [What? What?]"[85] As she could not readily instruct her predominantly isiZulu-speaking pupils in an English-language curriculum without some mediation, Edwards began to train Champion and two other advanced pupils to take over some of the classes. "I sit by and tell them what to do if they seem at a loss. I was a good deal amused one day; Laurana Champion was hearing the primer class read, one little girl did not read to please her and she spoke decisively, 'Ukumakwake! Gala futi [sic],' begin again, she did but let her voice fall where it should rise. 'Ukumakwake!' She read it again and again and then read it for her. I think she will make a good teacher, she keeps good order," Edwards explained.[86] The next month, she placed Champion and two other students in charge of daily religious instruction in isiZulu, hoping "that the conversion of these girls does not depend upon my ability to speak the language."[87]

Edwards had repeatedly asked the mission to send a woman conversant in isiZulu to assist in her evangelical work. In her first year, she wound up with more teenagers. Sarah Rood, whose parents ran the station at Amanzimtoti, was followed by fourteen-year-old Clara Lindley (who stayed with her parents in the evenings), and then by seventeen-year-old Katie Stone, who Edwards sent home to Ifafa in disappointment few weeks after her arrival. When the Board finally sent Laura Day to assist her in July 1871, Edwards took the appointment as an opportunity to ask Clark for a furlough.[88] She ended up staying on, but found she could not work effectively with Day, who departed for the Amanzimtoti Institute shortly after her arrival. Then Daniel and Lucy Lindley retired to the United States in April 1873, leaving the entire station of Inanda under the charge of Edwards and Reverend James Dube. As

[82] Pixley, et al., Umtwalume, to Clark, Boston, 3 June 1871, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[83] Edwards, Inanda, to Clark, Boston, 7 January 1870, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[84] Edwards, Inanda, to "My Dear Young Friends," 12 April 1869, ABC 15.4, volume 6; and Edwards, Inanda, to Clark, Boston, 18 October 1869, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[85] Edwards, Inanda, to Clark, Boston, 17 September 1869, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[86] Edwards, Inanda, to Clark, Boston, 17 September 1869, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[87] Edwards, Inanda, to Clark, Boston, 18 October 1869, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[88] Edwards, Inanda, to Clark, 20 July 1871, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

a woman and an African man, Edwards and Dube were both earning significantly less than the Lindleys had been, and collectively bore more responsibility. They relied on each other intensely. "I can say of him as he said of me in speaking to one of the Mission, 'She is my mother, she is my father, she is my right-hand,'" Edwards assured Clark in 1874.[89]

But for all of Dube's support, Edwards had had enough. When an American couple named the Pixleys replaced the Lindleys on the station, Edwards borrowed one hundred pounds from the mission treasury and boarded the next ship out, leaving the seminary under the control of the Lindleys' daughter Martha and the Kilbons, another American couple who stepped in temporarily to take her place. "Please don't scold," she wrote Clark from the shores of England in July 1874. "I am on my way home, but I promise to return soon."[90] The school's enrollment dropped precipitously during Edwards' self-declared furlough. That October, she confessed to Mrs. Hume of the Women's Board, "I secretly hoped some one would be found to take charge of the school and allow me to remain at home… Why will not some of the ladies—young ladies—whose early home was in Natal and who know the language well, go out and take charge of the school? I do not know the language and never will."[91] Over the next year, Edwards stayed in her hometown of West Milton, Ohio, where she cared for the children of her recently deceased brother—one of two siblings she had lost since receiving her appointment to Inanda—and vacillated about her future plans.[92] "I can't feel that I acted honorably towards the Board or towards the school or Mission in Natal in remaining away or in leaving the school just as I did. But I sadly needed rest," Edwards wrote Clark in December 1875.[93] By that point, she was helping Clark look for a replacement. When none was forthcoming, Edwards agreed to return, departing Ohio in May 1876.

Mary Edwards would never return to the United States, dying in her bed at the Seminary in 1927, at ninety-eight years old. But she would struggle to leave her post at the school again as soon as Fannie Morris and Martha Price arrived in 1878. As Morris recounted to Clark,

> Two or three days before time for the school to begin, Mrs. E. surprised us all very much by saying, that she had come to the conclusion that it would be better for Miss Price and I to take the school, that we would do much better if she was away also, therefore consequently she would withdraw. Miss Price and I objected strongly to her doing that. Then she gave us another reason for doing so, that she was very tired and needed a change. We told her we would take the school for the term, and she could go away and have a rest, and then return. She would not listen to our persuasion, however, but removed her things from the Seminary building to the very small and inconvenient room in the Pixleys' house. This was a great trial both to Miss Price and me, and it was with difficulty that we restrained the feeling that our being sent from America was a mistake. So far at least it seemed only to have done harm, for we felt that our coming had driven Mrs. Edwards away from her home and work.[94]

After much insistence that Edwards' place was at the school, Morris reported, she agreed to leave the seminary and instead evangelize women in surrounding "kraals"—as missionaries referred to the non-Christian homesteads surrounding the station. She found this work important, as she believed that "women's work outside the schools is much needed in Natal." But she also found her ambiguously

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[89] Edwards, Inanda, to Clark, Boston, 24 February 1874, ABC 15.4, volume 8.

[90] Edwards, "On Board the 'Danube,'" to Clark, Boston, 16 July 1874, ABC 15.4, volume 8.

[91] Edwards, Troy, Ohio, to Mrs. Hume, Boston, 27 October 1874

[92] See Edwards, West Milton, Ohio, to Clark, Boston, 14 June 1875, ABC 15.4, volume 8; and Edwards, West Milton, Ohio, to Clark, Boston, 2 November 1875, ABC 15.4, volume 8.

[93] Edwards, West Milton, Ohio, to Clark, Boston, 13 December 1875, ABC 15.4, volume 8.

[94] Fannie Morris, Inanda, to Clark, Boston, 11 July 1879, ABC 15.4, volume 8.

defined and underappreciated position frustrating.

> They can do a work among the women that it is impossible for a man to do, but until this fact is recognized by the brethren, it will be much better not to send any more single ladies, unless they are the daughters of the missionaries now in the field, for it tries one to the very soul, after having left a position at home where they felt they were doing acceptable work for the master to go where they thought there was a greater need, only to find that there was no recognized need. I requested we be removed from the seminary and located elsewhere, at the last meeting, but they refused my request, not unkindly, they were very kind, but they could not think of any other place where I could work. Then I told them that I knew I was not needed at the seminary, and I would not return there for fear that Mrs. E. would again withdraw, and if there was no other work in the mission, I should leave it, for I could not be happy away from my home unless I could feel I was doing a work that could not be as well done by a native. Then they gave me permission to work where I chose until there was a need at the seminary.[95]

Morris returned to the United States less than two years later, on account of poor health in the subtropical climate.[96] One suspects that she suffered from more than the heat.

"Like a Family": Domesticating Authority

Edwards, on the other hand, navigated her ambiguous position in Natal by insisting that her school was her home. From the start, to an extent that was unusual amongst her peers, Edwards sought to bridge the social chasms between Americans and Africans, believing that everyday intimacies would facilitate conversion. "I have nothing locked, my own provisions are where they could easily help themselves, they come into my rooms, I frequently send them from the school room, and nothing has been missed, they even bring the pins they find. I have never told them to. Miss Rood and I now take our meals with them and I have felt much more at home and we seem more like a family," Edwards reported early on.[97] Her colleague and neighbor Daniel Lindley chastised her for becoming too intimate with local women after Edwards had, "in a laughing way, told them that one of the old women of the station had lain upon my bed to show another old woman, just from the kraal, the use of my bed."[98] Lindley also opposed her initial suggestion to study isiZulu with James Dube.[99] Similarly, she reported to Clark, "There was a great deal said to dissuade me from taking my meals with my girls. After all my reasons were swept away I finally said I came here to do these people all the good possible, if I can do these girls more good by sacrificing the comfort and pleasure of sitting with you at your table I must do it." Lest he worry she was too comfortable, she hastened to add, "It is very far from being an inviting dining room… When Miss Rood and I sat down to drink our first cup of tea, I had scarcely commenced until I was obliged to leave the room sick." Moreover, she continued, "Although I eat with them, jump the rope and play… whatever games they may have, persons, white persons, visiting the school say the order and respect are wonderful. The workers at this station say the girls love their mother at Inanda so much that they are forgotten."[100]

But assuming the role of her pupils' "mother at Inanda" was not only about stomaching teatime and jumping rope. It also demanded that she assert disciplinary authority over a set of other women's children; as an American woman who could barely speak isiZulu, this could be a delicate matter. When the mother of one of her students showed up in the school kitchen to scold her daughter for fighting, Edwards escorted her from the building and enlisted Daniel Lindley to lecture the student's father. A few days later, the mother returned to apologize, and Edwards "took occasion to inform her

[95] Fannie Morris, Inanda, to Clark, Boston, 11 July 1879, ABC 15.4, volume 8.

[96] See Wood, 171.

[97] Edwards, Inanda, to Clark, Boston, 8 May 1869, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[98] Edwards, Imfume, to Clark, Boston, 15 June 1869, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[99] See Edwards, Imfume, to Clark, Boston, 15 June 1869, ABC 15.4, volume 6; and Duke, 191-192.

[100] Edwards, Inanda, to Clark, Boston, 14 June 1869, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

that I was in the place of father and mother and could not allow any one to abuse the girls, if they do wrong she must come to me and I will attend to the matter. On some accounts I am not sorry it occurred; the girls seem to understand me better and look as if they can trust me." Shortly thereafter, another father "assured me that if the girls needed punishing I need not fear that I would offend the parents for they sometimes have to punish." At Daniel Lindley's advice, Edwards later whipped four troublesome students.[101] Others she felt compelled to expel, including the "great, fat, lazy Helen" she had mentioned in her early report. Edwards called Helen's father, who lived on the Inanda reserve, to the school one morning to break the news. He replied, "It makes my heart sore," but agreed to call his daughter home later that day. But in the afternoon, Helen's mother, Mawele, came to Lucy Lindley, who sent her to Edwards' room. She was in tears, and said that she and her husband had both cried over the expulsion of their only daughter. "She will be ruined at home," Mawele reportedly insisted. Edwards agreed to keep Helen on. "It is not an easy matter to get rid of them. It is a great disgrace to be sent home from school," Edwards explained to Clark.[102] Two other fathers refused to speak to her after she sent their daughters home for misbehavior, but both later forgave her and sent younger daughters to the school. As one father explained of his decision, despite his anger, "I can't have her stay out of school."[103]

Amakholwa fathers were especially concerned that their children attend Edwards' school.[104] Edwards placed Dalita Hawes under the charge of Laurana Champion, daughter of George Champion and niece of the aforementioned Laura Nembula ("Laurana" was the diminutive form of her aunt's Christian name).[105] Laura and Ira Adams Nembula's daughter Louisa was also among the first cohort, as was Nomagugu Dube, the eldest daughter of James Dube.[106] Both Ira Nembula and James Dube were ordained in 1870, after which Nembula would serve as pastor at Amanzimtoti, and Dube at Inanda. All four of these fathers—Thomas Hawes, George Champion, Ira Adams Nembula, and James Dube—had grown up and risen to prominence in the early American Zulu Mission's paternalistic fold. Hawes' overwrought farewell speech to Daniel and Lucy Lindley upon their 1873 retirement to the United States emphasizes the central role of American Board families and institutions in their families' strategies:

> Let us review the past a little; it will do us good. Turn to the old deserted home under the Inanda mountain. There is no spot on earth like that one to us. There we were boys when our father came with his wagon and commenced building his house. There we gradually saw one and then another believing, and building on the station. There we were taught and felt our hearts growing very warm with love to God and to His Son.
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> A few weeks ago I rode past that beloved and beautiful old place. My heart was full of old memories. I saw the bush where we went and made our first prayer. We hardly knew what made us pray. We were naked, ignorant, herd-boys. I said, 'Who is this, now, riding on a good horse with a saddle and bridle? He is well dressed so that this cold wind is not felt.' Verily, it is the same herd-boy! What a contrast! Today he is the pastor of the church at Esidumbini. And where is he going? To see his children, who are in two fine, large boarding-schools: The one at Amanzimtote, the other here at Inanda. Did we, in those days when we knew not how to hold a book, knew not even which side was up or which was down, think it would be all like this today? No, really no! 'Goodness and mercy have followed us.' See how we have increased. Our families are larger. The people, far and near, remark

[101] Edwards, Inanda, to Clark, Boston, 8 May 1869, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[102] Edwards, Inanda, to Clark, Boston, 17 September 1869, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[103] Edwards, Inanda, to Clark, Boston, 7 January 1870, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[104] See Edwards, Inanda, to Clark, Boston, 8 May 1869, ABC 15.4, volume 6; and Edwards, Inanda, to Clark, Boston, 19 June 1870, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[105] See Edwards, Inanda, to "My Dear Young Friends," 12 April 1869, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[106] See Edwards, Inanda, to Clark, Boston, 11 March 1869, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

> that death has come so seldom that we are every day exclaiming, 'How very wonderful!' Look into our houses; see what comforts: see our wagons and our cattle! Our cup is running over.[107]

For men like Hawes, whose connections with American missionaries had enabled them to obtain land and secure a future for their families in an uncertain political landscape, schooling and generational progress were synonymous. Thus Edwards, serving provisionally "in the place of father and mother" for their daughters, possessed tremendous power. Some *amakholwa* daughters, however, disagreed with their fathers' educational decisions: Nomthemba Champion, for example, ran away from the school in March 1874.[108]

But Edwards' pupils over the first decade in fact comprised a small number of the "First-fruits of Believing Parents" that Bridgman had envisioned—girls who were sufficiently prepared for a Holyoke-style curriculum, and who would go on to teach—within a much larger and more unwieldy group of boarding and day scholars. These latter students came from a range of backgrounds, and by 1874 included the young sons of the African preachers James Dube and Benjamin Hawes (Thomas Hawes' brother) and the children of the American missionaries the Pixleys.[109] They also included the young sons of Chief Mqhawe, who Edwards courted heavily in hopes that he might send his daughters to the school. Over dinner in her dining room one evening in November 1876, Edwards reminded the chief of the advantages that his Inanda education had conferred upon a son now attending high school at Amanzimtoti.[110] By 1880, none of his daughters had come to Inanda, but Edwards had acquired six more young sons of Mqhawe and Chief Ndhlokolo, to whom her pupils taught the alphabet. "I shall ask for their daughters," she promised Clark. "I have asked, and Umqawe said I might have two or three, but their mothers would not consent—they need them to take care of the babies or watch the mealie gardens or to dig."[111] Thus as much power as Edwards possessed in her dealings with *amakholwa* fathers, she also remained in a position of supplication with respect to traditionalists, whose daughters the school would more aggressively pursue in subsequent decades.

Whether relating to *amakholwa* or traditionalists, Edwards was uncomfortably cognizant of the relations of dependence that pervaded missionary-African relations in a settler colony. "I don't know that the black race will ever feel that the white people are really their friends, there seems to be the feeling that white people are trying to get everything away from them and they must look out for No. 1 and get all they can," she told Clark in 1878.[112] British settlers, she believed, were not doing their part to improve this relationship, as they were more eager to support schools for the English poor than to invest in African education. "Christian Kaffirs don't make such servants and the Eng. like and money expended for any other purpose is worse than thrown away" from their point of view, she had explained to Clark the previous year, maintaining that "I try to teach the girls that labor is honorable and that one who is truly a Christian will work."[113]

Here Edwards understated her case. From the start, Inanda Seminary ran on student labor. In addition to her reliance on advanced pupils as teachers, Edwards assigned each student a domestic task

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[107] Smith, 419.

[108] Edwards to Clark, Boston, 16 March 1874, ABC 15.4, volume 8.

[109] Edwards to Clark, Boston, 16 March 1874, ABC 15.4, volume 8.

[110] Edwards, Inanda, to Mrs. Lawson, Boston, 13 November 1876, ABC 15.4, volume 49.

[111] Edwards, Inanda, to Clark, Boston, 16 June 1880, ABC 15.4, volume 49.

[112] Edwards, Inanda, to Houghton, Boston, 17 January 1878, ABC 15.4, volume 49.

[113] Edwards, Inanda, to Clark, Boston, 27 September 1877, ABC 15.4, volume 8.

each week: One or two would cook, and the others would wash dishes, grind corn, and make samp. Other students would be charged with fetching water and wood, filling the kerosene lamps, and cleaning the schoolroom.[114] They were also responsible for sewing and washing their own Western-styled dresses; and Edwards paid talented seamstresses to stitch dresses for "heathen children" attending the kraal schools on the station. In the school's first few years, these earnings went to their families and to "support the Missionary Cause," for which Edwards took up a regular collection.[115] Upon her return from her self-imposed furlough in 1876, Edwards elaborated this routine to new extremes. "The girls do all the work. Ten girls to cook, 8 girls for the dining room, 3 to carry water, one to sweep school room, one to sweep verandahs, one to keep the grounds clean, two to scour knives & forks, & one in each of the 5 rooms to keep them tidy & one is Stewardess, whose duty it is to see that each room is tidy, that the bells are rung at the right time. The bells are at 7 for breakfast—8 – 10.5—1.5—quarter past 3—5.5 for supper, 7 for study, quarter past 8 for entering their rooms, 8.5 all noises to cease," Edwards informed a member of the Women's Board. "The girls do a good deal of work which is considered man's work at home. Transplanting trees, spading the garden, cutting grass with sickle, cleaning the paths etc. For this outside work we pay them one penny per hour & they buy their books in this way. Their parents provide clothing for them. These last items indicate a forward movement, an advance. There is no religious interest. On this account my heart is heavy many times."[116] And yet, out of all of these bells and tasks, Edwards was cultivating a religious adherence to routines of bourgeois domesticity amongst her pupils. As Esther Dube described it in 1878, daily life at Inanda appeared as a sequence of domestic trappings, rules, and collective activities. "We have our bed rooms and sheets and blankets. On Saturday we wash our clothes and prepare them for Sunday. We have machines to wash with and tubs. We have our kitchen and dining room. We have rules to help us. 1st rule. We must not whisper in the dining-room or in the school room or in the Bed rooms at night. 2nd rule. We must not be tardy when the school bells ring—every bell when rung. 3rd rule. We must not speak Zulu until 4 o'clock. 4th rule. Must comb. 5th rule. We must not wear clothes which need mending."[117]

But at the same time that they deferred to Edwards, the girls forged their own spheres of peer leadership and even subversion, as we shall see in the next chapter. They learned, in short, new ways of connecting, conforming, and commanding— all of which they would deploy in a network of *amakholwa* institutions undergirded by women's labors, again iterated in a familial idiom.

[114] Edwards, Inanda, to "My Dear Young Friends," 12 April 1869, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[115] Edwards, Inanda, to Clark, Boston, 17 September 1869, ABC 15.4, volume 6.

[116] Edwards, Inanda, to Miss Dorn, Boston, 30 October 1876, ABC 15.4, volume 49.

[117] Esther Dube, Inanda, to Miss Bradley, Boston, 19 February 1878, ABC 15.4, volume 48.