Title: African Israel Nineveh church: a theological and socio-historical analysis

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Abstract: Christianity in Kenya like in any other part of Africa, is characterised by rapid multiplicity of Christian denominations commonly known as African Independent Churches. This independency phenomenon has attracted attention of scholars, majority of whom have focused their attention on general factors influencing the rise if these churches. Very few students have focused on ecclesiastical structural organization of these churches or their theology. The purpose of this study was therefore to investigate and point out specific factors which underlay the rise of African Israel Nineveh Church (AINC); describe and analyse its ecclesiastical structural organization; and give a description and analysis of the church's theology and establish the foundation of that theology. The study was conducted in Nairobi area (see appendix A and C) and at Nineveh, in Kakamega District, where the church's headquarters are situated (see appendix B). The study sample was composed of AINC members - the youth and adults however, new non-church members were included. The research instrument used in this study consisted of two types of interview schedule; one for ordinary church members and the other for church leaders; and participant observation and eventual analysis of religious and social activities in the church. The study revealed that no single factor whether political, economic, social, psychological or cultural exhaustively or exclusively explains the rise of the church. The causes are complex, although some appear more prominent than others. The study further revealed that the church's structural organization is an end result of various factors: socio-religious, economic and political forces which the church has interacted with and experienced over a long time of its existence. The church has had to change and adjust its structural organization to prevailing socio-religious, economic and political needs of the society in which it exists. The study also showed that the church's structural organization is both local, national and transnational and yet the church maintains overall cohesion and structural unity with the Bishop as its overall head. The study revealed that the basis or foundation of the church's structural organization is both biblical and African traditions. The study further highlighted that men and women have equal opportunities in leadership positions of the church. The research revealed that the AINC is a Christian church which has merged Jewish traditions, the early church traditions, and African traditional heritage. These three form the foundation from which the theology of the church is derived.