

Cutting pice* and running away: Discipline, education and choice at the UMCA Boys' Industrial House, Zanzibar, 1901–1905

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Abstract

Missionary schools in colonial contexts were sites of asymmetrical power. Missionary teachers believed that they could reshape the worldview of their students, and the disciplinary regimes put in place were often harsh. However, as we can learn through a careful reading of the log book of the Boys' Industrial House on Zanzibar in the early twentieth century, the teachers of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa did not always have as much control over the minds and bodies of their students as they wished. The boys could run away, steal or use the ties formed at school to actively change their situations. In examining moments when the power dynamics shifted, one can seek a fuller view of authority, historical agency and daily existence at the mission school, and use this method to ask similar questions in other missionary and colonial contexts.

Keywords: Christian mission; industrial education; Universities' Mission to Central Africa; Zanzibar; discipline; punishment; resistance; agency; community

Within a month of the arrival of Bishop William Tozer and Reverend Edward Steere on Zanzibar in August of 1864 – there to re-establish the Universities' Mission to Central Africa on a new island base – the work of educating former slaves began. After a disastrous attempt to establish a station on the mainland, in the Shire highlands, the mission had retreated to Zanzibar, a place known for having a healthier climate and, importantly, located within the sphere of strong British influence. Here Tozer

* A pice was a fraction of a rupee. The writers of entries in the log book also sometimes used the term to generally refer to the pocket money given to the students.

and Steere could use the contacts of the British consul on Zanzibar to find a new building in the capital, and through the consul they also enjoyed friendly relations with the Sultan's government. From this more secure location, the Universities' Mission planned to build up a Christian community on the island, from which they could choose indigenous clergymen and Christian settlers who would some day set up stations on the mainland.

The source of the mission's new converts, however, was not the local Zanzibari population, which was overwhelmingly Muslim. Rather, the Universities' Mission for its first four decades of existence dealt mostly with rescued slaves – mainland Africans who were seized in Central Africa and sent east into the Indian Ocean slave trade. This trade was outlawed in 1873 under British pressure but continued clandestinely if decreasingly until at least the turn of the century. As long as the mission focused on non-Muslim slaves, the Sultan was happy to allow them to stay and do their work. In fact, soon after the arrival of Tozer and Steere, the Sultan delivered to the mission five young boys taken from a slave dhow which had been seized for not paying the proper duties, and this small group constituted the first class of the mission's new pupils.

In 1871, the more formal educational endeavours of the Universities' Mission (UMCA) began with the opening of St Andrew's College at Kiungani, a few miles outside of Zanzibar Town. There followed the establishment of a girls' school at Mbwani, the founding of a separate theological education track at Kiungani, and the organisation of a handful of other institutions such as a nursery school and a choir school. In July of 1901, the UMCA opened yet another new school – the Boys' Industrial House – at Ziwani for the male industrial school students formerly housed in town. By establishing the school in the countryside, the mission wanted the boys 'remove[d] from the evil influences of the town' while still engaged in the learning of 'trades, mechanics, and keeping accounts' (Anderson-Morshead 1909: 350). In November 1903, the UMCA moved the Industrial House to Pemba, the island just north of Zanzibar's main island, in the hope that in this more removed location students would 'live a healthier life, physically and morally ... while still carrying on handicrafts' and working on the fertile clove plantations there (*ibid.*). The industrial students were regarded as more prone to backsliding than their theological counterparts, and so their teachers saw their removal from the temptations of city life, and of fraternisation with female students, as a positive step. The move to Pemba was disruptive for the students, many of whose only family and community ties were to the UMCA installations on Zanzibar. This article will focus on the Boys' Industrial House between July 1901 and April 1905, using the school's logbook as the main source.

Industrial House logbook

The Industrial House logbook is located at the Zanzibar National Archives, along with several logbooks from other schools on the island kept during different periods. A large

bound volume, it contains entries written every day or two, generally just a few lines, but sometimes consisting of longer accounts of special events or difficulties. The logbook also contains lists of baptisms, confirmations, confessions and other religious ceremonies, notices of marriage and death, the comings and goings of students and visitors, and several lists of rules and regulations as they were put into force at the Industrial House. The writing was done in the third person by the priest-in-charge, essentially the headmaster, sometimes referred to in the logbook as Padre. From July 1901 until February of 1902 this was Reverend Baines. He was succeeded by Reverend TC Simpson, who wrote until April 1903. At that time Reverend Cyril Frewer took charge of the House, and he would complete the extant logbook – with a few exceptions – through early 1905.

The staff at the Industrial House consisted of the priest-in-charge, one or two brothers of the Society of the Sacred Mission (a religious order of monks), lay teachers and craftsmen who were brought in to train the students. There were at least two African lay teachers who were brought in from other UMCA installations. The number of students fluctuated each year, but was generally between 17 and 30. From the beginning, most of the boys came from other UMCA schools on Zanzibar or from the Mbweni *shamba* (farm). There are scattered references in the logbook to students coming from other nearby *shambas*. They were sometimes referred to as 'heathens' because they were not already part of the Christian community. As expected, the flow of people into all of the UMCA's schools diminished as the slave trade was slowly squeezed out of existence. In 1897, moreover, the legal status of slavery was abolished. Some of those former slaves who applied for their freedom joined the Christian community, but with fewer rescued slaves the numbers of potential students and converts declined.

Reading the logbook, one gets the sense that the students were almost wholly cut off from their previous experiences, whether as mainlanders of various ethnic backgrounds or as the children of UMCA Christians. This is undoubtedly a problem with the source. In the view of the priests doing the writing, the students arriving into their care were truly beginning new lives with a total break from the 'heathenism' that had come before. Even for the children of Christian parents, leave to visit home was kept to a bare minimum in order to protect students from any negative influences. The students were expected to adhere completely to the norms and rules of the mission, more of which will be discussed later. While some missionaries were likely interested in the backgrounds of new converts and in the communities in which they were stationed, this was not the focus of the teachers who made entries in the logbooks. It is therefore difficult to retrieve many distinct details about the students' backgrounds using this source.

The nature of the educational experience

Discipline and punishment were a significant part of the educational experience at the Industrial House. Here I will examine the actions of the students within this disciplinary and educational regime, and thereby aim to enrich simplistic dichotomies of

resistance and collaboration. Though in the last two decades the literature on Christian missions in Africa has dispensed with such simplicity, these reductionist dichotomies persist whenever attributions of historical agency are reserved for those who ran away or otherwise defied missionary or colonial authorities. The boys of the Industrial House, I argue, were making decisions based upon the choices available to them. Sometimes this meant running away, but sometimes students tried to work within the system to change their conditions. Neither decision was more active than the other, nor more admirable or authentic. The students participated in the formation of a community at the Industrial House, and the tendrils of this network stretched out beyond school grounds. My hope is that this look into the logbook of the Boys' Industrial House will contribute to the creation of a fuller picture of authority, resistance and existence at missionary schools on Zanzibar, and perhaps offer a lens through which to re-examine these questions for other regions.

From its inception, the Universities' Mission saw literary education as one of its main activities. Students and new adherents were taught to read the Bible or a catechism (often translated into Swahili) so that they could imbibe Christian values through their literacy. Furthermore, the UMCA sought with its theological college to create an African clergy that could continue to spread the Word on the continent. By the turn of the twentieth century, however, there was increasing interest in the teaching of trades at missionary schools. The period under examination here is prior to the consolidation of a debate about the nature of education in British colonies, but one can see similarities between the thoughts of some UMCA missionary teachers and later colonial education theorists. As the twentieth century proceeded, tensions emerged between missions and the Colonial Office, and between denominations, about the proper content and purpose of education for Africans. Some colonial educational experts called into question the mission emphasis on literary education – on teaching Africans to read and write, and 'uplifting' them through European-style educational curricula. They regarded this as a hopeless, even dangerous, task. They questioned a form of education that created a cadre of highly educated, English-speaking, 'detrified' Africans, who would have certain uncomfortable expectations of equality and opportunity. Such questions reflected similar debates about the education of England's working class, a population that was seen as equally dangerous but also in need of salvation (Parsons 2004: 38; Berman 1975: 8). This led to the advocacy of industrial training, often called adapted education, with an emphasis on teaching African students trades and skills that would both bolster indirect rule and the colonial economy and protect 'traditional' African social structures. The industrial turn was not fully crystallised until the 1920s, following World War I and the release of the Phelps-Stokes reports on colonial education.

Changing colonial rule

Although these events were characteristic of a later age, they have relevance for an

understanding of the context being examined here. There is no doubt that by the first years of the twentieth century, the UMCA was feeling the pressure of consolidating colonial rule. The Germans had gained control of much of the mainland opposite Zanzibar in the late 1880s and early 1890s. The British had formally declared a protectorate over Zanzibar in 1890. The UMCA found itself needing to juggle the expectations of its Home Office, African congregations and two different colonial governments. This was also a period, as noted by Jerome Moriyama (2000), Anne Marie Stoner-Eby (2003; 2008) and G Alex Bremner (2009), when the UMCA began to pull back from its emphasis on training African clergy. Especially at its mainland stations, Moriyama and Bremner have described a transition from an emphasis on 'vernacular' or flexible forms of Anglicism to a greater assertion of European control (though Bremner argued that one could still see compromise even in the architecture of mainland stations). Stoner-Eby likewise argued that with the consolidation of colonial control, missionaries were no longer totally dependent on local alliances for their survival.

In the period of focus here – from 1901 to 1905 – the UMCA on Zanzibar and Pemba was still largely independent of the British protectorate government. Though at times it called upon the authority of the administration to bolster its own authority. In this context, the UMCA chose to continue its mission of developing an African clergy at Kiungani, while funnelling other students into an industrial programme, as it had been for several years, now at the Industrial House. Here is where this study can contribute to our understanding of the full spectrum of education provided by the UMCA, and thereby of mission education in general, and unlike the studies of Stoner-Eby (2003; 2008), Justin Willis (1993) or Julia Allen (2008), it focuses on the industrial branch of the UMCA schools, a topic heretofore largely neglected in favour of the theological students.

Though the UMCA continued to offer literary education to some of its adherents, most of whom by this time were coming from the mainland stations (see Willis 1993; Stoner-Eby 2003), there is clear evidence that a shift was occurring by the turn of the century. As Anderson-Morshead wrote in her 1909 *History of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa*

Of course the training of clergy and teachers is still the most pressing need for Africa, but those who cannot do this may still be built up into a God-fearing and useful laity. (Anderson-Morshead 1909: 349)

In an even more extreme example, Andrew Porter (2004) quoted John Hine, Bishop of Nyasaland from 1896 to 1908, as saying that there should be

... no more native priests for ten years ... of that I am pretty certain. And an increasing number of permanent [European] deacons. We are pushing the native too much and he soon gets out of control and is anything but a blessing. (Porter 2004: 289)

The UMCA's Industrial House school was one of the innovations devised to limit the extent of literary education offered at mission schools. The Industrial House was in essence a boarding trade school, and over the years in question it saw to the training of

dozens of boys and young men. By 1901 the slave trade between Zanzibar and the mainland had been officially abolished for nearly three decades, and slavery itself on Zanzibar for four years, so these students were no longer drawn from the ranks of rescued slaves, as was the first generation of UMCA students. Though the sources rarely offer much detail, most of the students appear to have been orphans or otherwise socially marginal figures, or in some cases the children of parents who were part of the mission. While the theological college grew in the late nineteenth century as mainland stations produced a new class of potential clergymen and teachers, the number of students at Ziwani declined over the five years in question. The teachers and staff recognised the problem, but without access to later logbooks we cannot know how they tried to remedy it.

Emphasis on practical training

From the beginning, the UMCA's missionary teachers at the Boys' Industrial House sought to impart two types of lessons. The first was the practical skills of a trade or agricultural expertise. The students trained to be *fundis* and *dobis* (carpenters and laundrymen). They helped to build the new dormitory on Pemba and worked on all the stages of the agricultural cycles of cloves and coconuts. Anderson-Morshead (1909: 350-351) mentioned mission boys trained in masonry, woodworking, pottery-making, leather- and iron-work. Reverend Frewer noted in the logbook the daily schedule in December 1903:

From 5:30-10:00 a.m. students worked on the *shamba*. This was followed by rest and a meal. From 1:00-4:00 p.m. the students were engaged in technical or construction work as a part of their apprenticeships. Evening activities rotated, with one night per week being devoted to religious instruction, one to reading or other lessons, and one to singing. (CAM: December 1903)

The emphasis, this makes clear, was on manual labour and the learning of a trade.

Also a focus on personal control

There was a second set of lessons that the teachers hoped to impart. These emphasised the importance of self-control and self-denial, hard work, humility and discipline, which the missionaries hoped would be inculcated by industrial education. In his study of the Catholic Spiritans who also evangelised and educated on Zanzibar and later at Bagamoyo on the mainland, Paul Kollman (2005: 18) wrote that those missionaries saw themselves as making or forming Catholics out of the raw material of the African children, a process that depended upon rigid work and disciplinary regimes. The power of manual labour to simultaneously combat the supposed inherent idleness and immorality of Africans was a recurring theme (Berman 1975: 11). The UMCA's Industrial House log is filled with the expectations of the missionaries for proper behaviour: cleanliness and hygiene, honesty, control of temper, abiding by certain sexual mores, temperance in drinking and eating, deference to Europeans, and never

acting 'cheeky' or 'sulky'.

The inculcation of this extensive set of values, both secular and religious, was what the missionaries expected would result from the discipline of the Industrial House. The long lists of rules recorded in the school log attest to the expectations of the missionaries (as well as to the fact that these expectations were not always met). For instance, when Frewer arrived as the new head of the House in May 1903, he wrote

Boys in habit of breaking many rules ... Drew up a list of rules and regulations and reviewed old customs and rules fallen into disuse and read these out to the boys and posted them on baraza [porch or veranda] for their inspection. (CAM: 6 May 1903)

He recorded all 14 new rules in the log. They pertained to things like leave, relationships with females, play- and work-time, obedience to superiors, the use of water, sitting in church and the proper greeting of Europeans and clergymen. Another list of rules from September 1903 stated that roll was to be called three times per day; this was embedded in a set of 18 regulations pertaining to the students' daily schedule, from waking and washing, to work and prayer, to what to do if nature called during the night (CAM: 8 September 1903). These rules aimed for obedience, work and the strict control of the boys' movement in and out of, and even within, the House.

Control and discipline

Control over the steps towards adulthood was also something that the missionaries at the Industrial House fought hard to maintain. As in the records of nearly all churches, the rituals of baptism, first communion and confirmation were meticulously recorded in the UMCA logs. Notably, though, the log of the Industrial House contains in addition numerous entries marking when students entered into apprenticeships with local artisans or farmers, and when a boy was officially taken into the house and began receiving pocket money. The careful stepwise process echoed the rigidity and importance of many non-Christian initiation ceremonies, and in fact Stoner-Eby (2008) has shown in great depth the process of the 'Christianisation' of such rituals at the UMCA station in Masasi. At the Industrial House these steps, controlled by the priest and teachers in charge, were to lead the boys along a path towards a job in a trade and then to Christian marriage. Industrial training was intended to support the process of maturation, a way of marking a boy's progress in life, alongside the religious rituals.

The UMCA on Zanzibar does not appear to have participated in the systematic redemption of slaves, unlike the Catholic Spiritan mission on Zanzibar. Being an Anglican mission, the UMCA had a more direct line to the British Consul on Zanzibar, which delivered groups of slaves captured by the Royal Navy as its ships patrolled the East African coast during the latter half of the nineteenth century. The Spiritans also received freed slaves from the Consul, but fewer than the Anglican mission. However, that they had not been bought by the mission did not mean that the UMCA's students, especially in its early days, did not see themselves as coming under the patronage of a new type of master. There was a large degree of ambiguity; the missionaries held

a complex combination of authority over the students as teachers and priests, and perhaps in some sense as parents and masters. There was also the mission's connection to the increasingly powerful British presence on the island. This is not to paint the UMCA as a handmaiden of the empire, but rather to acknowledge that the authority of Great Britain was an ever-present factor.

The ambiguity of the students' status persisted even after the abolition of the legal status of slavery on Zanzibar in 1897. The question of whether or not the Industrial House students were there voluntarily is not easily answered. For instance, Frewer wrote in the log on May 20, 1903:

Gave the boys a lecture in Chapel, telling them that they were not children ... that they were here quite at their own free will – no prison about it, but that there must *be* [sic] rules. (CAM: 20 May 1903)

Ostensibly the boys could choose whether or not to enter the industrial school system, but once they had committed, their labour was at the command of the priests and teachers, and they were subject to the rules of the House. The teachers could also, however, prevent boys from leaving, and punish those who did run away and were returned. This calls into question the voluntary nature of student placement at the House. The use of *askari* (police officers) to find runaways or encourage recalcitrant students, moreover, blurred the line between 'crime' and 'sin' (CAM: 12 January 1903). And the occasional calling in of colonial agents to impart discipline makes clear the connections between the mission and the British administration. This ambiguity troubled some members of the mission, including Bishop Hine, who in June 1904 wrote a letter to Frewer at Pemba in which he stressed that corporal punishment should be avoided, and in any event never administered by a priest. Hine wrote:

When I lived here [Mkunazini] in 1890 and had charge of the industrial boys, I got into the habit of beating them with kiboko [a term used for whip, often made out of hippopotamus hide], and I found the habit (for which I first had a great dislike) grew on me till I felt myself becoming callous and even brutal. Then I began to realise that we priests don't come out here to flog boys with Kibokos. It is not our work, it is not a happy way of extending the Kingdom of Righteousness ...

If flogging has to be done, it should be done very reluctantly by a layman or by a native under careful supervision but not by a priest. If you can get it done by Government authority as for stealing it is far better than to do it in the mission. (CAM: 27 June 1904)

Hine's letter was a reiteration of a memorandum written by Reverend (eventually Bishop) Steere over two decades before. The fact that the message needed reiterating is evidence that the policy was not always followed at the Industrial House. The priests often carried out punishments, and spiritual power often blurred into secular power.

Indeed, the missionary teachers never questioned, as Hine's letter evidences, that punishment was at times necessary. This belief comes clearly through in a set of maxims set down sometime in 1903: 'The African is a child; the European a grown man. The African is quite conscious of it. He appreciates discipline and certainly needs

it' (CAM: 'Maxims'). The priests were there, in part at least, to offer that 'edifying discipline'. Even as teachers were reprimanded for inappropriate use of force, the log recounts a large number of beatings and whippings (e.g. CAM: 4 April 1901, 10 November 1902, 17 November 1903). Frewer and his predecessors were not shy in recording the use of corporal punishment. Boys were 'flogged', 'whipped', 'beaten', 'given stripes' and had their 'ears boxed' for transgressions ranging from staying out after curfew to getting into fights or giving 'impertinent answer[s]' (CAM: 17 November 1903). Boys could be demoted from the position of *mkubwa* (akin to a prefect), or even expelled, this latter usually only after multiple transgressions (CAM: 21 October 1903).

Like many a boarding school, group punishments were also employed at the Industrial House. On 24 December 1902, for instance, when a student named Fabiano was beaten after being discovered by an *askari* trying to sell stolen waistcoats, two other boys were also beaten for having seen the theft but telling no one. In May of the following year, after an incident of apparently rowdy behaviour at a wedding at Mbweni, all of the boys' leave was suspended for the next Sunday (CAM: 6 May 1903). When a sickle went missing in December 1903, everyone's pice was cut (CAM: 21 December 1903). The threat of communal punishment was used after two students, Marko and Chad, were caught drinking *tembo* (palm wine): 'In consequence of this and other things which have aroused my suspicions I have announced that the next case of "drinking" will mean the cutting of half the pice of all the boys' (CAM: 27 June 1904). Peer pressure was recognised as a powerful deterrent.

Benefits and rewards

The staff at the Industrial House also granted benefits and rewarded certain types of behaviour. They allowed holidays from work, especially on certain saints' days or the King's birthday. The boys went on outings and picnics, and on special days sports and other festivities were organised. Money was also a powerful motivator. At first the boys received a small sum of pocket money once a week. In September of 1904 this was increased to a weekly payment of 16 pice in lieu of the pocket money and breakfast. On top of the weekly pice, in May 1903 Frewer began putting money aside for each boy to use towards matrimonial or professional expenses. In announcing the new policy to the school, Frewer recorded:

And then told them that when I saw that they were really trying to learn their work I would begin to *weka* ['put away'] 6 pice a week for them in my book – which would go toward their making a start in life – but that they would only receive it when they were ready to be married – or when going out as proper *fundis* – but that they would not get a pice of it if they left of their own accord – unless of course there were reasons – nor if they get the sack – and only if they continued good behaviour. It is meant as an encouragement as they feel that they are doing work and yet earning nothing (CAM: 20 May 1903)

Thus, the incentive to stay at the school increased for the students over time; as they

grew older, leaving or being expelled would mean losing much more than just a weekly salary.

Not long after this lecture another incentive policy was put into place linked to the distribution of pocket money. The plan was adopted from the industrial school at the mainland mission station at Magila. When pice was cut for misbehaviour, the forfeited money would be put aside and the accumulated pot would be distributed among the 'best' few boys every three months. When Frewer reported on the incentive programme a year later, he recorded that it was working 'excellently. In about every case the money is "put by" to buy clothes etc and has been carefully spent. Also it is a good medium for punishing boys.' (CAM: mid-September 1903)

Using punishments such as beatings, demotion, cutting pice and leave, and sometimes calling in the police, as well as inducements such as monetary rewards, the missionaries hoped to instil a rigid sense of 'Christian' discipline in their industrial students. This was discipline and punishment from the missionary perspective. We now turn to explore what the Industrial House students thought of the rules, the work and the beatings, and of the potential advantages that were all a part of their school experience.

Evidence of religious experience?

Scholars such as Paul Landau (1995), JDY Peel (2000), Elizabeth Elbourne (2002), Meredith McKittrick (2002) and Derek Peterson (2004) have shown in multiple contexts the give-and-take that went on between missionaries and Africans, the central role of Africans in the spread of Christianity on the continent, and the appropriations and re-articulations of the missionary message – in sum, the perhaps asymmetrical but incredibly complex relationships and developments born of missionary-African interactions from the nineteenth through mid-twentieth centuries. Such studies also complicate the notion of resistance – one did not need to run away, pick up a gun or start an independent church in order to demand change. The one element often missing from these studies is that of religious faith. Obviously evidence for such an internal process is difficult to find in the records of missionaries, who assumed that baptism meant conversion and that all Africans fell into the camp of either God-fearing Christians or inveterate pagans. However, historians should not preclude the possibility that some individuals had a genuine spiritual experience. The task of searching for such evidence is an important one for further research, but one that I will put aside for the moment. Whether pragmatically or spiritually, though, people used Christianity, and negotiated the imperial order, in a host of ways.

The records of the UMCA's Industrial House can be placed within this literature, and used to undermine the notion of hegemony, as well as complicate considerations of resistance. Landau (1995), Peel (2000), Elbourne (2002) and McKittrick (2002), as well as Jean and John Comaroff (1991), were largely concerned with explaining how and

why Christianity spread in their various contexts. From the Comaroffs' 'long conversation' to Peel's soap metaphor to McKittrick's generational focus, these authors looked at the ways in which Christianity changed Africans, and Africans changed Christianity. Conversion, acculturation and the agency of Africans in embracing and spreading the religion are the main themes in this body of literature. Building upon the foundation set by these scholars, I have wanted to focus with this brief study on the dynamics within an already established mission community. Like Peterson (2004), I want to look at the work being done by Africans to constantly negotiate their relationships with missionaries (though it is important to note that Peterson was also interested in the spread of Christianity among the Gikuyu, and his study was not limited to interactions between Gikuyu and missionaries). Rather than the aims of missionary education, I want to emphasise the students' reactions to it. This look at internal dynamics of resistance has been undertaken with regard to several UMCA stations, but, as mentioned above, these largely focused on theological and teacher training. Here I focus on the Industrial House, and I begin with the assumption that the various UMCA converts joined and remained with the mission, both on Zanzibar and on the mainland, for a variety of reasons, including genuine spirituality.

Students' responses

Moving from that base, I will now examine how the students interacted with this one particular structure of the mission, and how they shaped the circumstances of their education. Some boys ran away, some lashed out, while some followed the rules and lived out their tenures at the school. Clearly these latter appear in the historical record less frequently, though they are not completely absent. The logbook contains references to nearly every disciplinary transgression, while the ways in which students could take advantage of their situation are less clear. Despite this imbalance I want to be careful not to fetishise the runaways, because obedience too is a choice, a calculation of costs and benefits, and hence evidence of historical initiative. Students could gain valuable skills through their Industrial House training. They were also more likely to win certain jobs with the mission's recommendation, such as when Lister, a government agent, hired Industrial House students for a construction job. There were also less tangible benefits, but powerful ones nonetheless, such as friendship and support from fellow students. The boys served as witnesses for one another's baptisms; they got into trouble for talking to each other after lights out; and they worked, fought, learned and played together. These were the benefits of community. Though no doubt their choices were limited, these boys may have had other options as they grew up. Some of them exercised these options, while some chose to stay and work within the UMCA system. Again, these advantages are less apparent in the logbook than instances of insubordination. Using several cases drawn from the Industrial House logbook, I will show that the students reacted variously to the discipline and punishments of the missionaries, and that they often used the system for their own

benefit, either to demand change or to take advantage of the resources available through the school.

Running away as protest

One category of recurring behaviour that sometimes fits into the realm of protest was running away. This was described again and again in the records. Often the same boy appeared more than once in the log as having run away. In late 1901 to early 1902, for instance, there was a spate of runaways when the school was between headmasters. Another situation that prompted running away was a boy spending time in the hospital – perhaps the idea of returning to the rigorous schedule of the school was too much to bear. Others, like Mambo ii (in contradistinction to another boy named Mambo), ran away because they were being bullied (CAM: 10 and 16 April 1902). Most of the boys, however, eventually returned to the House. Some were brought back, by an *askari* or other authority figure, while others returned of their own accord and ‘begged to be forgiven and received again’ (CAM: 25 February 1902). The priest-in-charge usually readmitted the boys after they showed penitence and received a punishment. The House staff regarded the running away as both a natural occurrence and something to be severely punished in order to demonstrate its unacceptability. For instance, on 8 March 1904, Frewer noted: ‘Chad returned ... today – had to beat him because he ran away (for the sake of the others)’. Running was most likely a last resort, or an attempt to make an emphatic protest, as it seems that most of the runaways showed signs of discontent before leaving. For example, on 14 April 1904 Frewer wrote: ‘On returning I found Garumou, Tulus and Sadi had toroka’d [to escape, flee or desert; like this example, the entry writers would occasionally use Swahili verb roots with English verb endings]. Tulus had been asking to leave for some time; Sadi had been getting into trouble and was afraid of a beating, but the first (Garumou) has always been a good obedient boy and I was much surprised to hear he had run away.’ Garumou returned just two days later; there is no indication of how or why he came back. But the sense of surprise that Frewer felt upon this good student’s running away indicates that this action was expected but only from certain boys, apparently after a time of demonstrated discontent.

Some boys who were unhappy in the school setting attempted to change their position by requesting to leave. The fact that they were sometimes denied permission, often prompting them to run away, certainly blurs the line between the voluntary and involuntary nature of their enrolment. One striking group of requests came just before the House’s move to Pemba. The students were leaving the home they knew, to be brought far from the friends and family that they had at the UMCA’s other installations on Zanzibar. Frewer denied at least one of these requests, and then found to his dismay that three boys ran off almost literally from the ship that was taking them to Pemba. They had initially, though, tried to work within the rules to effect change in their lives. And occasionally students were granted the leave that they

sought. The entries from 8 and 13 May 1903 read:

May 8 – Jerome, Roland, Tito, Jesse, Livingstone, Daudi, Lorenzo applied for leave to look for work in Town. Gave them such a barua [letter] giving them leave to look for work in Town, naming the work they thought they could do, that they went by their own device. I gave them permission to come back if they liked tonight to sleep but that after tomorrow they had no permission to return. I am glad in a way because they have no homes most of them. I could not sack any, but as it has come from them it simplifies matters. I am sorry for the boys. Edmundo has got a job at the Port office at R5 month, sleeps Mbwani.

May 13 – Martin Francis gone away and I believe has got a job in a shop. Daudi and Livingstone I have heard no more of. Jerome, Tito, Jesse and Lorenzo have all come back – but as they went and returned of their own will, next time they want to go, they must remain away and cannot be received back as we can't be played with. (CAM: 8 and 13 May 1903)

These boys worked within the system even as they sought to leave it. The letters that the applicants received would probably serve both to recommend them to potential employers and, just as importantly, distinguish them from runaways or vagrants liable to incarceration. Edmundo, who as indicated found a job in the Port office, soon appealed to Frewer for help with his situation there: 'Edmundo came to say that the Goa in Port Office would not let him have Sundays. Wrote a letter – Will call if not effectual' (CAM: 15 May 1903). In both of these cases, once given permission to seek work elsewhere, the boys used their ties to the UMCA and the Industrial House to their advantage. They utilised the networks fostered at the school to create opportunities in the wider world.

Change through excelling

Breaking the rules and leaving were not the only ways for students at the Industrial House to shape their own existence. Some chose to follow the rules, to excel within the boundaries set by the missionaries, and in that way to gain all the advantage they could from the school. Students could be promoted to *mkubwa* (prefect), given the tasks of leading prayer at mealtime and overseeing the dormitories after lights-out. These were paid more pocket money and presumably given other privileges. The log noted other boys who were given raises for good work or a certain number of years in apprenticeship. By volunteering to fetch water, setting up for the King's birthday celebrations, carrying teak, or other acts showing 'much enthusiasm and very good work done', boys could choose to work and excel within the system (CAM: 26 November 1903; 9 November 1903; 19 October 1903; 29 April 1904).

Today's reader of the Industrial House log should not succumb to the tendency to see these rule-followers as 'collaborators' in a negative sense, and we must resist the temptation to judge them harshly in comparison with those who ran away or acted out against what were difficult and sometimes unjust conditions. They were shaping their lives according to the choices in front of them, and the advantages of higher wages, assistance with marital and professional costs and learning a trade were compelling

reasons to stay. There were also the holidays, gifts and field trips which brought enjoyment to a rigid schedule and can be counted as advantages for the Industrial House students.

We can almost watch the mental calculations of cost and benefit taking place in the story of a student named Elia. In just six months he moved from insubordination, to reform and obedience, and back to insubordination:

17 Nov. 1903 – Bro Makius boxed Elia's ears this morning because he gave an impertinent answer. (NB This is not first time Elia had done so.) In the scuffle that ensued Elia's eye was hurt. The Bishop gave orders that no one (teachers included) should punish suddenly like this. Chastisement shall be officially administered at a later opportunity.

24 Nov. – Elia, whose whole attitude has changed for the better, began to wash my clothes etc. separately from the shamba washing. I have raised his monthly wages (provisionally) from 1R to 2R a month.

21 Dec. – Elia, Antonio and Albert created small disturbances in evening at giving of pocket money.

22 Dec. – Elia did not go to work at shamba this morning; was whipped for disobedience.

26 Jan. 1904 – Elia for failing to give proper account for his absence from Evensong yesterday and for telling lies was to be beaten by me in the presence of Bwa James. After first stroke he drew his knife and struck me on back of right hand. Much blood but nothing serious. Elia sent to Lister [a government agent], beaten and put in chain gang until repentant.

31 Jan. – Elia came up with askari to say he was sorry.

22 Feb. – Elia came out of prison and back to the House.

9 May – Marko Mabruki and Elia brought to me this evening accused of flirting with the two young wives of two shamba people. They were caught in the valley below Songolo's (Chaki Chaki) house.

10 May – Investigated this case. No doubt about the fact of that 'imprudence'. Gave each of them 8 with bakora [cane] and cut half their pice for a month.

15 May – ... Elia and Marko Mabruki went off after their dhobi work without leave. Pice of both will be cut half. (CAM)

One can speculate about the reasons for Elia's shifts in behaviour. Perhaps his initial change in attitude stemmed from Frewer's defence of him against the unjust punishment by Brother Makius. For nearly a month, he took on the washing of Frewer's clothes, was given a raise, and disappeared from the logbook. Then began the series of incidents that led up to his stabbing Frewer and being put in prison, the turning point being the disturbance at the distribution of pocket money. Could something have happened to make Elia think twice about his decision to work within the system? Or maybe Elia was a convincing actor, affecting obedience when it suited his desires but abandoning such pretence when it did not. In December of 1904 Elia left the Industrial House to take up work as a *dobi* in Chake Chake, Pemba, and thus disappeared from the log. But we can watch him as he swung back and forth between rule-breaking and rule-following, and in this one figure we see the difficulty of pinning down 'resistance' and 'subordination'.

Asymmetrical power relationships

The story of the UMCA's Industrial House is one of asymmetrical power. The missionaries and teachers had behind them the authority of the mission, the Protectorate government and material resources – weighty advantages to be sure. However, the assertion that in the face of such an asymmetry the weaker power loses all independent choice is a false premise. At mission stations and schools all over the continent, run by numerous Christian denominations, populated by diverse Africans, people were making decisions. Sometimes working with the idioms of the missionaries, sometimes rejecting the missionary regime altogether, often moving somewhere between these two poles, Africans were negotiating their relationships with missionaries using the tools they had at their disposal. Some also utilised the network created during their educational experience when they left the school. The community created at the Industrial House was a powerful advantage for its students. None of this, moreover, precludes the possibility that some of the new converts felt genuine spiritual connections to the Christian faith, nor does it ignore the power imbalance that greatly favoured the ability of the missionaries to control their adherents. Both of those forces were very real. But in the world of the Industrial House as elsewhere, these forces were negotiated by individuals reacting to conditions rather than working within a rigid paradigm. And as much as the historian might want to press historical actors into a theoretical framework of hegemony or resistance, groups of actual historical individuals rarely fall into such neat categories.

Acknowledgments: I would like to thank the Princeton University History Department as well as the Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies for their support of this research. I would also like to express my appreciation to the staff at the Zanzibar National Archives and the Rhodes House, Oxford, for their valuable assistance.

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