

## Merchants and Missionaries in Angola\*

The assumption that is commonly made about Protestants in the Portuguese world is that they were seen as subversive foreigners. This assumption may prove to be partially accurate when the history of the great Angolan rebellion of 1961 is written and Benedict Schubert, author of an Alemannic book on the Church and the war in Angola<sup>1</sup>, will no doubt have an opinion on the subject. The assumption may also prove to be partially true when the history of the authoritarian colonialism of Dr Salazar in the 1940s is written and Didier Péclard, author of a Gallic thesis on the Swiss Mission to Angola<sup>2</sup>, will surely have an opinion on the matter. And it is generally assumed that the Portuguese already perceived the Protestants to be dangerous intruders when the Baptist Missionary Society spilled over from King Leopold's Congo and began proselytizing in Portuguese Congo in the 1870s. Indeed it would appear that the Portuguese State lent the pioneering Catholics, led by Father Barroso, a gunboat of the Portuguese Royal Navy when they tried to establish the first modern Catholic mission in Angola. The aim of the old monarchical imperialists in Lisbon was to preserve a Portuguese national identity in their sphere of influence during the « scramble for Africa ». In small part they aimed to do so by means of Catholic persuasion and propaganda.

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\* The primary material on which this contribution is based are in the archives of the Mission philafricaine which are held by the Alliance missionnaire évangélique suisse in Winterthur. These archives have been fruitfully used by Didier Péclard for his master's dissertation for the University of Lausanne, *Ethos missionnaire et esprit du capitalisme : la Mission philafricaine en Angola*, 1993, mimeo., which he has kindly allowed me to use freely. The published material on the Churches in Angola is extensive. The most recent overview is L. HENDERSON, *A Igreja em Angola. Um rio com varias correntes*, Lisbon, Editorial Além-Mar, 1990. A survey by a former secretary to the conference of Protestant Missionary Society is J.T. TUCKER, *Angola : The Land of the Blacksmith Prince*, London, 1933. Details of the less known activities of the Brethren can be found in the works of F.S. ARNOT, *Garenganze, or Mission Work in Central Africa*, London, James E. Hawkins, 1889, and *Missionary Travels in Central Africa*, Bath, Office of Echoes service, 1914.

1. B. SCHUBERT, *Der Krieg und die Kirche. Macht, Ohnmacht und Hoffnung in Angola, 1961-1991*, Luzern, Edition Exodus, 1997.
2. D. PÉCLARD, *Ethos missionnaire...*, *op. cit.*

### Catholics, Protestants and colonialism

The simple thesis of Catholic support of, and Protestant antagonism to, the Portuguese cause has two defects. Neither would seem to stand up very well to scrutiny. Firstly the evidence of perpetual harmony between the Portuguese and the Catholics is not sustained by the historical evidence. The Catholic Church was not able to provide a patriotic « national » entry into Angola for the Portuguese. Gunboats or no gunboats, the Barroso mission to Portuguese Congo was not a success. Nor indeed was the progress of the Catholic Church in Portugal itself. In 1910 the Church was persecuted and almost outlawed at home and abroad by Portugal's republican imperialists. The Portuguese Catholic Church was threatened first by republican-style freemasonry and later by fascist-style nationalism. The threat of foreign Protestantism was the least of the Church's worries. Moreover the great majority of the Catholic mission effort in Angola came from France, Italy, Spain, Germany and elsewhere and did not come from Portugal. It was not until 1940, sixteen years after the coup d'État which brought Catholic soldiers to power in Portugal, that Salazar's new corporative State was able to agree a Concordat with the Vatican which preserved Lusitanian patriotism while at the same time accommodating the demands of the Catholic Church. But even if the « secular » clergy which served the white parishes and came from Portugal was supportive of the imperial design, the « regular » clergy which served the black missions and came from beyond Portugal was as ambivalent about much of Portugal's colonizing activity as any of the « subversive » Protestants.

If the thesis of Portuguese Catholic harmony is flawed, so too is the thesis of Portuguese Protestant antagonism. The evidence of a deep, persistent, hostility between Protestants and Portuguese does not hold up in the generation of the 1880s during which Portugal's most patriotic imperial heroes began the long process of exploring and conquering Angola. Indeed, some, at least, of the foreign missionaries seem to have been positively keen to celebrate the prowess of the explorers and to cheer at the planting of the flag. But the co-operation between Portuguese and Protestants goes back much further. Although the seventeenth-century Dutch settlers who remained in Angola, and fathered great families such as the Van Dunems, were Roman Catholics, many of the Dutch merchants and seamen were Calvinists. Yet they too were integrated into the colonial fabric, and indeed some of the famous Capuchin priests who converted Angolans to Catholicism travelled home to Rome *via* Amsterdam on Calvinist ships. Likewise in the nineteenth century co-operation between Portuguese colonizers and Protestants was the norm. The Scottish Presbyterian traveller David Livingstone was a particularly vivid witness to the mutual respect which Portuguese and Protestants showed to one another in Angola. While re-writing his diaries, which had been lost in a ship-wreck, Livingstone enjoyed the comfortable hospitality of a great colonial planter of the Ambaca highlands and admired his estates without ever once mentioning that he was one of Angola's leading dealers in slaves. Pragmatic cohabitation epitomized dealings between whites in proto-colonial and early colonial Angola.

The pragmatism which united the white business community, upon whose network of merchant footpaths Portuguese colonization was based,

and the missionaries who brought Protestantism into Angola can be closely documented in the 1880s, around the time of the partition over which Bismarck presided in Berlin in 1884. Any full understanding of the role of early Protestant missionaries in Angola would, of course, need to concentrate on the spiritual dimension and the way in which European religious concepts matched African ones. It would also need to look in detail at the relations between missions and the colonial authorities. But it is a third aspect of the spread of missions, the one concerning the economic environment in which they operated and their relations with surrounding producers and merchants, that is the focus of this very brief paper.

### **The colonial economy and the penetration of Christianity**

The connection between merchants and missionaries is an old one and for a hundred years campaigners against the slave trade believed that the way to end the abomination of slavery was to introduce new forms of wealth, new modes of production, and new types of labour incentive to Africa. David Livingstone, who visited Luanda in 1854, believed that « legitimate trade » would bring an end to that in human slaves by opening up the continent to new slave-free opportunities. Many traders were less sure of the benefits of missionaries to their profit-making ventures. Mary Kingsley visited Luanda in 1893 and thought it the most beautiful city in West Africa. She did not, however, share the view that missionaries and merchants had compatible objectives. She was emphatically the friend of the merchants and of their coastal sea-captains, and she was convinced that mission work spoiled the activities of the merchants. In her polemical writings the merchants were the true bearers of « civilisation » and the missionaries ruined the « natives ». In Luanda, however, her thesis is not fully born out and the harmony between missionaries and merchants had temporarily been enhanced in 1885 by the activities of a remarkable young man of twenty-six, Heli Chatelain. He was at home in both the mission environment and the merchant one, and the sea-captains who plied up and down the coast were as much his friends as they were Mary Kingsley's.

Nearly all the Protestant missionaries who arrived in Angola during the 1880s found themselves to be as dependent as Livingstone had been on the hospitality of merchants. The merchants and their bush traders had created a reliable network of communications across Angola, into the Zambezi and Congo basins, and even beyond to the spheres of influence of the South African Boers and the East African Swahili. It was these merchant paths that enabled Protestants to cover hundreds of miles to relative comfort and safety, all the while enjoying the hospitality of Portugal's commercial pioneers, not least of them António da Silva Porto. Protestant missions spread into Angola from the north, the east, and the south as well as from the west where the mission to which Heli Chatelain was initially attached started at Luanda and quickly headed for the more fertile and less pestilential highlands.

### **Bishop Taylor and the Luanda mission**

The Luanda mission was a non-denominational mission which was initially supported not by Portuguese traders but by the benevolence of a British trading and planting firm, Newton Carnegie & Company. The mission was extraordinary in its size and excentric in its ideology, for although Protestant it expected to survive in the old Catholic mendicant tradition. The members were an ill-assorted band of forty beggar-evangelists who came mainly from America and who landed in Angola in 1885. Their leader was an irrepressible Methodist, Bishop William Taylor, whose dynamic energy, persuasive powers, and dictatorial management style enabled him to establish mission posts along the west coast of Africa in American Liberia, in French Equatorial Africa, in King Leopold's Congo as well as in Portuguese Angola. The principle which underlay the enterprise, in theory if not always in practice, was that each mission was to be « self-sustaining ». In other words the missionaries had to live off the land rather than expect hand-outs from their home congregations in Europe or the United States.

The advance scout of the Taylor mission, and later its deputy station manager in Luanda, was Heli Chatelain who came from the watch-making district of Switzerland and had a sharp eye for business deals. Chatelain's account of Taylor's arrival in Angola sheds a wryly humorous light both on the colony and on the mission. The American band brought no less than forty tons of provisions to set themselves up before their self-sustaining ideology could take root. They naturally feared that they would experience great difficulty in clearing their stock of trade goods through Portuguese colonial customs. It was the task of young Chatelain to overcome the bureaucratic hurdles. He did so by quickly establishing close friendships with anyone of importance in the tiny business world of Luanda including customs officers and policemen. In particular he soon discovered that everyone in Luanda was more or less dependent on the English trading company. Mr Newton became Chatelain's guardian angel and when the much heralded expedition arrived, it was Mr Newton himself who waved his wand over the crates and got them through customs with minimal difficulty.

The merchants of Luanda not only helped the Taylor mission to do negotiate with the colonial bureaucracy. They also facilitated relations between the Protestants and the established Catholic hierarchy. Chatelain's closest ally was a Catholic priest, albeit one who had lost his preaching licence, but Chatelain also established adequate working relations with the official priesthood. When Chatelain advised the secretary to the Roman Catholic bishop of the impending arrival of nineteen Protestant evangelists together with their wives and children, the news was received with phlegmatic acceptance. The Catholic Church, like everyone else in Luanda, was partially dependent on the firm of Newton & Co for its material well-being. The bishop's office had little option but to express a moderately cordial welcome of an enterprise apparently blessed by Mr Newton. The young Swiss Protestant was offered a glass of the Catholic bishop's wine. It was, he said, the best that he had ever tasted in his life. Relations between Catholics and Protestants were not hostile and both were associated with, and to a real degree dependent on, the colonial merchants including the

wine-merchants who formed the backbone of Portugal's *raison d'être* in Africa.

The merchant community, however, was not long in revising its opinion of the Taylor mission. The commercial city soon recognized that the mission expected to live off generosity and credit. The self-sufficient Protestants resembled mendicant friars more than they resembled worker priests. Chatelain himself noted in his copious diaries all the houses where he was able to obtain free lunches and dinners from merchants who enjoyed his cultured company. An expedition of forty expatriates which the Methodist Church in America had refused to endorse or finance was a much greater burden on the host colony than a single rather charming young Swiss bachelor. Very soon the merchants rescinded their welcome and Newton & Co refused to grant the Taylor mission any further credit to sustain even the very spartan life-style of the evangelists. Chatelain himself slept on a bare rented floor until he became so ill and boney that the expedition's doctor felt compelled to lend him his own personal camp-bed on which to convalesce. Many of the missionary party suffered from acute dysentery but could not afford medicines and claimed stoically that to take medicine was to challenge the will of God and cheat the death that he had chosen for them. Chatelain himself came near to death, but his merchant friends secured for him a bed in the Maria Pia hospital and even persuaded the Governor-General to wave the hospital bills since Chatelain had no money and lived off charity. The Luanda merchants were unable, however, to raise the price of a steamer passage to Europe for Chatelain. Instead they found him a free passage to Benguela, in south Angola, where the climate was deemed better for a convalescent.

### **Self-reliance and the worker-missionary**

The concept of an industrial mission of craftsmen and traders who could be independent of foreign subsidies and who could build a chain of self-reliant Christian communities across Angola did not work well. Potentially the greatest problem was alcohol which was the basis of so much of Africa's trade, particularly in the Latin colonies. When Bishop Taylor presented his project to the authorities, the Governor-General of Angola immediately told him that he would be unable to recruit bearers to carry his stores unless he offered to pay them with spirits, the cheapest of which would probably have been illicitly-distilled cane brandy with a potentially high level of noxious alcohol. Dealing in spirits would probably have offended even Taylor's pragmatic attitude to commerce as a means of survival. Moreover when Taylor had arrived in Angola he had decided to announce that all of his followers would become « Methodists » at the stroke of a pen, without the laborious teaching and testing that normally preceded conversion and confirmation. The only exceptions to the mass enrollment into Methodism were two Quakers, but they were unlikely to have been more accepting of the idea of trading in liquor than the Methodists. The problem anticipated by the Governor did not recede, however, and for trading stations in the bush « self-reliance » meant distilling local « fire-water », the type of raw spirits that had done so much to destroy indigenous culture and society on the North American frontier. Accusations arose over reports that the Pungo

Andongo mission, near the old royal capital of the Angola kingdom, had a « whisky » distillery on the premises. And the mission store was alleged to have offended against Victorian morality by installing a billiard table.

The two « legitimate » activities which kept the self-sufficient mission stations functioning for the next ten years were teaching and gardening. The evangelists, unable to survive in Luanda, set out to find the fertile country in the hinterland that Livingstone had so lyrically described. The several mission posts attempted to sustain themselves by offering school lessons to the children of traders. The numbers of children that were enrolled, even in the great market-town of Dondo, could usually be counted on the fingers of two hands, and when it was time to pay school fees children were liable to absent themselves dispelling the prospect of locally-earned money. Gardening therefore became the basis of self-reliance. The evangelists, however, were not robust, their diet was seriously inadequate, their health was often poor, several of them died or saw their children die. Like other colonists they tried to hire labour to work their plots for them. To attract them the mission had to offer payment in good American calico. Even the mission gardens could not escape the merchant nexus and ultimately the need for foreign support. In 1896 Bishop Taylor retired, the concept of self-reliance was dropped, and the Methodist Church of America formally adopted the Protestant mission stations of the Luanda hinterland. With foreign sponsorship the missions in the Malange district began to flourish, to win converts, and eventually to establish a prestigious high school which trained one of the « tendencies » among Angola's rival modernizing elites.

### **Swiss missionaries and Boer settlers**

The concept of establishing self-sufficient Christian communities in Angola did not die out immediately when the Malange mission was converted into a foreign-sponsored field of proselytizing. Twelve years after Chatelain had visited Benguela as a convalescent in 1885 he returned to Angola's southern harbour-city determined to try out for himself the ideals which had inspired the now retired Bishop Taylor. The problem of maintaining a balance between missionary idealism and merchant pragmatism had not, however, become any easier to resolve. By the time Chatelain arrived in Benguela in 1897 the slave trade had recovered so vigorously in Angola that some 4,000 slaves a year were being shipped out of the country. The aim of the new mission was to stem the free flow of this slave trade and create a chain of refuge hostels for escaped slaves which would stretch from Benguela through the great raiding grounds of the Ganguela peoples, across southern Angola, and into the basin of the Zambezi. Such was the dependency of missionaries on the merchants, and such was the dependency of the merchants on the sale of slaves, that no such chain of safe havens could ever be opened. Without ox-trails and bush stores mission penetration was virtually impossible. Chatelain's Swiss-American mission only ever set up one station. Far from being located in the remote hunting grounds of the slave catchers, it was located in the prime settler territory of the highland plateau. Instead of its best customers being free Africans its best customers were Boer immigrants from South Africa. The settler community at Caconda to which the mission was attached was an off shoot

of the much larger Boer colony of Humpata on Angola's southernmost plateau.

The dependence of the Swiss Mission on the Boer colony began from the moment when Chatelain landed at Benguela and found that rinderpest fever had decimated Angola's stock of oxen. He had a long wait before he could negotiate the hire of Boer waggons to haul his equipment through the coastal scrub and up the escarpment to Kalukembe, his chosen station site near Caconda. Once established the mission became a trading post that depended on its Boer customers for its economic viability. Had the mission side of the enterprise agreed to harbour slave refugees from the Boer farms the commercial side of the enterprise would have risked losing its business. This business thrived on Boer customers who had no direct access to suppliers in Europe and no network of international credit which enabled them to order good from abroad. Chatelain's business acumen, his ability to make credit deals with overseas suppliers, and his familiarity with settler requirements made his trading post moderately successful. He installed anvils and forges in a workshop in which Boer carts could be repaired. Mission artisans kept the transport system of southern Angola running and Chatelain's import and export business underpinned the mission finances. But trade was also the mission's Achilles heel. To remain viable and solvent the semi-self-sufficient mission had to at least temporarily play down the anti-slaving ideals of its initial sponsors – they, to the great chagrin of the Portuguese, had named the station Lincoln, after the American president who outlawed slavery in the United States.

Although Chatelain initially had little success in protecting captive Angolans from slavery he did nevertheless develop close commercial relations with his black African neighbours. He travelled round the villages with its own ox-cart buying beans and maize each season as the crops were harvested. The wares which he peddled were those which he would have seen at any road-side fair in his native Switzerland. Unlike all other traders he refused to sell wine and brandy but his mobile waggon-shop carried sugar, salt, cook-oil, dried meat and soap as its basic necessities. He also carried ironmongery, padlocks, spades, hoes, wire, traps, penknives and cutlery. His stock of crockery included cups, plates, casseroles and bowls. Vanity was catered for with ten different kinds of glass-bead, shirt and coat buttons, bracelets, ear-rings, belts and coloured kerchiefs. The range of textiles went from cotton prints and woollen blankets to shirts, trousers, coats and caps. The travelling bazaar was completed with supplies of flint, lead, gunpowder, medicines, sewing needles, matchsticks, mirrors, writing paper and mouth organs<sup>3</sup>.

A perambulating bean merchant with a forty-acre small-holding staffed by casual black labour from the neighbouring villages was no great threat to the Portuguese merchant community in Angola. But Chatelain was more than that. He was a missionary with world connections to America, Britain and continental Europe who still aspired to end the Angolan slave trade. In 1903 Chatelain feared that any time an « accident » might happen to him or to his mission station. He let it be known that should any violence occur, or should his mission be burnt down by the slave-raiders, full details of local trading conditions had been lodged with the Swiss consul in Lisbon. The Swiss report specified in particular the manner in which colonial and

3. See PÉCLARD, *op. cit.*: 92, citing a letter of 22 Jan. 1905.

military officials in Angola not only tolerated the slave trade but personally benefitted from it. By creaming off the share of slave profits a tour of duty in a harsh colony largely staffed by convicts could be made economically attractive.

### The crusade against slavery

When Chatelain revived his crusade against the slave trade he found that he had unexpected allies. His Boer customers, who prevented him from exposing their own labour practices, were conducting a different campaign against Portuguese labour-recruiting practices. A simple explanation would have been Boer resentment at competition from slave-buyers working for the off-shore plantations of São Tomé which drove up the price of slaves formerly sold to local farmers for derisory prices. Chatelain, however, suspected a deeper conspiracy behind the Boer criticisms of the Portuguese. He believed that the Boers wanted to discredit the Portuguese in Angola and condemn them as « illegitimate » colonizers. If Portuguese slave-trading could be denounced to the world then southern Angola might be detached from Luanda and annexed by Pretoria. The Boer colonists of Humpata and Caconda would then become a part of the greater South Africa that was arising from the ashes of the second Anglo-Boer war. Chatelain did not support the Boer whispering campaign against the Portuguese and their suspected bid to enlarge South Africa. Instead he commended the efforts of British merchants who had turned against the now widely-revealed slave mode of production in Angola and the islands. The rival anti-slavery campaign was supported by the cocoa manufacturer Cadbury who, shortly before Chatelain's death, was being pressed to discontinue the purchase of Portuguese cocoa beans on the grounds that they were produced by *de facto* slaves who had been captured in the hinterland of the Swiss Mission.

In between bartering maize for crockery and corresponding with foreign businessmen about how to end the slave trade Chatelain developed an almost limitless range of commercial sidelines. Among his papers there is a manuscript catalogue of postage stamps issued by the Angolan post-office. He describes in detail the different colours, reigns, denominations, embossments, dentilations, printing errors, over-printings. Beside each is a figure which one must assume was the retail prices in Swiss francs at which Chatelain was able to supply specimens to stamp collectors or trade customers. Stamp collecting seems a far cry from the crusade on which Chatelain set out to challenge polygamy, witchcraft, alcoholism, slavery and all the running sores which, he claimed, had too long been tolerated by missionary societies. His great ambition was to sanctify the practice of commerce. This, he recognized, was much harder to do than sanctifying the practice of farming, or of craftwork, or of teaching, or of nursing. It was, moreover, difficult to attract suitable shop-keepers to work with him and accept his own bachelor asceticism. He also had difficulty in recruiting supporters willing to accept his thesis that colonization did represent the road to liberty for Africa's peoples and that one had to be patient and pragmatic while waiting for the benefits of « civilization » to trickle down.

### Silva Porto and the Plymouth Brethren

While Bishop Taylor and his acolyte Chatelain established worker-missions in western Angola, alternative variants of Protestantism took root in eastern Angola. In the fifty years to 1930 the largest Protestant mission in the country was that of the Plymouth Brethren, the Darbyites, or *frères larges* as they were known in Francophone societies. The Brethren arrived in Angola along the trails from the south that had brought Livingstone from South Africa. They were assisted and escorted by Silva Porto, the great Portuguese trans-continental merchant who regularly traded between Benguela and the Zambezi *via* Bihé and the Angolan plateau markets. The old pioneer helped the missionaries to organize transport, shelter and hospitality, though even Silva Porto was unable to replace Frederick Arnot's boots when they wore out. The young English missionary tried walking barefoot, like almost everyone else on the African trade paths, but the hot sand blistered his feet. He therefore arranged with Silva Porto to rent a riding ox which could swim rivers and push its way through a thousand miles of thorn bush. He eventually reached the central highland of Angola where the Brethren set up their headquarters in close proximity to Silva Porto's trading emporium.

The Brethren were perfectly aware that their close and necessary association with the traders involved adopting a muted attitude towards the slave trade. Arnot recognized that Silva Porto had been a major supplier of slaves to the west coast of Angola for almost half a century. The young missionary had persuaded himself, however, that the trade in alcohol had been a worse evil than the trade in slaves. He accepted Silva Porto's claim that by the 1880s he was granting freedom to his own personal slaves. He also accepted the old merchant's protestation that he had « rescued » slaves from « cannibalism ». The merchant went further and claimed that he converted the people he purchased to Christianity by putting « holy salt » on their tongues before buying them. This salt had been previously blessed by a priest. « I, too, am a missionary », said Silva Porto beguilingly. The centuries-old tradition of justifying slavery as Christian « redemption », and of providing a wholesale Catholic « baptism » by giving magic salt, rather than religious instruction, was still practised in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Neither the old Portuguese, nor the young Englishman, seemed much preoccupied with the rival factions of Christian belief which were later to cause severe conflict between Angola's Catholics and its Protestants.

Salt was not only a source of religious power but also the means of economic survival in the Angolan interior. The Plymouth Brethren tried to use mules rather than bearers to ensure their supplies of trade salt got through to the highland stations from the great west-coast salt pans of Benguela. A caravan of ten mules failed to make the journey, however, and the missionaries were compelled to revert to the tradition of hiring human porters as the merchants did. In the 1880s accepting recruitment as a porter, whether by a missionary, a merchant or a colonial regiment of sepoys, might not have been a good strategy, in purely economic terms, for an African farmer. It was, however, one of the most efficacious means of avoiding capture as a slave or worse still sale to the plantation masters of the off-shore cocoa islands. The porters whom the missionaries hired were

free men, paid at – though not above – the standard rate for the job. Their choice was constrained, however, since so-called « free » men were virtually forced to hire themselves out as porters to avoid being « sold » to labour contractors and « exported », nominally on a fixed-term plantation contract but in reality for the remainder of their natural lives. Porters tried to press missionaries into paying better wages than the merchants did but the rules of the market did not allow much latitude for humanitarian generosity and wages remained low even though the Brethren were probably the best resourced of all the Angolan missions<sup>4</sup>.

A pragmatic association with merchants enabled the missionaries to survive materially. It sometimes enabled them to survive politically as well. When in 1890 a newly elected king of Bihé decided that he would expell foreigners from his territory, merchants and missionaries alike, it was Silva Porto who warned the Brethren of the impending war and enabled them to negotiate a treaty of friendship with the king. The Portuguese, unlike the missionaries, were driven up of Bihé. Old Silva Porto, who had spent his entire trading life in Bihé, refused to leave and spectacularly blew himself up by igniting a few kegs of gunpowder. His injuries were so severe that his friends at the mission were unable to save his life. The close mission association with the merchants no longer protected them from the wrath of the Portuguese who visited severe reprisals on Bihé. In November 1890 one thousand colonial foot-soldiers and ninety Boer horse-commandos arrived there. The Brethren skilfully negotiated with a posse of Boers, generously offering them an excellent meal cooked by a European missionary wife. The settlers and the missionaries were able to orchestrate a peace plan. The king was persuaded to come out of hiding and surrender to the Portuguese commander of the punitive expedition as the only means of protecting his subjects from brutal reprisals. As the king was led away he entrusted his gun to Frederick Arnot, the missionary peace-maker, and the colonial commander allowed him to keep it. Acceptance of the right of the colonial powers to impose their rule over Africa was not questioned by the early missionaries in Angola.

### **The end of cohabitation**

Harmonious co-operation between merchants and missionaries, and mutual toleration between Portuguese and Protestants, broke down on several fronts after the end of the nineteenth century. The first spectacular conflict occurred in the kingdom of Bailundu, next door to the Brethren's host kingdom of Bihé. There the Protestant mission was an American Congregationalist one which had maintained good relations with the Methodists, the Swiss and the Brethren but not with the local Catholic Church. When a anti-Portuguese rebellion broke out in Bailundu in 1902 the missionaries, as loyal believers in the rights of the colonizing powers, did their best to help restore imperial law and order. They even went so far as to supply intelligence to the colonial commanders concerning the movements of the Bailundu regiments, and when the Portuguese authorities ran short of supplies during a siege they provided them with food and trade goods from the mission's warehouses. But co-operation was no longer enough to

4. F.S. ARNOT, *Missionary Travels...*, *op. cit.* : 4, 28, 109.

convince the official mind of the Luanda government that Protestants could be anything but subversive foreigners. The era of pragmatic collaboration was giving way to one of suspicion.

Some years later the suspicion became even more acute during the rebellion of 1913 which broke out in the sphere of influence of the Baptist mission. There labour raiding by the logging companies of Cabinda continued with great intensity three years after the slave trade to the cocoa islands had been ended. The missionaries had probably not incited their converts to rebellion, however much they shared their pain, but as in Bailundu Protestants were nevertheless accused of fomenting treason. The Baptist missionary Bowkill was even arrested. The honeymoon era of Protestant penetration was over. Rightly or wrongly Protestant missionaries were blamed for the campaigns which limited the scope of the merchants in Angola. Those limits consisted both of foreign publicity given to the evils of slavery and alcohol, and African rebellion against the closing colonial net which gave legitimacy and armed support to the merchants and their profit-making traditions.

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