

**THE TRANSFORMATION OF AUTHORITARIAN LEADERSHIP TO
PARTICIPATORY LEADERSHIP IN THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
IN NAMIBIA**

BY

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Declaration: I, Paulus Nanghambe Ndamanomhata, hereby state that this whole dissertation, unless specially shown to the contrary in the text, is my own original work.

Signed 

Dedication: Firstly, this dissertation is dedicated to all members of ELCIN and especially to all its pastors and lay leaders, and secondly to my wife Naufiku and Ndaxupifwa, Ndapandula, Ndawedwa, Ndayenga and Nafimanekwe, my physical children.

Abstract

The contents of this dissertation is about the authoritarianism presently found in Lutheran churches in general and in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN) in particular. In contradiction to the Roman Catholic Church, Luther advocated the participation of the laity in decision-making processes. However, strong offices of authority have been established in ELCIN and excessive powers have been granted constitutionally to the clergy against the laity, with the result that lay leaders are made to believe that the decision-making procedures belong to the higher authorities at all levels of the church. There is a lack of willingness among the higher authorities to motivate lay leaders to take up leadership responsibilities in their presence. The danger of this attitude is that most of the decisions made in the church are initiated by the clergy and are therefore not representative.

The leadership style of ELCIN can be described as partially democratic and partially authoritarian. The authoritarian leadership style of ELCIN was not derived from the original Lutheran heritage. This situation is due largely to a combination of the leadership patterns of the Finnish missionaries and the prevailing Owambo traditional culture. Authoritarian attitudes remain an urgent challenge to ELCIN in particular, and to Lutheran churches in general.

The formulation of a new concept of leadership in the church must embrace the collective participation of all male adult members of the community in decision-making processes as observed in positive elements of Owambo traditions and Luther's concept of the priesthood of all believers.

This dissertation recommends that lay leaders must be allowed to chair decision-making bodies at all levels in the church and that clergy and lay leaders participate equally in these bodies. ELCIN theologians also have to formulate concepts which contextualise church leadership and dissociate it from foreign vessels of culture.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY OF THE THESIS

1.1 Background motivation

The majority of the members of the Evangelical Lutheran church in Namibia (ELCIN) are Ovawambo who were confined to the northern part of the country by colonial laws. With the independence of Namibia, some of the educated members have been employed in various governmental departments, private sectors and non-governmental organizations around the country. For the first time they were able to compare the authoritarian church leadership in ELCIN with the leadership styles among other Lutheran Churches. They also became aware of the fragile unity among Lutherans in the country. Some of the intellectuals also wish the church to dialogue with the indigenous culture. The church sticks to the nineteenth century attitude that rejected the African culture as something evil and incompatible with Christianity. The result is that some of the intellectuals have terminated their church membership while those who have remained in the church have adopted an attitude of being too silent in church meetings. It is a brain drain. In this dissertation, I am going to deal with only one of these topics, namely authoritarianism in the church.

It is not only the educated laity which left ELCIN, but pastors and church workers also. There are many reasons. Authoritarian leadership and lack of full participation in decision-making have been the two major causes that have alienated lay leaders and young theologians from the church. From its ruling body, the Synod, down to the Congregational Meeting, either the bishop, dean or pastor is the chairperson. Decisions are made at top levels and transferred to communities which have little or no influence on such decisions. They feel that the church does not take their skills, education and diversity seriously. The church retains old fashioned procedures where pastors do “everything” during worship services, in parish councils and meetings. Parish members are treated like children. Except the preaching of sermons, lay leaders are not motivated to participate in parish leadership; to chair meetings; to welcome guests; to lead parish programmes; to read texts and other responsibilities. The church is very slow in adopting democratic principles as found in

the government, non-governmental organizations and private institutions today. The church does things as if it is not aware of the new dispensation in the country. Constitutionally, the term of office of the Bishop is unlimited. The leadership qualities of some competent theologians are not utilised. The frustrated leaders have abandoned the church. Some have left the church because they were hindered by the authoritarian situation in the church to initiate and implement their plans.

The gospel, according to its Lutheran interpretation, implies participation, and that participation implies the democratisation of church structures and procedures. I will spell out the Lutheran understanding of leadership in chapter two. An authoritarian leader is in control and does everything, or monitors his/her subordinates closely; he/she knows what is right and what the people need; he/she is more experienced; he/she acts as a parent while subordinates are treated like children; the leader is presumed to be more knowledgeable than the people who are led; the led people are presumed to be inexperienced.

The task ahead for ELCIN is to put the gospel at the centre of its ministry and to live out the word it proclaims; to become a democratic church by democratizing its constitution and bylaws. It should make sure that pastors and lay leaders share the constitutional powers between them; pastors should acknowledge lay leaders as their co-workers and teammates; the church has to learn from other churches in the country and region. The participatory approach should be encouraged at all levels of the church.

1. 2 Problem formulation

The main problem of this thesis can be formulated as follows: How can the authoritarian leadership style found in ELCIN be replaced with a participatory leadership style?

Subproblem analysis: 1. Which historical factors led to the authoritarian leadership style in ELCIN? (a) Is it possible to assume that Luther's theology, which is the foundation of the Lutheran tradition, has led the Lutheran church to authoritarianism? To answer this question, I will confront Luther's own approach with the traditional Catholic approach, against which Luther rebelled. This will be done in chapter two. (b) Could the authoritarianism found in ELCIN be

derived from the Finnish missionary tradition? I will take up this question in chapter three. (c) Could it be derived from the impact of Ovambo political traditions? I will explore this possibility in chapter four. 2. How authoritarian are the current institutional structure and the leadership style in ELCIN really? I will deal with this issue in chapter five. 3. Why is it important for ELCIN to overcome authoritarianism in favour of participatory form of leadership? This problem is addressed in the first part of chapter six. The argument for a participatory style is actually developed throughout the dissertation and that par 6.2 only offers some additional considerations. 4. How can this goal be achieved? I will address this question in the second part of chapter six.

I will now offer hypotheses for each of the formulated problems. I have to begin with the hypotheses of the sub-subproblems of subproblem one before I can formulate the hypothesis for subproblem one, and I have to formulate all the hypotheses for the subproblems before I can formulate the hypothesis for the main problem.

Hypothesis for sub-subproblem one: The authoritarianism found in ELCIN cannot be attributed to the influence of Luther because Luther rebelled against the authoritarianism of the Catholic church of his time and suggested alternative in the form of the “priesthood of all believers”.

Hypothesis for sub-subproblem two: The Finnish missionaries indeed contributed substantially to the authoritarian spirit found in ELCIN.

Hypothesis for sub-subproblem three: The Owambo political culture also contributed significantly to the authoritarianism found in ELCIN.

The hypothesis for the first subproblem: The authoritarianism found in ELCIN is not due to Luther’s theology, but partially to the Finnish and partially to the Owambo influence.

The hypothesis for subproblem two: On the whole ELCIN is fairly authoritarian, although there are individuals and organisations which can be considered to be exceptions to the rule.

The hypothesis for subproblem three: Participation is preferable over authoritarianism because it

accords equal dignity to all believers regardless of their training or social status; it builds the community through cooperation on equal basis; it mobilises the full potential of all members of the church for the free flow of the gospel and the smooth running of the organisation; it enhances the motivation of the members to pull their weight; it diminishes the frustration felt by subordinate individuals and bodies; it is in line with modern trends in the secular world, thus helping to make the gospel plausible to our contemporaries, etc.

The hypothesis for subproblem four: On the one hand the institutional structures of ELCIN must be changed to make participatory leadership possible, on the other hand the personal attitudes of leaders and followers must be changed so that participation is actually implemented. Both these changes presuppose an extensive educational drive based on Lutheran theology and informed by the biblical witness, as well as constant checks to see whether progress is achieved.

The hypothesis for the main problem: If authoritarianism is to make way for participatory leadership in ELCIN, the church must overcome the legacy of both the Finnish missionaries and the Owambo political tradition and fall back on Luther's own approach to leadership which is based on the priesthood of all believers. This involves a change of institutional structures as well as a change of personal attitudes of both the ordained and the lay members of the church.

1.3 Thesis structure

This passage is only meant to give some indication of the themes which will be taken up in the different chapters and that this is no longer part of the problem analysis or the hypotheses. We shall devote a chapter each to the subproblems stated above. **Chapter one** introduces the topic and explains the methodology of the thesis.

Chapter two compares the church structures of the evangelical church Luther proposed with those of the Roman Catholic church. The Catholic tradition reveals the shortcomings of an authoritarian leadership style and asks whether such defects are to be found in ELCIN as well. The Lutheran tradition is a roll model that motivates ELCIN members to carry forward the Lutheran Reformation and never go back to an authoritarian leadership style as observed in the

Lutheran Reformation and never go back to an authoritarian leadership style as observed in the Catholic tradition. The aspects of the Roman Catholic Church structure to be discussed are the papacy, the Curia and its offices, the College of Cardinals, the episcopacy, the priesthood, the laity, apostolic succession and two examples of democratization processes within the Roman Catholic Church. In the case of Luther's approach we shall deal with the historical background of the Lutheran Reformation, its concept of the ministry, the underlying ecclesiology, the priesthood of all believers, the concept of secular vocation, the right of the congregations to call pastors and to judge all teaching, the function of the ordained minister, the meaning of ordination, the function of the bishops, the findings of the visitations and the princes as leaders of the church.

Chapter three investigates the kind of leadership patterns and church structure the Finns introduced into its daughter church, ELCIN. We will assess briefly the history of the Finnish Mission Society; the establishment of the mission field in Owambo; the introduction of the pietistic model of Christian life; the strategic avoidance of interaction with missionaries of other confessions, as well as local cultures and traditions; the characteristics and theology of some of the Finnish lecturers and the quality of pastoral training; the power relation between the Finns and the emergent indigenous church leaders; the neutrality the Finns observed between local kings and the German and South African colonists.

Chapter four explores the traditional political organization of the Kwanyama Kingdom before the arrival of Christianity and the nineteenth century European invasion. The chapter further investigates whether the latter influenced the current leadership patterns in the church together with the Lutheran tradition and the Finnish missionaries. The following aspects are studied: the election and the ascension of the new king; the revitalization of the king's power; the king as the custodian of the communal land; death, burial and throne succession; initiation rituals for diviners, and the authority of clan fathers and heads of households. We then compare the traditional political system with ELCIN. Similarities between offices and titles; informal advisers to the consecrated bishop as ascribed; superhuman characteristics; procedures of promotions; administrators in church administration; judicial courts as compared with councils; property rights and the

concept of succession in ELCIN are aspects to be investigated to see to what extent the traditional patterns might have influenced the current leadership patterns of the ELCIN Church.

Chapter five investigates patterns of leadership in ELCIN. It focuses on the unlimited constitutional powers invested in the ordained personnel over against the very limited powers of the lay people. This chapter looks also at decision-making procedures of the Women's and Youth Associations. Its aim is to propose the creation of a balance of constitutional powers whereby the laity and the clergy share leadership responsibilities. We shall briefly analyse the compilation and development of the constitution and the abrupt introduction of the episcopal office into ELCIN. The chapter includes comparisons of the decision-making bodies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN ELOC) with that of the German Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (GELC), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (ELCSA), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa Natal-Transvaal (ELKSA NT) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia (ELCRN). Our objective is to broaden the scope of leadership analysis and to learn from other churches. The chapter further investigates resolutions of parish council meetings in six parishes which belong to three different deaneries. Here the aim is to inspect the practice of leadership approaches in these meetings. It further investigates the leadership styles of six pastors. Here the purpose is to examine why authoritarian rule is reflected at lower and higher levels of the church. The negative attitudes towards collegiality and team work among church workers and the impact of the constitutions on decision-making procedures of the Women's and Youth Associations will be described. The effectiveness of the procedures of decision-making in associations will be examined on the basis of the material recorded during interviews. This examination is further extended to pastoral supervision at all levels of the church.

Chapter six focuses on the possibility of transforming the authoritarian leadership style and its patterns in ELCIN. Authoritarianism lacks full participation of all members in decision-making processes on equal basis whereas participatory leadership provides such participation. The chapter deals with creativity as a gift of God, the sharing of vision and responsibilities and interdependent leadership. It points out that principled leadership is effective and commendable. Guidelines such as Lutheran theology, modern democratic assumptions and practical advantages in terms of the

mission of the church will be applied to evaluate the authoritarian leadership style of the church. The chapter recommends steps that can lead towards the transformation of such leadership style if properly implemented. The goal can be achieved when the constitutional powers invested in the clergy and the laity are balanced. The teaching and training of church members regarding their right to participate in all decision-making processes at all levels in the church and the introduction of lay participation in most of the activities at the parish and congregational levels would contribute to such a solution.

As the overview of the chapters shows, the problem of authoritarianism is very complex. In many cases the situation is ambiguous. There are, for instance, some participatory aspects in the Owambo traditional system, although on the whole it is authoritarian. There are also some authoritarian trends in Luther's approach, although on the whole it is meant to be participatory. Many phenomena can only be understood if they are seen in wider contexts. Moreover, some observations can be assessed correctly only on the basis of concrete examples. The author deemed it prudent, therefore, to include more rather than less material in the various chapters, even if it may seem to be irrelevant to the immediate problem at hand. The aim is to enable the readers to make their own judgments.

1.4 . Research methodology

1.4.1 I will do a literature study to obtain clarity concerning Luther's approach to the problem of empowering the laity in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia so that the laity can understand their ministry as truly complementary to the ordained ministry.

1.4.2 In order to describe what practices are prevalent in my church, I will apply the case studies approach, for it will be difficult to investigate resolutions of the entire church. I will visit a number of parishes, circuits, church offices and record the practices and perceptions found there.

1.4.3 To understand how and why the current practices have come about in my church historically, I will consult the archives of the Finnish Mission Society at Oniipa, Paulinum Theological Seminary at Windhoek, Engela Parish Institute and Nkurenkuru Bible School.

1.4.4 Unstructured interviews:

To assess current attitudes concerning the problem I will conduct unstructured interviews among church leaders, pastors, adult lay leaders, directors of Women's, Men's, Youth's Leagues, Sunday School, Music, Diaconate, Mission and Stewardship. With the assistance of one of the experts in the field I will prepare a questionnaire which I will take along with me personally. To send questionnaires to ordinary people will not work. Namutenya Akukothela, a journalist, will help me to observe and assess the findings.

1.4.5 Possible African cultural influences:

To explore possible African cultural influences I will look at leadership patterns in Owambo traditional society. I will make both a literature study and interview traditional leaders, clan leaders, fathers, old people, diviners and healers. The information given should be controlled by comparing the views of different respondents.

1.4.6 Participatory observation:

I plan to discuss this topic separately with youth and women of Ekoka Parish as well as with nurses and teachers of Engela Parish. Working with various groups enables me to get information from people of different backgrounds and to use them as control groups for each other.

1.5 Limitations and delimitations of the subject of research.

The following sidelines are excluded because they would either sidetrack this study from its aim or make the research unmanageable.

1.5.1 The biblical patterns of authority such as the patriarchs, tribal elders, judges, kings and priests.

1.5.2 Jesus' Galilean Ministry.

1.5.3 How the German colonial rule and the South African Apartheid System influenced the leadership model of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia.

1.5.4 Although the problem addressed in the thesis applies to the entire Lutheran community, I will concentrate on the empowerment of the laity in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN).

1.5.5 I do not know the German and Finnish languages, so I cannot utilise sources written in these languages. The study is limited to English and Oshiwambo literature.

“For the purpose of this thesis, we take the Oshiwambo concords *omu-*, *ova*, *oshi* etc. as substitute for English articles” (Munyika 1997:9).

CHAPTER TWO

THE CONTRAST BETWEEN LUTHER AND THE ROMAN CATHOLIC TRADITION REGARDING CHURCH STRUCTURE

2.1 Introduction

Chapter one dealt with the introduction and methodology of this thesis. The reason for this arrangement is to make it clear from the outset what we want to achieve and how we plan to do it. In this chapter we will explore how far the Lutheran Reformers have gone in initiating and establishing an Evangelical church structure. The best way to do this is to deal with the contrasts between Luther and the Roman Catholic church. The selected sections of the Catholic Church structure, are the papacy, the curia and its offices, the college of cardinals, the episcopacy, the priesthood, the laity, apostolic succession and two examples of democratization processes within the Roman Catholic Church. From the suggested structure of the Evangelical church the following will be investigated: the historical background of the Lutheran understanding of the ministry, the underlying ecclesiology, the principle of the priesthood of all believers, the right of congregations to call pastors and to judge all teaching, the function of the ordained minister, the meaning of ordination, the function of higher and lower offices (superintendent and bishop), the findings and contributions of the visitation commissions, and the princes as leaders of the church. There will also be a comparison between Lutherans with Catholics and Reformed approaches, details of some developments after the Reformation and a conclusion.

For Luther, all Christians are ministers through baptism, so they can intercede and pray for others before God, call and dismiss their ministers, judge the teachings of their teachers and therefore participate in all decision-making procedures. We call for a revisit to Luther's original approach to enlighten our formulation of the inclusive concept of church structure for which this dissertation targets.

It is the aim of this thesis to study Luther's own approach with the intention to discover where it can be Africanised and contextualized. Both useful elements from the Lutheran and the

Owambo traditions will be utilised so that we can form a theory of Lutheran leadership, which is participatory and responding sufficiently to the needs of church members of African and Owambo origin.

2.2 The papacy

2.2.1 The primacy of the Pope

Because the structure of the Roman Catholic Church culminates in the papacy he is seen as the symbol of Catholicism. Avis' says, "The Roman Catholic Church is a monarchy, a hierarchical structured society, with the Pope at the apex of the pyramid" (1992:3). Catholics believe that the Pope is the successor of Peter, who headed the college of the apostles. He was called the "primate", a title which is higher than that of a supreme officer (Mckenzie 1969:6). The reasons for this belief are the significance of Peter as recorded in the New Testament (Matt 16:18-19) and "the tradition of the Roman primacy within the church" which culminated at the First Vatican Council in 1870 (Mckenzie 1969:6-7). Catholicism believes that Peter had a special leadership position in the apostolic group. The particular Roman interpretation of Matt 16:18 is first used by Tertullian at the end of the second century (Kung 1967:461). Catholics also believe that Peter was the first bishop of Rome and his successors were therefore entitled to his office as the leaders of the church. These two bases have not been accepted by the Orthodox or the Protestant Christians. Cullmann argues that while Peter was a leader of the apostolic group, no one succeeded him in this leadership. Cullmann's conclusion was that, like other apostles, Peter had no successor and therefore there was no need for a new leadership (quoted in Mckenzie 1969:7). According to Gal 2, Peter was the leader of the three "reputed pillars" in Jerusalem. A group whose other members were James and John, managed the church in Jerusalem (Gal 2:9). Peter was later succeeded by James in Jerusalem. The apostles as a group were succeeded by the *episkopoi* (overseers). The office of the bishop was derived from the overseers.

The Catholic view of Peter's role is often associated with the bearer of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, entrusted to him 'to bind' and 'to loose'. "To bind was to give an interpretation of the Law which imposed an obligation, and to loose was to give an interpretation which freed from

an obligation” (Mckenzie 1969:8). The bearer of the keys was the *major domus*, one who kept the keys in ancient monarchies (Is.22:21-22). Someone within the household was appointed and invested with authority who acted on behalf of the householder (Mckenzie 1969:8). The power of binding and loosing has no biblical parallel and no contemporary echo.

In Matt 16:13-18, Peter is referred to as a rock upon which Christ builds his church. It is only the Roman Catholics who believe this to be correct. No parallels are found in Luke and Mark. Again, among the four Gospels, it is only Matthew who records Jesus speaks of the church (Matt 16:13-18; 18:18). Protestants obviously do not reject Matthew’s gospel. They give the passage a different interpretation, namely that it is not his office but his confession (or his witness of the risen Christ) which forms the rock.

In Luke 22: 31-32, Jesus exhorts Peter as well as each Christian to strengthen the faith of his/her fellow believers, while in John 21:15-19, Peter is commissioned as shepherd of the flock of Jesus to strengthen others. Shepherd was an ancient Near Eastern title for kings (Mckenzie 1969:8). Acts 1-12 records Peter playing a significant leadership role in the young church immediately after Christ’s resurrection and ascension. He emerges also as an influential leader of the Jerusalem Christian community during the Council of Jerusalem (Act 15:7-11).

According to these pericopes Peter is authorised by Christ himself to take the lead and his leadership role has nothing to do with his primacy or his greatness. It should be noted also that Jesus prayed for Peter after Peter’s confession that Jesus is the Messiah (Luke 9:18-27) “But I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail; and when you have turned again, strengthen your brethren” (Lk 22:32). The words are Jesus’ response to Peter’s confession about who Jesus is. On this uttered faith, a new community of faithful believers entrusted with the keys and the power to bind and to loose, can be built. Faith is the important characteristic here and not primacy. John puts the emphasis on the love a leader should have towards his/her followers (John 21:15-19). The kind of leadership introduced here is one that entails responsibilities and not a legal or juridical entitlement. “It is significant that his leadership is always exercised in and with the college of the apostles. Important decisions are always the decisions of the college, and in the baptism of Cornelius, Peter’s action is discussed and ratified by the Twelve” (Mckenzie 1969:10).

2.2.2 The election of the Pope

The Pope is not elected by the bishops, let alone the ordinary members, but instead he is appointed by a small group of cardinals. Members of this body are appointed by the Pope according to his own personal choice. Cardinals in return appoint the successor of the Pope in the conclave. Severe penalties are laid on anyone who reveals any of the processes in the conclave. Cardinals are the Pope's personal staff, especially those who are members of the Curia. The Pope does not determine his successor, but determines the group from which his successor is to be elected. Cardinals are chosen by the Pope whom they advise. This creates personal loyalty towards the Pope which can damage good performance on both sides. The college is seen as an organization of friends who are perpetuating the status quo for their own survival. It is not possible for anyone else to enter this circle by means other than those cited above.

2.2.3 The power of the Pope

2.2.3.1 The First Vatican Council of 1870

“The Council explicitly defined the primacy of the Pope as primacy of jurisdiction, not merely of honor” (Mckenzie 1969:10). The word jurisdiction refers to the formal authority to govern. He possesses the power “as the successor of Peter, who received this authority as a permanent element of the church to be transmitted to his successors. This power is supreme and subject to the review of no one in the church; in particular it is not subject to the review of a general council” (Mckenzie 1969:10; Neuner & Dupuis 1978:224) The Council developed and defined the office of the Pope in more autocratic terms. Apart from being beyond the consent of the church, it gave the office absolute power which go far beyond what could be deduced from the New Testament Scriptures.

The Canon Law defines the power of the Pope by means of a quotation from the First Vatican Council documents. The definition is: “The supreme and full power of jurisdiction over the universal church both in matters of faith and morals and in matters of discipline and government”. This power is qualified as “genuinely episcopal, ordinary, and immediate over each and every

church as well as over each and every pastor and believer, independent of every human authority. Jurisdiction means the power to make laws; it is not leadership by merely moral influence or persuasion. It is the power to compel obedience, not by police and courts as civil governments do, but by binding the conscience of the believer” (1969:18). Such a powerful statement was the culmination of a long development in the Western Church aimed at uniting the universal Church under the leadership of the Pope, who is the Bishop of Rome (Neuner & Dupuis 1978:219). The Council of Ephesus (11 July 431) already refers to the Roman See as “established and consecrated with his blood [Jesus’ blood]” (Neuner & Dupuis 1978:222). Not only that, the Council of Florence (1439) records “that the holy apostolic See and the Roman Pontiff have the primacy over the whole world; ...” (Neuner & Dupuis 1978:223). The Fourth Council of Constantinople (869-870) and the Second Council of Lyons (1274) followed in the footsteps of the above Councils (Neuner & Dupuis 1978:225). Punishment for disobedience was the death penalty when the church was both a political as well as a religious body. Expulsion from the Roman Catholic Church was the practice during the Reformation period (Mckenzie 1969:18).

The papal power is also referred to as “genuinely episcopal” (Mckenzie 1969:18). This means that the Pope is both the bishop of his diocese and the universal church at the same time. According to the description, “his power is immediate; it touches each member of the church without passing through any intermediate. It is ordinary, which means that the power over the whole church is inherent in the office itself; it does not come from the appointment or delegation of the church or of any body within the church” (Mckenzie 1969:18).

At the head of the Roman Curia stands the Bishop of Rome, the Roman Pontiff. The Curia corresponds closely in structure and function with the cabinets of political governments. The Pope’s powers in the church are not equal to any power in other churches or secular politics. Therefore the Pope acknowledges no political superior. Already Pope Glasius I (492-496) publicly announced that while secular and spiritual powers are of equal rank, nevertheless “the priest is the king’s spiritual guardian and superior” (Bodensieck 1965:1923). In 1929, with the establishment of the Vatican City, which is the personal property of the Pope, the Pope withheld his cooperation from the Italian government by refusing to leave the Vatican City. It seems that the Pope did not want to acknowledge the authority of the Italian government. Acknowledging the power of that

government would mean degrading the Pope's absolute powers over against any power in the world.

2.2.3.2 The Second Vatican Council of 1965

The Pope has ordinary and immediate power in matters of discipline and government, and this touches each church, each pastor and each believer. In short, this means that there is no area of the Roman church, and no person who is not subject to the direct command of the Pope. The church enjoys the fullness of God-given authority to rule its members according to Roman Catholic understanding. It prescribes what they shall believe and how they shall live. Christ is described as acting through the church, which in turn acts corporately through the Pope, to whom the gift of inerrancy is tied. As Christ did not do any wrong, so the church does not teach any error. It is only the Magisterium which enjoys the gift of discerning authentic theological developments. Thus any theologian who thinks that he/she has had a new insight which contradicts official teaching must know that he/she is mistaken. "The Pope contains in his office all the power of the church, which would continue to subsist in him even if the whole body of the faithful were to be wiped out" (Avis 1992:3). Vatican II attempted to place the Pope at the head of the college of the bishops. These attempts were undermined in the Canon Law with the outcome "that authority remains absolute" (Archer 1986:7).

Ethically, the Pope has powerful teaching authority. Avis writes that "the two-edged sword of the papal authority divides unerringly between right and wrong" (1992:4). His power protects even the rights of the unborn children. The use of contraceptives and the practice of vasectomy are condemned as instruments of selfish sexual satisfaction without responsibility. These two practices endanger both the morals of the person and his/her body. Surrogate motherhood is put on the same level with prostitution while homosexual practice is perceived as "a form of mutual self-giving" and all are not accepted by the Pope, (Avis 1992:4). Both premarital sex and adultery are regarded as ways of using persons for selfish ends and therefore are not accepted. "Artificial insemination - even for childless couples - treats the body as a mechanism and the resulting child as an industrial product" (Avis 1992:4).

The above teaching illustrates how much power the Pope has in controlling and knowing what is best for the private lives of Christians. Avis might be correct when he says that “many observers, both inside and outside the Roman Catholic church, regarded it as suffering from an excess of authority” (1992:4). However, Macaulay is of the opinion that the papacy’s understanding of its own identity has been transformed through civilization. It thus no longer sees itself as the institution entrusted by God with absolute authority (quoted in Avis 1992:59). The latter argument does not say that the papacy has either moderated or retracted its historical claims. Nevertheless, the institution currently presents itself as a uniting and enabling body (Avis 1992:59). Vatican II has this warning to lay people: “Let the layman [woman] not imagine that the pastors are always experts, that to every problem which arises, however complicated, they can readily give him [her] a concrete solution or even that such is their mission” (Abbot 1966:244). The Pope and the bishops are also indirectly included in this quotation.

2.2.3.3 Collegiality among bishops

The constitution is contradicting itself. On the one hand it supports the veto powers of the Pope, while on the other it stresses the collegiality and dignity of the bishops’ authority. This idea of authority assumes that the leader, although sovereign, will act in consultation with his advisers. It is similar to some African traditions concerning the chieftainship. Collegiality does not have a meaning here in its relation to the Pope. The institution of the papacy elevates the Pope above all bishops. The Pope by virtue of his office, is highly elevated as the “Vicar of Christ and the Pastor of the universal church here on earth” (The Canon Law 1983:57). Because of these intangible powers granted to the Pope constitutionally, the authority of the bishop, the synod of the bishops, even after ecumenical Council depend on the Pope. “They are always in union with its head and never without this head”(The Canon law 1983:58). The apostolic succession of the other apostles is downgraded in relation to the succession of Peter. The power of the bishop is not autonomous but depends on the bishop of Rome who has the *plenitudo potestatis* (the fullness of jurisdiction).

If Christ is the head of the church and he alone holds all things together, another head such as Peter is not necessary. Jesus’ command that Peter should feed his flock does not mean that he

should be elevated to supremacy over the other apostles. If Peter is called the rock of the church this does not mean that he is the cornerstone which is Jesus. It is not Peter who was placed at the centre of the church but his confession. His confession became the foundation of the early church. The question remains whether the papal institution is needed in the church. If it was an office created to fill a gap for a certain period of time, then after that transitional period it should be abolished.

The Catholic dogma assumes that God gave all the authority to Christ (without democratic participation) and Christ gave it to the apostles (without democratic participation), who then handed it to the bishops (without democratic participation). Humans have no say over God's decisions. Obviously the millions of Catholics could not all vote. But, if the Pope is the pastor of the universal church, one would have to allow the people to elect their representatives in the synods, the synods, the bishops and the bishops again their "chairperson", the Pope. The same suggestion was advocated by Jean Morley in his book, *Traicte de la Police et Discipline ecclesiastique*. He was excommunicated and his book was burnt. The point Morley advocates is the right of the whole church to hold elections. Morley died but his positive ideas remain and I believe that it is the right time for the Roman Catholic church to apply them today. The Pope is the leader of the whole church. Like other leaders in other organizations he should be elected by his followers. This kind of election would mean that his power and authority were invested in him by the voters of his church. Another advantage here would be that the electorate could choose the most competent candidate. As it is now, the Pope as a leader does not have this power and authority from his followers. He is a monarchical leader whose rule does not require a representative body of advisers. The wider electoral base might be possible by utilizing the technology that secular states and organizations use in their elections. As it is now, the bishops, since they are appointed by the Pope and not by their diocesan representatives, cannot elect the Pope on their behalf. The idea that the power of the Pope reaches everywhere is logical but we disagree with the assumptions upon which this logic is based. The cardinals are also appointed by the Pope so they cannot act as the representatives of the laity and priests. The fact that the Pope is not first among equals contradicts the criterion of interdependence that teaches that no person has all the gifts. Each person has a gift and an empty space to be filled by the gifts of others.

2.2.3.4 The Curia

2.2.3.4.1 Introduction

The Roman Curia is a collective name for the offices through which the Pope administers the universal church. The offices are permanent with established functions, and function like the cabinet of a political government. The Roman Pontiff, who is also the Bishop of Rome, is the leader of the Curia. The Curia is the personal staff of the Pope and it is he who designates curial officials. It has no authority of its own, except the authority that the Pope gives it when he wants something done. The purpose of its establishment was, firstly, to minimize the power of the kings over the bishops they had appointed and gradually to do away with the right of kings to elect bishops. Secondly, the Curia acted as an office which had the responsibility to provide external offices with the official information from the Pope. That type of information kept the Catholics together during difficult times such as wars and harassments of bishops by kings.

2.2.3.4.2 Offices in the Curia

The various offices in the Curia are as follows. The Congregation of the Holy Office, formerly known as the Inquisition, is an office that is “committed” with “the doctrine of faith and morals” (Mckenzie 1969:20). The Pope acts as its prefect and practises his teaching office through it. The Congregation of the Consistory “supervises dioceses; it erects and divides provinces and dioceses and appoints bishops” (Mckenzie 1969:22). Bishops’ visitations and their reports are supervised from this office. The Pope acts as its highest official. The Congregation of the Sacraments makes regulations concerning the administration of the seven sacraments. However, matrimonial cases are classified under the jurisdiction of the Roman courts. The Congregation of the Council deals with episcopal conferences as well as with clergy and laity affairs which do not fall under other Congregations. The Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith provides clergy and financial resources to mission fields. The Congregation of the Rites approves all liturgical changes and “handles processes of beatification and canonization of saints” (Mckenzie 1969:23).

The Congregation of Ceremonies is the office of ecclesiastical protocol at the papal court. It also

manages ceremonies conducted in the papal chapels. The Congregation of Extra-ordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs is involved in establishing dioceses and designating bishops “in countries in which the relations of the government with the Holy See are determined by a concordat” (Mckenzie 1969:24). The Congregation of Seminaries and Universities “supervises the discipline, course of studies, and administration of seminaries” and the erection of pontifical universities (Mckenzie 1969:24). The Congregation of the Oriental Church deals with issues pertaining to the Eastern Orthodox churches which have joined the Catholic church under special arrangements. The Pope is the prefect of it. The Apostolic Chancery prepares certain pontifical documents. The Apostolic Dataray handles ecclesiastical posts while the Apostolic Camera makes temporary arrangements during the interim period between the death of the Pope and election of a new one.

The three pontifical courts are the Sacred Penitentiary, the Rota and the Signature Apostolic which is a supreme court. There are two secretariats, namely, the Secretariate of State and the Secretariate for Latin.

2.3 The college of cardinals

Cardinal which is a title of honour, is a derivation from *'cardo'* a Latin word meaning hinge (Mckenzie 1969:32). This is to explain that cardinals do not have ordinary ecclesiastical jurisdiction like bishops. Cardinalate refers to the office of dignity of a cardinal. Cardinalate who are not in Rome often associate with certain large archdioceses the world over. Küng says that the role of the college of cardinals in the church governance can be seen as a continuation of the synodical tradition of the first millennium (Küng 1985:185). The significance of the college of cardinals is seen in the fact that every congregation, court, and office of the Curia is presided over by a cardinal officer (Mckenzie 1969:32). There are two classes of cardinals. The first class comprises residential bishops who live in the sees which they govern. The second class consists of cardinals who are employed by the papal administration, but are not residential bishops. The offices are overlapping and interlocking. Cardinals that are of the people are designated members of many congregations beside their own. A Congregation prefect has seats in more than one congregation. A congregation is one of the departments of the Curia.

It is the Pontiff himself who appoints cardinals. He does so with the advice of the Congregation in Consistory. The cardinals elect the Pope among themselves in a locked conclave. All procedures of the election are conducted secretly and severe penalties are dealt out to any member who discloses them. Cardinals remain advisers of the Pope. It is believed that the power of ordination empowers them to elect the Bishop of Rome. But the diocese of Rome is administered by a cardinal vicar who is not a Bishop of Rome. "The cardinals are divided into cardinal bishops, cardinal priests, and cardinal deacons" (Mckenzie 1969:33). There are six cardinal bishops, fifty cardinal priests, and fourteen cardinal deacons, who together form the Pope's council (the sacred college) and who elect the new Pope. The six cardinal bishops are granted the six ancient suburban suffragan sees, while each cardinal priest is a nominal pastor of a church in Rome. Each of the cardinal deacons is attached to an ancient Roman parish.

The college of cardinals is considered to be a pivotal group. Each cardinal is believed to represent a certain part of the whole church. Therefore the expansion of the church is made to correspond with the expansion of the college of cardinals which is a very small group of people in the church. The same body does not have a close relationship and interaction with the people it represents. It does its work sometimes under the pressure of influential personalities. A good example is what happened in the year 1378, when the pressure from the mob organised by Italians in Rome influenced the cardinals to elect Urban VI instead of Bartholomew Prignani (Hughes 1947:233). This election initiated the Western Schism. Besides the influential outsiders cardinals can favour someone among themselves to further their own interests. The other disadvantage of the system is the senior age of most of the cardinals. Like most old people some cardinals are suspicious of the discoveries of scholarship and positively hostile to new theories developed from these new discoveries. They do not accept new social theories, or social action, or new liturgical practices and are very slow to revise the existing structures of management and operation. Vatican II attempted to propose a compulsory retirement age for ordinaries. The suggestion was voted out because the Roman church never deposes a bishop who is not heretical or schismatic. Theologically, the bishop is in "a state of perfection" and it is not admitted that he can be imperfect (Mckenzie 1969:52).

Residential cardinals advise the Pope on matters which concern their nations and regions. This

work overlaps with that of nuncios who are ambassadors sent by the Pope to foreign countries. This means that the advisory work in foreign countries has special representatives. The politics behind the existence of the college of cardinals is that they are the only body competent to elect the Bishop of Rome. One is tempted to conclude that the competence referred to is a legitimation of the perpetuation of the college. However, the question remains whether the church really needs this body. Since there is no doctrinal reason to prevent the election of a Pope on a wide basis, on the basis of the latter my information I am of the opinion that college of cardinals should be abolished.

2.4 The episcopacy

2.4.1 The episcopacy and the constitution

The Roman Catholic Canon Law teaches that the bishops hold their offices “by divine right” or “by divine institution” (The Canon Law 1983:66). This doctrine says that episcopal offices are constitutional offices and that no church can exist without this office. According to Catholicism the college of bishops is believed to be the successor body of the apostles. This means that it is the body that received apostolic authority from Jesus. Gregory the Great was of the opinion that “Bishops, then, must be considered as the nobler members of the universal Church, for they are linked in an altogether special way to the divine Head of the whole Body and so are rightly called ‘first among the members of the Lord’” (quoted in Neuner & Dupuis 1978:233). Each residential bishop is offered the representative authority of the place which means that the bishop has jurisdiction because of his office. Titular bishops have no territories which they govern and are offered ancient sees in the territories of the unbelievers (Mckenzie 1969:41). Auxiliary bishops are ordained to episcopal orders to assist the ordinary with liturgical obligations. Coadjutor bishops are appointed to succeed ordinaries who are either old or with chronic ill health. A group of dioceses are formed into a province, which is seen as one episcopal see. The largest see is called the metropolitan see. Others are named suffragan and patriarch while the oldest see in a country is called the primate (Mckenzie 1969:41-42).

Kung maintains that there is no trace of a direct commission to the bishops by Christ. Christ sent

his disciples into the world and after several generations of complex historical development, the episcopate came into being. This mission includes, however, no directives for a charismatic or episcopal church order whatsoever.

2.4.2 The college of Bishops

The next group in the hierarchical structure is the college of bishops. Catholicism does not consider an individual bishop as the successor of an apostle. A bishop is not an apostle, but the college carries the apostolic office. It is believed among Roman Catholics that the entire college succeeds to the mandate of Jesus Christ. The mandate referred to is the preaching of the gospel throughout the world, administering the sacraments and governing the church (Mckenzie 1969:39). The episcopal model seems to have been the answer to the unstable situation of the early Christian era. “ Ever since the second century of the Christian era, the role of the bishops together with the creed, was considered a stronghold against heresy and schism” (Küng 1985:95). The following are Ignatius ‘ admonitions against Gnosticism.

You should all obey the bishop as Jesus Christ obeys the Father, and the *presbyterium* like the apostles; but honour the deacons as appointed by God. No one must act in anything concerning the church without the bishop. Only the eucharist celebrated by the bishop or those appointed by him is valid. Wherever the bishop appears, his people are there too, just as where Jesus is, so also is the Catholic Church. Without the bishop there is to be no baptism and no celebration of the agape meal; but whatever he approves, is pleasing to God, about all this you can be sure and confident,... It is good to know God and the bishop. He who honours the bishop, will be honoured by God; anyone who does something without the bishop’s knowledge serves the devil (Ignatius 1868:238-255).

In the pastoral letters an officer of a local church is called *episkopos* which means “overseer”. This word is the root of the word “bishop” in English (Mckenzie 1969:39). The word *episkopos* is secular in origin. In non-Christian usage it meant an official overseer of a town, of subjects, or of slaves. It was used for officials of a community or group, for the overseer of a building site, for the officials of religious communities, especially those responsible for administering wealth, for other kinds of functionaries like market superintendents, watchmen, or for journeying preachers and for gods in their roles as tutelary divinities of certain people, towns or treaties.

2.4.3 The title bishop has undergone various developments

In the Christian sphere the bishop must have had some sort of supervisory or administrative function related with economic matters. As said before it also had the function to hold the church together by excluding heretics. The title *episkopos* or bishop as we have it today went through three phases. The first phase was that the *episkopoi* gradually established themselves as the chiefs and eventually sole leaders of the community and replaced the teachers and prophets. The second phase was the establishment of a monarchical episcopate. Here the *episkopoi* stand out from the ranks of the presbyters. Towards the end of the second century, Ignatius of Antioch writes, “one eucharist, one body of the Lord, one cup, one altar and therefore one bishop together with the *presbyterium* and the deacons my fellow servants” (Ignatius 1868:221-238). For the bishop to serve in a college of presbyters and deacons does not mean that he judicially depends on them. The bishop is not accountable to the *presbyterium*. With the idea of serving in a college, the bishop avoids an autocratic monarchy. That is why a three-tiered hierarchical structure was put into operation. It is also the beginning of the division between “clergy” and “laity”. The third phase was when the *episkopoi* were called *paroikia*, who became leaders of dioceses. The other title found in the New Testament is *presbyteroi*, “elders”, which was translated to mean “priest” in English (Mckenzie 1969:39). Both the *episkopoi* and the elders are referred to as members of the college. Ignatius of Antioch is described by historians as the first authoritarian local *episkopos* who lived towards the end of the first century. The bishops of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria and Antioch took the title “patriarch” instead of *episkopos* (Bodensieck 1965:311).

Roman theology gives to bishops a strong title, “monarchical bishops which means that the bishop alone has all ecclesiastical power in his diocese”(Mckenzie 1969:40). The title monarchical bishop was a later development (Küng 1967:460). One of the disadvantages of monarchical bishops was that they had great political influence. They were either “princes” or “kings” in their own dioceses. It was therefore not easy for them to resign from those positions or to cross to other faiths during the Reformation period.

2.4.4 Election of a bishop in the Roman Catholic Church

The selection of the bishops is secretly conducted by the Pope through the Congregation of the Consistory. The election process is kept away from the people. The criteria for qualification put forward are such that they accommodate every ordinary in the church. Legitimate birth, a career of church administration and conservatism are some of the qualifications looked at (Mckenzie 1969:45). So, the Holy See never appoints a “controversial figure as a bishop” (Mckenzie 1969:48). In its secretive election procedures, the Holy See depends on recommendations from its representatives, cardinals and ordinaries in that country. It is a centralized appointment whereby the Pope selects his favoured candidates, rather than a decentralized selection where other voters participate. Such election is undemocratic because people do not have the right to elect their representatives.

2.4.5 Power sharing in the bishopric diocese?

The Canon Law made a provision that an ordinary should be provided with advisory bodies. One important body among others is the cathedral chapter. Its members organize divine worship and act as senate and council members for the ordinary. The same members serve as members of the interim government between the death of an ordinary and the installation of his successor. They have the power to elect the vicar capitular who is an interim administrator. The body has a special say (deliberative vote) (Mckenzie 1969:56) which the ordinary needs before making a decision in small matters. In ordinaries where there is no cathedral chapter, the bishops decide themselves what course to follow. In some dioceses, the ordinaries themselves designated a board of consultors. No job description for them is stipulated in the constitution and at the death of an ordinary, the administration is transferred to the vicar general. Lay persons could be accommodated in the group of consultors. As the Pope has the Curia beside him, each ordinary has its Curia led by auxiliary bishops.

The relation between the ordinary and that of the priests is that of submission on the side of the priests. Obedience and submission is demanded from every diocesan priest through ordination. Through the ordination oath every diocesan priest makes a promise of obedience to the diocesan

bishop. It is a vow which differs from the one members of the religious orders make. This is a controlling mechanism through which the ordinary is able to control every priest in his diocese. The ordinary is not obligated by the constitution to consult a priest for instance before assigning him to any type of work or place. The priest is not part of this decision. The bishopric post is “the backbone of the ecclesiastical structure...” (Mckenzie 1969:51). A Diocesan bishop lays salaries down, proper clerical clothing, places of relaxation and the times priests should keep. The ordinary has absolute powers of appointment and promotion. When a priest resigns even through the proper channels, the ordinary will deprive him of his property including the licence to conduct priestly functions. The ordinary cannot be sued for he is the judge. In a nutshell, all diocesan activities depend totally on the powers of the ordinary. Mckenzie remarks,

... but it is true to say that no one can show leadership unless the ordinary permits it. He and he alone can mobilize the strength of the diocese, and only a regional group of bishops can mobilize the strength of a region or a nation. Without episcopal support, or at least episcopal tolerance, no form of Catholic action moves very far. If the ordinary himself does not speak articulately to issues of common concern or permits others to speak, the Roman Catholic church remains mute on the issues, for the Roman Church speaks officially only through the bishops (1969:65).

Apart from the property owned by religious orders, the ordinary is in charge of all other diocesan properties are. He is the supreme administrator of diocesan property. This position differs from one diocese to the other and from one country to the other. However, in some dioceses, the ordinary is “a corporate sole” which means that the property of the diocese is invested in a single person. The diocesan leader is not in this regard responsible to a board of directors. In some instances, the ordinary plays the role of chairman of a board or selects board members of parishes and organizations in his diocese.

Only the ordinary and the clergy are members of the diocesan synod, which takes place every ten years. Laymen and laywomen are not members. The diocesan synod is a body in which the ordinary makes church laws. The body is neither a legislative nor a “deliberative body in practice” (Mckenzie 1969:57). It makes laws and uses any of them when needed. The preparatory committees have controlling power in that they can to limit free discussion to themselves. The fact

that lay persons are not members of the diocesan synod, contradicts the criterion that a vision is gift from God and that the church participates in it. What is meant here is that each one of us has a vision. Like clerics, lay leaders have visions to share with other leaders. Not only vision, they have also creativity to initiate ideas and insights.

2.4.6 The power relationship between the Pope and a bishop

The power relation between Pope and bishop is very complex. Mckenzie calls this relation “unfinished theological business” (1969:58). According to historians the First Vatican Council (1870) failed to resolve the issue because of the seizure of Rome by the troops of Victor Immanuel. Vatican II also tried but ended in further complications. The two powers are parallel in the same diocese and the same church. This means that the power of the bishop is not under that of the Pope. The Pope acknowledges this, but “has neither the right nor power to change them” (Neuner & Dupuis 1978:228). The bishops are not his subjects in the same manner as laity are. It is a fact that the Pontiff has power to depose bishops, but this is done with extreme caution. Other colleagues have to be consulted beforehand. The Canon Law teaches that the Pontiff has the overall episcopal power in the whole church. This means that the power the Pope exercises in the whole church is similar to the power each bishop has over his diocese. But a bishop is not a representative of the Pope in his diocese. His jurisdictional power, which is full episcopal power within his diocesan borders, was not given him by the Pope. The episcopal power is the power the diocesan bishop has because of his office. Because of this power the bishops have the right to act as spiritual and temporary governors of dioceses. Besides the latter they are possessed of legislative, judicial, and coercive power. The archbishops are supervisors of church provinces and other bishoprics and unorganised regions between the Pope and the bishops. The Archbishop functions as a bishop of his own diocese just as the Pope is a bishop of the diocese of Rome. Besides the appointment of bishops the Pope appoints abbots, prelates, and other officials in certain bishoprics.

According to Catholicism a bishop without jurisdictional power is not a bishop in the true sense of the word. The power to judge is the power to make legal decisions whereas the “power to compel is the power to bind the conscience of the subjects...” (Mckenzie 1969:50). That the Pope

possessed the same power. "In theological language, episcopal power is understood as the threefold supremacy in teaching, in administering the sacraments, and in governing the diocese" (Mckenzie 1969:51).

The Pope's power cannot destroy episcopal power. The Pope is the spokesperson and the supreme Bishop of the Roman Catholic Church. Mckenzie calls him "the bond and expression" of the harmony among bishops (1969:61). Being a member, though a primate, of the college of bishops, he is a colleague to other bishops. The authority he has to talk to a colleague is through the college only. Thus each bishop has no authority over other individual bishops.

The selection of the bishops is performed secretly by a small selected group with the view of not hurting the feelings of bishops who were nominated but not chosen.

It would be desirable for diocesan members to make the selection. The advantage of a broader electorate is that the voters will feel compelled to support the person elected. The proposed system takes the burden from the ordinary and puts it on the shoulders of the persons to be led. It is a way that guarantees voting rights to all adult members of the diocese. As it is now, the Pope only has to consult the people whom he himself has elected. It is not enough to get advice only from leaders of the same rank, for they do not represent the whole church, and it is human for colleagues to defend each other's case, or to cover it up. By doing so, the system is producing its own products, meaning that it does not accept leaders outside the already established hierarchical circle. The danger is that new insights and different leadership perspectives cannot emerge. The elected leaders perpetuate Roman theory and practice and thus no change would occur. It should also be noted that it is not the centralized appointment that would remedy the prevalent system, but a decentralized election. Both Vatican I and II opted "for the decentralization of church government and for more freedom of ordinaries from Roman supervision and Roman directives and from the necessity of appealing to Rome" (Mckenzie 1969:59). The Council concluded that the remedy is the provision of a situation when an episcopal office is regarded as equivalent to the papal office. Controversial leaders are often not incompetent leaders. Room should be created within the constitution whereby the laity and priests have access to the Pope. Other criteria should be added to the administrative qualifications which

are demanded for the office now. McKenzie talks about cooperation as the major qualification a candidate should possess (1969:45).

It is theologically accepted even among Roman Catholics that a simple priest can be authorized to confer the sacrament of confirmation. This theological conviction leaves little room for ordaining a bishop merely for the purpose of conferring the sacraments. The bishop has to share the ministry with fellow Christians. He has to understand that in his office the functions of the college of presbyters find their unity. He alone cannot carry all the functions of the whole diocese and ignore the gifts of others in his diocese. It has become a well-known fact that the most effective diocesan bishops are those who make best use of their competent co-workers and staff members. One of the advantages of the delegation of duties is that the leadership empowers the staff and has more time for other functions.

2.5 The priesthood without the power of jurisdiction

Priesthood is a post-apostolic development. It came about because the single parish in the city became too big for one bishop to serve. Many priests were ordained to minister in various sections of the same parish but under one bishop. The position emerged as an expansion of the ministry of the ordinary.

The priest does not have power of jurisdiction by virtue of his office. He has sacred power, which was transferred to him by the bishop during his ordination. It is the power to preach, to administer the sacraments, and to govern. Since the priest does not have the jurisdiction power of the ordinary, so the sacred power he possesses depends on the jurisdiction of the ordinary. This means that the Roman priest does preach and administer the sacraments as a representative of the ordinary. Some of the functions of the priest are the following: He is described as called by God to represent the people before God and to offer their gifts and offerings for sin to God. "The people are to turn to the priest to receive Christ's life, power, comfort, spiritual food, confession of their sins, showing their repentance, and be forgiven their sins" (Pero and Moyo 1988:72). The ordinary has the right to give the priest the licence to act as a minister and to suspend him when necessary. The licence is called faculties, while the withdrawal is suspension. This demonstrates

the total responsibility of the ordinary for the diocese. The priest does not constitutionally share this task with the ordinary.

Various priestly titles such as “monsignor, protonotary apostolic or domestic prelate, and Papal Chamberlain” were instituted (Mckenzie 1969:67). Monsignor is a title of honour, protonotary apostolic or domestic prelates are called “right reverend”, which is a permanent title. The Papal Chamberlain is called the very right reverend, a title he loses after the death of the Pope.

Seniority rather than competence plays the most significant role in promotion and appointment in the Catholic Church. This does not imply that competence is not important. The proper way of promoting candidates is to hold a concursus, which is “a competitive examination in theology and preaching” (Lee 1965:70).

The other issue to be noted here is the identity crisis experienced through the isolation and celibacy of each priest. With isolation the author means the prevention of the priest from entering “the theatre; the opera; moving pictures; sports events, especially racing; restaurants and bars; riding in an automobile with a women of any age, even an infant or the priest’s own mother; public beaches; going anywhere after sunset except for an urgent summons for priestly ministry, which means death actual or impending” (Mckenzie 1969:73). Celibacy is an universal law in the Catholic Church introduced in the First Lateran Council of 1123, which prohibits clergy to marry (Mckenzie 1969:74).

The Roman Catholic parish property falls under the diocesan ordinary. The parish priest is the parish property administrator under the ordinary. The disadvantages are that the ministry suffers because more time is spent on property than on persons. Some priests take administrator posts as their major career. Here follows a basic example of how a North American parish pastor spends his working day.

There are scheduled ceremonies of public worship each day in the church. Both the doorbell and the telephone will ring at intervals, not only all day long but into the evening, the hours when lay people are more likely to be free from their employment. Some of the calls are purely business, concerned with the domestic details such as purchasing, maintenance, and repair, and conversations with

employees. Other calls will come from parishioners who seek counseling. Such ritual services as weddings and funerals must be arranged. Officers of parish organizations will call to discuss their programs and problems. Many priests have regular classes of instruction in schools; other groups meet for instruction in the rectory. The parish is often an unofficial center of Roman Catholic information for the press, for local merchants and business men, for ministers and members of other Christian churches, and for those who are simply curious. A priest is sometimes called to the telephone to settle a bet made at a cocktail party. He may be summoned to a hospital, and in any case the wise pastor visits his sick daily. Sunday is not the typical day. The entire morning and some of the afternoon or evening are spent in conducting public worship in the church, but Sunday afternoon and evening are usually the only periods of the week when the rectory will be reasonably free of the telephone and the doorbell (Mckenzie 1969:70-71).

2.5.1 The relation between the parish priests and their assistants in the parishes

Constitutionally, the relation between the priest and his assistant is not clearly stipulated. It is up to the priest to decide his relationship with his assistants. This undetermined situation creates room for some of the priests to dominate, underwork, or to prevent their assistants from participating fully in the ministry. The priest who is permanent in the rectory is the head of the parish as well as the rectory. Assistants share the rectory with him on a temporary basis.

The priest is the responsible administrator of the parish property.

A constitutional amendment is needed here so that the Roman Catholic priest may have jurisdictional power to have authority to serve. To make the priest a representative of the bishop is to deny that God does not work outside church structures, which God does through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The absolute power in the hands of the bishop should be divided among himself, the priest and the laity. As it is now, the priest's service is at the mercy of the bishop who should be his co-worker and not his master. Not only that, the bishop should share the diocesan responsibilities with the priests and other diocesan workers, for the total dependence of the diocese upon one person is autocratic.

The problem of transforming the Roman Catholic hierarchical structure lies with the consecrated episcopacy and not with the laity or the priests. Like the leadership of an ancient state the episcopacy has the legislative, executive and judicial authority in its hands. Nobles are classified

according to grades. The Pope and bishops together form the class of the higher nobility which has the power of consecration, called "*sacra potestas*" (Obrist 1992:29). This power differs from the pastoral and teaching authority; thus the higher nobility has all the say and controls all key positions in the church. The priests and deacons who are "a lesser spiritual nobility" through ordination have their own class (Obrist 1992:28). The sacred power is handed down in the form of ordination but the bishops are controlling it. On the other hand, the lesser spiritual nobility forms the reserve from which the Pope can select candidates for consecration as bishops. The church rules "by the theory of the grace of God, supplemented by the sub-theory of the apostolic succession" (Obrist 1992:29). This implies that the higher nobility of the church has received its power directly from Christ. Power should be removed from the nobility at all levels if any change is to take place.

The progress a predecessor has achieved may be undone in the process because of an incompetent new senior leader. The process as such discourages senior clergy either to improve their academic qualities or to compete with younger and more competent priests. Competent leaders will also be discouraged from maintaining or improving their competence. Young competent priests will feel betrayed and unjustly treated while incompetent leaders will be obstacles in the way to transformation. The system tends to give chances to colleagues and associates rather than to the most competent leaders.

In order to remedy tension between the parish priest and his assistants, substantial amendments protecting the assistant priests have to be added to the constitution. Parish priests should consider their assistants as fellow human beings and co-workers. The parish priest has too much power, so this power should be shared between himself and his assistants. However, the proper way to deal with this problem is to introduce a Parish Council in the Canon with parish members who have decision-making power. The property power should be taken away from the hands of the parish priest and put into the hands of the laity. This gives the laity the opportunity to utilize their talents and at the same time take the burden of property responsibilities from the priest. The daily lives of the people of the community served by the priests shows that speedy transformation is needed. Priests therefore should be allowed to live with non-Christians, and visit recreation places as other people do. That exposure would strengthen their faith and their sense of responsibility

towards secular life. It is wrong to think that keeping priests away from ordinary life will protect them (Lee 1965:156). Celibacy has no basis in the Scripture. It has robbed the clergy of marriage, which is God-given. While preventing some marriage problems, celibacy, has encouraged concubinage (Mckenzie 1969:77) and homosexuality among priests.

The working situation and conditions of the parish priests need to be re-considered. As it is now, the priest is overworked. He spends most of his time in personal encounters. It is good to be people-centred rather than work-centred, but too much work is always dangerous. The danger here is that the priest does not have sufficient time to engage in theological studies as well as in preparing quality sermons. He does things routinely. Such a working situation can also cause health problems in the long run. Parish priests should be encouraged to look beyond their daily responsibilities and participate in the cultural activity of the people they serve. This is one of the positive attempts to bring the gospel closer to the people.

2.6 Exclusion of the laity from the church structure

Theologians often refer to the equal sharing of the Christian message and Christian way of life at the initial stages of the church as recorded in Acts 2 and 4. The New Testament does not witness to the clergy-laity polarity seen in some of the Churches today. The term “clergy” is not found in the NT at all. A few exceptions are seen in the pastoral epistles. Except *Espokopos*, terms such as hierarchy, pope, priests and laity were not known. These words and the ideas they represent are all post-apostolic developments.

The laity have no place in the power structure of the Roman Catholic church. According to the Catholic understanding the laity must not be part of the power structure, therefore the Canon Law excludes them from participating in decision-making processes. The clergy belong to a sacred group. The Roman Catholic Church distinguished between hierarchy and laity as well as between “religious” and “secular” priests. The latter refers to monks and the former to clergy. Secular here means not connected with religion in a special way like the clergy. Based on these principles “the secular is the proper area of lay decision...” (Mckenzie 1969:85). The result is that the laity are passive in the religious world in the Roman Catholic Church because it is not their sphere. Instead

of being participants in decision-making procedures in their own church, the laity "...are recipients of sacraments and listeners" (Mckenzie 1969:82). They are the governed. Alberigo calls them the "learning church" or "the ordinary faithful laity" (1992:16).

The laity are active in secular aspects of the church. Although not able to participate in decision-making procedures they are active in other aspects of the church, such as economic resources, mission and many others. In the economic structure of the church for instance, the laity provide the revenue of the church. However, because of the prevailing belief and the impact of the long tradition upon the Catholics, the laymen and laywomen are thought to be the recipients of the activities of the church. The activities of the church should be understood as the religious activities delivered by the clergy in the church. "Therefore their active participation in the operations is not needed" (Mckenzie 1969:83). The laity are called the people of God.

The clergy for their part have penetrated the secular sphere. There have been clergy who engaged themselves in literature, social welfare, teaching, writing, and journalism. These are secular spheres. This unfair distribution of working opportunity in both secular and sacred spheres is understood by the laity as clerical interference in the secular field. The laity cannot share in clerical duties. Tension between the laity and the clergy mounts in some Churches while in others anti-clerical resentments are expressed candidly. The Second Vatican Council "proposes councils of laymen both in the dioceses and parishes" (Abbott 1966:515; Mckenzie 1969:87; Brain 1999:55).

There are new developments at diocesan as well as at national levels in Southern Africa that attempt to improve the situation. Some dioceses allow lay persons free expression of ideas, needs, priorities and suggestions in synods which are held from time to time; diocesan structures in which the lay persons can consider special problems and make recommendations are provided in some of the structures of the dioceses; bishops also consult lay experts; the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference (SACBC) is considering representation of laity at national level (Brain 1999:55); lay organizations, such as the Knights of Da Gama (KDG), the Catholic Women's Union, the Young Christian Workers (YCW) and Small Christian Communities (SCCs) have been established (Henriques 1999: 253-260). Priests and catechists have become trainers of the laity and are no longer considered as their sole providers. Because of these initiatives the laity began

to care for themselves in the absence of priests. They overcome the perception that the involvement of the laity in the church is an extension of the hierarchy's apostolate and encourages them to participate in the life of the church.

If the laity have no place in the structure of the Catholic Church this is due to a lack of democratic principles. The laity are not under aged so that they should suffer exclusion from decisions that have an impact on their future and their church. In view of its undesirable consequences, the RCC should revisit the appropriateness of the division of sacred and secular responsibilities. De la Bedoyene complains that "the church often treats them as children all their lives"(1962:141). Overcoming the present division with its prohibitions would free the laity from clergy domination and give them the opportunity of making use of their leadership gifts. As in the case of the priests, the Canon Law, the constitution and the underlying theology would need to be amended in this regard. Vatican II proposes the participation of the laity in the structures of the church. However, the suggestion fails to propose constitutional amendments in this regard. Another vitiation of the document is that it proposes diocesan and parish advisory bodies instead of bodies that have decision-making power (Abbot 1966:528; Mckenzie 1969:57-58). The church is ruled on a traditionalist household model basis, which excludes subordinates from decision-making processes.

The Dumont Commission led by Ferdinand Dumont was appointed in 1968 by Quebec bishops. The objective of the research commission was "to examine the crisis of the church, and, on the basis of this research, to formulate recommendations for new, more appropriate pastoral policies" (Baum 1992:106). This is what it offered. The Dumont Report formulated recommendations for new and more appropriate pastoral policies. It recommends that in all parishes there be created a 'pastoral council' open to lay people and 'an episodic assembly' that at fixed times calls all the members of the community together to air "their concerns, assess present policies, enlarge the concern of the parish and initiate new pastoral ventures" (Baum 1992:110). In accordance with the Report the parish priest should act as a facilitator. He should lead a 'pastoral council' which is the decision-making body. The Report recommends the creation of a new institution called 'pastoral zones'. The zones are meant to bring together people from various parishes with "common concerns, common conditions, common problems" (Baum 1992:111). By so doing

collegiality, dialogue and cooperation in the parish and the entire church is promoted. Here the 'centre of decision-making' would be an appointed 'zone council.' Members of the council should be exclusively lay people who meet at regular intervals. All people in the zone including all those affected by problems and activities can congregate there. The exclusion of the clergy in zone council is one of the basic attempts to help the laity to develop self-esteem and self-confidence which are qualities that enable them to articulate their problems. The Report also recommends the creation of a diocesan pastoral council led by a bishop. It is a decision-making body in which the diocesan priests and lay congregants express their concerns and make suggestions (Baum 1992:111).

2.7 Apostolic Succession

Having looked at all the hierarchical levels in the Catholic church we proceed to trace the understanding of the Apostolic Succession in this church.

Apostolic succession means a succession of bishops going back to the apostles of Christ. During the second and third centuries apostolic succession was explained to mean "like the apostles" (Kung 1967:127). The Catholic understanding of the apostolic succession is that the apostolic authority came from Jesus to the apostles who transmitted it to the college of bishops. So, Catholicism holds that, because the college of bishops is the legitimate successors of the apostles, the hierarchical structure of the church is the bearer of the sacred power which Jesus Christ committed to his disciples. "Thus in the Roman tradition no one can bear authority unless he can trace his designation through legitimate succession from the apostolic appointment" (Mckenzie 1969:4). The transmitted authority, Catholics believe, includes the authority to preach the gospel, to administer the sacraments, and to rule the church. The priesthood is "the power of orders" (1969:4) conferred by ordination, that is the imposition of hands upon the ordinand. It is a sacramental power meant for the administration of the sacraments. The power to rule is the power of jurisdiction conferred by appointment by the Pope. The appointment of bishops therefore in the Roman Catholic Church is carried out by the Pope to ensure that the apostolic succession is not broken and that their jurisdiction is therefore, legitimate. These responsibilities belong to the college of the bishops in the church.

High Church Anglicans and the Swedish Lutherans do claim to have the apostolic succession. Lutherans also believe in apostolicity but they maintain that it is the contents of the apostolic message that constitutes apostolicity, not the office transferred by the laying on of hands. The Orthodox and Presbyterian Churches, to mention only a few, legitimate hierarchical successors of the apostles.

Apostolic succession is a collegiate and not an individual succession. It is the group of bishops which succeeds the group of apostles and not a person who succeeds a person. The succeeding process is therefore carefully controlled. The vacancies in the college are filled gradually and the college is expanded to meet the needs of the church. Since the breaking of succession is believed to be a loss of sacred power, everything possible is done that nothing damages succession. The two examples on how the succession can be broken are “a lack of intention to confer sacred power or a distortion of the rite of ordination to such a degree that the rite no longer symbolizes the conferring of sacred power” (Mckenzie 1969:4-5).

The Catholic understanding of a church founded as a hierarchical college has no scriptural basis. Christ did not leave behind any kind of hierarchical design for the church. All hierarchical structures available today are *adiaphora* and post-apostolic developments. Historians also noted that due to long times where traditions were not recorded it is not possible to prove the unbroken chain of apostolic succession as claimed by Catholicism. Küng states that the “whole church, not just a few individuals...is the successor of the apostles in obedience, and from his obedience it derives its authority” (Küng 1985:94). The issue of making the Roman Pontiff the ultimate seat of apostolic authority needs serious reconsideration. As it is now, the Catholic Church denies or ignores the jurisdictional power of other Churches by claiming to have the sole and absolute jurisdictional power to appoint bishops. The imposition of hands has a long tradition and symbolizes the transference of blessings and authority to the ordinand. However, this is performed with the Word of God which is in the form of a tradition but is above any tradition. In the Catholic understanding it seems as if the bishops are the church. An inappropriate emphasis is put on the bishops, their responsibilities and the defence of episcopal authority. The place of other members, particularly the priests and lay persons, seems to be forgotten.

2.8 Examples of democratization processes within the Roman Catholic Church

2.8.1 Introduction

The two examples that are dealt with here are meant to demonstrate the meaning of collegial government within the Catholic Church. As mentioned before, they are not part of the overall church structure. What is significant is that members and leaders of Orders who are theoretically under an authoritarian church government find it possible to practice a democratic leadership style. So they provide the Roman Catholic Church with a tangible model of democratic church structures from which it can learn. Members of the Protestant Churches, particularly ELCIN grass roots members, can also learn from these attempts.

2.8.2 A brief description of Dominican government

2.8.2.1 Initial attempts

The Order came into existence round about the year 1215. It was the time when “the corporation theory and the law which developed by the middle of the thirteen century held that authority in a corporation was not concentrated in the head alone but resided in all members; and as a practical consequence it followed that the prelate could not act without the consent of the members in the more important matters affecting the well-being of the whole corporation” (Tierney quoted in Walter 1992:59). The idea was simplified to mean, “what affects everyone should be treated and approved by everyone” (Walter 1992:59). Among other debated issues were “the origin of ecclesial authority, the relationship between the head and members of the group, what if any limitations existed to the authority of the head, the significance of election and of ecclesial groups” (Walter 1992:59). The theory as well as the debated questions ran counter to Decretalists and Innocent IV’s theory that the Pope possessed “*a plenitudo potestatis*” directly from God (Walter 1992:59). *A plenitudo potestatis* means that the Pope “was absolutely sovereign in the church and above all human law” (Walter 1992:59).

2.8.2.2 The Constitution

A collegial type of government with three basic elements has been formed. They are “a deliberative assembly, a personal authority, and an electoral body” (Mandonnet quoted in Walter 1992:61). Each of the three levels has its legal autonomy. Elected members of a monastery form a chapter and each chapter appoints its leader. All members determine issues concerning their common daily life together. Chapters appoint their representatives to the provincial chapters. The decree issued in 1228 by the general chapter said that new legislation has to be approved by three successive chapters.

The function of the provincial chapters is to attend to issues at regional level. Examples of these are, for instance, to make decisions on prevailing problems, to inspect the administrative work of provinces and to outline future visions. The ruling body, the general chapter, directs the mission of the Order and is in charge of the general supervision of governmental issues and administration. Its “supreme executive, legislative and judicial authority” (Walter 1992:61) functions only when the body is in session. It has the power to make alterations in the constitution and to enact legislation.

Members are bound to respect the authority of the leader. The Master has supreme executive and judicial authority and acts as a facilitator between communities and does so within the constitutional framework. The authority and powers in the hands of provincial leaders are not supreme. They are flexible and adaptable to circumstances and situations. Walter calls them “powers of flexibility and adaptability” (1992:62) in their territories.

Members are exercising their authority through elections, responsible persons or groups, corporate decision-making and through their representative officials. The respect of the principle of “subsidiarity, accountability and co-responsibility” from the side of the leader and the persons led are built into the system (Walter 1992:62). Sharing of leadership gifts is ensured in the sense that authority is exercised in limited terms of office and previous leaders whose terms of office ended, participate in activities together with other members.

The Dominican government is participative. It concentrates on Dominican charism and not on political will or organizational efficiency. The centralization of authority at the top of the government is strictly avoided. Members of each priory have the basic right to elect their own leader. Provincial officials have broad powers in their territories just like the leader of the organization. Elected leaders whose terms of offices have ended, go back to their former status. This positive move is one way of avoiding such things as an inferiority complex, depression and demotion among leaders to mention a few. Normally, the problem occur in leadership styles which do not have terms of office. Some leaders in these styles develop an attitude of seeing themselves as leaders always. They want to occupy leadership positions even when they are unable to deliver. They regard for instance, election or re-election as demotion.

There is a common vision of sharing the responsibilities while searching for truth. De Couesnongle notes that... "the structures of Dominican life are intended to bring about, in dialogical fashion, virtual unanimity in the search for God's will and corporate responsibility in responding to that will" (quoted in Walter 1992:63).

2.8.2.3 The basic church communities

The basic church communities are another democratic movement within the Catholic Church. The present Roman Catholic Church model depicts Jesus as having a close relationship with the disciples. The model portrays Jesus who "transmits all power to the Twelve, who transmit it to their successors, the bishops and the pope" (Boff 1986:24). According to the same model, popes and bishops are the immediate associates of Jesus and therefore his sole representatives universally and in individual churches as well. Because of this position they have become the mediators, rulers, celebrants, and producers of sacraments while lay people have remained the governed, onlookers and consumers of sacraments (Boff 1986:24). This attitude has divided the Christian society into two camps which stand against each other.

The theory of the basic church communities does recognize the essentiality of the hierarchy and its functions. But the present hierarchical structure does not begin with the grass roots who need leadership and coordination and proceeds to the leaders. Instead it is based on itself. The point

here is to prioritise who comes first. The people should come first, but this is not the case in the present church structure.

According to the theory of the basic church communities the present Catholic church institution is based on what Jesus did as an individual person in the history of the church. Boff describes such approach as the “fleshly existence” of Christology (1986:24). The spiritual nature of the body of the risen Christ was not taken into account (1 Cor 15:44). In a nutshell, the present Christology does not reject both fleshly and the spiritual existence of Christ. The latter has relevance with the stance of Boff that says, “the church was born not only from the opened side of Christ, but from the Holy Spirit as well, on the day of Pentecost” (1986:24).

The basic church communities are an attempt to call the church to its original and continual status, the basic community. The characteristic nature of the basic communities of the grass roots started on the day of Pentecost. It is continued by the presence of the Holy Spirit as a representative of Christ in the church and the world.

The basic church communities suggest a church institution in which the clergy and the laity share responsibility in the building of the church. The suggested relationship is that of power which comes from God, transmitted to Christ/Spirit and from there to the clergy and laity simultaneously. The power of Christ is invested in every member of the community and not only in the hierarchy. This contrasts with the prevalent model where the power comes from God to Christ who transmits it to the apostles who transmit it to the bishops. The laity will receive it through the priest and not directly from the bishop. Here the power of Christ is confined to the clergy. The social restructuring of the church suggested by the basic church communities is an attempt to help the church to “reinvent itself” (Boff 1986:33). The suggested new restructuring is expected to take place gradually in at least two phases. One, “the basic communities will surely become institutionalized, will expand, ‘universalize’” (Boff 1986:33). “Just as in the Middle Ages the parochial framework structure came in gradually - from the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries - and replaced the old regime of ancient Christianity, so also will the formation of the basic communities be gradual” says Comblin (quoted in Boff 1986:33). Two, the new church born of faith is expected to be an outcome of the unification of various Christian groups. Gutierrez argues

that “the deepening of the identity of the basic communities is as a ‘new way of being the church’. Azevedo differs from the latter that he proposes the integration of the basic communities into parochial structures” (Goldewijk 1992:99).

According to Boff the church institution, as it has been designed by the basic church communities is not in contrast with the conceptualization produced by Vatican II. According to *Lumen Gentium* and in *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, Vatican II came up with a triangular design where the bishops, priests and laity have the same weight of participation (Boff 1986:32). The suggestion is to have bishops, priests and laity establish a network of relationships with one another, involving one another in a circularity (Boff 1986:32). If implemented such a plan will enable the laity to participate in the decision-making process which would imply a decentralization of power.

The institutional structure of the church needs a re-interpretation, particularly when it comes to the of the relationship between Jesus and the laity. Most probably Jesus had more than twelve disciples. Besides the twelve he had other disciples such as Mary and Martha, Joseph and Nicodemus who remained at their houses (Luke 10:38-42; 23:50-56; John 3:1-21). The Gospels distinguish between the most immediate twelve disciples of Jesus and the wider circle of followers. Twelve perhaps symbolizing the twelve tribes of Israel.

Whenever Jesus preached or taught he never spoke through his disciples. He spoke directly and face to face with his audience. He never separated his audience into a group of experts and teachers of the law and an other group of lay people. The fact that he treated all equally, shows that all are equal before him.

The assumption that the power of God is channelled through the hierarchy before it reaches the laity needs some re-thinking. God’s Spirit is free from human manipulation. During Pentecost “...there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance” (Acts 2:3-4). Each one of them was filled with the Spirit simultaneously and no mediation took place. The Gentiles, who had believed in the risen Christ through the Apostle

Paul's proclamation, were filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 15:8-9). This is proof that there is no distinction between believers.

The author fully supports the plan of restoring the dignity of the laity as well as the unification of the two camps in which Christians find themselves now. The laity are in the majority. Their participation is an implication of the gospel and why this is the case. It is because of the flock that the leader is needed. Should there be no flock, its leader would also not be needed. Both the flock and its leader are significant, but the flock always comes first and not vice versa. The separation of clergy and laity resembles the apartheid policy, which separated the privileged, the rich and the educated from the disadvantaged with the intention to further the interests of the privileged at the expense of the disadvantaged.

2.9 The historical background of the Lutheran approach to the ministry

2.9.1 Evangelical congregations and the interim period

Luther established a new denominational church, the very thing he did not want to do. He regarded himself as a pastor of the universal church of Christ. He neither wanted his followers to be referred to as Lutherans, nor to leave the Catholic Church, for it is easy to split but very difficult to reconcile. His argument was meant to lead Christians to Christ their master and the owner of Christian teaching. Together with others, Luther held to the universal teaching of Christ. His objectives were to reform the already existing church. The ecclesiastical as well as the political hierarchies were opposed to the reform. Individual congregations had ensured that Luther's determination was carried through. Luther's work *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation*, is a proof that he needed assistance from various people. His belief in the priesthood of all believers made reform imperative.

The interim period discussed here is the stage in which the reformed congregations were in urgent needs of leaders and church structure. This came after they freed themselves from the Roman authoritarian hierarchies and structures. An organizational structure higher up than the congregation was needed immediately. Luther had no other church structure in mind. This stage

was a very critical period for Luther. He had campaigned for reform, deposed the Roman Catholic Church leadership, but congregations had no efficient leadership to take over. It meant that most of Luther's followers had no deep understanding of what good governance was. They were not ready to take over where the Pope and his bishops had ended. They did not know their right and duty as congregations to determine whether the person to be chosen was qualified, to watch over what he taught, and to depose him if he openly contradicted the "true doctrine" (Elert 1962:350).

In 1523 Luther demanded, with special emphasis, the independence of congregations. He made proposals to the Bohemians. He was of the opinion that there should be a specific qualification for the person to be chosen. However, he later advised the congregations to choose their leaders in accordance with their free discretion. The installing of a pastor in the congregation against the will of the congregation would have been contrary to Luther's approach on one hand and on the other supported the Roman Catholic practice. The Reformer was advocating that a congregation should call its own pastor. It was not easy to implement these proposals. Most individual congregations were frequently altogether incapable of making this happen. Things were worse in rural areas where most congregations did not have the necessary judgement in matters pertaining to doctrine. Often they did not have qualified persons in their midst whom they could choose and call. A supervisor was needed to supervise the examination before a pastor was installed in the office and to provide for other needs related to his official activity. This office was bound up with the specific duty to teach. Doctrinal examination was something to be conducted by superiors outside the congregation. All these needs did not take away the right of the congregation to call the pastor whom they thought fit for their situation and ministries. The co-operation of the whole congregation was necessary when determining the characteristics as well as the personal morality of the person to be called.

Each congregation had its own order of worship. There were many financial questions. Many congregations as well as members of the nobility were not in a position to give their pastors sufficient salaries. The iconoclasts and the Peasants' War decreased Luther's confidence in the masses to lead themselves. A higher authority was needed urgently. A church administration beyond the local congregation was needed. Two very crucial issues, the Lutheran Church structure and competent Christian leaders to lead the congregations, stood out for Luther. He

turned to the secular authorities to intervene temporarily. It was a traumatic decision for a leader to take.

Luther found himself in a situation he was not able to avoid or to escape. His situation can be compared to that of the president of the liberation movement which dethroned the colonial government through military power. It was a situation where the colonial power refused a peaceful deal. After its dethronement, because of fears and mistrust of the new government, most of the experts and specialists fled the country. The result was that the new president found himself in a situation in which most of his ministers were former war commanders who were unable to run ministerial portfolios effectively. Before his Reformation campaign Luther did not outline the structures of the prospective church, simply because his intention was to reform the existing Catholic Church. He neither had a new church structure available nor did he properly prepare the parishioners to take over the parish leadership from the Roman clergy. They were like parishioners in most parishes in ELCIN today who trust the top leadership of the church and do not exercise their rights. Members of the Protestant parishes did not know that they had the right to know the decisions taken beyond the congregational level. So, it was beyond the comprehension of most congregants when Luther embarked on the independence of the congregations. Although it was a positive move, to many it was a contradiction for they did not consider themselves as part of the solution of their own leadership problems.

2.9.2 The underlying ecclesiology

Luther defined the church as “holy believers and sheep who hear the voice of the Shepherd” (Altmann 1992:60). A simple way of saying this is that the church is composed of the believers who hear the voice of God through the representative of Christ. The Creed adds more light, “I believe in one holy Christian Church, the communion of saints” (Altmann 1992:60). This means that the church is a crowd or assembly of people who are Christians and holy, the community of those who share faith in Christ. The Augsburg Confession describes the church as “the assembly of all believers among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity and the holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel.” It further says, “The church is the people who trust Jesus, the Christ. Not institutions, not even theology constitutes the church, but people who have faith

in Christ” (Forell 1968:37). Its membership is not determined by one’s good life or status. Nobody else but Christ is the Head and Sovereign of the church. In his writings, the Reformer preferred the New Testament term, ‘community’ (the people of God in the Old Testament) instead of ‘church’ which to him connoted hierarchy (Altmann 1992:62).

Luther’s definition of the church is a counter- argument against the medieval theology that the church is the Pope and the clergy. The latter idea cannot be true, for all Christians are equal before God. They are called and nurtured by one and the same gospel and baptized in one baptism. Christians are one people, equally priests, entrusted with the task of making all people the children of God through Christ. So, all have authority and power to do mission work among God’s people (1992:61-62).

The Word of God is incomparably superior to the church. The church came into existence by the Word of promise through faith and it is fed and preserved by the same Word. It is the promises of God that make the church and not the other way round. Being a creature of the Gospel the church is brought forth and shaped by the same Word. A church without the Word is an assembly of unbelievers, not one of holy and believing Christians. Luther is right when he said that “where the Word of God is, there the church is, even if the community is weak and small” (Altmann 1992:62). Luther writes:

In truth, the gospel comes before the bread (Holy Supper) and baptism, as the one most certain and noble sign of the church, because it is only through the gospel that the church is conceived, formed, nourished, born, educated, fed, clothed, ornamented, strengthened, prepared and sustained. In a word: The whole life and substance of the church is in the word of God (Altmann 1992:62).

According to Luther, a distinction must be made between the internal and the external church. The internal one is the creature of the word and the object of faith, while the external church is the human organization. Like a believer in Christ, the church is a justified and sinful body at the same time. It is the word that constitutes it, justifies it, but the sinfulness of it is brought in by its members. So, the institutional purity of the church cannot be claimed.

The church has a spiritual nature that transcends time and place. It is neither a family, race or nation. On the other hand the church is not something which is a mere fellowship gathered around given rites or external objects. The church is a body in which each one's personal faith alone makes him/her a member of Christ. Numerically speaking the church is one. It is united in faith and hope. It inherited its holiness and righteousness from its founder, Jesus Christ. It is an apostolic church because it is built on the apostolic teaching. It is catholic because it embraces all believers. Christ the sovereign head of this one church who granted it all the powers and privileges that belong to it. All members of the body have access to Christ, no mediation between the members and the Head is needed. To this body Jesus has given the keys of his kingdom and word and sacrament. The keys are thus not "vested in a special order of priests, clergy, church bodies, popes or bishops" (Tuell and Fjeld 1990:91). Christ established the church through his incarnation, death on the cross, his resurrection, and by commissioning his followers to proclaim his wonderful deeds. The word and the two sacraments, namely baptism and the Lord's Supper, become the mark of the presence of the church. In praising God, Christians offer worship services, prayer, instruction, godly discipline and celebrate the Lord's Supper in their assemblies.

Christ has only one universal visible Christian church on earth. The local churches are part of the one church. To these local churches, which exist by divine right, Christ has given the keys of his kingdom. Both the universal church and the individual congregations derive their "divine right" (Elert 1962:371) from Christ. The individual congregations and the church as a whole have their origin in the operation of the gospel. With this Luther also wanted to clarify the point that the commission to preach, to baptize, to teach was given to the church and not to individual persons such as popes and bishops. The relation between the local churches and the holy Christian church of all believers is of "coexistence as regards membership" (Tuell and Fjeld 1990:91).

The real church for Luther is an invisible community which is purely spiritual. This community subjects itself to God alone. Its law is love. The visible church is made up of visible people who come together and each perform his/her part. The participants are all believers and priests. Those who perform a religious ceremony are not mediators between God and the people. They are preachers and ministers chosen for convenience's sake. What they do for all, each individual could do by and for himself/herself. "All believers are equal in their freedom to follow grace as

they understand it, all are equal in control of their inner life” (Hughes 1947:517). Everyone is the spiritual sovereign for himself/herself. No one has authority over anybody or can control anybody.

The believing community is the church, says Luther’s ecclesiology. No group, no body is put either above or below the believing community. All are equal. Theoretically it seems there is no problem of understanding the ownership of the church, but when it comes to leading of church activities, decision-making bodies the clergy are the preferred ones.

The definition that the church is constituted by holy believers who hear the voice of the Shepherd can cause some exclusion and misconception. Since the word shepherd is associated with pastors, the definition could be understood as saying that Jesus’ calling of believers is only channelled through ordained personnel. Should this misconception be allowed to persist, there will be no distinction between the Roman Catholic clergy and the Protestant ones. Both are understood to be intermediaries. I do not think that the meaning of the definition will alter if we say that the church is constituted by holy believers who hear the voice of another believer (s). The task of converting someone to faith in Christ belongs to the Holy Spirit, while proclamation and invitation to mention a few, are the responsibilities of every believer.

Yves Congar M. J criticises Luther for failing to construct a proper ecclesiology. The ecclesiology he constructed has “intense dialectical opposition between the outward and visible and the inward and invisible” (Atkinson 1983:34). He accuses the Reformer of failing to place as much emphasis on the external forms and visible activities of the church as on the inward and invisible. The misconception lies with Congar, for Luther taught that the hidden church should become the visible church.

2.9.3 The principle of the priesthood of all believers

2.9.3.1 Luther and the rights of all believers

The priesthood of all believers is originally an Old Testament concept. “Now therefore, if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession among all peoples; for all

the earth is mine, and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation..." (Ex 19:5-6). The letter to I Peter is not an exact quotation from Ex 19. It reads: "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Pet 2:9). Luther quoted this verse.

According to the evangelical understanding of priesthood, the church is founded on Christ's priesthood from which the priesthood of Christians follows. Christians become Christ's co-workers through baptism, regeneration, and the anointing with the Holy Spirit. Althaus described the priesthood as to "...stand before God, pray for others, intercede with and sacrifice ourselves to God and proclaim the word to one another" (1975:314). The seven rights of the universal priesthood as enumerated by Luther in his book, *Concerning the Ministry* (1520), are, "to preach the word of God, to baptize, to celebrate the sacrament of the altar, to minister the office of the keys, to pray for others, to sacrifice bodies for the service of others, to judge the doctrine and to distinguish the spirits" (WA 12, 180ff. in Althaus 1975:314).

In his tract, *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, Luther for the first time emphasized the common priesthood of all Christians and their privilege to assign the public duties in the congregation to one of their numbers by mutual consent. Luther's main aim here is to free Christians from the mediatorial priesthood practised in the Middle Ages. This practice had, for a long time, made Christian freedom impossible. According to that religious custom, nobody could enter the presence of God unless through the mediation of the priest. The grace of God was given in a series of sacraments which a priest either granted or withheld. A man's "marriage was cleansed from lust by the sacrament of matrimony; penance brought him back to grace and to spiritual life; the Mass gave him the necessary spiritual nourishment during his life pilgrimage; deathbed grace and the guarantee to ultimate eternal life with God were imparted in extreme unction" (Atkinson 1983:97).

These were not channels of God's free grace but operations which guarded the professional powers of the priest. If a king of a country or councillor of a town had "crossed the pope's path in some matter of worldly policy" (Atkinson 1983:98), the country or town was placed under

spiritual and economic interdict. The characteristic Roman Catholic teaching was 'closedness' while Luther's was 'openness' (Atkinson 1983:99). This literally means that the Catholics wanted to keep the parishioners uninformed about their rights and Christian freedom while Luther's teaching is that God reveals Himself in Christ who was incarnated so that every penitent seeker can have direct access to God. No priestly mediation was needed. Every Christian is a priest with a special function that cannot be granted to an unbeliever, the function of telling the world that through the death and resurrection of Christ Christians were made brethren, co-heirs, fellow-kings and fellow-priests with Christ. Furthermore Luther demonstrated that words such as "priests", "cleric", "spiritual", "ecclesiastic" were transferred by the Catholic hierarchy from all Christians to the "ecclesiastics" (Atkinson 1983:100) as if they do not belong to them all. Scripture, which is Luther's base, knows no distinction between Christians. It therefore gives titles such as "ministers", "servants" and "stewards" to popes, bishops, pastors and to all preachers of the word (Atkinson 1983:100). Luther is not contradicting himself for he is not saying that there are no leadership grades or diversity of gifts in the Church (Eph 4:11-13). He says that the titles referred to are meant for service and not to make distinction between Christians. The laity and the clergy are on the same level as far as spiritual position, privileges and responsibility are concerned. Both have immediate access to God.

The difference between clergy and laity was not that clergy had a higher vocation, and laity lower, secular vocation. All alike were on the same footing, justified by faith. The clergy were simply men called out of the community, trained and appointed to fulfil pastoral and spiritual duties; their function did not make them holier than, say, the farmer or merchant (Atkinson 1987:102).

Based on this argument a pastor who fails to do his/her responsibility properly can be compelled to mend his/her ways. He can be deposed from office and put back into the fellowship of Christians to act as a lay believer. It was made clear that though we are all equally priests yet we cannot all publicly minister and teach (1 Cor 4). Luther was propagating the priesthood of all believers together with the freedom of Christians. His famous antithesis is "A Christian man [woman] is the most free lord of all, and subject to none: A Christian man [woman] is the most dutiful servant of all, and subject to anyone" (Atkinson 1983:99; 1 Cor 9:19).

Troubled by a movement without a working programme, Luther tried to shape the public ministry together with the episcopacy in the evangelical congregations.

We have sufficient biblical foundations which support the establishment of the pastoral ministry in the church. One, Christ in Matthew, Mark and Luke says to all his disciples at the last Supper: "Do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19; 1 Cor 11:24). This remembrance is the proclamation of the Gospel. It is meant to strengthen communicants so that they grow in their faith and become able to share their faith with others, unbelievers included. The Apostle Paul proves this in 1 Cor 11:26 when he says, "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." The ministry of the word is the duty of all Christians. Paul writes that "Each one of you has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation" (1 Cor 14:26) and again, "For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged" (1 Cor 14:31). To all Christians the right and the task to proclaim the Word of God was given by God. Luther writes to the Bohemians that "there is only one proclamation of wonderful deeds of God, which is common to all Christians. Again, there is one priesthood which is spiritual and universal" (Lehmann 1988:22). In his book, *The Reformation and Liberation Theology*, Richard Shaul describes the priesthood of all believers as the elevation of the most lowly parishioners to the level of a pastor. With this elevation a Christian is expected to pass the message of life to others. A Christian who bears the message of forgiveness to others is able to stand before God for others. This creates the opportunity for every Christian to serve his/her neighbour, to actualize love in the world (1991:37). The above passages vigorously and clearly illustrate that the office of the ministry of the word is the highest office in the church. Its uniqueness lies in that the office belongs to all by right.

Two, baptism is a ministerial function that belongs to all Christians. There was a usage in the Roman Catholic Church that even ordinary women were allowed to baptize in cases of emergency. Baptism is a sacrament. The practice of the sacrament by the lay people including women in the case of necessity indicates that all Christians are priests. They do not need to be anointed, tonsured, or to show "episcopal character" (Bergendoff 1988:23). Baptism per se is the proffering of the life-giving Word of God, which renews the soul and redeems from death and sin. The sacrament falls under the highest office of the ministry. There is no theological difference in

status between the sacraments. So when the lay people baptize, they exercise the function of the priesthood legitimately. They do not do it as private individuals, but as a part of the public ministry of the church which belongs to all Christians. The priesthood and sacraments are not institutions the clergy have created, but Christ, the founder of the church, therefore the administration of the sacraments by the laity can be done in the absence of the clergy.

Three, consecration of bread and wine belongs to all Christians, like the priesthood and baptism. At the Last Supper, Christ said: "Do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19; 1 Cor 11:24). It is obvious that the command was given to all who were at the table, and those who would come to the same table in the future and definitely not to the clergy alone. Luther confirms that what is given at the Last Supper is given to all. For him there was no other foundation than this to stand on, "except the fathers, the councils, tradition, and that strongest article of their faith, namely, 'We are many and thus we hold: therefore it is true'" (Bergendoff 1988:24). The quotation discloses a traditional mechanism used to dissolve a dispute in the church since the time of the fathers. The side that has many participants wins by being in the majority and not by convincing their opponents with facts. Consecration as such is the source of spiritual strengthening for Christians in their battled lives. It makes them grow in their faith and in fulfilment of their responsibilities and commitments.

Four, binding and loosing from sin belongs to all Christians. Roman Catholic theologians of the Middle Ages interpreted binding to mean "to make laws, to prohibit, and to make commands" (Bergendoff 1988:25). The deviation from the right interpretation of binding as prohibition becomes a binding of the conscience when there is no reason to bind. The example here is the prohibition of marriage and of certain foods. Both have the sanction of God's creation. Christ makes this task clear when he says "If your brother [sister] sins against you, go and tell him [her] his [her] fault... if he [she] listens to you, you have gained your brother [sister]" (Matt 18:15). "If he [she] refuses to listen even to the church, let him [her] be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosened in heaven" (Matt. 18:17-18). The authority and the use of the keys belongs to the church, the people of God. The keys have not been given to the church, while "their use to bishops" (Bergendoff 1988:26). Luther points out that Christ gives both the

power and the use of the keys to each Christian, when he says, "Let him [her] be to you as a Gentile." Christ refers to each individual Christian, with this part, "Let him [her] be to you." He does not only give authority, but also commands its use and exercise also. "Let him [her] be to you as a Gentile means not to have fellowship with him [her], to abandon him [her], to excommunicate or literally speaking, to close the door of heaven. Whatever you bind... shall be bound." (Bergendoff 1988:26) The word "you" refers either to the church or to each individual Christian and not necessarily to Peter. But if the giving of the keys to the church means not the use but only the authority we would, by the same token, claim that its use has never been given to anyone, not even to Peter (Matt 16:19). For what is the use of conferring authority to the church and withholding the usage of it? How can Christ contradict himself in what he commands? Again, God's Words are the same everywhere, nobody whosoever is permitted to give them one meaning in one place and another meaning elsewhere. The reality is that the keys belong to the whole church, and to each of its members both as regards their authority and their various uses. Binding and loosing belong to all Christians because to bind means to apply the gospel in such a way that the gospel nourishes and strengthens the weak. To loose means to announce the forgiveness of sins before God. The keys are an exercise of the ministry of the word and belong to all Christians.

Five, there is only one sacrifice, which is our bodies, in the church. In his letter to the Romans, the Apostle Paul teaches us to present our bodies as a sacrifice just as Christ sacrificed his body for us on the cross (Rom 12:1). The proffering of praise and thanksgiving are included in this one sacrifice. Peter adds to this when he says that we offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. That is ourselves, not animals or gold (1 Pet 2:5). And, since the word is common to all, the sacrifice too must pertain to all.

Six, intercession for others belongs to all Christians. Christ gives the Lord's Prayer to all his disciples. All are priests, thus all can pray for others. All are able to stand for others in the presence of God. Christ said that only disciples and all those who cry in the Spirit, "Abba, Father" (Roman 8:15) are genuine in their prayer and they alone are priests.

Seven, the judgement of the teaching on Scripture belongs to all Christians. There is only one

Holy Spirit who equips both the ordained and the lay Christians. There is no such thing that the Holy Spirit who equips the theologians is superior to the Holy Spirit who equips the laity. The laity like all other Christians are continually taught by the Holy Spirit, by whom they know with certainty what to believe and what not.

The author of Exodus constitutes two conditions, namely, obedience and the keeping of the covenant, that would make the Israelites the kingdom of priests. Peter's quotation has no condition, but has an affirmative declaration which includes the purpose to do world mission instead. Luther uses the text to make the point that the office of priesthood in the church belongs to every Christian by command. Luther quoted from the first Epistle of Peter to teach that there is only one priesthood of believers in the church and not two. This is counter to the Roman Catholic teaching that there are two priesthoods, namely, the ministerial and the common priesthood (Neuner & Dupuis 1978:481).

The word priesthood as an Old Testament concept refers to a mediatorial sacrifice, namely a process in which the priest mediated between God and people through offering sacrifices to God on behalf of God's people. Now that God has sacrificed God's son on the cross to die for our sins once and for all, the human priestly mediation is no longer needed. Not even the bloodless sacrifices are needed. God does not need our sacrifices for Jesus' sacrifice is enough. In order to shun the sacrificial connotation of the term priesthood, the term priesthood should be replaced with the term ministry. The phrase will then be read as the ministry of all believers.

The pastoral and lay ministries overlap. Both a minister and a lay Christian have the right to administer any function in each of the ministries. What the minister does can also be done by the lay people and vice versa. However, for the sake of order, the minister is entitled to carry the pastoral responsibilities on behalf of all believers who have equal spiritual authority. In sum, all ministries are equal and all functions in both ministries belong to all. Both the clerics and the laity share their creativity, vision and interdependence as gifts from God, unlike in the Catholic Church.

2.9.3.2 The right of congregations to call pastors and judge all teaching

2.9.3.2.1 Each congregation has the right and power to call and dismiss teachers

The situation of the reformed congregations without pastors forced Luther to alter his stance on congregational leadership. He was confronted with the fact that most bishops did not want to teach the gospel nor did they tolerate anyone else to do so. For Luther it was a crucial moment, one that demanded immediate action for the salvation of parishioners who were without parish pastors. The Reformer was faced with the issue of whether to ignore the spiritual suffering of the people or to take up decisions which were contrary to Roman Catholic rules. The result was that he decided to teach the congregations about their right to call, appoint and dismiss their congregational leaders. He found in Scriptures the practice of congregations to call qualified and gifted leaders among the parishioners. He worked out a procedure to call preachers in the tract entitled *That a Christian Assembly or Congregation Has the Right and Power to Judge All Teaching, Call, Appoint, and Dismiss Teachers, Established and Proven by Scripture*. The content of the tract was formulated in such a way that congregations could call new pastors or dismiss the Catholic priests who were not for the Reformation. Luther regarded that action as a “divine right and necessity for the salvation of the souls to depose or to avoid such bishops, abbots, monasteries, and whatever is of their government” (Gritsch 1983:309). The following quote is the shortened passage containing the Reformer’s advice to the evangelical congregation.

Since a Christian congregation neither should nor could exist without God’s word, it clearly follows...that it nevertheless must have teachers and preachers who administer the word. And since in this last and accursed times the bishops and the false spiritual government neither are nor wish to be teachers -moreover, they want neither to provide nor to tolerate any, and God should not be tempted to send new preachers from heaven - we must act according to the Scripture and call and institute from among ourselves those who are found to be qualified and who God has enlightened with reason and endowed with gifts to do so (Gritsch 1983:309).

Luther battled to understand when a congregation is a congregation. His new interpretation was that a congregation is a group of people that have the gospel of Christ among themselves. He later expanded his phrase that a congregation is where the gospel is preached and the sacraments are

administered. His ultimate conclusion concerning this issue is observed in his saying that

wherever there is a Christian congregation in possession of the gospel, it not only has the right and power but also the duty on pain of losing salvation of its souls and in accordance with the promise made to Christ in baptism to avoid, to flee, to depose, and to withdraw from authority that our bishops, abbots, monasteries, religious foundations, and the like are now exercising (Gritsch 1983:308-309).

In the same year (1523) Luther took upon himself the responsibility of helping with the restoration of the pastoral ministry and the creation of the episcopal ministry in Bohemia. In his tract entitled, *Concerning Ministry to the Bohemian Utraquists*, Luther taught them that the church is among them through the presence of the word. The community was assured that both the restoration and the choosing of bishops were within their power. The Bohemians “must elect bishops of their own choosing who will supervise the calling of pastors by the congregation” (Bergendoff 1988:40). This was a new interpretation of the power to call or to consecrate belonging to the congregation. It was the congregation that entrusted its task to a minister who would act on its behalf. Entrusting the authority to the minister never meant the complete withdrawal of the power from the congregation. It had this power with it always and thus it used it in the absence of the minister or when the minister failed to meet his/her ministerial responsibilities.

On the one hand the interpretation of the congregational power and authority and their usage are an indirect challenge to the jurisdiction of the bishops. On the other it is an opportunity for the congregation to call someone able to empower them in their service. The empowerment is needed for the effective witness and service of all Christians in a congregation. The presence of the pastor in the congregation is briefly described as to facilitate the source of life through the proclamation of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments. In the Roman Catholic church, it was the bishops alone who had the legal authority to appoint, to instal and to dismiss priests from congregational offices. Nobody, not even the Pope, had the right to appoint a person in their dioceses without their consent.

2.9.3.3.2 Each congregation has the right and power to judge all teaching

In the Reformer’s words, the bishops, popes, scholars and councils were murderers, thieves, and

apostate Christians because they took away both teaching and its judgement from the parishioners and annexed it to themselves through their own law. Luther also taught the congregations about their right and power to judge all teaching.

It was decreed that only bishops, scholars and councils should be allowed to judge the doctrine. They had the right and power to judge what is Christian or what is heretical. The ordinary Christians were expected to accept and implement decisions. They did not have any influence on the teaching. Luther taught that Christ had instituted a different order. He took both the right and the power to judge the teaching away from the bishops, scholars, councils and gave them to every Christian equally. He made the following texts the basis of his argument. “My sheep know my voice” (John 10:4). “My sheep do not follow strangers, but flee from them, for they do not know the voice of strangers” (John 10:5). “No matter how many of them have come, they are thieves and murderers. But the sheep did not listen to them” (John 10:8).

According to Christ’s teaching, like every Christian, bishops, popes, scholars, councils have the power to teach. But it is for the listeners to judge whether they teach Christ’s voice or the voice of strangers. Spiritual leaders should put forward the teaching, but parishioners must use their right and scriptural knowledge to evaluate whether the teaching is right or wrong. The outcome of the evaluation should shape the teaching.

Other texts on who should judge the teaching are, “Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but are inwardly ravenous wolves” (Matt. 7:15). “Test everything, but hold fast to that which is good” (1 Thess 5:21). These texts teach that all teachers and their teaching must be subjected to the judgement of the listeners. The core idea is that a teaching or decree must not be obeyed unless it is examined and recognized as valid by the congregation members hearing it. The Reformer wants to illustrate the radical difference between the secular and the Christian rulers. In the world the rulers command whatever they please and their subjects accept it, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant” says Christ (Matt.20:25-26). Instead, among Christians each person is the judge of each person, while he [she] is also subject to the other person (Matt.18:15-17).

Luther calls for a radical transformation that would transfer the right and power from the minority, who are the clergy and the people of higher learning, to the majority, the laity. The Reformer has many reasons to propose this. He does not want the clergy to be considered fathers who have a right to judge all teaching in the church. The parishioners are grown-up people and not children who need either parents or guardians to tell them what is right or wrong. They do not need that assistance. The Reformer warns the laity not to expose themselves to the monopoly of the hierarchy which does not want to respect the judgement of anyone else. Christ teaches them to judge all trees by their fruits (Matt. 7: 17f). Luther teaches that for the leaders to take both the right and power into their own hands means intimidation of the ordinary Christians. This is a means whereby the clergy built the highest stronghold and defence against the parishioners.

Luther has turned to the Scripture as his authority to prove that the attitude described above has no validity. The Scripture is against the master-subject relationship, because such a relationship is formulated and exercised for the sake of political and economic power and not based on love for each other. The Scripture sees the leader as well as the people he/she leads as equal before God and before each other. Serving each other has been made a two-way traffic by Christ. Instead of the teammates only serving their group leader, for instance, the group leader also serves them. He/she is only to serve them, but to accept them as co-participants in whatever is to be done. The servant leadership model does not end with the relationship between the leader and the people led. It is also to be lived out among fellow Christians.

2.9.3.5 The function of the ordained minister

2.9.3.5.1 The institution of the ministry of Word and Sacrament

In his book, *Ministry in Crisis*, Harrisville talks about two camps. The first camp is for those people who see the difference between minister and parishioners as of ontological status. They see ordination as a special grace given to the ordinand through the laying on of hands. They see the laying on of hands as the power that equips and empowers the ordinand for the office of ministry. A pastor is believed to have the keys to the kingdom of heaven. He alone has the authority to loose, to forgive the penitent and authority to bind, to shut up heaven against the

ungodly. This group asserts that salvation is provided through the ministerial office. The second group sees the difference between the minister and parishioners as functional. This group understands the event of ordination as the confirmation of the peoples' choice. Ordination is the transference of office by the universal priesthood to one of its members, and is without redemptive significance (1987:13). Luther belongs to the second camp.

Luther insists that the ministry of Word and Sacrament was divinely instituted. He defines it as a gift of God to God's Church and, therefore, of divine institution. The disciples of Jesus did not apply to be his followers. They were chosen and commissioned. "Follow me and I will make you become fishers of men" (Mk 1:17). God willed this ministry. The first evangelists recorded that Christ called his disciples and trained them (Matt 4:18-22; Mk 3:13-19; Lk 5:1-11). For Luther, it is God who has spoken, and it is God's word that requires speaking. The church therefore has nothing of its own to transfer to any of its members. The church is left with the task of organizing "who shall do the speaking?" and "How shall they be elected, called, installed, and supervised?" (Tuell and Fjeld 1990:36). Thus Luther advised the congregations which were caught up in the reforming movement, to elect pastors of their own choice. Luther does not believe that the ministry of Word and Sacrament emerges from the Christian congregation, but from God.

The teaching of the Word is the first priority among a variety of responsibilities of the ordained minister. Luther's stance is reflected in WCC document on *Baptism Eucharist Ministry* (BEM) where it says: "The chief responsibility of the ordained ministry is to assemble and build up the body of Christ by proclaiming and teaching the word of God, by celebrating the sacrament, and by equipping the life of the community in its worship, its mission, and its caring ministry" (BEM 1982:15-16). The Word is the content of the ministry. Luther is right when he writes, "For we teach with the Word, we consecrate with the Word, we bind and absolve sins by the Word, we baptize with the Word, we sacrifice with the Word, we judge all the things by the Word" (Luther's Works 40:21 in Pragmann 1983:23). The Confession tells us that the office of the ministry is there so that people may come to faith (Forrel 1968:28-29). The office is run by an ordained minister and exists for the sake of the people. The ordained minister is entrusted with the promotion of faith for Paul writes: "So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard, comes by the preaching of Christ" (Rom.10:17). So, the ordained minister provides the believers

with the Word, baptism, the Lord's Supper and the office of the keys. Its offices are run by "servants of the Christ" (1 Cor.4:1) who administer "these saving remedies"(Althaus 1975:323). Upon this basis Luther abolished both services that were held without a congregation present and communion where nobody communed.

2.9.3.5.2 Order in the parish

The servants of the church are appointed in the office of Word and Sacrament to avoid "a deplorable confusion" (Althaus 1975:323). Luther cites Paul who writes that, "Everything in the community should be done in an orderly way" (1 Cor 14:40). Maintaining order in the congregations is the second priority that makes congregations call individuals to this special office of the ministry of Word and Sacrament. The congregation takes the initiative in calling a minister because it is the community entrusted with the entire authority of the ministry of Word and Sacrament. The minister is a representative of the community that employed him/her. He/She does everything in the name of the community. To make this point clear Luther used the example of an evangelical mass.

The pastor sings Christ's ordinance instituting the Lord's Supper, that is, the words of institution; the community kneels beside, behind, and around him. All of them are true and holy priests as the pastor himself is. We should not permit our pastors to speak Christ's words by himself as though he were speaking them for his person; rather, he is the mouth of all of us and we all speak them with him in our hearts (WA 38,247 in Althaus 1975:326).

2.9.3.6 Both ministries are divinely instituted by Christ

The representative activity of the pastor includes co-operation with the community he/she serves. So, the public ministry does not imply the release of other members from their priestly duty of proclamation. The difference between the bearer of the ministerial office and the priesthood of all believers is that the bearer has been entrusted with the task to minister to the entire community while individual Christians have been entrusted with their neighbours.

”Ordained ministers, on the other hand, can fulfil their calling only in and for the community and with the support of the community and in co-operation with other ministries which exist within it” (BEM 1982:16). The ordained ministers exercise their ministry within the community, and stand at the same time under the Gospel, over against the community. Both offices were instituted by Christ and neither is less important than the other. The individual called and working under the authority of the priesthood of all believers, acts and speaks in the name of Christ. The speciality of the call to a ministerial office in the church is not in conveying a unique Christian status, but the special ministry of the Word and Sacrament to the community. According to the Lutheran understanding, a pastor is not, during ordination provided with a mark that cannot be rubbed out. There is no character *indelebilis* as believed in the Roman Catholic church. Luther writes: ”It is a wonderful thing that the mouth of every pastor is the mouth of Christ” (WA 37,381 in Althaus 1975:326).

According to Melancthon, the prime responsibility of the evangelical pastor is to convey the gospel of forgiveness in Jesus Christ to his people. He/She is neither responsible for converting nor for maintaining anyone’s faith. This is the work of the Holy Spirit through the Word. His/Her function is to apply God’s Word to God’s people. The pastoral office “exists *jure divino*” (Tuell and Fjeld 1990:91). The pastor does publicly the things that belong to all believers. He/She is in a “correlative relationship” (Tuell and Fjeld 1990:91) with the congregation. According to Christ’s command, the pastor enters the parish office by the call of the congregation. Christ delegates the office and its power to the pastor but through the congregation.

The fact that Paul and Barnabas instituted leadership in the congregations or Paul’s command to Timothy and Titus to institute elders (Acts 14:23; Tit.1:5) cannot prevent the Christians calling someone among themselves. The cases of Stephen (Acts 6-7), Philip (Acts 8:5) and Apollos (Acts 18:24-19:1-2) who were not called by Apostles are seen as an example of the saying that “need breaks all laws and has none”. Martin Luther saw the self-government of the royal priesthood and the God-ordained office as the two poles around which the life of the church moves.

The ministry of the Word and Sacrament is not beyond the ministry of the priesthood of all believers. As said before, both are divinely instituted by Christ. The significance of both should

not be evaluated in terms of which comes first and which comes last. Their significance should rather be seen as complementary. Neither is possible without the other. It was also said before that the teaching of the Word either through proclamation or by other means belongs to all Christians. This is true because all Christians alike have received the Holy Spirit, whose is their teacher. Each of them, leaders included, has a gift and an empty space, which is filled by the gifts of others. This makes Christians interdependent on each other and therefore able to share their visions unlike in the Catholic church.

2.9.3.7 The meaning of ordination

2.9.3.7.1 Introduction

There are few references to ordination in the New Testament. The word ordination or its verb to ordain does not appear directly in the New Testament. Mark says that Jesus appointed the twelve (Mk 3:14) while Luke speaks of Jesus choosing them (Lk 6:13). Luke goes further to tell us that Jesus prayed all night before making his selection (Lk 6:12). John speaks of the risen Lord as breathing on the ten, saying "Receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:22). No word about ordination or ceremony is mentioned before the twelve were commissioned to missionize the world. When Matthias replaced Judas the word used is "enrolled" or "numbered with the others" (Wood 1996:850; Acts 1:26). While some sources argue that there is no ordination to any ecclesiastical office, some have regarded the laying on of hands on the seven deacons as ordination (Wood 1996:851; Acts 6). Assuming this view, ordination is then the laying on of hands with prayer. However, according to the letter to Timothy, ordination is, "firstly, the giving of a charisma, the spiritual gift needed for the work of ministering. Secondly, this came to him [her] by (*dia*) prophecy. Thirdly, it came with the (*meta*) the laying of hands by the elders" (1 Tim 4:14; Wood 1996:851). Wood further refers to ordination as having two parts, the outward act as identified by the laying on of hands and the invisible inward "divine gift" (1996:851).

"To ordain means to select an individual for the sake of order and to confer on him the right to preach and to administer the sacraments, the right which we all have. What we give him today we can take away from him tomorrow" (WA 38,221,1 in Elert 1962:347).

Ordination is administered with the prayer of all the people and the laying on of hands by the ministers, especially those who occupy a ministry of oversight and unity in the church. The laying on of hands means that the person called is set before God and all believers. It illustrates that God together with the people calls, sends, and appoints the person to the pastoral office. Enchiridion (Poellot) writes, "...the laying on of hands in ordination is observed chiefly because of the common prayers of the church, that they may be made with greater diligence and warmer desire. For it is, as it were, a public reminder of the difficulty of the ministry, which cannot be made able except by God" (2 Cor 3:5-6 (Enchiridion quoted in Pragmann 1983:55).

2.9.3.7.2 Luther's understanding concerning ordination

According to Luther bishops are called to ordain on behalf of the community. However his argument continues that in an emergency situation it would be fitting for a community to ordain without the presence of the bishop. That the bishop ordains reflects an agreement. The parish assigns one who exercises the office on its behalf for the sake of order in the parish and the church. This means, firstly, that ordination belongs to all Christians. Secondly, when the parish has entrusted ordination to the bishop, it has kept with it the power and authority to ordain in the absence of the bishops or when the bishops became unfaithful to the gospel. This also means that there is no period in history when the church was without the ordination. According to Gerhard "the power of ordaining has been left to the bishops, although from this presbyters have not been purely and absolutely excluded" (Gerhard XII quoted in Schmid 1961:610). Jerome teaches that the distinction between the grades of bishop and presbyter [pastor] is by human authority..." (Norgren and Rusch 1991:53). Therefore ordination administered by a pastor in his own church is valid by divine right. So, when the regular bishops become enemies of the gospel and are unwilling to administer ordination, the churches retain the right to ordain for themselves. For wherever the church exists, the right to administer the gospel also exists" (Norgren and Rusch 1991:53).

By the year 1525, Luther had removed ordination from the other sacraments and also from the bishops' hands. "He ceases to regard ordination as a sacrament and commands bishops as well

as priests to know and preach the gospel” (Lehmann 1986:116). The above notion is a counter teaching against the Roman Catholic teaching that the “episcopal structure is regarded as fixed by divine decree (*jure divino*)” (Harrisville 1987:64). The interpretation that goes with it is that only a bishop may ordain because only the bishop is a receiver of that particular grace of oversight from Christ via the apostles. The issue in 1400 when Pope Boniface IX authorised an English abbot to consecrate his priests was one of the rare cases which took place before the Reformation. Luther ordained Georg Roher and came up with a new interpretation that ordination would serve to confirm the call of the congregation and provide the opportunity for intercession among Protestants. Luther tells us that the call is necessary by divine order on the basis of the scripture while ordination is a desirable usage with roots deeply in the apostolic-ecclesiastical practice of ordinance. Ordination has no biblical basis. “A sacrament of ordination can be nothing else than a certain rite by which the church chooses its preachers” (Althaus 1975:328). Again, “Ordination is a solemn ratifying of the call and earnest petitioning by all the priests for God’s blessing upon the ordinand and upon the congregation a pastor is called to serve” (Tuell and Fjeld 1990:94). Luther makes it clear that ordination neither confers the ministry nor a kind of indelible character. The call and its acceptance makes the minister. The power of the ministry is the power of the Word and not of ordination. The territory of Saxony may have done without it for a time. Examination and call may have been regarded as sufficient entry into office. Melancthon sees ordination as a worthy “tradition” (Pragmann 1983:40) through which the church provides itself with ministers and thanks God for that provision. While Chemnitz concludes that ordination brings forth ministers, ordination “...does not have the promise that the blessing of the gospel is applied for salvation to the ordained person through the ordination itself, as if it were an instrument divinely instituted for this” (quoted in Pragmann 1983:55).

Ordination is believed to be the rite through which God calls, blesses, and sends the ministers of Word and Sacraments. An ordinand receives a special authority and responsibility from God in Christ and through the same act he/she also receives authority to minister from the laity. The ordinands enter into a commitment in which they are accountable and are assured of God’s gracious assistance through the Holy Spirit, in any time and any difficulty. Ordination is not consecration which all Christians undergo in their baptism and through which they become priests. Reformers neither reject the distinction nor the episcopal ministry of ordination. Their belief is that

God instituted the ministerial office and that bishops and presbyters have identical divine authorization.

...the historical succession of laying-on-of-hands in the ministerial office was not theologically primary. The confessional tradition believes that the divine institution of the ministerial office is evidenced by its faithfulness to and continuity in the apostolic Word and Sacraments as heard and received in the church throughout the centuries (Norgren and Rusch 1991:54).

The crucial question here is whether the laity knows that it is they who give authority to an ordinand to minister to them. This authority is transferred through the call and culminates in the ordination rite. The ordination rite does not make an ordinand holier or more Christian than the laity are. It is not repeated, for it is believed that nothing can damage the divine gift inside an ordinand. The latter sounds like the Catholic idea of character *indelebilis*. But unfortunately the rite does not equip an ordinand with a leadership style. The distinction between the ordinand and the laity lies in different responsibilities.

2.10 The functions of higher and lower offices (superintendent and bishop)

2.10.1 Job description of the superintendent's office

The office of a superintendent was purposely established as a liaison between the territorial government officials and the Evangelical congregational officials. It was a temporary establishment which was not meant to replace the historic office of the bishop. Its responsibilities were stipulated by Luther in the *Instructions of the Visitors of Parish Pastors in Electoral Saxony*. According to this stipulation a superintendent was a pastor of other pastors who had their parishes or benefices in the region. It was a time when some priests still lived in monasteries or foundations of nobles or others. It was the task of the superintendent to make sure that correct Christian teaching, true and pure proclamation of the Word of God, and the administration of the sacraments were according to the institution of Christ provided for the blessing of the people in these parishes. The preachers were to live exemplary lives. They were admonished "not to teach or to preach anything that is contrary to the word of God or that contributes to rebellion against

the government” (Bergendoff 1988:313). The superintendent dealt also with guilty pastors. He called them and warned them to abstain from wrongdoings. These were wrongdoings in doctrine, false teaching and daily life conduct. However, issues such as continuous false teaching and sedition were to be reported immediately to the proper officials who would then bring it to the knowledge of the elector for his proper attention (1988:313).

The office of the superintendent played a major role in facilitating and coordinating. Its coordination was clearly put in the *Instructions for Visitors of Parish Pastors in Electoral Saxony*. These provisions were made that the superintendent had to be notified in case a pastor or a preacher either by death or otherwise left his parish. But should someone be accepted in his place, such new employee should be presented to the superintendent before he was fully employed. The superintendent should question and examine him as to his life and teaching and as to whether he would satisfactorily serve the people. As in other instances, the coordination was needed to prevent further irregularities, trouble, or an ignorant or incompetent person from being accepted for he would mislead parishioners. Of this the Apostle Paul has faithfully warned us in many passages. (1988:314).

2.10.2 The Augsburg dispute and its results

Luther’s understanding of the existence of the episcopal office and the function of its visiting role was shaped by his study of the Canon Law in 1528. On the one hand his study helped him to rediscover the necessity for the function of the office, while on the other hand he appreciated the visitations set up by the elector as the beginning of such a restoration (Maurer 1986:84). As said before, however, Luther, did not consider the elector’s action and the oversight ministry it had created, as a substitution for the historic office of the bishop.

The German Empire which had religious disunity because of the Reformation was also faced with a war against the Turks. Emperor Charles V who needed a united front against the Turks summoned a diet in 1530 to meet in Augsburg, Germany, aimed at dissolving the religious differences. The invitation was extended to the prince, and representatives of free cities in the empire (Tappert 1959:23). The diet which was attended by theological and political leaders was

chaired by the Emperor himself who appealed for church unity in his empire. Among many other issues discussed, the Catholic delegation demanded that the reformed territories recognize the jurisdiction of the bishops. The reforming delegation on their side put forward two conditions. These were that they would recognize the bishops' jurisdiction if the bishops did not require celibacy, and the bishops should not require the renunciation of evangelical doctrine by prospective ordinands. Despite much effort put into this meeting the two sides failed to reach a compromise.

Luther, who could not attend this historic occasion because of his hiding at Coburg, prepared the exhortation and sent it with the delegates from Coburg to the meeting. The exhortation was entitled *Exhortation to All Clergy Assembled at Augsburg* (Norgren and Rusch 1991:44). Its contents envisage that "A pact between the Lutheran Reformation and the bishops is still possible," writes Maurer, and that, indeed, was Luther's "top priority" as with "stern love (he) sketches the portrait of a proper Christian bishop"(1986:71). Luther indirectly tried to persuade the two groups to reach an agreement that supported the continuation of the episcopal office for the sake of unity and not of necessity (Norgren and Rusch 1991:51).

Luther was willing to accept the jurisdiction of bishops even if they "were wolves and our enemies - because they still possess the office and sit in the place of apostles - as long as pure doctrine could be guaranteed" (Maurer 1986:80). His objective was that the gospel *and not episcopacy which is an adiaphoron* should be brought back to the centre of the church's activities. The reformer put forward his vision of a reformed Catholic episcopate existing under the gospel and serving the gospel. Because the ministry of bishops was a ministry of the gospel they functioned "by divine right" (Norgren and Rusch 1991:47). "According to divine right, therefore, it is the office of the bishop to preach the Gospel, forgive sins, judge doctrine and condemn that is contrary to the Gospel, excluding from the Christian community the ungodly whose wicked conduct is manifested. All this is to be done not by human power but by God's word alone" (Tappert 1959:84). These proposals eventually became Article 28 of the Augsburg Confession.

Since the Augsburg meeting had not reached any agreement, Luther drafted a document in which he defined the relationship between congregation and bishop as follows:

the agreement of both parties... The pastor has the right and duty to propose new ordinances and to recommend the amendment or abolition of surviving ones all of this, however, only with the concurrence of the congregations...It is assumed that all the baptised who believe belong to the congregation. The jurisdiction of the pastor can just as well encompass a province as a city, even the world; there is room for division into bishoprics, and even for a reformed papacy (Maurer 1986:228)

As time went on, Luther shared the same vision as Jerome when he proposed a reformed church with equal bishops in offices. He writes:

Consequently the church cannot be better governed and maintained than by having all of us live under one head, Christ, and by having all bishops equal in office (however they may differ in gifts) and diligently joining together in unity of doctrine, faith, sacraments, prayer, work of love etc. So, St Jerome writes that the priests of Alexandria governed the churches together and in common. The apostles did the same, and after them all the bishops throughout Christendom, until the Pope raised his head over them all (Norgren and Rusch 1991:50).

According to the Augsburg Confession the spiritual authority of a bishop is “the power of keys, that is spiritual authority which is at work in the liturgical events of confession and absolution. The authority of bishops is grounded in the word of God, that is, the gospel. It is concentrated in the liturgical events of an ordered church...” (Maurer 1986:69-70). Article 28 of the Augsburg Confession made the provision for what was later called two kingdoms theology.

2.10.3 The power of the bishops

Provision for the ecclesiastical power of the bishops was made in the Augsburg Confession and in the Apology of the Augsburg Confession. The pre-requisites of the gospel were that those who exercise the ministry of the oversight over churches should preach the gospel, remit sins, consecrate the sacraments, exercise refusal of communion to members who were guilty of notorious crimes, and absolve those who repented.

Article 28: The power of Bishops.

... Our teachers assert that according to the Gospel the power of bishops is a power and command of God to preach the Gospel, to forgive and retain sins, and to administer and to distribute the sacraments. For Christ sent out the apostles with his command, "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you. Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained" (John 20:21-23). This power of keys or of bishops is used and exercised only by the teaching and preaching the word of God and by administering the sacraments (to many persons or to individuals, depending on one's calling). In this way are imparted not bodily but eternal things and gifts, namely, eternal righteousness, the Holy Spirit, and eternal life. These gifts cannot be obtained except through the office of preaching and of administering the holy sacraments, for St. Paul says, "The gospel is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith." Inasmuch as the power of the church or of bishops bestows eternal gifts and is used and exercised only through the office of preaching, it does not interfere at all with government or temporal authority (Tappert 1959:81-82; Scriba 1997:68).

The contrasts between the Roman Catholic and Lutheran understandings of the episcopal office should always be remembered and never confused. According to Vatican II "the faithful must adhere to their bishop just like the Church to Christ, and Christ to the Father, so that all agree in unity and rejoice to God's glory." Here, the hierarchical nature of the episcopal office is believed to be a necessity. "The Bishop of Rome - the Pope - is the eternal evident principle and foundation for the unity of the bishops, assisted by the priests, the Lord Jesus Christ is present in the midst of the faithful. The priests do not have the full eminence of the office, yet they are indeed also priests of the New Covenant...one degree below them are the deacons..."(Cleve 1982:99). Luther maintains that "the first and only care of all bishops should be to ensure that the people learn about the gospel and the love of Christ" (Dietzfelbinger 1982:99). The latter statement echoes the other that says: "And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry..."(Eph.4:11-12). The Lutheran parish pastor is not a representative of the bishop but an independent and responsible bishop in the local parish. He/she is a bishop in the sense that he/she is responsible for the faith and the gospel proclaimed in his/her church. He/she confirms and ordains in an emergency cases just as the diocesan bishop does. For the Lutherans, the office is not a necessity.

2.10.4 The findings and contributions of the visitation commissions.

2.10.4.1 Ineffective congregational leadership

The purpose of conducting visitations among the reformed congregations was for the leadership to acquaint itself with the situation at the . Based on the outcome the leadership would be able to improve the prevalent situation by encouraging both the parish leaders and parishioners to bring about the change needed. It was also an opportunity to assess the effectiveness as well as the ineffectiveness of the Reformation movement in the regions visited The new order had been introduced through visitations of territories. In Saxony, during the year 1525, Luther supported by Spalatin and Hausmann, had requested John, the elector, to authorise the visitations which he did. After his approval the territory was visited region by region by the visitation commissions whose members were theologians and jurists. Melanchthon and Hieronymus Schurff participated very often in the visitations whereas Luther himself did so only occasionally (Loewenich 1982:310).

The findings were sometimes not very encouraging. Here follow a few of the examples recorded. Some of the pastors were unable to recite the Lord's Prayer and the Creed. The latter had a negative effect upon delivering a sound evangelical sermon. A few pastors were reported to be unsure as to what was the evangelical teaching and what was not. Thus some of them were found practising and emphasising fasting of members in reformed parishes. One pastor was reported as playing double standards in that he served both Evangelical and Catholic regions but using teaching suited them best. The likelihood is that he was not sure which of the two churches would survive. So, it was difficult to decide which one to abandon and which to support. Many of the parsonages were frequently found to be in wretched conditions (1982:310).

The visitation commission attempted to assist incompetent leaders. Those who had sermon preparation problems were admonished to use Luther's book of sermons, while those who practised fasting were prohibited from continuing the practice for it was an unevangelical practice. Pastors and preachers were encouraged to preach both the law and gospel. Melanchthon drafted an emergency '*Instructions for the visitors of Parish pastors*' which provided directives on the

most important elements of the evangelical teaching and churchly practice (1982:310).

2.10.4.2 The need for basic books of instructions

The commission of visitations achieved its objectives. It found that the parish leaders as well as the parishioners had no basic evangelical text books, and it was obvious that the local Christians could not obtain these books by themselves. This was the urgent need that Luther met when he wrote the Small and the Large Catechisms. The education needs manifested themselves in two categories. The first category was of households where household members, children included, but particularly the fathers, needed Christian instructions to help them guide their families. So, the Small Catechism was a book of instructions which was designed for use by the family at home. The second category was of leaders such as pastors, preachers, teachers, parents and adults. Luther provided the latter group with the Large Catechism which appeared in 1529 and served as “reading material” for the group (WA 30,1,123-238 quoted in Loewenich 1982:309).

2.10.4.3 The new order of service

As mentioned before, much reformation was needed at the congregational level. The order of worship service was changed. In order to facilitate the change, written directives were needed. Luther, with the assistance of Konrad Rupff and Johann Walther, compiled a book for the order of worship. According to the new compilation the Mass continued to be chanted in Latin to avoid the breaking of the link between the Catholic and the Protestant congregations. Latin, Hebrew and Greek (Biblical languages), were preserved for historical and theological purposes.

An order of worship remained a public worship so that worshippers can express their adoration in public. Luther had a different understanding in this regard. He understood true worship as adoration through the spirit. According to him the order of worship service did not need to be a public ritual. However, for the sake of the youths and simple persons, one needed a public service of worship. The new order of worship was therefore introduced with a warning that one ought not to make it a law for others to follow.

The Allstedt congregation was the first to celebrate the all-German congregational Mass led by Thomas Muntzer at Easter, 1523. The German Mass and the Order of worship was adopted finally on Christmas Day in 1525 and published on New Year's Day, 1526 (WA 19,75,5, in Loewenich 1986:313).

2.10.5 The princes as leaders of the church

2.10.5.1 The reasons of turning over to secular lords.

The turning of Luther to the secular authorities took place because of the failure to find leaders who could be entrusted with supervisory work over congregations and address the church crisis. It was in 1520 in Wittenberg when Luther published his treatise, *"To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation, Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate"*, addressing it to "his most illustrious, all-powerful, imperial majesty, and the Christian nobility of the German nation." (Scriba 1997:66). The Reformer considered the church as a weak organization that needed the protection of the state. Luther had reasons for doing so. To him the state was an entity independent from the church. Its magistrates were ordained by God with the intention to punish all evildoers whether they were clergy or ecclesiastical government that treated the citizens justly. Not only the magistrates were ordained by God but so they were members of the priesthood of all believers. It should be noted that at the centre of Luther's appeal was his wish to reform the church so that it could perform its spiritual responsibilities better.

In the same treatise Luther described also three walls that were meant to protect Catholicism but especially the Pope against any reformation. The first wall was the standpoint that the secular power was inferior to the spiritual power. The second wall was the belief that the Pope alone had the right to interpret Holy Scripture. The third wall entailed the view that only the Pope could convene a council (Scriba 1997:66). The first wall was invalid, for both the spiritual power and the secular power have originated from and were ordained by the same God. Concerning the second wall, all Christians are priests through baptism and thus they have a right to interpret the Scriptures. The third thesis was also incorrect for the Apostolic Councils, the Council of Nicea and the Augsburg diet were convened by Emperors. "May God help us, and give us just one of

those trumpets with which the walls of Jericho were overthrown to blast down these walls of straw and paper in the same way”, writes Luther (Scriba 1997:66; cf Judges 7:16-22).

As referred to above, turning to the secular authorities when the church authorities failed to meet the expectation of all its members had been a common experience in the late Middle Ages. So, Luther’s request was accepted by the territorial princes. The appeal Luther and his co-workers put forward was for the territorial authorities to assume temporary responsibility for the necessary work of the reorganization of the church. It was not a permanent take-over that was requested from the secular authority, but a temporary help while the church was preparing its own leaders. Shortly after this agreement, especially after the Imperial Diet of Speyer in 1526, the territorial princes believed that they had free reign to carry out the Reformation in their own regions.

2.10.5.2 The evangelical episcopate lost out

From the very beginning of his turning to the secular authorities Luther considered the sovereign ruler of a given territory as only an “emergency bishop”, a leader who was to carry out this task on behalf of the church out of “Christian love” (Loewenich 1986:309). This meant that a sovereign ruler had certain limitations when it came to spiritual matters. Luther made the type of relation between the two very clear in the *Instructions for the Visitors of the Parish Pastors in Electoral Saxony*. He writes: “To teach and to rule in spiritual affairs” (WA 26,200,29; AE 40,273 in Loewenich 1982: 309) was not the task of the princes. Melancthon was of the opinion that princes were not “*custodiani utriusque tabulae*” meaning the guardians of the first three commandments (Loewenich 1982:309)

Things went beyond Luther’s expectations. The electoral instructions of 1527 handed over the supervision of the church completely to the territorial rulers. The assumption behind this was that each territorial ruler had the duty of caring for the welfare of his subjects. Luther’s trust that territorial rulers were superior brothers, superiors in the sense that they had been set apart from others for the service of others, had been undermined . Each of them had been a Christian brother who as a prince carried out this “service of love” (Loewenich 1982:309). Thus when each ruler took over the complete supervision of the church each territorial ruler became the “*Summus*

episcopus” (Loewenich 1982:309), the presiding bishop of his territorial church. In this way the territorial church administration came into being.

Since the complete supervision of the church by each territorial ruler was not planned in advance and, secondly, because the territorial rulers had lacked the necessary practical skills of how to handle ecclesiastical matters, a “ministerial church” (Loewenich 1982:309) was established. It was simply a commission that was constituted of theologians. The ministerial church among many other churchly matters dealt, with theological issues and acted as an intermediaries rulers and church members. Territories were seen as confessionally unified. The reformed church, that had aimed at becoming an evangelical Church led by evangelical episcopate had become a state church. What happened was that it freed itself from the authoritarian Roman Catholic leadership but ended up in another kind of slavery. A section of the peace of Augsburg in 1555 reads “the religion of the prince is the religion of the land” (Loewenich 1982:309).

The author is of the opinion that Luther was too rash in handing over the church leadership to secular lords. Luther should have spent more effort on training the local leaders for a longer period of time. It is not obvious to figure out how training programmes could have been facilitated, but the reformed congregations needed such an exercise. It is well-known that the transitional period from the Roman Catholic rule to the reformed one was a period of uncertainty and difficulty. Nevertheless, these uncertainties should had been faced. Uncertainties are not normal occurrences, but one can learn through them. It seems to that the congregants were not given sufficient opportunities to cope with the new realities. Dealing with the prevailing situation themselves would have been an opportunity to discover how to do things for themselves. It should be noted that the situation in which they found themselves did not indicate that they were incapable of leading themselves. Luther was persuaded by his own fears and the conviction that his followers were incompetent to lead themselves. The democratic assumption that subordinate people had the right to overthrow an existing government if they disagree with its policies was beyond the horizon of most people at the time. He could not understand that the peasants had the right to resist against the lords and princes who oppressed and taxed them (Loewenich 1982:249; Pillay 1991:153). Like his contemporaries, Luther acted according to the principles of feudalism. The Reformer did not fail to remind the authorities of the day to suppress the insubordination. The

following words indicated that Luther did not trust a common person. “What is more ill-mannered than a foolish peasant or a common man [woman] when he gets power into his [her] hands (Foster quoted in Pillay 1991:153). His fears and mistrust in the leadership of the local congregational leaders are equivalent to those of many parish pastors in ELCIN. As in the case of Luther, many ELCIN parish pastors believe that pastors are the ones whose service is much better than that of lay leaders.

It is true that the territorial rulers were Christian brothers as well as members of the priesthood of all believers, but Luther should have understood the power hungry attitude among the secular rulers which wanted to control the church. Turning to the secular lords was like liberating slaves from one master and selling them to a new one. Like the Roman Catholic leadership of the day the new lords were excited to be political as well as ecclesiastical rulers at the same time in their respective regions.

2.11 Comparison of Lutheran approach with Catholic and Reformed approaches

2.11.1 The Roman Catholic Church Sacrament of Order

The Sacrament of Order is one of the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church. The scriptural basis for this was taken to be “I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on hands; for God did not give us a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power and love and self control” (2 Tim 1:6f). The Sacrament of Order was believed to have been instituted by Christ. In accordance with Catholicism the Catholic church “received from the institution of Christ the holy, visible sacrifice of the Eucharist”, in other words there “exists in the church a new, visible and external priesthood” (Neuner & Dupuis 1978:467). Consecration belongs to the apostles who partook in Jesus’ and through them it was transmitted to their successors, the bishops. From them “the divinely established ecclesiastical ministry with various ranks were formed. They are bishops, presbyters, deacons. Bishops have the highest degree of priesthood unlike the priests” (Neuner & Dupuis 1978:482-483).

The Roman Catholic Church observes three sacramental orders, the episcopate, the presbyterate

and the diaconate. These sacramental orders are also called the three degrees of the ministerial priesthood (Neuner & Dupuis 1978:479).

2.11.2 The episcopate.

The episcopal consecration proffers the fulness of the Sacrament of Order. The Council of Trent affirms this. As said before, the bishops are the successors of the apostles and continue the work of Christ. According to Catholicism, Jesus is believed to be sitting at the right hand of his Father and to be simultaneously present in the bishops. It means Jesus is present among the believers through the bishops. A community of believers that has no bishop, has no Jesus among them. Jesus, according to this belief, preaches the word of God, administers the sacraments of faith to believers through the actions of the bishops (Neuner & Dupuis 1978:481).

To them is entrusted the care of the portion of God's people which is the diocese, a charge which they must exercise in communion with the supreme Pontiff who is their head, who is the centre of unity of the whole Church (LG 21). United with their head, the supreme Pontiff, the bishops constitute an apostolic college (LG 22), and share in his solicitude for the whole Church (LG 23-24)" (Lumen Gentium quoted in Neuner & Dupuis 1978:479).

Catholicism uses texts such as Acts 1:8; 2:4; and John 20:22-23 to affirm that the apostles received a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This special gift is transferred to bishops and through them to the ordinand by the imposition of hands in episcopal consecration. The fulness of the Sacrament of Order is conferred through episcopal consecration. Episcopal consecration is believed to convey teaching, prophetic and kingly characters and the grace of the Holy Spirit to its candidates. By means of the Sacrament of Order the bishops admit new members into the episcopal body.

The bishops, as ministers of the Sacrament of Order, are superior to priests, having the ecclesiastical and canonical authority to confirm and ordain. The power they have is not common to them and to priests. They confer valid Orders without the consent or call of the people (Neuner & Dupuis 1978:467-468). The Council of Trent declares that the bishops are superior to priests, for they succeeded the apostles, belong to the hierarchical Order, "established by the Holy Spirit

to govern the church of the Lord” (Acts 20:28), confer the sacrament of Confirmation, ordain priests of the Church, and have power to perform other significant functions which those of a lower Order are not allowed to do.

2.11.3 The presbyterate

The presbyters are the receivers of the episcopal consecration through the bishops who received it from the apostles who got it from Jesus. The priests do not have the highest degree of the priesthood. They unite with the bishop in priestly dignity and depend on the bishop to exercise their power. They act as collaborators, helpers and counsellors of the bishop. They are the bishop’s representatives in the local congregations. Together with the bishop the priests are in the priestly college. The consecration of the Eucharist and the performance of the Sacrifice of the altar is the task of ordained priests only. No lay Christian in whatever circumstances is allowed to exercise these tasks. The power of the Sacrament of Order makes the priests truly consecrated priests. Through it they become the priests who preach the gospel, care for the flock and celebrate the worship.

The Order is conferred through the imposition of hands and the citation of the key-phrases of the ordination preface. The form for the presbyterate, for instance, is, “Receive the power of offering the Sacrifice in the Church for the living and the dead, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Neuner & Dupuis 1978:466).

2.11.4 The diaconate

This office stands at the lower level of the hierarchy and is classified under “a ministry of service” (Neuner & Dupuis 1978:483). The diaconate assists in the liturgy, the word and charity “in communion with the bishop and his priestly college”(Neuner & Dupuis 1978:483). Recommendations concerning the restoration of the permanent diaconate in the Western Church were put forward by the Council of Trent.

2.11.5 Ordination

The Holy Spirit and grace are offered by the Sacrament of Order. Baptism, Confirmation and Ordination imprints a character “which can neither be erased nor taken away ...”(Neuner & Dupuis 1978:468-469). Once ordained one “conforms to Christ the Priest” and is a priest forever (Neuner & Dupuis 1978:475). The Council of Trent declares that the ordination of bishops and priests is valid without the consent of the civil authority or the people.

2.11.6 Critique

The Sacrament of Order deals with issues of faith hierarchically. Those who were with Jesus physically and their successors are those who are indicated as members of the ministerial priesthood. One does not understand why the physical connection with Jesus is more important than the spiritual connection. Geographically, Jesus lived in Palestine. Does this mean that those Christians who believe in him and his word but did not have tangible contact with him do not have the same dignity as those who interacted with Jesus? This does not agree with the meaning of Jesus’ parable concerning the labourers in the vineyard (Matt 20:1-16). What is here is not the physical connection but the witness to Jesus and his kingdom. There is only one priesthood of all believers and no more than one.

Faith is not a matter of succession. Human mediators between God and his people are not needed. The enthusiasts of the time believed that God can speak in one’s heart without any mediation. Luther insisted that God’s Word is always mediated. He called it the “external Word”, a word which has to be derived from the apostolic witness and proclaimed by somebody other than the believer him/herself. So the question is not whether, but by whom it is mediated. The Lutheran answer is: by all believers.

The disciples were trained mission workers who were commissioned to do Christ’s mission in the world. With the disciples’ training Jesus initiated the training of ministers and the office of Word and Sacrament. The central objective with the training of ministers is equipping them with scriptural and related knowledge so that they can lead others to the proper understanding of what

God has done for the world in Christ Jesus. To believe that Jesus or the Holy Spirit has instituted the church hierarchy is to miss his objective. A hierarchical order in the church is a later human fabrication and therefore an *adiaphoron*. To believe that Jesus is present among believers through the bishop is to limit his unlimited nature and to make the bishop a god for his followers. The leaders, their co-workers and their followers, are all equal believers in the eyes of God. As said before, it is not needed to offer sacrifices to God. God had offered Christ to die on the cross on our behalf. Our sins have been forgiven and the Old Testament sacrifices ended with the sacrifice of Christ given once and for all.

The Sacrament of Order neither makes provisions for congregations to call their ministers nor to allow them to participate in the consecration or ordination. It keeps the lay people away from decision-making and leadership responsibilities. All these belong to all Christians for they have been made priests in their baptism.

2.12 The Presbyterian Ecclesiastical Ordinances

The purpose of including the Presbyterian Ecclesiastical Ordinances in this section is to compare the Lutheran Reformation with the Catholic and with the Presbyterian Reformation in terms of church structures. The aim is to explore and to compare the following diversities: The Catholic Church is a hierarchical institution as said before. The Lutheran Reformation aimed at reforming the hierarchical structures of the latter. It did not totally reject the episcopal office in the church but rather placed it under the gospel. The Presbyterian Reformation advocated congregational church structures that placed clerics on equal footing; included were lay representatives and Doctors. The layout of how the offices function and how the visitation of ministers in local parishes in the Presbyterian Church were designed to shed more light to this effort. The question is what made the Lutheran churches in general and ELCIN in particular to return to authoritarianism?

The Presbyterian Church observes four orders, namely, pastors, doctors, elders and deacons. The criterion of these offices is that they were instituted by Christ and thus they should be maintained in every church government (Reid 1980:58; Loetscher 1983:25). "The clergy were equal, without

superior bishops over them, and the lay elders, twelve in number, were elected by the civil magistrates from their own number, to share with the clergy in church government” (Loetscher 1983:25). The composition of the church government was a reflection of the civil government in Geneva. Calvin’s understanding of the relation between church and government is that the government should be guided by the Word of God, but, on the other hand it should also protect and support the church from interference by the government in its internal affairs.

2.12.1 The function of the pastoral office.

The pastoral office has the task of proclaiming the Word of God, to instruct, admonish, exhort and condemn, both in public and private, to administer the sacraments and to enjoin brotherly corrections along with elders and colleagues (Reid 1980:58). The office-bearer of the pastoral office has to be called by the congregation he leads. “Now in order that nothing happens confusedly in the Church, no one is to enter upon this office without a calling. In this it is to consider three things, namely: the principal thing is the examination; then what belongs to the institution of the ministers; third, what ceremony or method of procedure it is good to observe in introducing them to office” (Reid 1980:58).

The examination has two parts. The first part ascertains that the ordinand knows the Scriptures and whether he has a proper way of communicating it to his audience. The ordinand has to “profess his acceptance and maintenance of the doctrine approved by the Church” (Reid 1980:59). The proper doctrinal standing of the ordinand is examined whether by means of interrogation or listening to his doctrinal teaching privately. The ordinand is also tested as to whether his life habits and conduct are above reproach.

The order is that ministers first elect such as ought to hold office; afterwards that he be presented to the Council; and if he is found worthy the Council receive and accept him, giving him certification to produce finally to the people when he preaches, in order that he be received by the common consent of the company of the faithful. If he be found unworthy, and show this after due probation, it is necessary to proceed to a new election for the choosing of another (Reid 1980:59).

The imposition of hands is observed as an introduction to the office and also as a tradition observed by the apostles and the ancient Church, provided that it is not regarded as superstition.

2.12.2 Concerning the second order, which are called Doctors

It is not mentioned how Doctors are appointed as office-bearers. However, their task is to teach and to defend the doctrine of the church. This is done with the intention to keep the gospel pure and to protect the church against corrupted theology that could come from its ministers. The office is that of lecturers of theology who are very close to ministers to assist them in academic related matters. It is this office that is entrusted with the responsibility of, for instance, to be Sunday school teachers. The purpose is to lay a solid foundation for Christian children in the Church (Reid 1980:62-63).

2.12.3 Concerning the third order which is that of Elders

This office has the significant task of supervising everyone in the church. It has the duty to instruct, admonish, and help erring persons to mend their ways and behaviour. Elders should be persons beyond reproach and suspicion and God fearing. Elders' election procedures are that the "Little Council" nominates and forwards the candidates to the ministers. The ministers, if they find the candidates worthy, will recommend them to the council which will approve them (Reid 1980:64). When they are approved, the candidates take the special oath. After a period of one year which is the term of office, elders present themselves to the responsible people for re-election.

2.12.4 The fourth order of ecclesiastical government, that is the Deacons

This office follows the ancient custom of two kinds of diaconal services. "One service deals with receiving, dispensing, holding things for the poor, possessions, rents and pensions while the other tends and cares for the sick and administers allowances to the poor" (Reid 1980:64). The office-bearers which are called procurators and hospitallers are to be elected as indicated in the case of elders and according to Paul's proposals in 1 Tim 3; Tit 1. Both procurators and hospitallers work

in close relationship with ministers in hospitals.

2.12.5 Order for Visitations of Ministers and Parishes

The order referred to is a draft of the *Visitation of the Church of Geneva* and its dependent parishes around it. The objectives for visiting parish ministers at parishes were unequivocally stipulated as to maintain the uniformity of the doctrine in all parishes. The procedures followed were that the Magistracy appointed two members from its Council while ministers also appointed two ministers from their congregation who have to visit parishes annually. The delegation checked whether parishes accepted new doctrines, whether the ministers diligently delivered the pure gospel; it admonished those who needed to be admonished and dealt with scandalous acts that needed to be inspected. The daily lives of ministers, including whether they have good family relations, are also under inspection so as to ensure that life style is exemplary. It encourages the parishioners in their service attendances, to live a decent Christian life and to know how to discharge it to others (Reid 1980:74).

2.12.6 Critique

The system of four orders creates space for the laity in the leadership of the Church. Jurists also play a major role in this set-up. The imposition of hands is treated as optional showing that the imposition of hands is not the ordination of an ordinand. While it is not wrong to stick to ancient practices, it should be checked whether they are relevant to today's needs and situations. The content of the examination of ordinands was well designed. Nowadays its content seems to be too spiritual. It excludes the social and political dimensions of life.

The second order makes theological lecturers and their teaching part and parcel of the enhancement of Church education and developments. Their expertise and gifts are fully utilized in the Church. The nomination of elders by Church members is a positive move in the third order, especially if elders have an education level that enables them to interact with everyone. One can ask whether the ancient order of deacons cannot be transformed.

2.13 Some developments after the Reformation

2.13.1 Basic endeavours to seek a practical church structure

The Lutheran Reformation was carried out during Luther's life-time. However, it is a fact that the Reformer could not implement all his proposals. One of them was to establish small churches within the parish. This most radical proposal of Luther did not materialize. Its official formula was to be a "truly Evangelical church order" - namely that "those who mean to be real Christians and profess the Gospel with hand and mouth, should record their names on a list and gather in a house by themselves in order to pray, read, baptize, receive the sacrament, and to practise other Christian work" (Reumann 1987:36). This has been the ideal of evangelical congregations which would ensure them of the availability of the gospel among themselves. So, with the gospel at their disposal, they could organise and hold regular devotions in a house. In these worship services they would be entitled to exercise all worship service activities as listed above. With this phrase Luther teaches that God is everywhere and not confined to the church buildings. God can be worshipped everywhere. Christians have the right to worship God in the absence of the pastor. They do not need his mediation. However, it is to be noted that Luther was not advocating anarchy and disorder in the parish worship. He implied that the small churches and its leadership work in smooth relationship with the parish pastors.

The second part of the above phrase, "I cannot and do not yet dare organize" should be studied with care (Reumann 1987:36). One explanation is that to organise small churches in parishes demands detailed arrangement and Luther did not have sufficient time to do it. Secondly, probably Luther wanted to distinguish his task as a Reformer and that of the parishioners as implementors of the transformation achieved. Thirdly, in this phrase Luther makes sure that the gospel receives the first priority and church structure the second. Fourthly, it is obvious that Luther did not want to monopolize the church structure but invited the participation of others to continue where he ended. So, for Luther it was not due to negligence that he left the parishes and the church as a whole without a consistent structure.

As said before, other Christians have continued where Luther has ended. A variety of patterns for

church structure and ministry emerged, such as “the consistory in German territories, the involvement of bishops and the king in Sweden, free church developed in Amsterdam.” The Lutheran Orthodoxy in Europe tried to formalise the Reformation heritage. It viewed the pastoral ministry as a divinely instituted property of the church. Class distinctions before God and character the *indelebilis* were rejected (Elert 1962:354). It preserved the concept of the priesthood of all believers, but “never helped it make a break-through” in the church life (Bernhard quoted in Reumann 1987:36). Further developments included the Pentecostal movement, the “lay apostolate” in Roman Catholicism, “theologies of the laity”, and all emphases on “world engagement and secular Christianity” (Walz quoted in Reumann 1987:40-41). American Lutheranism came to America with the Lutheran settlers. It established itself in a religious pluralistic and democratic environment and society (Willard quoted in Reumann 1987:41). There it did have the status of a state church, the position it had in Europe. It did not develop a ministry and doctrine of the laity partly because of the conservatism of its own leaders and members. It seems that the church had adopted a low profile approach towards democratic principles in that society. It stressed the authority of the pastor and regarded the office bearers in this group as a class instituted by God. They alone had the power of the keys, and were able to decide doctrine. The joint Synod of Ohio had the following theses on the ministry:

1. In the Christian church there is a universal priesthood....
2. In the church there is also a public office of ministry.....instituted of God....
3. there is a distinction to be made between the evangelical pastoral office and the universal priesthood ...not ...that the public office of the ministry possesses a word of God, a Baptism, and Absolution and Eucharist different from those given to the entire church, but...that it publicly administers this word, baptism, absolution and eucharist. Butall Christians have the right and duty to make use of God’s Holy Word, and, in cases of necessity, also to baptize and absolve.
4. The church ,i.e., all the Christians have the keys ..but does not follow from this that Every Christian is a pastor.
5. The pastoral office is not a human arrangement, but a divine institution, although the external appointment...is a work of the spiritual priesthood.
6. The call to the pastoral office comes from God....but mediately, through men, i.e., through the Christian Congregation.
7. Ordination...is not a divine command...there is no absolute necessity for it, and yet it is necessary from a churchly point of view...and, in the regularly organized condition of the Church, is only to be administered by those who are already in the ministerial office (Wolf quoted in Reumann 1987:43).

2.13.2 Re-introduction of the episcopal office

The use of the title bishop was stopped through the events of Reformation in the Lutheran churches outside Scandinavia. However, episcopacy was never destroyed. It has been preserved in various Lutheran churches in countries of Scandinavia, and Eastern Europe. Dietzfelbinger referred to the Evangelical- Lutheran Church in Romania as one of these examples (1982:93) An unbroken apostolic succession can only be claimed by the Swedish. Most German Lutheran churches did not have bishops for many centuries, but presidents or “*praeses*” Dietzfelbinger supports the latter when he says, “In the Lutheran Churches in Germany it prevailed after the Revolution 1918 and during the church struggle of the thirties” (1982:94). However, the proclamation of the gospel survived through all these years.

“Daughter churches” of Lutheran missionary work in Africa, Asia, and Oceania to say a few inherited from their mother churches the office and title of bishop after their independence. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN) and the Church in New Guinea are two examples. Dietzfelbinder referred to Lutheran churches who adopted the title because of the influence and close contact they had with neighbouring Anglican bishops. In the twentieth century many Lutheran Churches have re-introduced the office and the title. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) in the USA, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia (ELCRIN), and The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN DELK) are a few instances of those which went through this process.

The Department of Studies of the Lutheran World Federation teaches that the episcopal office has been created primarily to perform the task of unifying the church. More than half of the member churches of the Lutheran World Federation have introduced the office of the bishop. But, despite the latter, there are various arguments among Lutheran theologians which either support or reject the existence of the episcopal office. Arguments for the office of the bishop are: The office is perceived doing away with old existing barriers and creating fellowship among Christians. The office acts as an umbrella under which the public ministry manifests oneness and promotes the visible unity of the church. Servants in episcopal ministries are exhorted to exercise leadership in the church by “expressing and serving the unity of the

church in relating to the other churches and to confessional and ecumenical organizations” (1981:11). It sees that bishops have the obligation “to call the church to the goal of visible unity in the one faith and one eucharistic fellowship expressed in worship and in common life in Christ, and to advance toward that unity that the world may believe” (Moede quoted in Harrisville 1987: 66). However, the pastor is responsible for the above concerns as well as many others in the congregation.

Counter arguments are that the establishment of the episcopate in the Lutheran Church is seen as doing away of the disparity between the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran Church. The claim of an episcopal office to represent the church in the public sector will result in a figure type office and lose its value (Lutheran World Federation Department of Studies 1981:11). The urge for episcopacy is viewed as an attempt to return to the monarchical episcopate and to patriarchy. Some Lutheran churches in the USA have the fear to loose the structure of a church based on the independence on the congregation (Dietzfelbinger 1982:95).

2.13.3 Positive aspects of Luther’s approach according to Catholic scholars

Traditionally, Catholics rejected Luther as a heretic. Some Catholic scholars began with a reappraisal. This was probably opposed again by others. In 1917 Professor F. X. Kiefl, broke the Catholic tradition of Denifle and Grisar, who aimed at liquidating Luther’s work. He emphasised that the correct understanding of Luther could be found in Luther’s theology. He contradicted Denifle when he clarified that the doctrine of justification insinuates that good works are fruits of justification. Sebastian, a historian, confirms that Luther “was no revolutionary or radical freethinker, and he conceded that he was genuinely concerned only about spiritual things” (quoted in Atkinson 1983:22). In his two volumes entitled *Reformation in Deutschland* (1939-40), Joseph Lortz, proffers Luther “a status of historical necessity” (quoted in Atkinson 1983:22). He further “argues the possibility of a true protest being neither an act of insubordination nor a destruction of unity. Luther was in fact a creative genius, so complex that after four hundred years scholars are still unable to arrive at a common assessment of his real significance” (quoted in Atkinson 1983:23). In his criticism, Lortz

points to Luther's subjectivism, individualism, one-sidedness, selectiveness. These characteristics, according to the latter scholar, prevented the Reformer from understanding the true Catholic Church. The result is that instead of reforming one Catholic Church, "he tore it into two" (Atkinson 1983:24).

Hessen rejected the notion that Luther was an individualist and subjective person. To him Luther was "a reformer" which means "a restorer of the God-given Gospel from which the church had strayed" (quoted in Atkinson 1983:25). He pointed out the nature of the *homo religiosus* and *homo propheticus* found in Luther which is in line with the Old Testament. The Reformer tried to reform and reshape the contemporary teaching of the Catholic Church. The four main teachings Luther was faced with

are intellectualism, moralism, sacramentalism, and institutionalism. Intellectualism tends to make faith into assent, and is content with a few formulas instead of the living and continuously disturbing creative contact of God as revealed in the biblical revelation. Moralism makes of Christ a new Moses, and subordinates the Gospel to the law by putting man's works before God's mercy. Sacramentalism has the tendency to make of religion an outward observance, to the neglect of that inner experience worked by the Word of God. Institutionalism tends to make outward observance and attendance a source of salvation...Luther wanted to put the Gospel back on the lampstand" (Atkinson 1983:26).

Hessen's criticism against Luther's reform is that it is went too far. Despite personal virtues found in Luther, Karl Adam calls him "a rebel and an apostate who used his gifts not in the service of the Church but against it" (quoted in Atkinson 1983:27). Richter supports the latter fact when he concludes that Luther "was but a heretic and rebel, better at demolition than at construction" (quoted in Atkinson 1983:29).

Luther demanded that the following practice be abolished.

The kissing of feet was to be abolished; pilgrimages to Rome should cease; the number of begging monks should be reduced; cloisters should again become Christian training schools; Celibacy should be abolished, at least for parish priests; Luther severely judged the rules and regulations of the church; the interdict, the laws of marriage, the regulations concerning fasting,

dispensations, the granting of privileges, and others. Festivals should be abolished and limited to Sundays. Begging was an evil; every city ought to look after its own poor and expel other beggars. It was high time that the schism with the Bohemians be set aside; it needed to be admitted that the burning of Huss was an injustice. Safe conduct was a divine decree. Heretics should be opposed with books, not with fire” (Scriba 1997:67).

2.9.8.4 Critique

Luther’s failure to work out the practical church structure of the evangelical church he intended to form has advantages. One positive outcome was the space and opportunity it gives to others to participate in the process of shaping the church. Fixed structures are not easy to alter. If one looks, for example, at the order of worship service Luther outlined, after nearly five hundred years, one recognises that only slight revisions made to it. ELCIN is still using the liturgy the Finnish missionaries compiled in 1925 to be used by the first indigenous pastors. However, it is also dangerous to leave behind unfinished responsibilities, for others might not know how to continue from there. Without a basic foundation the objectives can either be misunderstood or misinterpreted. The possibility of damaging what has been achieved is also there.

The issue of re-introducing the episcopal office into Lutheran Churches is not a matter of necessity, but rather a matter of uniformity. In ELCIN the office has played an important role during the initial stages of the parishes. It was the sole office with the basic know-how in the church. Bishops, moderators and their delegations led petitions against the former South African apartheid government. Currently, except for a few young congregations, senior parishes have the required basic skills. Financially, the office totally depends upon foreign donors. Its ministry is no longer considered as “one manifestation of the ministry”(Simojoki 1982:80), but as the superior ministry. The bishop is no longer a servant and brother, but rather an authoritarian “king”. Presently, bishops have adopted a low profile with the newly Namibian government. Some prominent church leaders have joined the government. The episcopal office is one of the hindrances to the unity negotiations among the three Lutheran Churches in the country. Research needs to be conducted so that an episcopal office, which is part of the church ministry and under the gospel, can be re-established.

The Catholic re-evaluation of Luther after nearly five hundred years indicates a long silence and the perpetuation of divisions. It remains a reminder to us all, Catholics and Lutherans, that theologians are not beyond making mistakes. It is theologians who, sided with the hierarchy that directly assisted in dividing the Catholic Church, and not the laity. The Church has become a contradiction, for while divided it continues to proclaim one Christ.

2.14 Conclusion

Both Catholicism and Lutheran reformers agree that the ministry is a divine institution. Catholicism teaches that bishops are the successors of the college of the apostles to whom the power to govern the Church has been transmitted from Jesus. Thus they are the rightful inheritors of this power and the hierarchical ministerial priesthood in the church. To them belong the diocesan powers of jurisdiction to “sacrifice” the eucharist, to rule and to govern the dioceses. The episcopal powers of jurisdiction is parallel to the power of the Pope. Bishops do not share the jurisdiction power with the priests and diaconate. The priests, because of their sacramental service, are vested with the sacred power of service in their ordination. All diocesan activities should be carried out by the bishop or with his personal consent. Due to the multiplication of parishes and congregations in the diocese, the priests are installed in congregations as delegates of the diocesan bishop who is unable to attend to their needs due to their number. Jesus is believed to be present among his believers through the bishop.

Luther and other Lutheran reformers replaced the emphasis on power with the emphasis on the gospel of Christ. According to Luther the ordained ministry is a divine institution. Bishops are possible but not necessary. The function of the ordained minister, according to Luther, is to preach the gospel, to forgive sins, to judge the doctrine, to condemn and excommunicate the wicked with the Word of God. For the sake of unity and reconciliation, and not out of necessity in the church. Luther later proposed a church with equal bishops. They should be evangelical bishops who are under the gospel. The Augsburg Confession is in agreement with Luther’s definition of the power of the bishop. The spiritual authority of the bishop as the power of preaching the gospel, and exercising the keys, in confession and absolution, was

assured.

The intention of the reform movement was not to create a new church nor to institute a new polity. The Lutheran Reformation was the result of the hierarchy's falling away from the right track and was not a political tactic. Lutheran reformers did not consider themselves to be innovators. The movement claimed the right to ignore obedience to bishops who taught and issued commands opposite to the will of God. The reformers had the support of Augustine when he said that "one should not obey even regularly elected bishops if they err or if they teach or command something contrary to the divine Holy Scripture. The power and jurisdiction the bishops may have in different matters, is by virtue of human rights'" (Norgren and Rusch 1991:47).

Luther teaches that there is one priesthood of all believers in the church, which is contrary to the Roman Catholic sacrament of order. It teaches about two distinct priesthoods, namely the ministerial priesthood and the common priesthood. Catholicism teaches that the ministerial priesthood is a hierarchical ministry that belongs to the clergy. This superior ministry according to the teaching has been instituted by Christ when he called his disciples from other believers (Heb 5:15). Christ "made this new people into a new Kingdom, priests to His Holy Father" (Rev 1:6; 5:9-10; Neuner & Dupuis 1978:481). 1 Peter 2:4-10 is interpreted to mean that the ministerial priesthood was consecrated by the Holy Spirit to be a spiritual household and a holy priesthood. Its members entered a religious status that enables their actions as Christians to proclaim the wonderful work of God wherever they found themselves. The disciples should devote their lives to teaching and fellowship and to the breaking of the bread and prayers (Acts 2:42-47); to sacrifice their bodies as a living sacrifice to God, bearing witness to the world and to live an exemplary life to the tempters and "to any one who calls to account for the hope that is in you..." (Rom 12:1; 1 Pet 3:15).

The ministerial priesthood and the common priesthood are described to have distinction in essence and degree (Neuner & Dupuis 1978:481). Despite the difference, both are ordained to each other and share in the priesthood of Christ. However, since the ministerial priesthood has received sacred power in ordination, it plays the role of instructing and ruling the other

priesthood. When administering the eucharist, the ministerial priesthood performs in the person of Christ and proffers the sacrifice to God on behalf of the common priesthood. The common priesthood participates in the eucharist for it belongs to the royal priesthood and exercises its priesthood when receiving the sacraments (Neuner & Dupuis 1978:481).

Luther has defined ordination as “not a sacrament; it bestows no character *indelebilis*; this is not a sign of succession leading back to the apostles” (Braaten 1985:141). The question remains, what is it then? It is obvious that Luther gave this answer in a polemic against the Catholic teaching that makes ordination a sacrament and thus elevates the clergy above the laity. The power and authority and the permanent character are conferred to the clergy by the bishop in ordination. For Luther scripture does not provide direct and straightforward support that ordination goes back to the apostles. Nothing in scripture confirms ordination as instituted by Christ. There was nothing upon which the parishes could rely when, for instance, discipline a minister whom the parish called. Luther developed a theology aimed at restoring the power and authority the laity lost. Not only restoring but removing them from the clergy to the laity. To do that he declared ordination as a “human ceremony, a kind of *adiaphoron*” (Braaten 1985:143) and the call a divine institution. However, this is an occasional and emergency type of an answer. Luther did not go further to explain how the laity is going to use the power and authority they gained inside the church. It is clear that both the minister and the parishioners are commissioned to proclaim the gospel to the world. But it remains a dispute as to how the two ministries are interrelated inside the church. In accordance with the above, the minister becomes a facilitator and a delegated leader. Sharing the power and authority between the minister and the laity might be a better suggestion than transferring the power and authority from a minister to the group.

Luther suggested a the household as a church with the father presiding over worship services provided he governs himself according to the teaching of Christ. He reads the gospel, baptizes those who are born in his home, but does not celebrate the eucharist. His concern was that eucharist does not guarantee salvation, but the gospel and baptism do. The second suggestion was the small churches in the parish. Here he envisaged that few people can gather together in the name of Christ. What matters is not their number but their agreement to meet in the name

of Christ. As an example Luther referred to two to ten homes or an entire city or more than one cities provided they agreed among themselves to do so. The content of such agreement should be “to live in faith and love by the use of the gospel in the home” (Lehmann 1988:9). In accordance with this suggestion the gathering can take place without the presence of an ordained minister. The celebration of the eucharist can only be presided over by the minister when he/she is available. Both examples reflected the worship life of the Israelites while in exile away from Jerusalem. The third suggestion, meant to be temporal, was office of the superintendent. Beside its supervisory role to pastors and preachers, it acted as a link between the officials and the elector. Government officials acted as deans do nowadays, through which issues beyond both offices were brought to the attention of the elector who acted like a diocesan bishop. Later, as time went on, Luther emphasised episcopacy which should be equal in office and remain under the gospel. All three suggestions were emergency responses. They were responses to the crises at hand. This is one indication that most of Luther’s answers were emergency answers for there was not sufficient time to contemplate them thoroughly.

CHAPTER THREE

THE IMPACT OF THE FINNISH LEADERSHIP PATTERNS ON ELCIN

3.1 Introduction

From chapter two we learned about Luther's own leadership approach which aimed at transforming the authoritarian church structure of the Roman Catholic Church into a "democratic" institution. This chapter will deal with the impact of the Finnish leadership patterns on ELCIN. Chapter two will be used in this regard as a mirror to portray how the leadership style of the Finnish missionaries distanced itself from the Roman Catholic church leadership and how far were their leadership patterns influenced by the Lutheran Reformers.

I will assess the kind of leadership model developed in the Finnish mission field and its impact on ELCIN in the following stages. Firstly, I shall look at the history of the Finnish Missionary Society, whose missionaries came to Owambo, including the establishment of the mission field, its difficulties, growth and achievements. Secondly, I shall deal with the introduction of the pietist model of Christian life into non-Christian communities in Owambo. Thirdly, I detail the strategic avoidance of interaction with people of other confessions, local cultures and traditional religions when propagating the gospel. I want to find out why the Finns avoided integration and worked in isolation. My fourth aim in this chapter is to examine what kind of indigenous church leadership the Finns produced.

I shall briefly describe a few characteristics of some of the Finnish lecturers, their theology, and the quality of pastoral training offered. This section also deals with the power relationship between the Finnish missionaries in the field and the emerging indigenous church leadership. This includes the question of how long it took to introduce indigenous leadership, and the co-operation between the two groups of leaders during the transitional period. Fifthly, we shall discuss the neutrality which the Finnish missionary leadership had observed during the colonial period. We shall highlight the fact that they did not take a stand against the migrant labour system in its initial stages. They stood between the local kings and the German or South Africa colonists. Finally, I

shall critically analyse the positive and negative aspects of the missionaries leadership model in its mission field, Owambo. The chapter ends with a brief summary.

In view of the main objective of this thesis, we shall analyse and consider the extent to which the Finnish leadership patterns have transformed or consolidated the Owambo traditional culture. The Finnish missionaries were to communicate Luther's concept of authority to Ovawambo in order to transform the Owambo traditional culture which we believe is authoritarian in itself.

3.1 The Finnish Missionary Society

3.2.1 Lay people and local pastors engaged in the initial mission work in Finland

Christianity planted its roots for the first time in Finland during the rule of King Eric the Holy of Sweden in 1157. The teaching and spreading of Lutheran doctrine by clergymen such as Michael Agricola, Paul Junsten and others turned Finland into a Lutheran Protestant country in the 16th century. Thereafter, two centuries passed without the Finns engaging in foreign missions.

The spirit of revival which began in Sweden spread all over Finland during the years 1820-1830. As a result, clergy as well as lay people wanted to do mission work. A layman, Nyberg, who was a carpenter by profession, was sent to Surinam working under the Moravian Church. He died there. Many pastors, but especially those in Osterbotten, manifested their wish to establish missionary societies after the example of Sweden. Pastor Jonas Lagus believed that the training of missionaries was a priority for the church and so he bought a house to be used as a training school for missionaries. His application to the government to establish a mission society was turned down. The reason behind the move was that "all religious work not ordered in the ecclesiastical laws and manual was suspected" (Bliss 1975:236). The church was a state church, so it was a state department and pastors were government servants. Lagus and other pastors were summoned to court simply because they collected money for missions by placing collection boxes before their doors. Pastor Reinquist, a lover of mission, managed to collect funds and sent them to the Swedish Society. Besides that, he was also engaged in writing pamphlets and books on

missions.

3.2.2 The formation of the Finnish Missionary Society

Towards the middle of the century the attitude changed. The hierarchy under the leadership of the bishops of Finland and the Russian emperor (Eirola 1985:51) intervened by taking this initiative one step further. The bishops proposed that Finland be allowed to commemorate the seven hundred years of Christianity in that country, then submitted that proposal to Emperor Alexander. In the same year, 1857, the emperor approved the proposal and “ordered a jubilee on the eighteenth of June” (Bliss 1975:236). A spirit of mission, awakening and revival spread all over the country. Some young pastors grasped this precious moment to bring forth the idea of founding a mission society.

To forward the idea, a petition was drafted, signed by two hundred people from all walks of life and presented to the Senate of Finland in 1858. After its consultation with the emperor, the Senate gave its approval for the plan. It further used its discretion to prescribe that the 16 000 Finnish Marks offered in the jubilee be invested in a foreign mission society. It was also decided that in memory of the jubilee celebration, a collection should be taken annually on one Sunday for foreign missions. The mission society was warned not to do its mission work in Russia (Shejavali 1970:23). The Finnish Missionary Society (FMS) was established and its name formally adopted on the 19th January 1859 in Helsinki, with Professor Frans Ludvig Schauman as its chairman and pastor Klemens J. G. Sirelius its secretary.

The mission society worked through other foreign mission societies during the early years of its existence. As stated before, some individual pastors had collected funds and sent them to the Swedish Society. The Finnish Missionary Society worked through the Leipzig Missionary Society, the Gossner Mission Society and the Hermannsburg Mission Society. Pastor Ludwig Harms was the leader of the latter society. After their training, in 1869, Jurvelin and Malstrom were sent to Hermannsburg. The FMS provided for their needs, including their salaries, through the Hermannsburg Society, which in turn supplied the FMS with annual reports. Through the Gossner Mission Society a missionary was maintained during the years 1861-1867 in Chota Nagpur, India

(Bliss 1975:237). While working through other mission societies, the Finnish Missionary Society organised itself to open its own missionary training school.

3.2.3 The training and sending of missionaries

A missionary training school was opened in Helsingfors in 1862. Its first students were nine young men who were chosen for a six year course (Bliss 1975:237). The amount of money collected for foreign missions reached a sum of 147 000 Finnish Marks (Bliss 1975.237).

In Namibia, Carl Hugo Hahn, a missionary of the Rhenish Mission, visited Owambo twice, in 1857 and 1866. During his second visit, King Shikongo shaKalulu of Ondonga and King Mweshipandeka shaShaningika of Oukwanyama pleaded with him to send missionaries to them. Shikongo went further and showed Hahn the place where the missionaries could erect their building. Having been received well and having made promises to various kings in Owambo, Hahn informed the FMS what his journey had achieved.

It is worth noting that Hahn had toured Europe, visited Germany, England and Russia and campaigned for financial support for his mission (1859-1863) before he visited Owambo for the second time. In 1862 missionary Hahn visited Finland and lectured at Helsingfors. He talked about his journey to Owambo and his missionary work among the Herero. The Finnish missionaries were very impressed by Hahn's speech and therefore sent 1200 Finnish Marks as assistance to Hahn's school for indigenous preachers in Hereroland in 1863 (Bliss 1975:372).

After about two years Hugo Hahn sent his journal of a second tour to Owambo to the Finnish Missionary Society accompanied by a letter which pleaded with the Finnish Missionary Society to commence mission work in Owambo. The content of the letter is as follows:

This will tell you, Finnish Missionary Society, it is time you remember your promise to come over and help us. Trusting that this request will not be denied, I come to you in God's name, who wills that all shall be saved; and in our Lutheran Mission's name, that is so little known in this land; and in the poor

heathen's name, to whom God has opened the door, and ordered me to speak. Come over and help. I have, in God's name, dared to give three tribes the promise that before two years they shall have missionaries and Christian workers (Bliss 1975:372).

It was a crucial moment for the FMS. It had to decide whether to accept Carl Hahn's proposal to take Owambo as their mission field or not. It called an extra meeting of the directors of the Society which passed a decision on 18th September 1867 that missionaries will be sent to Owambo. This body discussed also the arrangements as to how to divide the field between the Finnish Society and the Rhenish Society (Bliss 1975:237). Tirronen writes:

In 1867 the Finnish Missionary Society had to decide if it will take the call to Owambo. On September 18, 1867 at the extra meeting of the Society, it was decided upon to send its missionaries to Ovawambo. The same year was also the final year of those who attended the first missionary school. These men eventually became an answer to the call of (Kings) Shikongo shaKalulu Mweshipandeka shaShaningika (1977:12).

In a mission festival, held on 9-11 June 1868, five students from the mission school were ordained by Bishop F.L. Schauman. They were B.B. Bjorklund, P. Kurvinen, K.L. Tolonen, K.A. Weikkolin, and Martti Rautanen. At this mission festival the first missionaries were sent out by the FMS (Tirronen 1977:18; Shejavali 1970:26). The group was also accompanied by non-theologians. Eirola writes: "They were sent to Africa together with Karl Immanuel Jurvelin (1845-1897), who had been trained as a missionary in Germany, Juho Heinonen, Erkki Juntanen (1938-), Antti Pirainen (1840-1910) and Juho Nissinen" (1985:61).

"The Board subordinated the activity of its missionaries in the beginning to the supervision of Hahn" (Minutes of the Board quoted in Eirola 1985:66). Concerning Hahn's leadership, the 1871 Annual reports of the Board of FMS read: "the Society is told to ask Hahn to lead and govern our mission in Ovamboland" (Eirola 1985:66).

While the group were getting accustomed to mission work and the German language at Barmen, Germany, Juho Nissinen turned back to Finland.

The group left Germany by ship (Cape City) for South Africa. Arriving in Cape Town, on the 30 December 1868 (Shejavali 1970:27), after a journey of more than sixty days, the group was met by P.D. Luckhoff, a Rhenish missionary. On the 1st January 1869 Luckhoff led the group to Stellenbosch to meet C.H. Rath, the Rhenish Director (Nambala 1994:81). At Cape Town on the 1st February 1869, they met Bishop R. Grey of the Anglican Church, and a Finnish missionary, Alexander Malstrom, who served in the Hermannsburg Mission Society in South Africa, joined the group (Eirola 1985:62).

From Cape Town, the group proceeded by a ship named Fliberty, reaching Walvis Bay in Namibia on 14th February 1869, and was met by missionary C.H. Hahn in early March 1869. There the Finns were transported by Hahn's ox-wagons which reached his mission colony at Otjimbingwe on the 24th April. Like Nissinen, who returned home from Germany, Juntanen went as far as Otjimbingwe and then returned back to his home country. The impression their returns give is that "these newcomers were heading for one of the less attractive regions of rampant heathenism" which required "much of the newcomers in the way of sacrifice and disappointment..." (SA Outlook quoted in Munyika 1997:246).. At this place, the Finns stayed for a year studying Otjiherero, Dutch and English, as well as other practical mission work (Nambala 1994:81; Eirola 1985:62). Otjiherero is a Bantu language similar to Oshiwambo. It was therefore meant to be a foundation for the future usage of Oshiwambo in Owambo. Fortunately, it was here at Otjimbingwe that the Finns met Ovawambo for the first time.

The mission revivalistic movement took place at the congregational level upwards. It was a transformation that has started from the foundation, the congregations, upon which the Christian church is founded. The indomitable wish of doing mission work had deep roots at local congregations in Finland. Therefore the movement was supported by all believers of all walks of life, irrespective of rank and profession, including the secular Russian emperor. The success achieved in preparing the Christian community to establish its missionary society and its engagement in mission work is the result of the close cooperation between the lay people and clergy.

Many reasons can be given for the fact that for seven hundred years there was no missionary

society in Finland. The Finns were under the Russian Government, which kept the mission work out of Russia; so they did not have a neighbouring country in which they could work. Fact is that mission is not normally regarded highly in institutionalised churches. But a pietistic or evangelical revival shakes the consciences of people and leads to repentance and awakens the desire to share the gospel.

3.2.4 The Finnish mission field in Owambo

3.2.4.1 Omandongo

The journey to Owambo began on the 27th May 1870 after their six ox-wagons were ready. Hahn arranged to lead the group to Owambo, and Tolonen remained behind for a while to replace him at the station. Because of the war that broke out between the Nama and the Herero, Hahn parted from the Finns at Omaruru, entrusting the leadership of the missionary convoy to a trader, Frederick Green and went to Okahandja to encourage the two groups to make peace. The first treaty between Kamaharero, the Herero Chief, and Jan Jonker, the Nama Chief was signed at Gross Barmen on the 28 May 1870 with the assistance of Hahn (Goldbaltt 1971:44). It was on the 9th July 1870 that the convoy of the first missionaries arrived at Omandongo where King Shikongo shaKalulu received them cordially.

In his sermon during the Sunday service on the next day, Kurvinen pinpointed the aim of their coming as “to save Ovawambo souls” (Shejvali 1970:28). The king’s response was *Oohapu dheni oombwanawa* [your words are good]. *Otwa hala okuninga ashihe shoka tamu tu lombwele* [We want to do the things you tell us to do]. B.B. Björklund, who was the group’s first presiding missionary, and three others remained at Omandongo while the others proceeded to other kingdoms in Owambo.

3.2.4.2 Establishment of mission stations

The mission work extended rapidly to Oukwambi, Ongandjera and Oukwanyama. Many stations

were established between 1870 and 1883. "Mission stations established during this period were Omandongo 1870, Olukonda 1871, Rehoboth (Okahao) 1871, Riboko (mUukwambi) 1872, Oniipa 1872/3, Ondjumba 1873 and Omulonga 1874 (Nambala 1994:82; Shejvali 1970:29-37).

3.2.4.3 Difficulties

King Shikongo shaKalulu did not maintain his cordial attitude for very long, for the missionaries did not give him ox-wagons, guns, ammunition and many other things that he had expected from them. The king's attitude made his subjects unresponsive towards the newcomers. A similar change of attitude occurred in other cases:

Nehale IyaMpingan, who declared himself King of Ondonga (Oshitambi) forcefully demanded clothes and ox-wagons from missionaries. Nehale "was even said to have planned to attack mission stations in search of ammunition"(Eirola 1992:59). The Finns abandoned their stations and went into hiding at western Ondonga (Onamayongo). At Oukwambi, King Nuuyoma wEelu chased missionaries out of his kingdom for fear that they might bring misfortune to his country and their teaching may spoil his subjects. They would be no longer obedient either to work for him or to wage wars in his name (Shejvali 1970:50). King Tseyu Uushona plundered the missionaries. His philosophy was that whatever existed in his land belonged to him.

Like King Mwaala waNashilongo of Oukwaluudhi (1909-1959), King Mweshipandeka shaShaningika of Oukwanyama (1862-1882), Mandume Ndemufayo (1911-1917) of the same kingdom and Shaanika shaNashilongo, the successor of King Uushona, of Ongandjera expected missionaries to teach only them and not their subjects for fear that the preaching of the missionaries was going to undermine their authority and expose their practices. At the end of 1873 all missionaries except those in Ondonga were expelled from the different kingdoms. The expulsion came because of the Portuguese slave traders who feared for the survival of their business and stirred up the natives against the missionaries (Bliss 1975:237; Eveleigh 1915:163). The traders told the kings not to accept the missionaries to settle permanently in their kingdoms. To strengthen their contention they told the kings that *Ovahongi ove uya ve mu nyeke oshilongo, shi ninge shavo* [Missionaries have come to take the country away from you] (Shejvali 1970:49-

50). Kings were also told that the presence of the missionaries would hamper the slave trade between the kings and the traders. The latter reason was an information twisted to fit their argument. What happened was that missionaries had advised the kings not to sell their people as slaves or to exchange them with whatever new commodities were available. However, the truth of the matter was that the Portuguese traders realized that missionaries and their teaching were opening the eyes of their customers. The slave business would die as a result.

Malstrom, Jurvelin, Kurvinen and Tolonen went back to their home countries forever in 1880, whereas Pirainen became a trader at Omaruru, Skoglund died in the same year. Malaria and other sicknesses decimated the Finnish personnel. Bliss describes a situation when the “Finnish mission consisted of but three stations and four missionaries” (1975:237). The same source reports about “two workers in the field in 1890. (Nambala 1975:237;1994:83)

3.2.4.4 Mission achievements

3.2.4.4.1 Baptism

Despite the fact that missionaries carried out their work faithfully, a long time had passed before they achieved their objectives. The inhabitants were sceptical about the ultimate aim of the coming of the missionaries into Owambo. The missionaries, in turn, wanted to win the trust and favour of the kings and their subjects. Therefore four youths, who in 1876 came forward to ask for baptism from the missionaries, were advised to consult the Rhenish mission pastor at Omaruru in the south. Their baptism was conducted on the 6th November 1881 by pastor Gottlieb Viehe at Omaruru.

The converts were Martin Iipingge, Gustav Iithoko, Gabriel Nangolo and Wilhelm Amutenya (Nambala 1994:83; Shejvali 1970:39). According to Bliss, the four men went to Hereroland “so as to escape the hostility of their own people” (1975:237).

There was tremendous fear among the missionaries that King Kamonde of Ondonga might regard baptism as a punishable act. When Iithoko, one of the four baptised, visited the king one

year after his baptism. he was not persecuted but received an unfriendly welcome. The kings' attitude indirectly encouraged the Finns. Locally, the relationship between the baptised Christians and the missionaries created disputes with the kings. However Eirola writes:

The missionaries were nevertheless supported by those groups who wished to gain benefits from good relations with the Europeans, e.g. in order to gain a supply of firearms, ammunition and other new commodities and services (1992:52).

This means that initial baptisms were allowed to take place in exchange for firearms, ammunition and other commodities. It seems that there was no firearm treaty between the indigenous people and the missionaries.

Despite many differences and setbacks, the Finns maintained their perseverance until they had achieved their goal. The first public baptism in Owambo took place on the 6th January 1883 at Omulonga. Six men, Moses Iimene, Elias Nangolo, Abraham Shikongo, Jakob Angula, Tobias Negonya, Johannes Nangombe and a child of Maria Nanguloshi, were baptised that day. Three other converts were baptised at Omandongo in March of the same year.

It should be noted that this first public baptism was not the first of its kind among Ovawambo. Eva Maria Nanguloshi, Kurvinen's domestic worker, whose child was baptised with the six men, had been baptised in Finland in June 1876 (ELOC 1978:28). She is considered to be the first Owambo convert. Many more baptisms followed. Also, because of the thirteen years of the missionaries labour without fruits, it should not be taken for granted that Ovawambo were either too savage to fathom the message delivered to them or too sinful to repent. Rather, the prevailing situation was very sensitive and therefore it was handled cautiously.

The congregation grew and its development was obvious. Eighty-eight converts in 1887 were added to the number and there were 545 Christians in Owambo in 1893. After six years, in 1899, the number of converts had grown by another 207 members, totalling 752 (Shejavali 1970:41; Nambala 1994:84). Bliss records the following:

There are in (1904) 5 stations, 15 outstations, 11 Finish missionaries and 39 native

helpers; 1235 baptised Christians of whom 455 are communicants and 1100 scholars in the various educational institutions (1975:237).

3.2.4.4.2 Church growth in terms of infrastructure and manpower

The work force was strengthened by new missionaries, among them August Pettinen and Albin Savola, who joined the group during the period between 1889-1900. The work progressed. The first church building was erected at Olukonda in 1888 and in a parochial general meeting held that year parishioners were encouraged to erect church and school buildings. The Teachers Training Seminary for men was opened at Oniipa in 1913 with six students and missionary Liljeblad as its principal. Johanna Kristof, the first Owambo woman teacher who graduated in 1928, was the only woman allowed to study with the men.

Missionaries took the responsibility of training the future wives of the indigenous teachers. Missionary Anna Rautaheim started a school for the fiancées of students and taught at Onandjokwe in 1921. In 1924 the school was transferred to Oshigambo. *Ouumbo vakwao voukadona* [boarding schools for girls] were established at Engela (1924), Tsandi (1939), Ontananga (1953), Nkurenkuru (1938) in Kavango. Elim, Oniimwandi, Okalongo, Ondobe, and Omundaungilo. *Eefikola dovamati/jongenskole* [Boarding schools for boys] were founded at Engela (1926), Nakayale (1945), Eenhana, Oniipa and Onayena.

The purpose of establishing boarding schools was to provide learning facilities, to cut long distances short and to stimulate the culture of learning among Owambo youngsters. However, because all learners were from a community where manual labour was the predominant occupation most of the subjects consisted in practical work. Boys were encouraged for instance to build their own classrooms.

A more advanced technical school was opened at Ongwediva in 1927 and a basket-work project at Olukonda in 1965. Okahao Teachers Training Seminary for women was opened in 1947 and Oshigambo High School, ELCIN's private school, in 1952.

Pastoral training for pastors and evangelists commenced in 1922 at Oniipa. For short periods the seminary was transferred to Olukonda, then to Ontananga and Onayena. As from 1947 this theological institution moved to Elim, in the Kwambi Kingdom, where it remained until 1962. A merger between the Elim Seminary and that of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in South West Africa (ELCSWA) at Otjimbingwe took place in 1963.

Besides the theological seminary, the Engela Parish Institute was created in 1950 to train evangelists, choir directors, Bible study group leaders, Sunday school teachers, parish youth leaders, parish office secretaries, and other workers needed (Shejvali 1970:105).

The division of the church into four administrative regions, or *oitaingeleki* [deaneries], in 1939 was a significant development for the church as a whole. *Oitaingeleki* [deaneries] were formed after the Finnish model and were run by full time ministers called *ovapashukilishitaingeleki* [deans]. According to Löytty, “the division into deaneries was originally a temporary measure” (1971:32). It happened when Valde Kivinen, who was a mentor for Ovambo pastors, entrusted his position to his assistants, who were also Finns, and went for a vacation in Finland. These assistants became deans who were gradually succeeded by Ovambo pastors. It is not clear yet to the author what had necessitated the development of permanent deaneries in ELCIN. Unfortunately the boundaries of the deaneries were drawn according to kingdom lines.

The Finns built hospitals to promote health care among Ovawambo. Onandjokwe hospital, founded by Dr. Selma Rainio in 1911, was the largest hospital in Owambo. The policy had been to set up a hospital or clinic at every established congregation. With the independent of Namibia in 1990, except Onanjokwe all hospitals and clinics were handed over to the national government.

A printing press that made various kinds of literature available was erected at Oniipa in 1901. Martti Rautanen’s Old and New Testament translations were printed here as well as various books and pamphlets. It also published a Church newspaper, *Osoondaha*, which was later renamed *Omukwetu* [friend/relative].

3.2.5 Evaluation

During this short episode of mission history, missionary leaders made two things clear. They were not only peacemakers, but people whose task was to win souls. They stated from the beginning that they were neither politicians nor businessmen. However, first and foremost the missionaries tried to win over the kings and then, after having won their trust they continued with their work. The extension work described above shows that the Finns were patient leaders with long term strategic planning. Various infrastructures were erected in a reasonable period of time. However, first and foremost the missionaries tried to win over the kings and then, after having won their trust, they continued with their work.

It was not safe for Hahn to entrust the missionary convoy under the leadership of Green, a trader. He knew the way, but his leading role created a suspicion among the inhabitants who knew him before. The exchange of baptism for firearms is a misrepresentation of the doctrinal teaching of baptism as a sacrament. The Finnish Missionary Society waited too long before trained indigenous leaders. If we count as from the first baptism, it took thirty-seven years (1876-1913) before training the teachers, forty-five years with boarding school graduates (1876-1921) and forty-six years with pastors (1876-1922).

3.3 Introduction of Pietism as a model of Christian life

3.3.1 The Finnish pietist movement

Pietism came to Finland in a revival form at the end of the seventeen century and established itself as a spiritual but powerful church movement in the next century. However, the nineteenth century in Finland was characterised by four national revival movements. They were Pohjanmaa and Savo, the evangelical movement, the Laestadian movement and the “praying peoples” movement. Due to their wide spread to different parts of the country, they were named “fire of God” (Bodensieck 1965:854). Pohjanmaa under its peasant leader, Paavo-Ruotsalainen who died in 1852, included most clergy. Its thoughts and ideals continue to be felt in Finnish Christianity. “The Song of Zion” has become their outward mark of identification. Its supporters wore a simple peasant

According to Bodensieck, it ran the Finnish Lutheran Gospel Association in the nineteenth century. The movement's emphasis in teaching was on the significance of the gospel, the Lutheran Confessions and the publication of Luther's works. The Laestadian movement, named after its founder, Laestadius, was the third revival movement. It was situated in the north of the country. Laestadius was called the "awakener of the North" (Bodensieck 1965:855). It teaches the significance of private confession. The praying peoples' movement resided in the south-west of Finland. It had a branch called "Renqvistianism" named after its founder, Renqvist. Renqvistianism teaches total abstinence and the significance of the kneeling posture in prayer (Bodensieck 1965:855). In nutshell, all four movements enriched the church in various ways.

3.3.2 The transfer of pietistic notions to Owambo

The Finnish pietistic notion was transferred to Owambo without contextualised it. The Finnish missionaries were products of a revivalistic and pietist society. Eagerly they went to teach their converts about these things. Although not all missionaries were pietists, the pietistic missionaries in the mission field played an active role in the 1920's and early 1930's in laying the pietistic foundation in Owambo. Its representative was missionary Heikki Saari whose pietistic attitude is clearly demonstrated by the hymn-book, entitled *Omagalikanondjimbo* (Prayer hymns) which he edited. The content of the hymn book is the "Psalms of Zion" (Löytty 1971:27). The pietism and pietistic notions in these hymns were thus conveyed to its users. The Ndonga edition of the "Psalms of Zion" has 183 psalms.

Most hymns in the Ovambo-Kavango Lutheran Church hymnbook were drawn from either Finnish collections or German hymnbooks. There was a strong wish among the Finns to translate most Finnish hymns into Oshiwambo. *Omaimbilo gOngerki Onghwaevangeli paLuther yOmowambokavango I Ndonga & Kwanyama*. [Hymnbook of the Evangelical Lutheran Owambo-Kavango Church] is the title of the Oshiwambo revised hymnbook. Additional hymnbooks were *Imba Omunona*, [The Child sings] (1947), and *Imbileni Omuwa*, [Sing to the Lord] (1960). Both were edited by missionary Kantele (Löytty 1971:28). The two books were made up of:

translations from the hymnbook of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland, from the collection of *Hengelliset laulut ja virret*, from the songbooks of the Finnish Sunday

school society and the Finnish Seamen's Mission as well as from *Harpun savelia* and *Savelisilta* (Löytty 1971:28).

3.3.3 Congregational life and household commitments

In most cases the first converts were the domestic servants of the missionaries. The religious life of the converts, who were socially, politically and psychologically totally depended upon their benefactors were transformed by their superiors. Obedient workers often cooperated positively when they participated in conveying the gospel message to the people of their communities. Either directly or indirectly these workers were used by missionaries to invest the new faith in the communities where they came from.

The ELCIN constitution shows that the rules of Luther concerning Christian education were applied here. The emphasis was on knowing and reading the Bible, but not on its interpretation. Every head of a Christian household had to care spiritually for his/ her household. It was his/her task to see to it that devotions, in which the Word of God was read and shared, were held daily (Church constitution 1939 quoted in Löytty 1971:26). Short portions from the Small Catechism were memorised during devotions. Pressure was also exerted to make people preserve this faith. It was a constitutional obligation that each Christian had to attend *omaleshelo* (reading, telling, discussing portions from Christian literature). The primary aim was to know the Word of God because faith presupposes knowledge of the word (Rom 10:17) (Church constitution 1978:35).

There was a tendency to put more emphasis on spiritual strengthening and revival than on the social and economic life of the people. These times of coming together were often prolonged by sermons meant to strengthen and revive congregants. Spiritual strengthening was aloof for it only emphasised the relationship between God and individual Christians and ignored the practical relation between these individuals and their neighbours.

The spirit of caring for each other's soul was very high among church workers. The love of one's neighbour was prevalent among them (Luke 10:25-37). A resolution of the Conference of Ovambo Pastors from 15-18 August 1946 says: "May the love of Christ bind all servants of the

Lord together so that there prevails a mutual spirit of harmony and mood of intercession” (Minutes of Pastors’ Conference (MPC) of ELOC 1946 art.16).

The practice of self-disclosure and self-examination had deep roots in most missionaries as well as their converts. It was emphasised that the preacher should study Scripture for his/her own life and not only for the purpose of proclaiming it to others. Annual reports of 1935-1946 highlighted various self-disclosures. For instance Syrja writes: “I have been working in a feeling of almost desperate insufficiency for the purpose of work” (Annual report 1944 quoted in Löytty 1971:27). Himanen who worked at Ombalantu and Okalongo, 1935-1946, had this to say: “On the darker side, I think of the greatest drawback of missionary work in Ombalantu and Okalongo. I feel myself to be the greatest obstacle...” (Report on A. Kekki’s activity in 1950 quoted in Löytty 1971:27).

3.3.4 Means of communication

The Finns attempted also to spiritualise daily communications. It was one of the difficult things in the mission field. Uneasiness on the side of the converts occurred when missionaries wanted the indigenous people to behave submissively and pietistically. To realise their expectations missionaries used the proclamation of the Word as the mean of daily communication. The expectation was too high, and so it failed. When the proclamation failed to produce piety, education replaced it. But it should be noted that the proclamation of the Word and educating people are the two major themes in Finnish mission work. According to Petäjä teaching the Word was “to make the Grace of salvation known” (annual report 1920:20 quoted in Löytty 1971:29). Despite encountering problems, the proclamation of the Gospel was kept as the “essence of all mission activity” (Minutes of Missionary Conference quoted in Löytty 1971:29).

3.3.5 Literature used for Christian schools

Literature used for Christian schools were direct copies of literature used in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland. The textbooks for both baptismal and confirmation classes, were *Ombibeli* (the Bible), *Okatikisa kanini* (the Small Catechism) and *Elongo loukriste* (the Christian

doctrine). The two former books played an important role in baptismal classes and were sources of sermons. *Elongo loukriste* is a translation of the *Christian Teaching of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland*, accepted in 1893 by its General Assembly, and was mostly used in confirmation classes. It lays emphasis on individual piety. To make *Elongo loukriste*'s teaching relevant to Owambo Christians, the Finns "had a number of sections concerning the crises of Christian life to the Christian Teachings" (Löytty 1971:28). Missionary E. Hynönen added chapter nine which consisted of awakening, repentance and vigilance. When it was found necessary to combat taboos, another part was added to the same book to "reject taboos of traditional tribal life and other beliefs" (Löytty 1971:28).

3.3.6 Exposure of unlearned communities to Pietistic literature

The Owambo communities which had no other means of defending themselves against pietism was exposed to famous pietistic literature. For the Finnish missionaries to transform traditional Owambo religious life into a pietistic one, pietistic materials were introduced to converts. The danger was that they had no other materials with which they could compare. *Ina pa ningwa ekonakono lasha* (No critique was made). Like in Saari's pietistic hymnbook, *omagalikanondjimbo*, to which I referred previously, converts memorised the content of these materials without analysing them first.

Missionaries had introduced famous books used in pietistic environments in Europe. The most chosen were Johannes Gossner's "Human Heart [*Omutima womunhu*], John Bunyan's Christian Pilgrimage [*Oweenda womukriste*] and Thomas Wilcox's "A Choice Drop of Honey" [*Eta lyomagadhi goonjusi*] (Löytty 1971:29). Another book worthy to be added here was Keikki Saari's *Vululukweni manga* which was a translation of Fredrik Wisloff's book *Levahtakaa vahan* (Löytty 1971:29). These books were widely accepted among the *Owambo* Christian community as the best textbooks.

3.3.7 The celebration of the sacraments

How and when the sacraments were celebrated in the mission field has negative effects on ELCIN

today. The Finnish missionaries rarely refer to the sacrament in their teaching (Löytty 1971:30). The reason was probably that sacraments were emphasised less than the proclamation in Finnish Christian life. Björklund was of the opinion that “the sermon is more important than Holy Communion. The sacrament draws its strength from God’s word. The one who enters the Word through the Holy Spirit will be nourished” (Löytty 1971:30). Missionary director Vapaavuori’s 1954 annual reports revealed that Holy Communion was prepared for the congregation three times a year. This was done according to the regulations stipulated in 1924 that “divine services with Holy communion were to be held at least twice a year ...” (Vapaavuori quoted in Löytty 1971:30).

The present order in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia is *Ouvalelo Uyapuki wOmwene ou na okutukulwa komufitaongolo, lumwe ile shi dule lumwe mohani keshe melongelokalunga IOuvalelo Uyapuki, paKambo kElongelokalunga* [Holy Communion should be distributed monthly or more than once by an ordained minister in a Holy Communion worship service but in accordance with the ELCIN altar book] (ELCIN Constitution and regulations 1993:43).

As observed above, a slight modification was made. The sacrament which was celebrated twice a year in the mission field, is celebrated once a month in ELCIN today .

3.3.8 Evaluation

The Missionaries believed that their own society was corrupted and were determined that such society must not be tolerated to develop in the mission field. If one looks critically at their attitude, one observes in them the type of understanding of the world as evil from which the faithful Christians have to escape. The destination of those who escaped from the world and entered the church through baptism was believed to be salvation. Missionaries were confronted with a shortage of material resources and so they used those that were at their disposal. The Africans were not in a position to offer meaningful counter information that might have helped to balance what was offered.

Pietistic ideals and ideas were inherited from revivalistic community in Finland and transmitted to the Owambo mission field as they were. No alterations were made. The missionaries wanted

Pietistic ideals and ideas were inherited from revivalistic community in Finland and transmitted to the **Owambo** mission field as they were. No alterations were made. The missionaries wanted to create a similar revivalistic community in the mission field to the one they left at home. They feared that to engage in social problems would put one's faith at risk. So they spiritualised the gospel. Converts for instance were encouraged to proclaim the gospel to non-Christians, but they were warned not to have close relationship with them. Texts such as goodness has nothing to do with evil; unrighteousness with righteousness; a faithful person cannot sit together with the unfaithful were often used to keep converts from associating with non-Christians. This attitude made it possible to be in the community but created an inner space for Christians to dwell in with the purpose of avoiding defilement from non-believers. The Christians were not encouraged to hold their faith high among the non-Christians so that they can see it and turn to God. Each believer was taught to accept Christ as his/her personal saviour. They should have enacted their faith in their social contexts and daily responsibilities instead of staying aloof.

Pietism is conservative. Missionaries wanted to transform the traditional Owambo community into a Christian one but they also worked against this transformation. It was said before that some of them shunned controversial theological issues. They did not allow their converts to hear things they did not want them to hear. Converts had to be content with what their benefactors told them. To drink beer or to smoke were believed to be disobedience against the will of God or the traps of the devil. The teaching should have concentrated on the health consequences of using beer or tobacco. People should be taught about the danger of misuse and to leave the space for them to decide what is right for themselves.

Pietistic believers condemn their fellow Christians who have a different perspective on these issues. This weakness is one of the stumbling blocks of unity in denominational as well as in ecumenical circles.

3.4 A strategy of avoiding competition in propagation

3.4.1 The basic attitude of missionaries applied to rituals

This section is an attempt that briefly highlights that missionaries as leaders of the Finnish mission in Owambo chose to work in isolation. They decided not to improve or to work hand in hand with the institutions they found among Owambo people, but instead they deconstructed and replaced them with new ones. They also decided not to be in cordial relationship with other missions in the country. Because of time and space, we are only going to enumerate some of these institutions.

The Owambo culture which was an identity of the people was replaced with the “Christian culture”. First of all I want to define what culture is. To do so I borrow Willowbank’s definition that says:

Culture is an integrated system of beliefs, of values, of customs, and of institutions which express the beliefs, values and customs, which binds a society together and gives it a sense of identity, dignity, security and continuity (quoted in Stanley 1990:170).

The Owambo culture has been considered to be irreconcilable with Christianity by the Finnish missionaries. It has been perceived as a stumbling block in the way of the new faith, Christianity. In their home countries missionaries presented an awkward picture of African culture which served the purpose of legitimating their mission. Eirola sheds more light on this phenomenon:

[Finnish Mission Journal]... gave a gloomily emphasised and Eurocentrically coloured view of Africa and its people and cultures. The original way of the life and culture of the Africans was usually seen as heathen and condemned. Of course, the message appealing (sic) to the feelings, touched the people of Finland, and more easily opened their hearts and purses to mission” (1985:53).

The aforesaid attitude was not unique among missionary circles. Black converts who were sent to study theology at Kimmage Seminary in Ireland were denied admission because the Irish church council thought that their acceptance would weaken their proclamation in Ireland (Heerey quoted

Such attitude was one of the reasons why the German missionaries initiated the transformation of the self-reliant pastoral community of the Herero into a labour force at the service of white employers (Soggot 1986:14).

Oshiwambo traditional rites and rituals were regarded as pagan practices. *Efundula'epitotanda* [Girls and boys initiation] were a stage in bringing youngsters to womanhood and manhood. This was a stage in which girls proved their virginity as well as their faithfulness to their clan members and especially to their future husbands. The rationale was the prevention of *ouhengu* [pregnancy before initiation] which was considered to be an embarrassment and to bring misfortune to the mother's clan. *Oondjuhi* [the decorated hair which hangs from the heads of the women to their ankles meant to cover their nakedness], *oshipe* [celebration of a type of harvest festival], *omwai* [the feast of splitting the year], and musical instruments, for instance the use of an African drum, *okushashifa omadina opashiwana* [to retain traditional names in baptism], were abolished simply by being termed pagan practices. The above practices, were part and parcel of the life of the indigenous people, so the converts practised them in secret.

The culture of the people was something unworthy in the eyes of the missionaries. The argument that the peoples' culture was destroyed because in all traditionalist societies culture is a complete package or that there were no precedents of a Christianity incarnate in Owambo culture is too general. Martti Rautanen, one of the presiding missionaries, says this words to the first ordained Owambo pastors. *Dhimbulukweni, one aana yaapagani. Omwa zi momilema dhuupagani nomuulunde nomesho lyo lyene...* [Remember that you are children of pagan parents. You have come from darkness, sin and from death itself] (Auala 1977:167). Rautanen conveyed two messages at the same time. One, the ordinands were baptised and through baptism had become children of God. Two, he depicts Owambo culture and daily life as darkness, sin and death. Stanley offers a similar picture. Missionaries had a radical belief that African cultures were controlled by the devil. He writes that there was a belief that "heathen's societies were the domain of Satan in all their aspects - not merely religion, but also economics, politics, public morals, arts and all that is embraced by the term culture" (1990:161). The statement of Stanley maintains that missionaries believed that their own cultures were transparent to God, thus they saw themselves engaged in a battle where God was on their side versus the heathen who were under the devil.

Missionaries took it for granted that God had sent them to make other nations Christian through the destruction of their cultures and replace them with Christianity.

There was an obvious attitude among missionaries that they brought a superior religion carried in a superior culture and the two cannot be mixed with local religion and culture. With such conviction they left their countries to go to the unknown world to bring the gospel to “miserable souls in the need of light” and to convert “benighted heathen” (Boxer 1978:39). Missionaries worked hard to convert their converts, but they avoided the painful task of working hand in hand with the people’s culture. To make converts willing to adopt Christianity, the culture which had bound them together and defined their identity had to be destroyed. This indicated that one of the strategies of the missionaries was to deculturate converts before turning them to the new faith. It is a fact that it is easier to deal with cultureless people than with those with a culture. Missionaries did not want to face a culture challenge. Here, the Finns demonstrated their desire to be experts always. The irony was that the peoples’ institutions were replaced with the missionaries’ home culture and the western industrial culture which were termed Christian. No culture is Christian. This agrees with Stanley’s words that missionaries “have been guilty of foisting their own cultural values on their converts. They have upset the stability of indigenous social systems, and saddled the younger churches of the Third World with a thoroughly ‘foreign’ Christianity” (Stanley 1990:157).

Nineteenth century missionaries, including the Finns, have assumed that the indigenous cultures were immoral and a degradation of humanity. Because of this weakness the indigenous people did not utilise their potentialities to do things better. Some went further to think that, because indigenous people worshipped their gods, God allowed them to remain backward. They believed that the gospel is the sole remedy to heal such a situation. When comparing their culture with that of their converts, missionaries were upset by what they called the moral degradation of the heathen.

On the one hand the Finns have done very useful development work in Owambo. To mention a few, they developed the agricultural skills in the region by importing agricultural implements and vaccinated cattle into Owambo; erecting modern buildings; basic mechanical work such as the

repair of vehicles; carpentry and the construction of ox-wagons. These and many others had a positive cultural impact on the life of the people.

But on the other the missionaries made themselves the analysts and the judges of the local culture. Criteria of what was reconcilable with Christianity and what was not were determined by them alone. The indigenous people, whose culture was judged, did not have the right to judge the teaching and judgement of the missionaries in turn. The right thing would have been that missionaries had taught the gospel while converts were allowed to judge for themselves what was appropriate and what was not based upon their Christian conviction. The author observed a debate whether the small drum, which was used during initiation ceremony to announce that girls reached their womanhood, can be played in a modern wedding ceremony in parishes led by senior pastors in ELCIN during the eighties. The two main reasons against the motion were that (a) the drum reminds Christians of paganism and (b) that the modern wedding is a Christian ceremony. New wine, it was argued, cannot be poured into an old container. Both reasons are not valid because the announcement of womanhood is not paganism. The modern wedding is not Christian. The outcome of the debate illustrated that some of senior pastors failed to see the connection between the use of cultural facilities and church ceremonies. This was the school of thoughts they had studied in their theological training at the seminaries.

The Finns learned Oshiwambo, but withheld their language from their converts. They have become experts in our language while we remain foreigners in theirs. This attitude agrees with the observation of A. da Silva Rego regarding the Portuguese that “they were not consciously prepared to receive anything, or to adapt themselves to local conditions and environment; on the contrary, they were consciously convinced of the superiority of their culture and of their way of life” (quoted in Boxer 1978:40). In a nutshell, the Finnish leadership patterns were characterised by domination through deculturation.

3.4.2 The basic attitude of missionaries applied to clothing

Missionaries regarded native clothing as indecent but that of the Europeans as a symbol of civilisation. This indecency was expressed at public religious worship services and gatherings.

Missionaries wrote to their home countries requesting consignments of clothing for their newly converted members. Clothes were received from Finland and Cape Town. The religious groups responded faithfully, and within a short period of time the converts came to like the European clothes more than their traditional ones. “Western dress inevitably became a symbol of prestige and social advancement...” writes Stanley (1990:159). The Finnish missionaries, but especially Frans Hannula, thought that there should be a difference between the baptised converts and the pagans both in their inward behaviour and outside appearance (Shejavali 1970:48). The great concern was for women and pupils.

Attempts were made by missionary Albin Savola to train Ovawambo how to plant cotton, to weave and to make clothes out of this material. Elizabeth Björklund’s servant was trained in Finland for this purpose. Missionary Hilja Lindberg was sent by FMS specially to train Owambo girls who did not seem interested in the making of clothes. Missionaries introduced European clothing and explicitly condemned the “indecent” of the traditional clothing. As a result they were unable to control the indigenous people’s insatiable wish for European dresses.

The “indecent” of the people, as the missionaries saw it, was covered, whereas the basic skills and techniques as well as the national pride of the local people concerning their own clothes were undermined. They have become a people who despised their own technology and instead embraced that of others’. What probably would have had to be done was to introduce both the training of indigenous people in developing their traditional clothing and importing no clothing from overseas. The aim would have been to promote identity, productivity growth and competition among the people of various kingdoms in the region. As it is now, although on a very small scale, the stopping of making of traditional clothes contributes to unemployment in Owambo.

3.4.3 The basic attitude of missionaries applied to traditional religions in Owambo

Traditional religion too was undermined. Traditional religion is very important for leadership, because political ideologies were expressed in religious terms. Ideologies were promulgated by

kings and clan leaders in a way that convinced their subjects to provide them with the security needed (Williams 1991:99). In accordance with these religious terms *Kalunga* [Supreme Being] “is portrayed as the supernatural figure who possesses power over fertility, rain, and the growth of cultivated plants and a rich harvest” (Williams 1991:99). The belief was that the ruling king, his clan, including all royal members, and their subjects are under Kalunga. The king who is a human being, and not Kalunga or a half-god, was responsible for the following significant functions. He was a symbol of life, a multiplier of fertility, a provider of rain (Williams 1991:99). Except the functions mentioned, the ruling king was considered to be a mediator between the living and their dead ancestors. It was he who secured the blessings for his people and the country through performance of sacrificial rites.

The religious system, as briefly expressed above was not sophisticated. However, foreigners failed to grasp the political ideologies which were expressed in religious terms. They regarded them as a threat or challenge to Christianity among the Owambo kingdoms. As pointed out earlier, they described the king as a half-god or divine. They believed that the king was replacing God. For them, the functions of the king belonged to God alone. That was a misunderstanding. When Ovawambo spoke about a king as a rain provider, they did not mean that the king was a rain maker himself/herself, but a performer of appropriate sacrifices that had the power to appease Kalunga, the maker of rain and the ancestral spirits “who had the power to start and to stop rain”, to send it (Brincker quoted in Loeb 1962:63-64). Appropriate sacrifices were made to Kalunga and to ancestral spirits to send rain to the nation. Instead of developing a better understanding and ways how to work hand and hand with the new perspective, they undermined it and meant to destroy it. Underestimation or destruction of traditional religion meant insecurity for the kings and royal clan members as well as the philosophy behind such a religion.

As in the case of other missionaries, the Finns aimed at a complete replacement of the religion, beliefs and actions of Owambo converts. They attempted “to uproot the African from his “heathen” past with its barbarities, savagery and ignorance, in order to give him a new identity, constructed on the basis of the new, total package of Christianity and European civilization” (Bediako 1999:251). Pearce suggested two extreme European views: either the minds of the indigenous people were deemed to be a *tabula rasa*, meaning they had no religion, “or that they

worshipped the devil”(quoted in Bediako 1997:64). So, the complete change of hearts, minds and what one wears on one’s body has been demanded from converts. The methods of changing were included in baptismal lessons, evangelizations, sermons, speeches and the whole process of conversion to Christianity. The new converts had to give up all their traditions, such as dancing, singing, poligamy, bride price etc.. My father was baptised at a Johannesburg mine in South Africa. When he brought his baptismal certificate to the parish office at Omundaungilo, he was ordered either to dissolve his whole homestead and marry a Christian wife, or to divorce one of his wives in order to qualify for church membership. According to him it was unfair to divorce one of his wives because none of the two had broken the marriage customs. Eventually, because there was nothing he could do to normalise the situation, he sent his two wives each with two children to their relatives and married a Christian wife. The consequence was that I missed my father for a period of eleven years. The second painful moment was caused by my step mother who presumed that my father loved me more than her biological children. She feared also that being a second born son in the first family, the leadership of the family would be transferred to me in my father’s absence. Such observation agrees with Ajaji who says that conversion ‘necessarily involves a change of culture and the development of a new conscience’ (quoted in Ekechi 1993:147). It was not only a negative attitudes towards Owambo religious, customs and practices but either a denial of the existence of Owambo religion or a deliberate attempt to eradicated the cultural patterns. They were termed as signs of paganism, heathenism and barbarism.

Missionaries who worked among sophisticated civilizations and religions, for instance in Asia, had developed a more positive approach towards other religions. In his book : *The Religions of the World in their relations to Christianity*, F.D. Maurice, for instance, “has maintained that all religions contained elements of goodness or truth...” (Stanley 1990:164). Nineteenth century liberal missionaries in India, in order to avoid confrontation, used the fulfilment approach between Christianity and Hinduism. The vitality of the Hindu civilisation was preserved. Missionaries translated the *Ramayana* epic into English purposely to promote a Christian understanding of the Hindu mind and to do relevant evangelism. Converts were allowed to retain their Hindu names. I quote their principle:

We think the great object which divine Providence has in view causing the gospel to be promulgated in the world, is not changing of names, the food, and the

innocent usages of mankind, but to produce a moral and divine change in the hearts and conduct of men (Baptist Missionary Society Periodical Accounts III, quoted in Stanley 1990:160).

The author is of the opinion that the Finns should have studied thoroughly the contrasts and similarities between Owambo traditional religion and Christianity so that they could come up with a reasonable and mutual understanding. The negligence to do so is one of the reasons that promoted syncretism. The abolition of the traditional religion was systematically done through the baptisms of kings and their royal clan members and by destroying the religion itself.

3.4.4 The kinds of interaction between missions in the country

3.4.4.1 The relation between the Lutheran missions and the Catholic mission

Here I intend to give a brief account of the relationship between the Finnish, the Catholic and the Anglican missions. The Rhenish and the Finnish missions established themselves in the country and built close relations with the leaders of ethnic groups and kings of kingdoms and the German authorities before the arrival of the Catholic mission. The Catholic mission, which like other missions wanted to propagate the gospel among indigenous Namibians, did not receive a warm welcome from other missions found in the country as well as from the German authorities. Nambala says that:

the Protestant missionary societies in the country, especially the Rhenish and the Finnish after they had won some friendly relationship with the Africans, tried to instigate and persuade the kings and chiefs to exclude Catholics or even to expel them... (Nambala 1994:93).

During the early days the Rhenish and Finnish Protestant missions monopolised the whole country. The two missions had entered into an agreement with the German authorities not to allow the Catholics to cross borders of already established mission fields. The agreement was kept and that is why the Catholic Oblates were ordered to serve only the German Catholics in Windhoek until 1896.

Many unsuccessful attempts were made in the 1800s' to establish a Catholic mission in Owambo, especially in the Ngandjera Kingdom, but failed. One of the causes of the failure was the traditional Lutheran resentment against Catholics in the area. The Lutheran missions were opposed to the Catholics coming into the area because of the doctrinal clashes between Catholics and Lutherans. Long time presiding missionary in Owambo, Martti Rautanen warns his converts that the Catholic teaching is misleading regarding the Bible, and that it disagrees with that of the Protestants. He boldly told them to choose the light and never allow themselves to be misled (Rautanen 1957:7). Let me record three of the contrasts Rautanen outlined in his book. Protestants believe that "all scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness..."(2 Tim 3:15-17). Catholics teach that "the Bible does not have all the commandments of God and therefore cannot alone sufficiently teach the way of salvation. It should be complemented by oral tradition. The Bible is too holy to be studied by lay people who can easily misunderstand its content"(Rautanen 1957:1-2). Protestants believe that faith is "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Heb 11:1). Catholics believe that faith is acceptance of the Roman Catholic teaching as taught by the Pope and the clergy. Protestants teach that Christ forgives the sins of all penitent sinners while the Catholic church has the power to forgive sins behalf of God...."(Rautanen 1957:5).

The involvement of the German authorities in the dispute is obvious. Du Plessis says that the Catholic mission was prohibited by the German authorities from doing mission work "on the existing Protestant mission fields' (quoted in Nambala 1994:92). The German authorities were in the process of declaring South West Africa a German colony. The transitional authorities were of the opinion that different faiths would confuse and separate the Christians as well as the non-Christians. They feared the liberal spirit and attitude of the English people. To prevent missionaries who might have hidden agendas against the authorities, other missions were denied propagation opportunities (Laurmaa 1949:98). Omukuni, the Catholic Church newspaper, portrayed the prohibition as follows:

In 1902 Evangelical Christians commenced their mission work in Ongandjera, but we (the Catholics) were prohibited by the government to go there. From there the German laws never allowed the Catholics to go to Ovamboland. We, therefore, went to Okavango where five major mission centres were established (Omukuni August 1974:3).

Despite the difficulties such as the death of Father Delpuech and Brother Lucius who were killed by the Owambo people in 1885, who, together with their followers, fled from Omaruru into Angola in the same year, and the presence of the Portuguese and the German garrisons at the northern and southern banks of the Kunene river to watch the situation, the Catholics were determined to achieve their goals.

Two Catholic vicariates, namely the Vicariate of Windhoek, led by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, and the Vicariate of Keetmanshoop, led by the Oblates of St Francis de Sales, were introduced. The Oblates of St Francis de Sales have taken over Catholic work in the southern part of Namibia whereas the Oblates of Mary Immaculate run the area from Windhoek and the whole northern part of Namibia including southern Angola.

The prohibition of Catholic missions was to a certain extent limited after the German-Herero war in 1904-1907. The prohibition was later completely removed when, in 1924, the Union Mandatory divided Owambo into three zones for missionary purposes. In accordance with the division, the Finns were to concentrate in Ondonga, where they were concentrated, the Anglican mission was to work among the Ovakwanyama, whereas the Catholic mission had to work either among Ovakwambi, Ovangandjera, Ovambalantu, Ovakwaluudhi, or Ovakolonkandhi and Ovaunda. The Catholics chose Uukwambi and Ongandjera territories where Ovakwambi and Ovangandjera lived (Laurmaa 1949:102).

3.4.4.2 The interaction between the Lutheran missions and the Anglican mission

The Anglican mission had not gone through the same painful experience as the Catholics. Their desire to work among Ovawambo is obvious in Bishop Gray's words uttered in 1878: "First and foremost we should go to those who are near to us at the Kei river and to those who live in the northern and eastern nations, especially, we should go to western nations in Owambo"(Laurmaa 1949:97).

As from 1878 the spiritual needs of the English people at Walvis Bay were met from time to time

by Anglican priests from Cape Town. In 1884 the German authorities refused to allow the Anglican mission to establish a mission field. But in 1903, Bishop Alan G. S. Gibson of Cape Town was permitted by the same authorities to pay a visit to Owambo.

Gibson and his companions received a cordial welcome from the Finns who suggested that their church begin a mission work among Ovawambo. However, the suggestion could not materialise due to two main reasons: the authorities of the day, the Germans, did not permit such a venture, and the Anglicans did not have the required financial resources to establish a mission. In 1923 arrangements between Bishop Forgarty and Bishop Sidwell to send missionaries to Oukwanyama were finalised. Coincidentally the following year was the year when the Union Mandatory divided Owambo into three missionary zones.

Both the Anglican and the Roman Catholic Missions abided by their promise to the government of the day not to interfere in political affairs in the country. Töttemeyer puts it this way:

They confine themselves to the area allocated to them; conclude their own agreement with the local headmen; promise in writing to (a) support and promote government policy, (b) encourage the Ovambo people to work in the south as migrant labourers, (c) teach their members loyalty towards the administration, (d) confirm the authority of the headmen and leaders in their territory, and (e) emphasise practical education and only introduce new syllabuses into their schools after discussion with the Director of Bantu Education (1978:23)

Each mission concentrated on its programme of converting the people in its area. "Pastors have had only few opportunities of contact with representatives of other denominations"(Juva quoted in Löytty 1971:42). No interaction seemed to be needed. According to Juva's analysis, the Roman Catholic Mission, as well as the Anglican St Mary's Mission, were completely overshadowed by the Lutheran Mission.

The other example which highlighted the relations of the Finnish-led Ovambo Church with other churches is found in its director's inspection report in 1954. It reads:

In Ovamboland to the Anglican mission - distinct bounds, to the Roman Catholic

Church - a negative attitude, to sects - a negative attitude. In the Police zone of South West Africa to the Rhenish Mission - cautious co-operation, to the Dutch Reformed Church - a still more cautious co-operation, to the Pentecostal Churches - negative attitude (Vapaavuori quoted in Löytty 1971:42).

Members of the Dorothea Mission were seen as friends but their emphasis on sanctification was regarded as strange to Lutherans.

3.4.5 Evaluation

As mentioned before, the Lutheran missions opposed the Catholic mission because of the doctrinal and ecclesiological contrasts that existed between the two churches since the Reformation. It was a time of intense rivalry and competition between the Protestant missions and the Roman Catholics. What was said about competition of missions in other countries is somehow relevant to what took place in Namibia. "Protestant missions competed among themselves both for adherents and for the territory, while on the other hand Protestants and Roman Catholics were in a life-and-death struggle for dominance" (Ekechi 1993:153). It appeared that the Protestant missions were protecting the innocence of inhabitants who did not know the Catholic teaching before. They supposed that those kinds of inhabitants would be easy to convert into the Lutheran churches. The Rhenish mission, which had the conviction that "without the presence of the German troops the extension of the Gospel would be impossible", might have feared foreign occupation (Enquist 1990:55). The above attitudes illustrate that Lutheran missions thought themselves to be *leandongula olo li tool'oshima* [an early bird which catches the worm].

The Anglican mission was feared for its liberalism. The conservative Lutheran missions were afraid that their pietistic members would be influenced by its liberal teaching, behaviour and attitudes. For example, its missionaries drank alcoholic drinks freely and openly whereas the Finns were abstainers. In Eastern Nigeria, the Irish bishop, Bishop Charles Heerey, who found himself in similar circumstances as those described above, argued that British missionaries 'do not suit Nigeria' and the Americans were materialistic, which is 'not made for conversion of Africa' (Okwu quoted in Ekechi 1993:157).

As was often said in other countries, the missions who had the same goal of propagating the gospel of Christ failed to cooperate in Namibia. It is true that this was a different time in history than our's today. It was a period when the propagation of the gospel was done separately in the country. Thus it should be treated cautiously. However, it should also be pointed out that the Lutheran missions did not tackle the religious problems openly. They hid behind the German authorities. Such attitudes might have contributed to the persecution of other missions by the government of the day. What is portrayed here is an example of Lutheran mission's attempted to influence the government of the day in its dealings with other missions. However, it should be noted that the German authorities consciously avoided the rivalry and competition among missions because they perceived them to be a national or local political threat. The attitude has had a strong legacy which can still be found in the Lutheran Churches in Namibia today.

3.5 Preparation of indigenous church leaders

3.5.1 The setbacks in the process of introducing lay leaders into lay ministries

Martti Rautanen, a long time presiding missionary of the Owambo mission field, for a long time turned down the suggestions of the Society that the training of Owambo lay leaders should be started. The reason for these suggestions were that Owambo lay leaders should become converters of their countrymen/women whereas missionaries remained teachers. Two of Rautanen's major objections were that Owambo men liked to have many wives and that they turned back easily into paganism. According to him, Owambo men had no deep roots in Christianity (Ashipala 1999).

The Society solved the problem diplomatically. Young Finnish pastors were trained, prepared and equipped with the necessary transforming skills before being sent to the mission field. Being part of the leadership in the mission field, the young theologians managed to influence the decision to train Owambo lay leaders.

Mention has been made that missionaries had used assistants but it is not clear in which way and for which purposes. Pastor Filippus Iimene speaks about three steps that lay persons had to

undergo in order to become elders. The first step was that of *ovataleli* [inspectors]. They were faithful Christians, irrespective of gender, who visited houses and villages and reported the findings to the missionary pastor at his parish office. They were often old but experienced people who were meant to play an advisory role in relation to their missionary pastor. The second step was that of *ovataleli va ninga ovakulunhuongalo ve he newi letokolo* [inspectors became members of congregational council meetings on observer status]. The last stage was that *ovakulunhuongalo* [parish elders] became *ovaleliongalo* [lay parish leaders who became full members of congregational council meetings]. They were granted the right to participate fully in congregational council decision-making processes (Iimene 1999). Another source confirms that the first lay leaders involved in ministry were entrusted by missionaries to teach baptismal and confirmation classes. The same persons were later given the task of “ministration of the sacraments and the care of souls” (1923 Annual report of the Finnish Missionary Society quoted in Löytty 1971:31).

Although the transference of responsibility to the lay persons in the mission field was a very slow, long process, it has been the right thing to do. The lay persons are the majority and the backbone of the church in all its dimensions. Therefore it is their right to participate fully in the ministry and the decision-making process of the church but, as Neill observes, “missionaries were extraordinarily slow to recognize and trust the gifts of indigenous Christians” (1986:384). I do not know about all the prevailing problems in the mission field at that point in time. However, I suggest that an alternative would have been to replace the presiding missionary with a younger theologian.

As other missionary leaders, Rautanen did not want to relinquish absolute control over the lives and activities of the converts in the mission field (Ekechi 1993:157). The training of the lay leaders should have started at the beginning of the mission work in the mission field. It did not because “missionaries were aware that change would weaken their power of control over the whole range of activities of their followers” (Ekechi 1993:157). It is a fact that transmitting power to indigenous leaders in the mission field means losing the same power on the side of a missionary leader. As in many other missions, it proved also here not to be an easy thing to transfer leadership responsibilities from missionaries to indigenous leaders.

3.5.2 The training of teachers had encouraging results.

The second step in the direction of making the mission field autonomous was the training of indigenous school teachers. The education of school teachers, which was started at Oniipa Mission Station in 1913, paved the way for training Ovawambo as pastors. However, the pastoral students referred to did not have elementary education. Except being born in traditionalist families they were taught how to look after domestic animals and to carry out many other domestic tasks during their childhood. The latter presupposes a way of thinking and of doing things completely different from the modern academic way of dealing with issues. Therefore, one of the difficulties the above-mentioned students faced their studies was the reduced capacity of grown-ups to concentrate on academic work. Other problems were to think logically, to enter into preaching methodology and the ability to write properly. Despite the shortcomings most of them were able to achieve their teaching qualifications.

In their service as lay leaders they acted as faithful Christian teachers, preachers and congregational council members. The seriousness and trustworthiness of Owambo teachers towards their work and other responsibilities strengthened the argument that Owambo men can be trained as ministers. Other factors which contributed to this important undertaking were the increase of congregations and the shortage of ordained personnel in the mission field as a whole. There was also the language factor which to my observation was the most crucial one. Indigenous ministers and lay persons were much needed to teach and preach to their own people in their own language. It was a time when indigenous leaders had to convert their own countrymen/women. It is true that converts found ways to convert members of their own communities more easily. The mechanism used here echoed William Ward's words in 1802 that he was:

ready to doubt whether Europeans will ever be extensively useful in converting souls by preaching in this country (India). God can do all things. Paul could become a Jew to win Jews, and as Gentiles to win Gentiles; however needful, we cannot become Hindu's to win them, nor Muslim's to win Muslims (William Ward quoted in Stanley 1990:160)

It seems that there was no substantial plan as to when to incorporate Ovawambo into the leadership of the Ovambo Church. There were hot debates between missionaries and some Owambo Christians concerning admitting indigenous teachers to pastoral training.

Some Finnish missionaries thought that to train Ovawambo as pastors was to give them an honoured position which they would feel proud about. Some thought that Owambo men were neither spiritually mature nor mentally capable to lead the congregations. Few Owambo parishioners supported that last idea. Some missionaries spoke with dishonour mixed with fear. Some Owambo parishioners spoke frankly that a young church will not grow if it was to be led by foreigners (Shejavali 1970:109).

During that time in the history of the church most missionaries, including Rautanen, underestimated the potentials of serving and leadership found among the indigenous Christians. So, they took the stand that indigenous leaders should be taught to know the Bible, but not be allowed to engage themselves in higher education. The prevailing perception was that indigenous people were incapable of dealing with complicated higher education and leadership. Rautanen personally had no hope that the indigenous leaders could be entrusted with pastoral responsibilities (Nambala 1995:18). To a great extent this perception delayed the indigenous leadership development in the church.

I consider the training of teachers from which the future student pastors will be selected as a strong foundation for the pastoral profession. It equipped the pastors with teaching methodology and the academic ways of dealing with issues and prevented them from being only Bible-oriented leaders. It should have been the policy of the mission field and the church leadership that students could apply for seminary admissions themselves rather than being selected by pastors. The legacy of this selection policy is a strong perception that the pastoral calling is a profession which is too holy for personal initiatives.

3.5.3 The training of indigenous pastors

According to Löytty, the training of the clergy in Owambo can be said to have started early when

one compares it with the mission work in other parts of Africa. "The Board of the Finnish Missionary Society decided in 1921 that Ovambo teachers who showed themselves capable of development should be given an opportunity to prepare themselves for ministry" (Minutes of the Board of Directors (MBD) 16/02/1921 quoted in Löytty 1971:36). As said before, the pastoral training programme commenced in 1922 and the first ordination took place three years afterwards. That first training and ordination then paved the way for other training and ordinations in the future (Väänänen quoted in Löytty 1971:36).

The first pastoral students were qualified teachers, who were physically, spiritually, emotionally mature and prominent members of the community. The above qualities are measures of criteria in the Ovambo model of appointing people to positions of honour. Ovawambo believe that senior people are more knowledgeable than youngsters. The nobility was ascribed the natural right to lead in the traditional system. There is also a belief that prominent people, especially those brought up in palaces and prominent households are in a position to lead because of their experience.

Because of the shortage of accommodation, classrooms and other facilities, the first pastoral course was hosted at Oniipa Teachers College in February 1922 with Missionary Nestori Väänänen as its principal. This programme aimed at the promotion of school teachers to pastorship. All of them, ten evangelists and seven pastors, passed their final examinations and were ordained by the Mission Director, Rev. Matti Tarkkanen in the Oniipa church on 27th September 1925.

An old Rautanen, who was amazed by the wonderful deeds of God that transformed the indigenous people into faithful Christians uttered the following in front of the ordinands:

One oolye? Nomwa zi peni? Dhimbulukweni, one aana yaapagani. Omwa zi momilema dhuupagani nomuuhunde nomesho lyo lyene. -Ihe omwe ya ngiini peha ndika eyapuki? Oshike sha vulu okulonga iikumitha yi thike mpaka, mu thikame nena poaltari ondjapuki yaKalunga? Mu tulwe nokuli miilonga iiyapuki? Osha vulika ngiini? Dhimbulukweni aluhe kutya shika inashi za koonkambadhala dheni nenge kuunkulungu weni nenge koondunge dhomuntu gulwe aawe. Dhimbulukweni shili aluhe kutya: Ndika olyo esilohenda lyaKalunga lya longo iikumitha miigwana mbika. Ne shi itaalen wo kutya esilohenda ndika lyaKalunga

otali ka tsikila natango aluhe naaluhe okulonga iikumitha mevi ndika [Who are you? Where do you come from? Remember that you are the progeny of pagan parents. You come from darkness, sin and death itself. But how did you come to this holy place? Who could perform such wonderful deeds that make you able to stand today in front of the holy altar of God? How was it possible? Remember always that these miraculous events did not take place because of your own attempts, intelligence, proficiency or from the intelligence of other people. Remember always that: This is the grace of God that has performed the miraculous deeds among these nations. Believe also that this grace of God will continue to work wonderful deeds in this country forever] (Auala 1977:167).

The pastors were Paulus Hamutenya, Gideon Iitula, Sakeus Iihuhwa, Obadja Iihuhwa, Nabot Shiyoma, Juuso Ngaikukwete and Simson Shituwa. The names of the evangelists are not available (Löytty 1971:32; Shejavali 1970:98). Except for Paulus Hamutenya, Simson Shituwa and Sakeus Iihuhwa, the indigenous pastors were appointed to serve directly under the supervision of the missionaries. According to Crane, the same practice took place in a Congolese Church in the Belgian Congo. "The first pastors ordained in the mission were not ordained as pastors over a particular church, but as 'pastors-at-large', supplementing missionary itineration and serving as assistants of White missionaries. Their main task was to receive into the membership of the Church the hundreds of catechumens in widely scattered villages" (quoted in Sundkler 1960:52). Signs of racism were obvious in the Lutheran missions in the country. There was gross inequality between black and white clergy; white clergy were always in charge of church affairs; the Rhenish Mission Society (RMS) refused to train black pastors because they believed that indigenous lay leaders did not yet have sufficient maturity and experience (Soggot 1986:15); in both the mission fields of the RMS and the FMS young white clergy had better housing, transportation, remuneration and other amenities as provided by mission societies abroad; black clergy were often old and prominent in church structures, but had no housing, transportation and a tiny remuneration (Katjavivi 1988:32). When both mission fields became autonomous things became clear that the two churches were never one. The Rhenish missionaries who acted "as missionaries to the natives, on one hand, and as spiritual shepherd or pastor to the growing white German community on the other..." (Leeuw quoted in Nambala 1994:76) established the white Evangelical Lutheran church in Namibia (GELC). The Finnish leadership in the mission field wanted to do the same, but FMS rejected their application for they were not settlers like the Germans, but connected with the mission in some way. The ordination of indigenous clergy, to a great extent,

contributed to the new phase which was the development of an indigenous church.

The ordination of the third group, consisting of eleven ordinands, which in many instances is referred to as the second, took place on 27th September 1937. The responsibilities entrusted to them was a major step forward to gradual church independence. Most of the ordinands were young and less experienced than the previous group. Each of them was, therefore, installed into a congregation and worked 'under the supervision of Finnish missionaries in the beginning' (Löytty 1971:32). The full time supervision was brought to an end when Missionary Valde Kivinen was appointed to act as a tutor of Owambo pastors.

It should be noted that these pastors were revivalists. A strong revivalistic spirit entered their seminary in 1935 and changed their lives. With these transformed lives they were able to link personal conversion to Christianity with total abstention from alcoholic drinks, sexual immorality, smoking etc. Because of the aforesaid, many converts accepted abstention as a Christian norm and undertook to live accordingly. Their service to congregations was a good example for the indigenous congregants.

Before ELCIN got its autonomy from the Finnish Missionary Society in 1954, fifty-six pastors were trained (Shejavali 1970:196-197). However, Nambala records fifty-five ordinands (1995:19-21). Its first Bishop, Rev. Leonard Auala, came from the fourth group. A crucial point to note is that, at the handover of the church leadership, no indigenous person had a university level education. In 1950 when two Pastors, Jason Amakutuwa and Leonard Auala were refused the permission by the former South African authorities to further their studies at the University of Finland (Niinkoti 1978:44). The need for much training was recognised by Professor Mikko Juva, chairperson of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission, who offered himself as a middle person between the University Degree Committee, FELM and competent Owambo candidates in 1962.

3.5.4 Evaluation

In the selection of the student mentioned above the criteria used were adopted from the indigenous traditional ways of electing leaders to higher positions. It was a good start. There were no qualified candidates for pastoral students, and the leadership did well that it started with those traditional leaders who were available. The statement concerning the wonderful deeds of God among the indigenous people gives the negative impression that the indigenous people were too evil or incapable of accepting the will of God. Something the leadership could have avoided was the inclusion of many members from the nobility among the candidates. This would have proved that not only the nobility and the old people can lead, but youngsters also. It could also have demonstrated the distinction between the leadership of the church and that of the kingdom. The training of Owambo ministers took place after fifty-one years of mission work in Owambo (1870-1921). This is an indication of weak planning. This kind of planning should have been implemented at the very beginning of the mission work in the region.

3.5.5 Supervision of some of the first indigenous pastors

It was mentioned before that two stages of supervision were designed for indigenous pastors. The first stage was when each indigenous pastor was supervised on a daily basis by a missionary pastor. The second stage culminated in an appointment of one of the missionary pastors to tutor the indigenous pastors further. The information used here is from retired pastors and evangelists from the former Oukwanyama Circuit. The period under review started with the first ordinands and ended with the ordinands of the third group and their installations in congregations. According to Pastor Haufiku there was no Church Constitution and regulations at this stage. Congregational leaders were directed by a pamphlet instructing them briefly how to lead congregations. The Engela parish served by a missionary pastor was the sole parish in the whole Oukwanyama Circuit, whereas all other congregations such as Endola, Ongenga, Ohalushu Ondobe and Edundya were identified as outstations of Engela parish. Two of the first ordinands, namely Hamutenya and Shituwa were assigned to Edundya and Endola outstations.

The division of labour between the missionary pastor at Engela parish and the indigenous pastors

was outlined and applied. The missionary pastor distributed holy communion, conducted children and adult baptisms, as well as confirmation and solemnized marriages in the Engela parish church building (Nakale 1999). A slight change took place when a missionary pastor travelled from one outstation to the other to baptize and confirm. Names of the baptized and confirmed were recorded in the Engela parish books.

The indigenous pastors played an evangelistic role at the outstations. They walked with little containers of wine and boxes of wafers to offer communion to the weak, dying and aged. It was one of their duties to prepare and organise the communicants for holy communion at their respective outstations. Both at Engela parish and at the outstations they were not allowed to administer holy communion neither in the absence nor in the presence of the missionary pastor (Nakale 1999). Indigenous pastors were instructors of catechumens and confirmants at outstations. Beside instruction, they led worship services, buried the dead and evangelised. In these duties they were assisted by teachers and inspectors.

The next development began around 1936 when the first baptism took place at Omundudu outstation in which an indigenous pastor, Haufiku, participated. The next year, 1937, young indigenous pastors, among them Vilho Kaulinge, Paulus Nailenge, were ordained and installed officially in parishes. Henceforth baptisms and confirmations were held in congregations but, holy communion was again administered by a missionary pastor from the Engela parish (Haufiku 1999).

Retired evangelist Nakale told me briefly how one Sunday morning at Omundaungilo parish missionary Erkki Hynönen baptized the first San catechumens. Pastor Andreas Kanhalelo taught and prepared the catechumens for the sacrament of baptism. Early Sunday morning missionary Hynonen arrived from Engela purposely to carry out the baptism. He carried out the baptism and signed the baptismal documents and sent them to the Church Council. He was the first pastor to baptize the San catechumens at Omundaungilo parish (Nakale 1999). Neill records a similar incident in Indonesia. He writes: "The Indonesian pastor could prepare candidates for baptism but the baptism had to wait for the occasional visit of the missionary" (1986:384). At the baptism the Indonesian pastor used to hold the bowl containing water for baptism. Presumably, the reason for

doing so, was to enhance the prestige of the local pastor and lower the value of the sacrament or to protect the authority of the missionary rather than to deny the indigenous pastor enhanced prestige.

3.5.5.1 Evaluation

As is generally the case, there are many initial obstacles in the development of an organization. The division of labour is not wrong as such. What gave the episode a negative character is that missionary pastors put themselves at the centre of the service and pushed the indigenous pastors to the periphery. Such a move failed to do justice to the requirements of the transitional period from missionary leadership to an indigenous one. The wrong message was conveyed that missionary pastors were superiors to indigenous pastors. Both pastors should have shared all pastoral responsibilities together. The legacy is still felt in parishes where senior and associate pastors or pastors and deacons or deaconesses are serving today.

3.5.6 Financial supervision and the distribution of remuneration

At the initial stage of the former Oukwanyama Circuit financial supervision was done by the missionary pastor at the Engela parish. Collections and contributions collected from various congregations, mostly in coinage, were carried by the indigenous pastors from the outstations to Engela parish. There the money was put together and divided into salaries. After such division was made, indigenous pastors carried the remunerations back to the congregations. There they divided the amount among church workers, namely the teachers, evangelists, nurses and pastors.

Emancipation occurred when the indigenous pastors complained to the missionary dean and director about carrying the heavy coinage back and forth. The spokesperson of group was the late Pastor P. Nailenge (Nakale 1999). They had these points to make. Because they were entrusted with the overall collection of financial contributions in the parishes and the bringing of such money to Engela, they requested the missionaries to trust them also with the collection, counting and payout of salaries at the parish and congregational levels.

The following solution was found in this regard. The congregational collections and contributions were put together in the congregations and salaries were paid out locally. The Church Office retained the authority to control the salaries of its church workers. Until today all salaries are authorized by the Head Office.

3.5.6.1 Evaluation

It appeared that indigenous pastors were entrusted with the administration of the congregations from the beginning. All money was put together so that all church workers should have their monthly remunerations. There was a concern that congregations should complement each other in this regard. However, the approach has turned pastors into financial administrators, a legacy not easy to break away from. Parishioners are the right people to run this portfolio. The carrying of money by pastors perpetuated a traditional practice: common people were used to carry tributes to royal courts. The few vehicles available in the mission field belonged to the Society. The indigenous church had to make its start somewhere.

3.6 The quality of pastoral training offered to pioneer pastoral students

3.6.1 Why train pastoral students?

All power and authority in the mission field was invested in the leadership of the Society. The training of pastoral students has been necessitated by the transfer of authority from the leadership of the Society to the leadership of the indigenous church. The pastor needed training because, practically, authority was to be devolved from a missionary to him. He was an influential link at the centre of this transformation process (Sundkler 1960:45).

“The training of clergy has been regarded as an essential condition for the development of the young churches of Africa” (Morant quote in Löytty 1971:36). Yorke gives an example of closed schools:

One important higher training school in the Belgian Congo was suspended from 1937 to 1950. In Liberia, the highest training institution was closed from 1927 to

1948; and two leading missions secured practicably no pastors in that time... A mission in Angola had not training, even for catechists, for fifteen years. There are many other instances of this sad lack of continuity in training programmes. So often it is said, 'we stopped in the depression, and just didn't get started again until after the war' (1960:80).

The churches who were unable to pay the salaries of their ministers in service, saw the recruiting of theological students as a doubling of the burden. Recruitment in these churches was discussed in terms of existing vacancies.

In the Evangelical Lutheran Ovambo-Kavango Church (ELOC), as it was called at the beginning, training was done in the form of courses but without curricula until 1957. The "fixed curricula" were then followed after 1957, when the church got a theological institution (Vapaavuori quoted in Löytty 1971:36). The Finnish lecturers were responsible for teaching. Sundkler said that the training of clergy came at the time when "development in education" was a priority on the agenda of the missionaries in Africa (quoted in Löytty 1971:36). There was a conception that a teaching post was the nearest stage to the ministry in the churches. Until the year 1937, the procedure followed in the Finnish mission field was that "students on theological courses had taken the teacher's training" (Lindström quoted in Löytty 1971:36).

The training procedure of the Finns agreed with Allen's description of the inadequacy of the education of the clergy in Africa. He says:

Most African clergy have started life as village catechists. After a brief course of elementary training, they have begun their work as preachers of the Gospel. They have then been brought in again for one or two periods of training as catechists; and then finally for a further period of training for the ordained ministry....(1960:81-82).

The selection of candidates was carried out by the Administrative Board of the Finnish Ovamboland Mission which was replaced by the Administrative Board of the Ovambo Church after 1946. When school teaching had been developed into a separate activity, teachers who were pedagogically less competent, were assigned to teach and preach in villages. Some of them were

taken into the evangelistic programme which commenced in 1950 at Engela Parish Institute. The selection of candidates by a church body made some individuals to suspect its fairness and impartiality. For instance, there were complaints that some candidates, who were promising and pedagogically competent teachers, were not taken into the ministry, whereas some who appeared to be weaker in comparison with the latter, were taken in. A fair practice would be to allow each student to apply directly to the authority concerned.

Because of the lack of qualified pastoral students in the field, attempts were made to upgrade the theological education of teachers and evangelists. Because of their lower educational standard, when compared with that of the teachers, evangelists did not master the preparatory training. So, attempts to teach them together failed.

The shortage of theological resources prevailed in the seminary for a long time. Lecturers were forced, therefore, to produce notes which they either duplicated or wrote on the blackboard from where the students copied them into their copybooks. The compilation of the curriculum will shed more light on the problem of the availability of resources.

3.6.2 The compilation of the curriculum

As in other institutions of learning, the indigenous pastors were products of the pastoral training that moulded them. The compilation of the curriculum would prove it. The curriculum consisted of the most important books in the Bible, as well as “dogmatics, church history, catechetics, homiletics, spiritual care, hymnology and practical exercises” (Löytty 1979:38). According to Löytty, the curriculum followed a Finnish pattern, but was somewhat shortened to adapt to Owambo seminary conditions (1971:38).

“For the introduction to the Bible, Edvin Wiren’s and Paavo Virkkunen’s manuals have been used” (Virkkunen quote in Löytty 1971:38). The Bible Commentary by Puukko was chiefly used in teaching Old Testament (Kantele quoted in Löytty 1971:38). Kantele also said that she had used positive and constructive commentaries written in German. In 1954 Rauha Voipio translated ‘*God’s torch bearers*’ by Lauha Aarre into Oshindonga as “*Aahumbati joneyka jOmuua*’.

The basic textbook for New Testament exegesis since 1951 was the Finnish New Testament Commentary. Additional books were *Evangelii paMarkus ngaashi la tolokwa ku Tirronen* [The Gospel according to Mark] translated into Oshindonga by Tirronen in 1958. *Evangelii paLukas* [the Gospel according to Luke] as translated by Aino T. Nikolainen, *etoloko lEpistoli Kovakorinto nembwiitya leenhumwafo dopaufita ku Rafael Gyllenberg na Eina Sormunen*. [the translation of the Epistle to the Corinthians and the commentary of the Pastoral Epistles compiled by Rafael Gyllenberg and Eino Sormunen] (Gyllenberg quoted in Löytty 1971:38).

The other famous commentary used was that of Anders Nygren on the Epistle to the Romans. It was expected of the students that they thoroughly know one Gospel and one of the main epistles in Greek. “Many students have acquired commentaries in Afrikaans” (Löytty 1971:38). No theological sources were made available in Oshiwambo.

“Questions of source-critical explanations have been avoided in the Bible teaching and emphasis was placed on the nature of the Bible as a mediator of God’s revelation on a personal and practical level” (Kantele quoted in Löytty 1971:38). It must also be noted that *The Bible Knowledge for Schools*, which Rauha Voipio translated was not printed in Oshiwambo because of its pro-liberal theology. Lecturers such as Lehto and Petäjä concentrated on prayers, contemplation on texts, needs, joys, wants and personal spiritual battles. They tried to spiritualise all aspects of life.

Dogmatics highlighted questions of Christian teaching. Additional textbooks were *Christian Doctrine* by Erkki Kaula, *Grace Alone* by Eino Sormunen, *Instruction in the Christian teaching* by Martti Simojoki (Löytty 1971:39). The Christian Doctrine was later translated into Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama and used also in courses of Evangelists at Engela Parish Institute. Other schools of thought and theological interpretations from other theological sources were purposely not consulted.

Ehongoudifo [Homiletics] was seen as a subject at the centre of calling people to Christ. Books used were *Evangelical Proclamation* by J. J. Jansen, *Euvitho* [Sermon] by Väänänen, *Ondaka jevangeli* [Voice of the gospel] by Björklund. The contents of the two last books were identical

in that both described the purpose of the sermon to be the “awakening of men to search for Christ and aiding them to achieve a deeper knowledge of Him” (Löytty 1971:39). Text pericopes were formulated in such a way that the whole Bible was used. The preacher was expected, therefore, to know the Bible.

In accordance with the curriculum, students were expected to study homiletic theory for two years. Sermon practices were compulsory for each student. The homiletics teacher played a supervisory role; the student arranged the texts, situations and occasions. These arrangements took place in the third year. The neighbouring villages benefited most by the practical sermons whereas quarterly evangelistic tours were a source of strength to students. Evangelistic tours in the surrounding villages kept the students in continuous contact with the people among whom they would serve. Such practices helped the theological students to analyse the expectations of the people which they would serve later.

The compilation of the curriculum suggests that the lecturers wanted to teach mostly the content of the Bible. It was also too Finnish-oriented. The development of liberal thoughts was not allowed even in its basic form. Other schools of thoughts and theological interpretations were excluded. Passivity and pietism were maintained among future theologians. One observes the authoritarian attitude of the Finnish leaders that tried to avoid critique and controversy among future indigenous leaders. They taught them what they wanted them to know and nothing else.

3.6.4 Characteristics of some of the mission teachers who taught at the seminary

As is generally the case, the characters of the Finnish teachers were influenced by their instructors and the teaching they pursued. To mention a few examples of these instructors, the author starts with **Adolf Kustaa**. He served for more than thirty years as a teacher and an assistant director of the FMS. He became its director in 1934-1935. His favourite subjects in the mission school were “exegesis and dogmatics” (Marttunen quoted in Löytty 1971:20). Kustaa was a revivalist, influenced by Frans Hannula. Among other things, his preaching emphasised total surrender to Christ. To him proclamation was the instrument for winning souls for Christ and salvation.

Matti Tarkkanen, a mission director from 1914-1934, emphasised “the proclamation of the Gospel as the most important form of mission work’ (Poyhonen quote in Löytty 1971:21). To him the Bible was an unerring book that reveals God’s will to humankind. His perception of the Bible as the true revelation of God helped him to draw a positive critical analysis regarding other Bible exegetes such as “theological liberalism and the social gospel movement ”(Tarkkanen quoted in Löytty 1971:21). He had an interest in the Biblicist “Anglo-Saxon revival movement” (quoted in Löytty 1971:21). His missiological interpretations were influenced by Gustav Warneck.

Uno Henrik Berndt Paunu was one of the mission leaders. His theology was influenced by Warneck and Anglo-Saxon mission theology. He had great influence on the Finnish teachers. The Finnish teachers were: **Viktor Alho**, who served for thirty years as the principal of the mission school. He was among the pioneers who guided teaching developments among Ovawambo. He was the author of *Ohoole jotango* [*First love*], *Mua pewa omagano* [*You have gifts*], *Euuco lja Kalunga* [*Order of God*]. The contents of *Ohoole jotango* and *Mua pewa omagano* is designed to instruct Christians to grow in a life of prayers. Alho’s Bible understanding “ has been said to be soundly fundamentalistic” (Björklund quoted in Löytty 1971:23). The above became obvious in his rejection of Voipio’s translation of *Bible Knowledge for Schools* as liberal theology. To him liberal theology was detrimental to faith and thus could not be studied by Ovawambo.

Erkki Lehto was a liberal theologian who played a major role in influencing Owambo pastors. He was a principal for the Teachers Seminary at Oniipa. Lehto was a student of “both Laestadian and the Evangelical movement” (Luise Laurmaa quoted in Löytty 1971:24). As a missionary in Owambo for thirty years, his understanding of the Bible was “described as staunchly Lutheran” (Björklund quoted in Löytty 1971:24). His attitude was also described as “more flexible than that of Alho” (Kantele quoted in Löytty 1971:24). Many Owambo pastors regard him “as their model of preaching” (Kantele quoted in Löytty 1971:24). Lehto was also a gifted preacher.

Kalle Petäjä was a missionary for 29 years in Owambo. “His conception of the Bible has been compared to Lehto’s view” (Kantele quoted in Löytty 1971:24). He was a gifted preacher, and taught by asking questions. Petäjä taught his students and parishioners to kneel down when offering intercessory prayers. He perceived mission work as the “sowing of the Word of Life”

(Petäjä quoted in Löytty 1971:25). Petäjä was among those who won most souls. His stance is indicated in these lines: “We may be certain that in all our worthlessness we are dear to God for Christ’s sake. Remember, we have been made His children in the Covenant of Grace of Baptism. God wants to use us here such as we are.... We have reason to trust Him alone and alone to him bring our praises” (Minutes of Missionaries Conference (MMC) quoted in Löytty 1971:25).

Valde Kivinen, as mentioned before, was the mentor for Owambo pastors. Through refresher courses he conducted among pastors and parishioners, Kivinen encouraged the indigenous people to bear their church responsibilities. He liked preaching on sin and grace and the necessity of spiritual awakening. “His functional approach to the Christian life is illustrated in his saying: ”work is Grace and Grace is work”(Kivinen quoted in Löytty 1971:25).

Walter Björklund served as a teacher and principal of Engela Parish Institute. He acted also as a missionary in charge of the Oukwanyama Circuit. He influenced pastors and congregants through his booklets. They are, *Ondaka jevangeli* [Voice of the gospel], *Ondaka ja Kaume* [Voice of my friend], *Okambo komukwaneongalo keshe* [a booklet for every parishioner], *Ekumaidokambo* [a booklet of warning], *Ehekelekokambo* [A booklet of consolation], *Okukala omukriste* [to be a Christian], *Indileni nde tamu pewa* [Pray in order to receive]. *Ondaka jevangeli* outlined the message of the Gospel and has been used as a textbook by many pastors. The contents of the other booklets encourage believers to study the Bible and to live a prayerful life. His main teaching was on accepting ”Christ as personal Saviour”, “the eschatological dimension” and Christian watchfulness (Björklund quoted in Löytty 1971:26).

Maija Kantele, the first woman theologian in Ovamboland, taught for seven years in the Teachers Seminary at Oniipa. She understood the Bible as the Word of God written by people inspired by God himself. She rejected a theology which leaves out miracles due to the influence of scientific research as ‘liberal theology’ (Löytty 1971:26). Kantele’s concern here was that scientific research of that nature rejects the omnipresence of God and thus undermines the contents of the Scriptures. Although she encouraged historical-critical Bible study which is an exercise that helps modern people in the controversies between the world of the Bible and that of the sciences, her warning was to take the results ‘with caution because science has often had

to abandon its own earlier findings” (Kantele quoted in Loytty 1971:26).

The lecturers wrote educative books in either Oshindonga or Oshikwanyama. These books were a new way of communication besides oral tradition, and influenced the lives of various pastors and parishioners in ELCIN. Because of these attempts of the lecturers, early indigenous pastors also attempted to write books and pamphlets. Although women theologians were few in number and not ordained, their presence was felt in the mission field. This shows that what matters is not ordination but the quality of deliverance one offers to one’s audience.

3.6.5 Evaluation

The practice of the mission to keep the indigenous church under its leadership was meant to let the mission act as a parent of a church to be born. It also handled all financial issues and foreign affairs. However, the church, while under the mission, had no right to raise questions about its autonomy. The mission retained absolute authority invested in its leaders. Bishop Tucker who was a leader of the British mission in Ganda directed the mission to enter into a compromise in which the mission and the church in Ganda shared authority. “By means of this compromise the mission was able to be of the Uganda Church, but never under it; to be included in its constitution, but always in an extra position; to be built into its fabric, but always as the keystone...”(quoted in Sundkler 1960:54). I support the excellent proposal offered by Bishop Tucker that led to a compromise between the British mission and the Ganda Church. Such a compromise might help the young church to be autonomous at its early stage. According to Taylor’s analysis virtues of this idea are the following:

Bishop Tucker took it for granted that the responsible leadership of the Church must be largely identical with its clerical ministry, and that in setting aside men to be catechists, lay-readers and pastors in the Church, he was building up the real hierarchy of authority by which the Church was to be led and governed” (quoted in Sundkler 1960:55).

Like mission directors and mission school teachers at home, presiding missionaries and principals in the mission field could spend up to thirty years or more in offices. The author has not been able to find out what caused this practice. However, such a practice has been a hindrance of the

implementation of democratic principles in the ELCIN Church, whose members were ruled by kings before. It was not exemplary and transparent. As it was generally the case in those days in most churches, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland withheld women ordination. The legacy prevailed for many years in the ELCIN Church which I suspect waited for the mother church to take the lead.

3.7 The Finnish mission and the Owambo migrant workers

The aim to tackle this heading is to assess the approaches of the local Finnish missionary leadership in Owambo mission field towards social and economic sufferings of Owambo contract workers. Few Ovawambo had tried to find work before the contract system was introduced to their region. The simple reason for seeking work was their dependence on small-scale agriculture, the low productivity of Owambo arable land and the lack of industries in the region. The Herero, the Nama, and the Damara were forced to work for the Germans because their traditional way of life was destroyed. They had been robbed of their land. There was no place where they could herd their cattle. The German authorities sold the land to settlers at low prices. The only alternative left for the indigenous people was to sell their labour. Rauha Voipio maintained that “the most important reason was the search for food” (Voipio 1981:113).

Ovawambo were forced by these circumstances to enter into a paid labour system since 1884. Owambo men were recruited as contract workers by German colonists after the wars of extermination of the Herero (1904-1907) and after the failure of the Germans to recruit workers from East Africa, Togo, Cameroon and India (Hishongwa 1992:52). To do this the German colonists entered into an agreement with Owambo kings to provide them with short-term contract labourers.

Contract work began with the construction of Swakopmund harbour, railways from Swakopmund to Windhoek and to Otavi and Tsumeb from 1898 to 1903 (Peltola 1995:64). The indirect reasons which forced Owambo men to join the deal were, one, the drought that hit their region during two consecutive years, 1913 and 1914, two, “the influenza epidemic which hit the area three years later” (Moorsom quoted in Hishongwa 1992:53); three, the colonists declared places like Otavi

and Tsumeb, where Owambo men had collected minerals, as theirs. The Ovawambo were mining the minerals in such quantities that large numbers of people depended on them for their defence. They made weapons and equipments from iron-ore collected from those mines. According to former ELCIN pastor for compound work, Gerson Max, the imposition of taxes by the German government and the tribal system of unpaid labour which caused the men wanted to escape. He writes:

Chiefs and home heads used the men to till their fields, build and repair their huts, hunt, look after the cattle and go on expeditions organised by chiefs. It was difficult to be under the authority of the chiefs and home heads, because the men earned nothing. This was a factor forcing Namibian men to become migrants. The increased use of the men to till fields and to perform various traditional labour tasks for the chiefs caused conflict. It was at that time that the young men opposed their elders politically. For many young men their only response to the decline in social and economic opportunities and their increased poverty was to become migrant labourers in the mines in the industrial sector because the bride price and the internal exchange tax (imposed) by the chiefs was higher to them.... (1992:84-85).

Five, because of the change in the way of life, which included trade in commercial goods and agricultural implements, the local population needed some cash. The sixth reason was that workers saw contract work as a secure option to assist their families. Insufficient rainfall and the short rainy season in Owambo, which often caused unreliable crop production and loss of livestock, compelled the men to take the first option. The condition as described above agrees with Meillassoux's words that the subsistence farmer

... enters the colonial sector because of the economic conditions which prevail in his home area and, in particular, because there is no other way to increase production but through an increase in labour. In other words, because of the impossibility of introducing progress within the domestic sector (sic) (Meillassoux 1981:127-128).

Things became worse when the South African administration took over Namibia. It facilitated a conference of major white companies in 1926 which formed two official recruiting companies. These were replaced by the South West Africa Native Labour Association (SWANLA) in the

1930's. Through this body cheap labourers were recruited and assigned to various employers. Local men sold their labour to this body. SWANLA was the recruiting agency which demanded fees from the employers in payment of their services. These fees were then used partly to pay the kings and partly to run the organization. The contract labourers themselves also got remuneration from their employers (Hishongwa 1992:55; Eirola 1992:245). The contract system compelled all Owambo men to be part of the white controlled economy. According to Bishop Winter the system regarded blacks as 'labour units', people who had to work "for the white overlord for the minimum cost with the aim of producing the maximum profit" (1977:94). On the other hand the system barred the unemployed indigenous people from entry into white areas.

Unlike the Germans and South Africans, the Portuguese used direct coercion to recruit indigenous people. Siikonen has this to say: "Portuguese did not rely on voluntary flow of migrant labour, but used taxation and direct coercion to recruit the manpower they needed". For instance, they introduced the hut tax in 1907 (1990:42-43) .

Neither the Rhenish Mission Society nor the Finnish Missionary Society opposed the expropriation of land, livestock and other property from the indigenous people. According to the proclamation of 1922, blacks in the centre and the south of the country were given 10% of the land which was five million hectares out of fifty-seven million hectares. The proclamation of 1923 reduced the five million to two million hectares (Katjavivi 1988:14). Instead of challenging General von Trotha's policy of the extermination of the Hereros, some of the German missionaries justified it "as a terrible but just punishment for the Herero attack on the divinely ordained government of the Protectorate" (Hunke quoted in Soggot 1986:15). Hellberg describes a similar attitude when he says: "Like prodigal sons the Hereros had covered themselves with guilt; they had betrayed the love of the Mission and had forfeited the 'right' to be addressed as Beloved in Jesus Christ"(quoted in Soggot 1986:15). Apart from that, the Rhenish missionaries campaigned for the concentration of converted war survivors in mission stations, where they would be given social assistance and expected to be humble and loving. The RMS benefited from the consequences of war.

3.7.1 Laws controlling the movements of Africans

The movements of Africans in so-called white areas in Namibia were regarded as a threat to them and to SWANLA. Prohibitive laws were made. Proclamation No.3 of 1917 was meant to

regulate the employment and treatment of Natives on mines and other large works. Employers are required to make written contracts with natives, which must be attested before a magistrate or other officer. Compound managers must be appointed by the employers to supervise and control the natives in a compound... Provision is made for the punishment of... offenses by natives such as neglect of duty, intoxication, insubordination, breach of health rules, and desertion..... (Wellington 1967:282).

Proclamation No. 25 of 1920 dealt with the vagrancy of blacks, their imprisonment, fine or punishment when they were found 'wandering abroad' (Wellington 1967:282). This law required the magistrate

to adjudge a first offender under this law to a term of service on public works or with a private person, other than the complainant.... The result of this provision was that farmers, needing labour, often waited outside to engage offenders of this category (1967:282).

The relationship between indigenous people and white employers was regulated by the Masters and Servants Proclamation, No. 34 of 1920. One of its provisions was that a servant who either by drunkenness, or neglect, or who deliberately brought a loss to his/her master must be penalised. A herdsman who did not report either the death or the loss of stock found himself in the same category.

Other laws were Proclamation No. 11 or the Pass law of 1922 which withheld blacks the right to move freely without a permit, while Proclamation No.33 of 1922 prohibited the presence of blacks in public places and streets of towns between 22h00 and 04h00 without a pass or permit. The most devastating of these laws was the "Development of Self-Government for Native Nations in South West Africa act of 1968" (Nambala 1994:132). It exacerbated the situation in that it created ethnic homelands for blacks. The reserves had been established long before as I implied earlier, but the SA government now applied the SA homeland system to the territory, delimitating a separate "homeland" for every ethnic group. The small whites minority was allowed to retain

avast proportion of the agricultural and industrial land.

Proclamations R 17 of 1972 and AG 9 of 1977 authorised the police to use military force in order to demand obedience from the blacks. The Worker's Compensation Act which was passed in 1956, mostly benefited workers considered to be in excessively dangerous working conditions. Gillian and Suzanne Cronje write:

Compensation for severe injury and lump sum payments to relatives in case of death are calculated on the basis of the previous earnings, which means that black families automatically receive less ... A black would get R 400.00 for the loss of an eye, while a white would get R 6000.00 plus other sickness and accident benefits"(1979:48).

The practice of the colonial administrations to determine where the indigenous people must live; to introduce a labour system with meagre wages and to apply draconian laws to control them was not challenged either by the missions or the churches at the initial stages. Katjavivi is right when he writes:

The essence of the upsurge of the new movement in the Christian church in Namibia was caught in the treatment of a biblical text (Matthew 5:39) traditionally used to suppress anger or resistance: But what I tell you is this: do not set yourself against the man who wrongs you. If someone slaps you on the right cheek, turn and offer him your left (1988:32-33).

3.7.2 The contract system and its negative impact on family life

Before the imposition of the contract system upon Owambo men, marriage life meant that a husband stayed at home most of his time. With the arrival of the contract system, married couples were separated for a period of twelve to eighteen months. Both Christianity and the moral standards of Ovawambo sustained them with their teaching of patience. Rauha Voipio writes: "But one has to remember that the original moral standard of the people were strict and that the *Ovambo* themselves considered adultery and other forms of immorality as serious transgressions" (1981:114).

Some contract workers had been devout Christians before the inhumane system was imposed on them. One miner answered Voipio's 1970 questionnaire as follows:

[It is impossible to answer your question, because] God doesn't accept the breakdown of Christian marriage.... We don't know why a man is separated from his wife for twelve months. It means a lot, a lot of homesickness, and later the man commits adultery because of the length of the contract time (1981:114).

Both husband and wife in their separation suffered from strain and loneliness. The time they stayed together after their wedding varied from six weeks to one week a year. (Green and Kiljunen 1981:115). The reason for the rapid return of workers was the attempt the men made for re-employment by the same employers. "My master asked me to return within two months" (Green and Kiljunen 1981:115) was a reply given many times by newly married men. Loneliness made some married men to enter into adultery, drunkenness, financial and moral bankruptcy.

Two dangers are obvious here. One is the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. One of the doctors said the following: "when a young man gets married he often gives his bride together with other presents also the venereal disease he's brought from the south" (Green and Kiljunen 1981:117). The other is mentioned by Cronje:

The effect of the migrant labour system on family life is one of the most traumatic consequences of the apartheid economy... The majority of the black labour force live involuntarily and unnaturally as single men for the greater part of their lives while their wives and children remain in the reserves, supporting themselves on subsistence agriculture (1979:36-37).

Other problems were the inhumane conditions in compounds, movement intimidations, labour bureaucracies, long days of work and the prohibition of forming unions of workers. Homosexuality which was previously unknown among Ovawambo was practised by young men in some compounds. There were a few cases where some contract workers had two women, their wives at home and the illegal ones in towns. *Ova talika ovashunanima* [they are seen as people who have gone back to paganism].

Wives of contract workers suffered most. A survey which was conducted in twenty-one of the ELCIN congregations in 1969 disclosed that 129 wives of contract workers were found to be in prostitution (Kane-Berman 1973: xxix). In some cases young and newly married wives had been left with their in-laws who regarded them as strangers and yet important workers. In the absence of their husbands, wives tried their best to do all the work. They carried the burden alone. The division of labour, which was kept very strictly in Owambo, should not have been applicable in the absence of husbands. Most of them retained fidelity for their husbands. The following is a complaint made by some pastors in connection with the unbearable burden that wives of contract workers carried:

The wife is exhausted by the household work she has to do on her own and that should be really done by two people. If the man is not at home, the wife toils almost until she kills herself with work. If the men were away for six months and the other six months he were at home, it would be more bearable. (Voipio 1981:118).

Besides the hard work, wives also suffered because of the lack of literacy. Many men and women in Owambo were illiterate. Their correspondence was very weak. In some cases it took weeks or months for a wife to inform the husband about a baby born in the family. The same thing happened also to a husband sending a name for a baby born in Owambo. The author experienced a case where his father, who was a miner in Johannesburg, South Africa, was reported killed underground, together with all his team mates. The family mourned and forgot. After one year his father, who was in good health, came home with the story that he alone survived the accident.

The father-son and-daughter relationships were disturbed by this separation. One contract worker complained: "Because of the contract my children don't know me any more. I have become a stranger to my own children. I left a small child at home. On my return he ran and asked his mother who this strange man was. This distresses me"(Green and Kiljunen 1981:117). Although most wives did well to bring their children up, the absence of their husbands had a negative impact, especially on boys. Family devotions in the house were forsaken. Disobedience, truancy, drunkenness and vagrancy were common among boys while girls fell into immorality, prostitution and drunkenness. Children missed the patriarchal figure and his influence in the house.

The responses of the respondents of Voipio made it very clear that the missions and the churches taught their parishioners the significance of marriage. That teaching empowered the faith and moral behaviour of many contract workers. It was because of the importance of marriage that they expected the missions and churches to intervene in their sufferings on behalf of God who has instituted marriage. Not only that, but they also expected the missions and churches to teach them that slave trade and forced labour were prohibited in the Mandate given to South Africa to administer Namibia as a 'sacred trust of civilization' by the League of Nations. This mandate reads: "The Mandatory shall promote to the utmost the material and moral well-being, and the social progress of the inhabitants of the Territory...the Mandate shall see that the slave trade is prohibited, and that no forced labour is permitted except for essential public works and services, and then only for adequate remuneration"(Katjavivi 1988:13). The contents of the Mandate was not inculcated into the consciences of the inhabitants; therefore the majority did not know of their rights under the Mandate and little real power they had to change the entire system.

Through parish pastors the church was baptising children of the fathers who were absent on contract work. In this regard the fathers on contract work were replaced by a father substitute who together with the mother and the god-parents carried children to the altar. I have acted as a god-parent in my first parish when a father, who was a contract worker, failed to show up at ten o'clock Sunday morning. Through evangelists and pastors, who served among contract workers, the church was aware of the pass laws, police harassment, night passes, tiny salaries and many other ill-treatments the workers underwent. For instance, Christian workers were not allowed to attend night services without night passes from their employers.

3.7.3 The meagre wages and salaries

Employers and employees were not allowed to negotiate wages between themselves. SWANLA fixed the minimum wages for Owambo contract workers in advance. The Labour Bureau determined the type of work and the employer.

It is not easy to retrieve wage figures prior to 1950. Moorsom gave these figures of 1920:

An average yearly wage was 30 pounds. Out of it £5 [five pounds] went to gifts or taxes to the king; £4 [four pounds] to clothes; £10 [ten pounds] was used for

purchases and the rest £4-5 [four to five pounds] was expended in Ovamboland (quoted in Peltola 1995:71)

The exchange system in the country was very poor. The South African currency was one pound which was equivalent to twenty shillings (240 pennies). A hoe or a block of salt could be exchanged for a cattle (Peltola 1995:71).

Voipio quoted 1965 salary levels as follows:

Ovambo men are divided into three classes: A, B and C. An A-man is physically strong and fit for heavy labour; a B-man is not quite as strong; and a C-man is either a young boy (under 16) or physically weak. As an illustration of salary levels; an unqualified young male house servant gets a minimum of R 3.75 a month for a 12 month contract; a cattle shepherd sleeping outside gets R 5.25. The minimum salary of a qualified B-man is only R 5, and if he comes back to the same employer it is R 7.50. A beginner in the mines gets 30c per shift; by the end of the contract 40c. This works out at about R 8.69 per month....(Voipio 1981:121).

Hellberg's estimation of R 18 as the monthly income for unqualified black workers and R 325 for unskilled whites in 1975 portrayed a little improvement (quoted in Hishongwa 1992:67). Roger's 1978 salary levels are as follows:

The workers were divided into three classes. The lowest class comprised foreign and contract labourers who earned between 24c and 60c per hour, the middle class earned from 60c to R 1.00 per hour, while the senior class earned from 60c to R 1,50 an hour. By comparison, the white workers earned between R 2,60 to R 5,00 per hour. White managers earned R 1500 to R 2000 per month (quoted in Hishongwa 1992:67).

An example of salary levels at three major mines in Namibia should help us to understand the situation better. In 1982 the minimum salary plus overtime for an unskilled worker was estimated between R 230 and R 398 a month at Consolidated Diamond Mines (CDM). At Tsumeb Corporation Limited (TCL) things were worse. The minimum wage for a black worker was R 106.60 which was under the poverty line.

Rossing's wages and salaries were based on table of twenty different pay scales, scales one to eight for hourly paid day-rate workers, and scales nine to twenty for monthly paid salaried staff. Each of the twenty pay scales had a different rate of pay depending on the worker's colour.... Out of 2 382 workers employed in 1977, a total of 702, or 71%, were 'day - rate' workers who were either black or coloured'. The minimum monthly wage was R 135 at the lowest scale, and the maximum monthly wage for a day - rate labourer was R 557. Of the 608 salaried staff, 604 were whites and four were 'coloureds'. Not a single black person was a member of the salaried staff. Their minimum monthly salary was R 300 and the maximum was R 1400 (United Nations Reference Book on Major Transnational Corporations Operating in Namibia quoted in Hishongwa 1992:68).

The minimum salary for the lowest scale in 1977 was R 135, the maximum R 557, while the minimum salary for the monthly paid salaried was R 300 and the maximum R 1400 per month.

The wages were not fixed according to the employee's qualification, skills or experience. Some employers defended the low salary of contract workers and regarded it as pocket money since workers were receiving free food and lodging. Contract workers maintained that they were forced to take up jobs against their will. The working hours per day were also not fixed. Moreover, it was not possible to apply for more lucrative jobs:

The Ovambo [Omuwambo] goes to the labour bureau and says 'I am a driver and I want to work as a driver.' He is told, 'You are going to build rooms, and the pay is five rand per week.' If he says 'I don't want building work, and I am not satisfied with five rand per week,' he is chased back to Owambo and there are no means of self-protection (Cronje 1979:33).

The crucial issue for the contract workers was to support their families. The majority of them adhered to this important responsibility. They supported their household, parents, brothers, sisters, neighbours and other close relatives. Tribal tax money, as well as hospital, school and church fees were taken from these tiny salaries. Some wives were not aware of the amounts earned, so they were not satisfied with the small gifts their husbands could offer them. In order to alleviate the problems mentioned above, some husbands decided to prolong their twelve month contract to eighteen months. It was a hard blow to their marriage relationships. In the 1971-1972 strike the contract workers' many decades of patience with the contract system came to an end.

There is no doubt that the missions and churches were instrumental in strengthening morale and spiritual upliftment of the workers to achieve a better deal. However, the missions and churches should have worked for the rights of workers to bargain on wages, the type of work, the place of employment, medical care, pension and self-protection to be entrenched in the legal system.

3.7.4 The workers' ceaseless resistance towards the contract system

A burning question among the contract workers in the 1950's was about who would help them to change the migrant labour system under the South African government. Workers as well as all Namibians had hoped that the United Nations might help them out (Kutako 1989:111-115). When this hope proved futile, workers looked for other alternatives. Many workers from Owambo illegally left Namibia to work in South African mines. Among them was Toivo jaToivo, a founder leader of SWAPO. At Cape Town in South Africa, in 1958, about 200 workers established an organisation for workers. Its name was *Ovamboland People's Congress (OPC)*. The primary aim of the organisation was to improve the working conditions among its workers in South Africa and Namibia (Katjavivi 1988:20). It campaigned for support among workers in factories and mines. OPC was later reformed to become the *Ovamboland People's Organisation* and then the *South West Africa People's Organisation* in 1960. SWAPO liberated Namibia politically from the South African rule in 1990.

The other option the migrant workers used to change the system was strikes. A major general strike occurred on the 2nd December 1893 at the Otavi mine. Gillian and Suzanne Cronje recorded that twenty-five major strikes took place country-wide at various mines and factories between the years 1915 and 1972 (1979:78-79). Four workers were reported to have died in these strikes. One of the four was shot dead by a thirteen year old white boy. The other three were shot dead by police in 1953 at Lüderitz. Seventeen workers were fined, while sixty-eight were arrested and sentenced to either 3-9 months in jail or to pay £30 [thirty pounds] each (Gillian and Suzanne Cronje 1979:79).

According to the report of Gillian and Suzanne Cronje discloses that the following grievances led to these strikes: the issue of working clothes; bad relations between workers, foremen and

Cronje 1979:79).

According to the report of Gillian and Suzanne Cronje discloses that the following grievances led to these strikes: the issue of working clothes; bad relations between workers, foremen and employers; assault, intimidation and threatening of labourers; x-ray examinations for pilfered diamonds for departing migrant workers; late payments; the shooting of a worker by a thirteen year old white boy; furnace working conditions; twelve to eighteen working hours a day; arrest of some workers; the demand that night shifts be paid at overtime rate; protest against the system of pass laws and the abolition of the migrant labour system itself (1979:78-79).

3.7.5 The church and the migrant labour system

The first question to be answered here is whether the missionaries and the church leaders knew the system which prevailed among the people they were serving. The answer is definitely yes. "The Finnish mission ... was well aware to the situation of the migrant workers walking over the Etosha plain to labour in the service of Germans at the turn of the century" (Peltola 1995:124). More important is the question which approach the mission/church adopted for wick reasons.

The Finnish missionaries had known about this deal from the beginning. Mr Haag, the first German Otavi railway recruiting officer, brought "75 kg of rice ... and also donated a sum of money to the Finnish mission" (Pettinen to Mustakallio quoted in Eirola 1992:214) There were many other incidents when missionaries benefited from the migrant labour system. "... since 1907 the Otavi Minen -und Eisenbahngesellschaft (OMEG) used to pay a remuneration to the FMS for the travel documents which Martti Rautanen wrote for Ndonga men going to Tsumeb" (Rautanen to Mustakallio quoted in Eirola 1992:216). It was also reported that

the good offices of the Finnish missionaries were also rewarded in other ways, e.g. when one of them travelled by a train at a discount in 1907 as he was simultaneously acting as interpreter for a group of 47 migrant workers going from Outjo to Karibib on the same train (Tuiminen to Mustakallio quoted in Eirola 1992:216).

Historically, missionary work came before the establishment of the migrant labour system in the

country. Missionaries, especially presiding missionaries, were close friends and advisers to local kings. There is no way that they did not know the deal between SWANLA and the local kings in Owambo.

Abisai Shejavali writes:

Otu na okutya, oilonga yodalate oya etela oiwana yetu nongerki yetu oudjuu. Okutukuka kweefamili efimbo lile ohaku twala moshiponga. Meehombo mwa holoka ounona vadja kondje yohombo. Eliyalo noutondwe wa holoka meumbo neembinga mbali da fikamena ovanahombo: okutukuka ile okulididimikila osho sha holoka po. Oshinima eshi otashi pumbwa okundokotolwa, opo pa holoke omufudo mupe [We have also to say that the migrant labour system has brought difficulty to our kingdoms and to our church. The separation of families for a long period of time leads families into danger. Illegitimate children were born into marriages. Resentment and hatred grew high in the house with two alternatives remaining, either to divorce or to be patient with what occurred. This matter must be resolved]” (1970:142).

In 1947 the Finnish missionaries and the ELOC pastors sought co-operation with the Dutch Reformed Church and the Rhenish missions in the south. The issue at hand was how and who was to render spiritual services to contract workers. In a meeting between the Finns, ELOC and the other two missions on the 9th May 1947 at Karibib, an agreement was reached. It was called *eudafano lavatatu* or “*die Driehoek-ooreenkoms*” [Triangular Agreement] (Shejavali 1970:140). In accordance with the agreement reached, the Finnish mission and ELOC would train and install evangelists among workers and provide them with Christian literature. The Rhenish mission would allow its premises to be used for worship services, provide workers where possible with pastoral service and supervise the selling of literature. The Dutch Reformed Church undertook the responsibility of paying the salaries of the evangelists and their housing costs. The plan was implemented in 1949 when ELOC sent the first evangelist. In 1968 there were altogether 22 evangelists employed full-time among contract workers.

The agreement was continued with ELCIN and ELCRIN as independent Churches in 1957. All in all it existed for about 23 years when the Dutch Reformed Church dissolved it with the purpose of doing its own mission. The amount of money used was about R 10 000 in 1969 (Voipio 1970:122-129). For supervision and coordination purposes the Finnish Mission sent Finnish

pastors to work with the evangelists as from 1954.

In 1967 the ELOC Church Council passed a resolution that authorised contract workers while at work to pay annual church contribution to their congregations through the central church bank account. Contract workers have been the economic as well as the spiritual backbone of the parishes and the church as a whole. Besides pay the annual church contributions they uplifted parishes financially through collections and voluntary gifts. Up to today the ELCIN Church members adhere to the method mentioned above.

The workers are a formidable segment of the church that must not be forgotten. In Voipio's booklet, *Contract work through Ovambo eyes*, ELOC pastors were complaining that the long absence of husbands from their households was, among others, the cause of bad behaviour among children of contract workers. They witnessed workers who cited various texts in the Bible as an attempt to call God to intervene in their situation.

In response to Voipio's questionnaire, an Owambo pastor replied:

The lack of work makes men go. On the other hand it must be said that they are not given enough money. If the salary were sufficient they could help their families and fathers for a long time. Isn't it true that everywhere in the world a man is paid according to his knowledge and skills in his work? (Voipio 1981:122-123).

As it was said before, the church was receiving annual contributions from the workers who were trapped in this [life and death] situation. The church was also aware of immorality, drunkenness and adultery prevailing among contract workers. One ELOC evangelist raised the following complaint:

I'm talking about a burden on my heart because I'm here on the spot in Hereroland. I don't have anyone here to discuss this matter with, Our young men and old men too, corrupt this parish of the Rhenish Church begetting children, by rejecting them and returning to Ovamboland. The women here in Hereroland do not get married and live with one man, instead they have become objects of trade. The Ovambo [Omuwambo] who has committed fornication here is unmarried in Ovamboland, a Christian, as well as the woman (sic) with whom he has procreated

a child. If he wants to marry her, the government refuses saying that he can well beget children but he had to be unmarried. That is impurity. What can take away this difficulty? A change in the law of the government of the law of the Church (Voipio 1981:114).

It seems much was expected from the Finnish mission and the ELOC Church to help change the working condition of the contract workers. The church had a limited vision. It saw itself as a spiritual transformer and excluded the social and economic aspects of the lives of the people. It acted as a church in diaspora, meaning that it baptised, confirmed, counselled, administered the sacraments and many other church activities. Its bishops and other church leaders visited the workers at farms and many other working places and negotiated about spiritual matters with the employers. Among other exhortations, the workers were encouraged to normalise their relations with their employers despite the difficulties; to keep their work and the tiny wages; to be faithful to the church and to their wives in the homelands; to send their yearly church contributions to their respective parishes. As one could detect from the above exhortations, the missions and the churches saw the contract system as a means of their financial survival and the survival of the families of the workers in the barren reserves. Instead of condemning the inhumane system of exploitation and oppression they exhorted workers to be obedient. They did not initiate strategies that protected human dignity, rather they emphasised the dignity of work and the survival of communities in reserves. Very little was said about the impact of the migrant labour system on the life of contract workers and their families. Nambala writes that: *ongeleki oi tonde oilonga yokodalate, ndele oya popya ko shishona shona kuyo moule weedula dihapu da pita po* [the Church abhors the migratory labour system, but very little was said by the church for many years] (Nambala 1994:136).

The Anglican Church which established itself in 1924 in Owambo, took lead in speaking against the injustices of the legal system. It was determined not to compromise either with the migratory labour system or with the apartheid policy of the former South African National Party government. Reverend Michael Scott, an Anglican priest, was the first religious figure to petition for the Namibian issue at the United Nations in 1947. Rev. Theophilus Hamutumbangela took the lead in Owambo to defend the rights of the workers and did the primary preparations for the birth of *Ovamboland People's Organization (OPO)*. It was a dangerous political situation. A church

that stuck out its neck, was ostracised. Three successive bishops, Bishop Robert Mize (1968), Bishop Colin O' Brien Winter (1972), Bishop Richard Wood (1975), Rev. Edward Morrow (1978) and many other church workers were expelled from Namibia (Nambala 1994:136). Besides his opposition to racism and its practice, Bishop Winter openly supported the workers' strike in 1971-1972.

The Evangelical Lutheran Ovambo-Kavango Church knew, but did not understand, the migrant labour system, as well as the political situation in the country until the early 1960's. Some Finns termed *Ovamboland People Organization (OPO)* leaders and their activities as communist (Peltola 1995:126). Missionary Erkki Hynönen was reported to have been hiding a shot gun under his waterproof clothes in his sitting room as a protection against OPO's anti-Christian elements (Peltola 1995:127). The missionaries thought that it was too early for the indigenous people to carry national responsibilities. To them indigenous people were incapable of leading a country. They considered themselves in need of more time for preparing the indigenous people to reach that stage.

However, among other missionaries, Marta and Hendrik von Schanz, Mikko and Kirsti Ihamäki and Rauha Voipio developed an early comprehension of the objectives of the workers. In his visit to Owambo in 1961, Archbishop Mikko Juva pleaded with missionaries and ELOC pastors to develop a positive attitude towards the liberation movement. Here follows an example of how some indigenous pastors shown passive attitude against members of *Ovamboland People's Organization (OPO)*.

The Lutheran Reverends Nhinda of Engela and Shindongo of Oniimwandi refused to conduct baptism, confirmation or marriage services for OPO members and banned the meetings of OPO 'anti-Christ elements' on or near the premises. Pastor Shikondomboro of Nkurenkuru was killed, presumably because of his attitude to SWAPO, and his wife was still in 1992 in self-imposed exile in Botswana (Shityuwete quoted in Peltola 1995:127).

The positive attitude of ELOC towards the political, economic and social situation in the country began to emerge when Bishop Auala took over the leadership in 1960. Missionaries also changed their negative attitude towards OPO leadership and supported the indigenous people morally, and

influenced their governments to support the Namibian struggle. The Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Namibia made their voices known for the first time in the Open Letter of 30 June 1971 to the then Prime Minister of South Africa, Mr B.J. Vorster. Its Article Five reads as follows:

Through the application of Job Reservation the right to a free choice of profession is hindered and this causes low remuneration and unemployment. There can be no doubt that the contract system breaks up healthy family life because the prohibition of a person from living where he works, hinders the cohabitation of families. This conflicts with sections 23 and 25 of the Human Rights (Open letter to Prime Minister Mr B.J. Vorster of June 30 1971 quoted Serfontein 1976:399-400).

In 1972 the Black Lutheran Churches in Namibia established a body called the United Evangelical Lutheran Churches of South West Africa (UELCSWA) as a joint venture from which they could operate. When intimidation, repression and attacks on the churches increased, eight churches, including the German Lutheran Church and the Roman Catholic Church, formed the Council of Churches in Namibia (CCN) in 1978 with its offices in Windhoek, the capital. This council was a supporter of the liberation movement, SWAPO. It has played an influential role in bodies such as the World Council of Churches and the Lutheran World Federation. It campaigned for the independence of Namibia and therefore was entrusted with the responsibility of the reception, repatriation, resettlement and rehabilitation of 45000 exiles.

3.7.6 Evaluation

The contract workers initiated amicable alternatives that eventually led to the abolition of the contract system and the liberation of the whole country. Their achievements have been a reminder that lay people have a variety of leadership qualities that need to be explored. Next we are going to see how the missionaries and the Evangelical Lutheran Ovambo-Kavango Church perceived the migrant labour system.

On the one hand the spiritual upliftment conducted by the Missions and Churches among the contract workers in the country strengthened the workers in their inhumane working situations.

On the other missionaries and church workers did not use the Scriptures and theology to challenge exploitation and oppression of contract workers in the country. It seems as if they thought that the work was more important than the people who suffered. The analysis of Dr Philip who was the Superintendent of the London Missionary Society (1829-) and an advocate of the freedom of slaves is applicable here (Seoka 1994:75). According to Philip the missionaries and church workers emphasised the dignity of work and not the worthiness of workers. They neither challenged the inhumane contract system nor proposed the transformation of the working place.

Except that the missionaries benefited financially from the contract system, they considered the white employers as their equals with whom they shared and kept secrets. Issues were negotiated and agreed upon between themselves before being cautiously translated to indigenous people. Unlike the indigenous people the missionaries, the colonists and the employers understood each other. They maintained their unity in whatever situation in order to prevent any possible insubordination in this regard (Scott 1990:56). Missionaries acted in the spirit of betraying the indigenous people as it is evident in the words of Pastor Paul who refers to the relation between the German colonists and the Rhenish missionaries that "...she [the church] must rather - even in individual instances - offer herself as the spokesman for the natives, since she is by her very nature in a better position to gain their confidence"(quoted in Equist 1990:50).

Unlike their predecessors the indigenous church leaders were in the process of determining their role in the church and in the community. The pietistic church legacy, the authoritarian Owambo culture, the foreign political domination in the country as well as the lack of national political experiences were some of the obstacles in the way of the new leaders. But even if we concede these difficulties, the fact remains that the church, under the leadership of the indigenous leaders, has also ignored the social and economic conditions of the contract workers. It failed to interpret the working situation theologically with the intention to develop a system that could enable it to cooperate with the workers. It left the theology of work to lay persons.

The church neglected its prime responsibility to teach the victims their rights to participate fully in decision-making processes; to regain their social dignity to resist a system where the workers had no bargain privileges and no access to an industrial court; where the workers were foreigners

in their own country who served the needs and interests of the privileged white communities in industrial and urban areas. As other employees in various governmental departments and private sectors, the workers have a right to participate in the equitable distribution of wealth in the country and to receive solidarity and support from the church in this regard. It is obvious that such negligence indirectly supported the contract system in the country, and this in spite of the fact that the contract workers supported the church continuously and faithfully.

3.8 A critical analysis of the leadership model of the Finnish missionaries in the mission field, Owambo

3.8.1 Positive aspect of the leadership model of the Finnish missionaries

The Board of the Finnish Missionary Society abroad and its representatives in the field have succeeded in doing the kind of mission work they had set out to do. Hahn played an important role in directing and advising the Finnish Missionary Society to take Owambo as its mission field. He played a role in the composition of the first group of missionaries to be sent to the field. It was him who convinced FMS “to send handicraftsmen and colonists with proper missionaries to Africa” (Peltola and Pauna, quoted in Eirola 1985:61). There were no Finnish settlers in Owambo for the few handicraftsmen and colonists, who came with the first group of missionaries went back to Finland.

When the Board of FMS failed to find a superintendent among its first missionaries, it delegated the task to Hahn for at least five years (1868-1873). It is to be regarded as a sign of wisdom that the Finns were willing to cooperate with other Lutherans and avail themselves of the knowledge of an experienced pioneer in the field without any ethnic prejudices. With Hahn’s departure from Namibia in 1873, supervision of the Finnish field work went to the first Presiding Missionary, B.B. Björklund.

There was to some extent a participatory reporting in the instructions given to missionaries. Missionaries were directed to keep diaries from which they were to compile quarterly reports about their activities. The quarterly reports mentioned were sent through the presiding missionary

to the Board together with the minutes of the Brother Conferences” (Minutes of the Board quoted in Eirola 1985:66).

Management on the mission field was characterised by collective treatment of matters in the form of common Brother conferences. They were held quite frequently. However, the patriarchal guardianship of the Board as well as long distances and slow postal communications with the home country were making work rigid. (Peltola quoted in Eirola 1986:66).

As in the case of Moses or the apostles, the presiding missionary had to devote his time to spiritual guidance and not to administrative issues. In many cases a special treasurer and book-keeper were appointed to minimise the workload of the spiritual leader.

The Finnish missionaries proved to be excellent planners. Their expertise is observed in how they managed to establish five stations in three different kingdoms within two to three years of their arrival in Owambo (1870-1872). The ELCIN Church has inherited from them the system of establishing outstations around each parish/congregation.

The Finns gained the trust of kings and the local indigenous people and created an intimate relationship with them by learning their languages and offering health services.

In Ondonga, Martti Rautanen established particularly close relations with King Kamonde kaMpingana (1884-1909), who was ready to bring up political matters with him by 1886, after two years of his reign. Five years later their relationship had developed so far that the King did not want his aide to go away for vacation in Finland on account of the tense internal situation in Ondonga caused by the division of the Kingdom (Martti Rautanen’s Diary (MRD) quoted in Eirola 1992:57).

“Often missionaries achieved the position of chief’s adviser” (Peltola quoted in Eirola 1985:64). Due to the close relationships mentioned before, “in 1909, Missionary August Hanninen (1876-1950) was even proposed to be the chief [King] of Uukwaluudhi, when the former ruler died” (Pentti quoted in Eirola 1985:64).

The presiding missionaries in the mission field secured a high position in the Society when they acted as unofficial mediators between German colonists and local kings. Here the Finns portrayed themselves as leaders who showed obedience to whoever ruled in order to reach their goals. Peltola puts it this way: “when there were no colonial authorities in Ovamboland, the touchstone between the government and the local African rulers was kept through correspondence which the missionaries took care of” (Peltola quoted in Eirola 1985:64). This kind of relationship could be described as mutually beneficial for both groups. The Finns wanted to secure their mission activity among those communities while the kings benefited by receiving new commodities including firearms from the missionaries. But it is noteworthy that the kings did not know the plans of the colonial rulers while the missionaries did.

This mutual relationship and correspondence ceased immediately when Owambo fell under German rule, and more so when Namibia was declared a Mandatory territory by the League of Nations. When the kings lost their ruling powers, the Finns pay more attention to the new authorities and the activities between them and the colonial rulers.

The Finnish missionaries acted also as healers for kings and community members. Missionary Jurvelin acted as a healer to King Shikongo shaKalulu in 1871, followed by Tolonen after the former’s dismissal by the same king. When Tolonen was in Finland, Skoglund replaced him as a healer to King Kambonde kaNkwaya. Closeness and trust between missionaries, kings and their people were developed. King Kambonde kaNkwaya’s lamentation at the death of Skoglund reveals this relationship: “My heart and my head are full of tears; I cannot speak. He was my true friend and helper, and I shall mourn him all my life” (Nambala 1994:82). Apart from these initial healing said above, the contribution to the health care of Owambo by the Finns was enormous. Among many tropical diseases, “the sexually transmitted diseases, tuberculosis, contagious diseases, malaria which were threatening to destroy people” (Munyika 1997:286) were cured. The social gospel was enacted in this way.

The Finns brought literacy to Owambo. Before their arrival in the region, all means of communication were done orally. Shejavali puts it this way: *Ovatumwa ovo ovahoveleli velaka lOshiwambo omambo...* [Missionaries were the pioneers writing the first books in Oshiwambo]

(1970:163). A printing press was built to produce necessary literature. It was early in 1889 when Martti Rautanen translated the *Small Catechism*, a book with Bible stories and the New Testament. They were published in 1903. Seventeen years after this, the Old Testament was translated and published. Rautanen was therefore honoured with a D. Th. honoris causa degree by the University of Helsinki for the great contribution he made in Owambo since 1870 (Shejavali 1970:34; Nambala 1994:87). After Rautanen, Toivo E. Tirronen, the well-known former principal of Oshigambo High School, contributed to the development of Oshiwambo by writing and translating many basic books into Oshindonga.

The education introduced by missionaries was partly spiritual and partly general knowledge. At schools, the Bible knowledge period was always the first. The meaning conveyed by this practice was: put God first and the rest will be added to you. Besides the gospel, basic education in vocational skills, different sciences, arithmetic, mathematics, geography, history and languages were offered. This new learning opened up and shaped the minds of Ovawambo to a very great extent.

Valuable information for future generations was collected and preserved by some missionaries. They were August Pettinen, Emil Liljeblad and Martti Rautanen, To express this important work we quote Eirola:

As their secondary interest the missionaries have done a remarkable scientific work by collecting folklore information and ethnographical materials, making meteorological observations, collecting plants etc. From them unique collections have been preserved for coming generations (Eirola 1985:65).

On the one hand in order to achieve their objectives the missionaries introduced protective and nurturing communities in which the new converts would withstand the social pressure of their non-converted environments. They needed protective and nurturing communities in order to grow and to be capable of witnessing to the world outside. It was from these communities that Christian faith spread to all parts of the mission field. Most first generation of teachers, evangelists, pastors and other church workers were nurtured and brought up in these communities.

The objectives of doing mission work in Owambo have been achieved. The gospel message has been carried to various Owambo kingdoms and communities. The Finns have maintained evangelisation as their number one priority which was complemented by education and hospital services. This kind of strategy led the mission field to become the strongest Christian body in the area.

3.8.2 Negative aspects about leadership model of the Finnish Missionaries

To facilitate their work, the Finnish missionaries formed a social unit out of the converts at mission stations and in emerging congregations. Foster children, servants, baptised pupils and other converts were fathered at mission stations. Rautanen writes, "The Finns deliberately tried to father all the Christians close to the stations in order to separate them from their presumed heathen background" (quoted in Eirola 1992:52). The result was that Christians became subject to the Finns who placed them under their spiritual as well as their secular authority. The authority of kings and chiefs was undermined.

On the other the protective and nurturing communities had the following disadvantages: The cultural gap between the converted and the non-converted communities was encouraged.

It inculcated in the minds of those Christians the belief that they were holier and better off than others. This tendency was obvious among most first generation Christians including their progeny. Practically they tended to regard other Christians as "sinners". The legacy had also had an impact on the theological training of our ministers. The former theological seminary, Paulinum, was erected far away from "the corrupted environments, cities and communities". Whereas, instead of being part of the people we serve, we withdrew from them. The result is that our strengths to know and to interact with people are weakened or not developed fully.

The Finns could had attempted two things. One, to place the converts under their spiritual authority only and leave the secular domain to kings and other local rulers. This meant that the kings had no authority over converts who were their subjects. Two, they could had explored the possibility of including the rulers in their task of conversion. They tried very hard to win over the kings and cooperate with them in every possible way to secure their mission activities in the

kingdoms, but not to consider them as “co-workers”.

Politically, there was competition between chiefs, counsellors, diviners, healers, other indigenous officials and the Finns. Each group furthered its interests and attempted to win the favour of the king. During the rule of King Kambonde kaMpingana in Ondonga, for example, the Finns termed a political group led by Mpingana yaShimbu, Kambonde’s father, and Nambahu, Councillor-in-chief to King Kambonde, which was opposed to their participation in politics, a “heathen party” (Eirola 1992:52). The Finns literally became members of the privileged ruling group. Being part of the ruling class, the Finns had direct access to the king, participated in all levels of administration, were appointed as district chiefs and personal assistants and advisers to the King (Eirola 1992:52). This move contradicted one of their fundamental teachings, namely that Christians should transform communities with humility and never through political power.

Missionaries, in many instances, fuelled internal wars. When fighting between King Kambonde and Iifo yaNankwaya, a member of the King’s royal clan, broke out in Ondonga, for example, “Rautanen provided supplies for King Kambonde and the missionary Yrjo Roiha in Oshitambi for Chief Nehale” (MRD quoted in Eirola 1992:57). A similar incident took place in the south of the country during the wars between Kaptein Swartbooi and Kaptein Oasib when missionary Kleinschmidt supplied Swartbooi with gunpowder, while missionary Vollmer lobbied at the Cape for a supply of ammunition for Oasib (Lau 1982:193). When Chief Maharero died, the German colonial authorities and the missionaries supported the claim of his son Samuel Maharero (a Christian) but who was not the first in the line of succession. They rejected Nikodemus Kambahahiza Kavikunua, son of Maharero’s older brother who should have inherited the chieftom of the Maharero group in Okahandja. In 1896, Kambahahiza, together with Kahimenua, rebelled against the continuing encroachment of the Germans in the country. In the same year, the two latter chiefs were killed and cattle of the eastern Hereros were expropriated when Samuel Maharero sided with the Germans (Katjavivi 1988:8).

There were times when the Finns appointed themselves as mediators between local kings and the German colonial officials. The incident on 31 May 1908 at Oniipa when the missionaries took a decision to participate in a meeting between the kings and the German District Commissioner,

sheds light in this regard. The Finns had the following reasons to justify their mediatory role.

.. they hoped to safeguard the interests of missionary work and also the people, since by withdrawing from the issue they would have lost the chance to influence the development of affairs and thus have neglected their responsibility for the people (Minutes of the Missionary Conference quoted in Eirola 1992:224).

Martti Rautanen, who was a presiding missionary when Franke, the German District Commissioner, and his expedition visited Owambo, used similar arguments to support the participation of the Finns in politics. He said that the Commissioner came to discuss with the people, whose well-being the Finnish missionaries were promoting, and that they saw themselves as spokespersons for the local people's rights (MRD quoted in Eirola 1992:225). The Finns in this regard acted as spokespersons for the local people's rights because the issue at hand threatened their interests. They should have been spokespersons in both normal and difficult circumstances.

The Finns were never as neutral as they claimed to be. They acted as informants, agents, middlemen, interpreters, guides and a 'channel for information about the colonial power's intentions' (MRD quoted in Eirola 1992:95). Various confidential and informative reports, either from the Finns own initiative or from that of the colonialists, were sent by the Finns to the German authorities. Things such as the attitudes of the northern rulers towards the European invaders, the slave trade, famine, as well as local cultural conditions were part of these reports. This information was kept secret from indigenous leaders.

Since their arrival in Owambo the Finnish missionaries made the indigenous people believe that they were not political plotters and spies, but people of God who differed from traders and colonists. But in reality the role they played was that of skilful diplomacy that convinced the German colonists not to use military force when seizing Owambo from the kings. The kings were silenced when advised not to raise political questions, but to respond to questions asked and to receive the colonists friendly. The kings in their innocence were manipulated and undermined because they did not know that their silence would be taken as agreements. The stance to keep silent was probably built around the Oshiwambo proverb that says: *Mbululu kond'omulungu okana oke et'ekumbu lyamwene* [Say no by being silent because to express your stance

[immediately] may put you in a dangerous position] (Angula quoted in Laurmaa 1949:150). The Finns knew both languages and traditions. In a secret deal between the missionaries and the colonists, the colonists were requested not to do things that were in conflict with the position of the missionaries.

The Finnish Missionary Society followed the general norm that women did not have equal status at that time. Gender discrimination was practised among the Finnish missionaries. Women did not have the privilege of serving either as directors of the FMS at home, presiding missionaries, or even treasurers in the mission field. There was a time in the Owambo mission field when separate meetings between female and male missionaries were held. Women were not allowed to climb the ladder of leadership. They led boarding schools for girls and hospitals as deaconesses, but the mission stations as well as the emerging congregations were led by men. Things were done in a patriarchal and paternalistic way. I believe that this practice was a combination of both the Finnish and the Owambo attitude of men towards women in leadership positions. It culminated in the practice of both the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia to withhold women ordination, as we shall see later.

The theological training of indigenous church leaders was postponed for nearly fifty-two years (1870-1922) after the establishment of the Owambo mission field. As indicated earlier, the Finns were systematic planners, but why did they not plan ahead in this case? Many things can be said about this. As it is generally the case, it was also not easy for the Finnish leaders in the mission field to vacate their leadership positions. Positions are associated with better jobs, salaries and promotions they would not have received at home. It was said earlier that The Finns had the argument that the indigenous leaders were “not yet ready” to take over the church or government leadership. The question to be asked is when is a person ever ready? It is true that the prolonging of the control of missionaries over indigenous leadership cost the home base a lot of money. But, it is also to be taken into account that the home base depended totally upon the information furnished them by the leadership in the field. The home base has continued to support the mission field even forty years after its independence. The process was delayed because the Finnish leaders in the mission field set up criteria which were not shared among workers in the field and they withheld the jobs from the indigenous clergy. They believed that they were able to do things much

better than the indigenous leaders. The training of indigenous clergy in leadership and management was neglected because missionaries thought that they had much time to spend in the mission field. As said before, until the early sixties, the Finns did not regard indigenous leaders as mature and capable enough to run national organizations such as church and government. This was an underestimation of the capacity of the local population to develop capable leaders. However, it ought to be noted also that the prolonging of the handing over of the church leadership into the hands of an indigenous leadership was partly a result of the lack of means to set up schools and theological training facilities which would satisfy the quality standards of the Finns.

The Owambo theological seminary functioned for thirty-five years without a curriculum (1922-1957). The danger of not following a certain curriculum is, in the first instance, teaching without well-defined objectives. The second danger is for the teachers to teach their favourite subjects and to neglect other subjects. In 1957 the seminary adopted an outdated Finnish seminary curriculum. Although it was reframed, reshaped and shortened in order to fit into the Owambo seminary context, its Finnish patterns remained. The students who studied under such a curriculum were made good Finnish theologians who had to serve Owambo communities with their quite different theological problems.

The Finnish missionaries produced low quality indigenous pastors who were only capable of serving the unlearned people in Owambo. In their training the Finnish lecturers deliberately avoided various theological schools and sources that represented liberal theology, other interpretations and scientific problems. Instead, students were taught to know the Bible as an unerring book, a teaching that prevented them from engaging in significant critique of the Bible. The students were offered narrow vision. As mentioned before, the students were mature and stable personalities. If the other schools of thoughts were too sophisticated for the students, the lecturers could have simplified them for them. One must understand the fear, but teaching someone about something is opening his/her eyes to see what he/she was not able to see. But this does not necessarily mean that he/she would forthwith adopt a problematic stance uncritically. Could the motive have been to create a narrow vision so as to prevent indigenous pastors from engaging in intellectual pursuits? This possibility led me to suspect five things. First, some of the

lecturers were conservative; so they did not want to allow any change. Second, they wanted to avoid possible criticisms from future theologians. But the challenges posed by science were significant to the Owambo Christians at their own level of understanding. Withholding this valuable information could be more harmful than presenting it in a simplified form for the benefit of the students. Third, these lecturers wanted their students to be like them. Fourth, the lecturers underestimated the comprehension capabilities of students in scientific matters. Fifth, the missionaries were indirectly securing their position as future experts in the Ovambo-Kavango Church. By so doing they avoided future theological competition between themselves and the indigenous theologians.

Early written documents about the Owambo mission field and its activities were written in Finnish. The Finns withheld their language from local people, even from their maids. Except for few Owambo pastors who studied at Finnish Universities, students and academics who do academic studies on ELCIN are not able to use the early materials. We do not underestimate the valuable contribution they have made by learning the local languages and writing books in them, but their own language remains unknown to most people who would have benefited from it. The alternative would have been that the Finnish missionaries would have translated all significant correspondence and reports they had with home organization in English, for instance.

Missionaries taught local people that the use of cultural equipment such as *ongoma* [African drum], *onghinda* [magic basket] *oshiva* [steenbok horn], *oluvinga* [horn] *okashandje* [musical instrument] and many others was pagan. But the same missionaries took the utensils with them to their home countries as souvenirs.

The training of Owambo pioneer pastors was done in an atmosphere and environment hostile to the doctrines and teachings of other churches. Hatred between mission societies in the region was high. The point of departure of the mission societies was not that all Christians are the children of the same God propagating the Gospel of salvation, but the importance of winning souls for the particular mission society in which a missionary found himself/herself. Indigenous pastors inherited that negative attitude against other pastors belonging to other churches.

Many of the pioneer indigenous pastors were from royal clans. We mention but four of them as examples. Pastors Paulus Hamutenya (Shejvali 1970:75-77), Pineas Kombonde (Auala 1977:141-142), Vilho Mwadikange Kaulinge (Shejvali 1970: 78-79), Bishop Leonard Nangolo Auala (Auala 1977:19-24). Royal clans wanted to maintain their status, so they gave their sons to missionaries to be educated as future leaders. It is a fact that pastors who were of royal descent assisted their clan members to become Christians and guided them in other matters of faith. This caused the church to be understood by some pastors and parishioners as a modern kingdom ruled by educated kings. The Finns appointed them to the ministry of the word purposely to lead their subjects to Christianity and to be on good terms with the kings of Owambo. The extent of the pressure is not known to me, but such moves consolidated the rule of kings and nobles in the kingdoms and in the church. The result was that there was no difference between the leadership of the church and that of the kingdom. Parishioners who knew the former status of such leaders, would feel compelled to refer to them as kings and nobles. The missionaries should have transformed the tradition where possible.

Ovambo-Kavango Church deaneries were drawn up along tribal lines and according to the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church's deanery model. For sure this must have happened unintentionally, for the Finns are not tribalists. But such an arrangement supported the "apartheid" policy. A dean in this regard is counted among traditional figures and that is why ELCIN now has a problem. It can either do away with these types of deaneries or integrate them.

Ovambo pastors and Finnish ministers had close working relations, but they did not eat together. Church meetings were held at mission centres where the indigenous pastors had their separate place for dining and separate food was prepared for them by indigenous cooks while the Finns dined together with other Finns in the dining hall. It was a parent - child relationship. Missionaries applied the traditional feudal culture as it was in those times when servants and subordinates did not eat with their masters, or wives and children with their husbands and fathers. But indigenous pastors were pastors like the missionaries and not their servants, subordinates, wives or children. In Owambo feudal traditional culture men of equal status shared the same foods and dined together (Kapenda 1999).

Male missionaries were addressed as *tatekulu/kuku* meaning grandfather/honourable/king while female ones *meekulu/kuku*, grandmother/honourable/queen. This address reveals that missionaries were looked upon as the knowledgeable and the powerful. Indigenous workers also developed the habit of looking to missionaries for advice, comfort, and a decision in every important matter. The patriarchal rule under which Ovawambo found themselves played also a major role in this regard (Anderson 1969:260).

A person who did not have a recommendation from his/her pastor would also not be admitted into the schools or be employed. There were a few cases in which students lost their opportunities because the recommendations from their pastors were not accepted by the Finns in charge (Shivute 1998). The Bible was used as a norm and a yardstick in the work place. The workers were expected to relate their, discussions, relations and performance to it. Job rules were also Bible oriented. The danger was that other dimensions in life were ignored.

In political issues the Finnish missionaries played a neutral role, but one of double-standards in the case of the migrant labour system. The missionaries benefited from this system, as said earlier, but hid their Christian standpoint that the system was immoral and oppressive. By not involving themselves directly in the migrant labour deal, missionaries meant to protect their fragile relationship with local kings. The outcome was that missionaries sided and secured a good relationship with the powerful, and neglected the interests of their parishioners. The legacy has had an effect on ELCIN leadership patterns. It adopted a passive attitude regarding the contract system. As mentioned before, like its predecessor, it benefited from the system while neglecting the interests of its members. We shall see later how the South African apartheid Government intimidated the Lutheran Churches when the latter forfeited their 'let us see' attitude.

3.9 Conclusion

After Sweden, Finland was among the countries which were christianised during the twelfth century. Finland became a Lutheran Protestant country in the 16th century. It took the Finns two centuries before they engaged themselves in foreign missions. It was during the years 1820-1830 that the spirit of mission, awakening, and revival took hold. Overwhelmed by the mission spirit,

they sent their first missionary, Nyberg, to work under the Moravian Church in Surinam.

Many attempts were undertaken on an individual basis. Two very important ones were the establishment of a training school for missionaries and the collecting of funds for foreign missions. These attempts were followed by the establishment of the Finnish Mission Society on the 19th January 1859 in Helsinki. The society worked through other societies such as the Leipzig Mission, the Gossner Mission and the Hermannsburg Mission during its early years of existence. A missionary training school was opened at Helsingfors in 1862 and, coincidentally, its first students became the first missionaries in Owambo. What triggered the decision of the Finns to do mission work in Owambo, is that missionary Carl Hugo Hahn of the Rhenish Missionary Society had pleaded with them to take Owambo as their mission field.

Despite many obstacles such as the opposition of kings, deaths of personnel, wars, suspicion, scepticism, droughts and many others in the way of their mission work, the Finns achieved their goal to make Owambo a Lutheran region. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia, a daughter church of FMS, is the largest church in Namibia today.

The missionaries introduced pietism to Ovawambo, who lived under a patriarchal and paternalistic social order, through hymnology, proclamation and teaching. Most Christians adopted the attitude of self-disclosure, self-examination and the tendency to spiritualise the faith. Out of 656 hymns in ELCIN's Hymnal book, only 18 hymns were contributed by Namibians.

The Lutheran Missionary Societies, namely the Rhenish and the Finnish Societies, wanted to turn the whole of Namibia into a Lutheran country right from the beginning. Firstly, they divided the country between themselves. Secondly, they entered into an agreement with the German authorities not to allow other denominations to do mission work in the country. Thirdly, they adopted a strategy of intolerance of the local traditions, cultures, norms, and beliefs considering them as challenges to their work.

The Finnish missionaries, it seems, had no planned strategy as to when to begin preparing indigenous leaders and when to hand over the church leadership to them. When the shortage of

workers in the field increased, baptismal and confirmation class teachers were promoted to ministers' positions. After thirty-two years of pastoral training (1922-1954), the society had trained only fifty-five indigenous pastors. The first indigenous pastors were assistants of missionary pastors. In stage two all Owambo pastors were placed under the direct supervision of one Finnish pastor, Mr Walde Kivinen. In stage three indigenous pastors ran congregations by themselves.

Administrative offices in the church were first run mostly by male missionaries before Ovawambo were introduced to them. These were deaneries, institutes, moderators and Christian Education offices. This practice created a tendency among some ELCIN leaders to always let Finns (as their pioneers) take the initiative. They underestimated their own leadership potentials.

The Finns left behind a tradition of emphasising the spiritual needs of the migrant workers and neglecting their social needs. I refer here to the steps taken towards the spiritual upliftment of migrant workers which included the appointment of coordinators for evangelists, provision of their salaries and premises to hold services. But they did little or nothing about their tiny salaries, their restrictions of movement and the integrity of their families. Through strikes and the formation of SWAPO, workers demonstrated that they needed help and the church should have responded to this need. Workers for their part have continuously supported the church, spiritually, socially and economically.

Patriarchal attitudes were also part of the leadership patterns of the Finns. Missionaries treated the indigenous adults as children and indigenous in turn considered them as their knowledgeable parents. A male missionary pastor was addressed as *tatekulu* [grandfather] and a female missionary *meekulu* [grandmother]. Missionary leaders draw agendas for meetings alone or brought already made decisions to be implemented (Shivute 1998). They were too concerned about the reliability and efficiency of the indigenous leaders. This was one of the reasons why they withheld the jobs and leadership responsibilities from the indigenous pastors. The result was that indigenous workers tended to ask for advice from the nearest missionary before making any final decision. That habit culminated in a situation where the indigenous leaders felt that they could not lead the church without the leadership of the Finns. The Finns had to lead the way. Like most of

the Owambo parents who did not share their future dreams with their children, the Finnish leaders in the field did not discuss with their indigenous co-workers in advance when the mission would become an autonomous church. These consolidated the traditional patriarchal system under which Ovawambo lived.

The Finnish leadership patterns were characterised with feudal attitudes. Like Owambo kings, the Finns treated their indigenous people as subordinates. To them women had no equal status. Some of them adopted a negative attitude of not talking to their maids, but ate the food prepared by them and went back to their work. Instead of guiding students of pastoral training how to apply to the Administrative Board of the Finnish Ovamboland mission, the Board selected them. The Finnish pastors did neither dine with the indigenous pastors nor shared with them the same accommodation. They supported the status quo when they did not teach the workers about their rights, demanded that the rights of the workers be entrenched in the legal system, and use the Scriptures to challenge the migrant labour system in the country.

The gospel was spiritualised, which means that the secular knowledge of the laity has nothing to contribute to the life of the church. This meant also that other dimensions of life were ignored as if they were irrelevant and insignificant to the life of the church. Secular issues, for instance, were regarded as unimportant. It was expected that Christians had to act as spiritual beings all the time. The workplace, for instance, was spiritualised, a practice which might have contributed to dishonesty among church workers because they had no freedom to live as ordinary citizens.

The Finnish leadership was also characterised by hostility against new insights from the sciences and other church traditions. This meant that the theological leadership immunised itself against challenging insights. Thoughts of liberal theology, controversial theological issues and thoughts from sciences were excluded from the theological teaching materials. Liberal thoughts were a threat to pietistic approach and thinking. Sciences have no permanent stance so it was considered as a threat to the Bible which was treated as an unerring source. The Finnish mission chose to work in isolation by limiting its interaction with other missions in the country. The Dorthea mission was avoided because of its emphasis on sanctification; it kept a distinct boundary with the Anglican mission because of its liberalism; a negative cooperation with the Catholic mission for fear of its doctrinal and ecclesiological contrasts between it and the Protestant churches. The home base

supporters were presented with an awkward picture of African people, a picture that requested continuous moral and financial support but with less criticism about actions of the missionaries in the field.

The desire to exercise spiritual and theological control over the laity and its clergy, rather allowing their gifts to flourish was felt in the mission field. Lay and clergy training were delayed. As the benefactors of converts, the Finns made them to be content with what they taught them and nothing else. Lay leaders went through three stages before they became full elders. Training of indigenous lay leaders began after the involvement of young Finnish theologians in the leadership in the mission field. The Finnish leadership in the field rejected pastoral training because they regarded the indigenous people as immature and incapable enough to lead congregations. The Finns based their argument on a perception that indigenous people were incapable of dealing with complicated education and leadership. Because of that perception a stance was taken to teach the indigenous people the Bible only and thus formulated the curriculum consisted of pietistic sources and excluded critical thoughts. Indigenous lay and clergy were under tight supervision, which limited chances for them to improve their leadership by learning from their own mistakes.

The Finns lacked trust in the leadership potential of the subordinates, thus a reluctance to allow broad based (democratic) decision making processes prevailed. The indigenous teachers proved their worthiness as leaders, a thing that encouraged both the missionaries and the indigenous people that indigenous people could be trained as pastors. The missionary pastors put themselves at the centre of the service and pushed the indigenous ministers to the periphery. This practice gave a negative signal that missionary pastors were superiors while the indigenous pastors were seen as inferiors. The old Finnish leaders in the field did not want to relinquish power so they delayed the handing over of the leadership responsibilities to the indigenous leaders. They delayed the autonomy of the young church because they underestimated the potentials of serving and leading among the indigenous people.

In all these cases, the stance of the Finns reinforced the traditional culture, rather than transforming it.

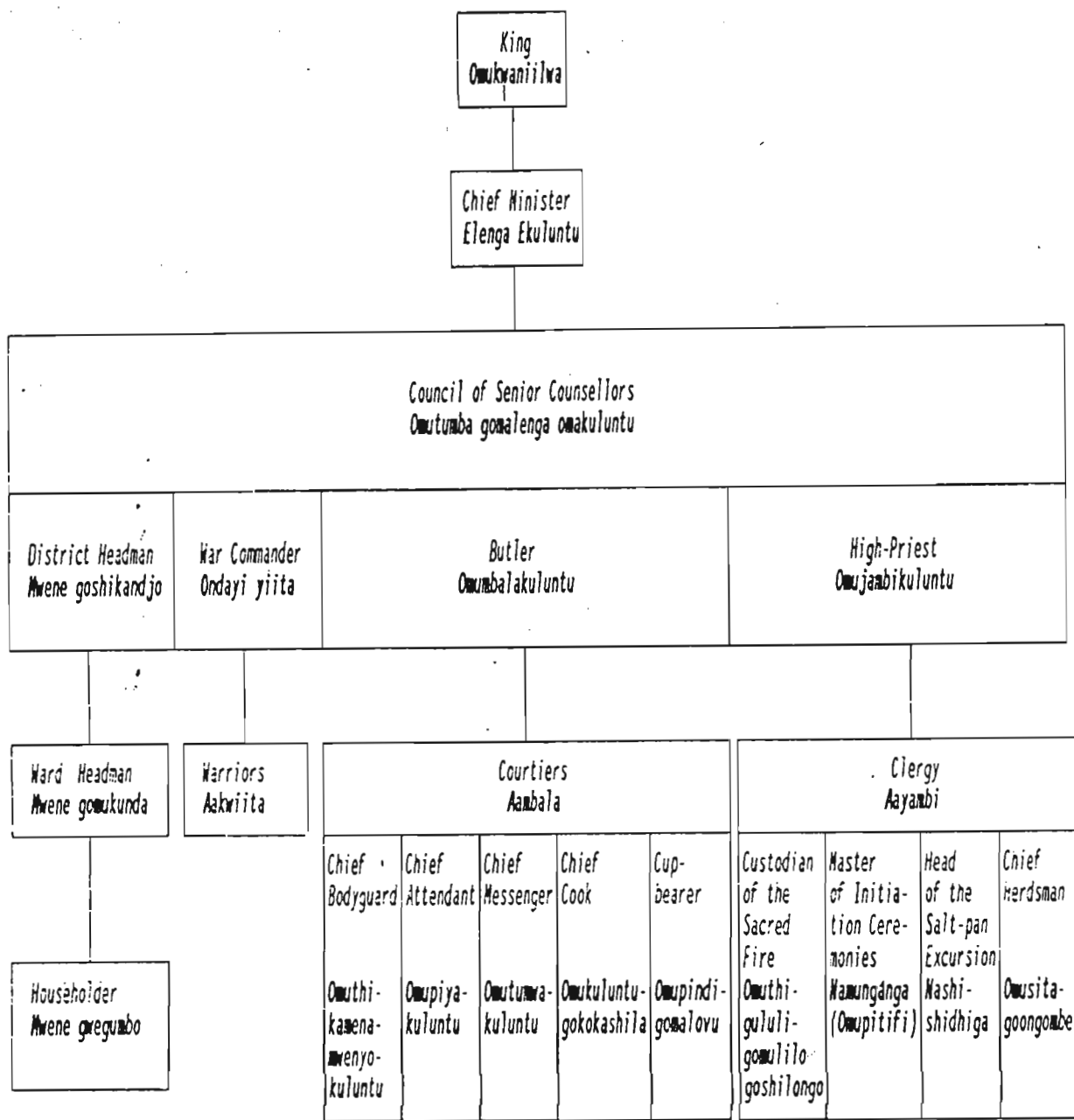


Figure 3: Power Relations in an Owambo Kingdom⁵³³

⁵³² The Police Zone is the area south of the 18 degrees 50' line of latitude, which was drawn during the German colonial period to cut off Owamboland from the south.

⁵³³ Pettinen (1889-1895), 15.08.1890; Savola (1916), pp. 85-97; Hahn (1927/28), pp. 11-24; Närhi, pp. 11-15; Uukunde, Mic.

CHAPTER FOUR

OWAMBO TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP PATTERNS WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE KWANYAMA KINGDOM

4.1 Introduction

From chapter two we learned about Luther's own leadership approach which aimed at transforming the hierarchical church structure of the Roman Catholic Church into a "democratic" institution. From chapter three we learned the effects of the Finnish leadership patterns on ELCIN. The Finnish missionaries were to communicate Luther's concept of authority to Owambo in order to transform the Owambo traditional hierarchical model into a more new democratic institution. Included was an overview of the Kwanyama traditional political organization and a comparison of it with those of the Ndonga and the Kwambi.

We will analyse the Owambo traditional hierarchical model, describing those elements which point to its authoritarianism, especially its being overly respectful of its leaders and leaving all authority and decision-making procedures in their hands. It will be shown that such a model has made the leaders believe that they are there to serve the people and not to empower them to be purely self-serving.

In view of the main objective of this thesis, we have to analyse the current leadership patterns in the church and consider the extent to which they have been influenced not only by the Lutheran tradition and the Finnish missionaries but also by the authoritarian traditional political organization of the Owambo. Correspondences between the traditional Owambo and Lutheran church hierarchies will be discussed and the question raised as to the need for a gradual democratic transformation of the church in the region.

4.2 The election of a new king

There were criteria each contestant had to meet before he was allowed to participate in the

contest. For instance, a prince who was left-handed or had a cataract in his eye was not allowed to enter the contest. When there were many princes in the country, a contest to discover *emanya loshlongo* [stone of the country/the power-stone] was organized. According to Williams the stone was hidden under a Baobab tree situated on the old kingdom site at Onehula (1991:102). (Each contesting royal prince would organize his followers to find the stone.) The prince whose followers found it, was enthroned (Kaulinge quoted in Williams 1991:102). Peyavali ya Nalyeende, a female healer, speaks of an appointed king instructed to hunt and kill a male steenbok with long horns and bring it unskinned in the old *ombala*. Failing to carry out the instruction would nullify the appointment. The chance would be given to the next eligible candidate and whoever succeeded would become the ruling king (Nalyeende 1999). The advantage of this practice was that it prevented killings among competing princes in the royal clan.

The newly elected king chose his counsellors and put to death the head wife and the chief counsellor of his predecessor shortly after his accession. The reason for doing so was that the two were "blood-relatives" (Tagnaeus and Raum quoted in Loeb 1962:55) and "blood-brothers" (Loeb 1962:62) of the former monarch. The practice was similar to the killing of the *tinsila* [chief councillor] after the death of the ruling king in the kingdom of Swaziland in the olden days (Kuper 1947:82). The widows were often under suspicion of witchcraft and some were killed, or sent back to their relatives until such time as the new ruler ordered them to marry his family members. If the new husband either divorced the king's widow or died, she was free to marry whomever she wanted. The surviving counsellors were often employed by the new king except those he wanted to get rid of.

During the first year the king was on probation. The new king had to do two crucial things. Firstly, he had to consult and persuade the neighbouring kingdoms to enter into alliance with his kingdom. If he succeeded in winning some over, they would become his subordinates who should have to live within the borders of his country. This necessitated the drawing of new borders. Secondly, the king had to win the faithfulness of his followers. In order to ensure the safety and security of his subjects, the king himself led a war against one of the neighbouring kingdoms. This was a way of proving his ability to protect his subjects. His *ombala* [royal court]

was built in his absence ~~and~~ he returned to the capital towards the end of the year.

4.2.1 Enthronement

4.2.1.1 The king and his counsellors establish a relationship of trust

It was common practice among the three kingdoms studied that the enthronement ceremony was presided over by a circumcised old man (Williams 1991: 104). This custom was initiated after King Haimbili Haufiku's death (1811-1859) when circumcision was no longer compulsory for every man in the country (Loeb 1962:24). Circumcised old men finally became rare. In cases when there was no circumcised old man in the country, a search was carried out to find one from the surrounding kingdoms. Estermann records that Ovakwanyama used to receive such circumcised old men from the Nkwankwa Kingdom (1976:122).

There was a meal shared between intimate friends to consolidate the existent relationship of trust between the king and his counsellors. The counsellors swore their allegiance to their king in whatever circumstances and difficulties they might find themselves. It was also meant to strengthen the power of the king. In the words of missionary Sckär the feast was as follows:

First a bull was slaughtered and its sexual organs were removed. At the same time a prominent prisoner of war was killed and his sexual organs were removed. All these parts were cooked together and then shaken in a wooden trough. Every participant in the feast was required to eat some of the flesh and drink some of the broth in order to give himself physical strength and at the same time to withdraw strength from the spirit of the enemy (the slain prisoner). Then the heart, the tip of the tongue, the central flesh of the nose, the sinews of the joints and the big toes, were cut from the corpse. As these parts were removed from an enemy, so likewise were his courage, his ability to follow a trail, and his speed in flight or pursuit. The pieces were roasted, and after being ground into a powder, were put into small horns that then served as amulets. The first joints of the index and little fingers supplied stoppers or corks for the horns. These finger joints were most useful in the war; with them one could ruin the enemy. One could entice him to approach, or keep him at distance. Finally each participant in the feast cut his upper arms and his wrists with the upper incisor teeth taken from the dead man and rubbed some of the magic powder into the cuts. These rites put new power in the king and his nobles and prepared the king for his coronation (Loeb 1962:52)

There are close similarities between Estermann's description of the feast and that of Sckär above. Their difference lies in the wording. Sckär speaks about the inaugural feast while Estermann describes the magical food of the new king. I quote.

Small parts taken from the body of the dead man were preserved- a finger, the nose, and the male member-to use, mixed with cow's flesh, in a ritual meal. This magical food was served to the new king by a specialist kimbanda from the little Kwanka tribe, situated to the south of Naulila. Another repast prepared for the chief [king] by the same "doctor", consisted of the lion's flesh cooked at the same time as the flesh of the bull slain precisely for the purpose of mixing the two. The two kinds of flesh were nevertheless prepared separately. The little dish of feline flesh was destined for the king alone, while another and a large one was filled with meat from the bull and distributed among omalenga, who were to be the councilors and the chiefs of the little bands of soldiers. Even the use of the rendered lion's fat as a cosmetic was reserved for the king; this he used instead of the butter employed by ordinary mortals (1976:122).

4.2.1.2 The Crowning ceremony

Traditionally, the crowning ceremony took place over two days. The first day included the entering of the new court and the promulgation of the king's new laws. From *eexwelo* [the king's temporary dwelling] the king and his followers formed a procession that entered the *ombala* from the east. On this occasion the king put on his kingly garments: he wore the skin of the slain slave over one of his shoulders; The sheepskin hung over the slave's skin; The second sheepskin was placed around his thighs. He was decorated with long narrow pieces of hide from a lion, an elephant and a leopard which hung from his belt and necklace. His genitalia were covered with the fur of a pole-cat and the hides of various animals. Puff-adder and mamba skins, hung with amulets, covered the new ruler's arms. The amulets were ornamented with "whelk shells and carved ivory buttons" (Sckär quoted in Loeb 1962:53).

It was a custom that before the procession entered the *ombala*, the king and his followers walked on the intestines of the beast slaughtered for the occasion. Outside the main entrance the procession stopped and it was here that the king was welcomed by the household of the old circumcised man who looked after the new *ombala*. From there the group proceeded to the *olupale* [the main courtyard/ meeting place]. Here all the important people of the *ombala*

welcomed the new monarch as he entered his new courtyard. Men shouted or fired guns whilst women ululated. The king was seated behind the fire and a designated old man “anointed him with boiled lion fat mixed with powder made from a dried, pulverized, yellow-flowering shrub called *efindapia*” (Loeb 1962:53). According to Shinana, when a new king was enthroned, his provisional homestead was built near the homestead of a servant of his clan. The servant was killed and the marrow of his bones was mixed with the lion fat and the mixture was used to anoint the king. His sinews were used for threading the beads of the enthroned king [Shinana 1999]. The other appointed elder stood before the king and uttered this advice to the king:

Mumwange mona wangadi Otwe kupa nee oshilongo shi ninge shoye u shi lele. Ndele omu omwa li nima; okwa li nongadi Ndele ove hasho u ninga. Longa onumba nongadi [My child, son of so-and-so, we give you (this) country to be yours, to look after. And there we had another [king], so and so; he used to do the following things..... But you must not do these things (do what we advise) (Loeb 1962:53).

The third designated old man said these words:

Mona wanumba, ove owa ninga nee oshilongo, ndele ino tila vanhu. Ndele omu omwa li ohamba; oya li hai longo shonumba noshongadi...Ndele osho u ninga u tale. [Son of so-and-so, you have obtained the country. And do not fear the people. But here there was (formerly) a king; he used to do the following [good] things... And [see to it] that you do them [also] (Loeb 1962:54).

After being welcomed and advised the new king stated officially his new laws to the nobles who were present. The first day ended with the feast of meat and beer. According to Loeb, “magicians ate the heads of eagles [in order] that they might be far-sighted and thus able to advise the king concerning the future” (1962:54).

The second day was characterised by the crowning of the king and his official marriage to his head wife. The two important occasions took place early in the morning at the *olupale*. The symbols of authority were the *olukatwa* (a chair-like throne) with three sheepskins as furnishings and the sacred bow with three arrows, traditionally inherited from King Shitenhu (Bruwer 1967:32). The custom of having symbols of authority ended with King Ueyulu (1884) (Bruwer 1967:32).

According to legends Shitenhu was the initiator of the kingship among the kingdoms in Owambo. His palace was in the Humbe Kingdom, and so the king of that country was believed to be his successor and therefore entitled to confer the throne on the kings in any of the other kingdoms. This happened during the middle of the sixteen century (Bruwer 1967:15). The *Olukalwa* remained the property of the king of Humbe. This meant that after the death of the king, it had to be returned to its owner. The representatives of the king of Humbe put the *olukalwa* at the householder's sitting place. It was in front of the main logs, behind the fire that faced East. Then the king took his seat upon it. The expression used for the happening is *ohamba yaya moipundi* [the king has taken his official seat].

A common custom in all kingdoms in the area was to receive the royal insignia immediately after the enthronement ceremony. It included *omiya doshilongo* [national girdles], *omukonda woshilongo* [the dagger of honour], *outa woshilongo* [the national elbow], *oikuti yoshilongo* [the national arrows], *odibo yoshilongo* [the national knob-kierie], *oshiva yoshilongo* [the national iron whistle] "and other iron tools" (Ashipembe and Liljeblad quoted in Williams 1991:105). This equipment was offered to the new ruler as a sign of his power while coronation was consolidated by anointing the ruler with a mixture of cooked lion fat and ochre. This is similar to what happened among the Zulus. The royal regalia which were transmitted from one king to the other among the Zulus, are "the ancestral assegai, hoe, axe, hearth-stones, fire-sticks, potsherds...and the ink'atha" (Krige 1950:243). The king was a custodian of articles of ancient origin. These sacred articles were symbols of the power and the unity of the nation.

4.2.1.3 The marriage ceremony

The enthronement was followed by the marriage ceremony. The king was married to a girl who would have gone through the *efundula* (girls' initiation ceremony). Dressed in rich bridal robes, she was led into the main courtyard. Attendants (usually old men) anointed the bride and the bridegroom with lion fat. They put the crown upon the king's head. It was "a tasseled fez-like crown with a wide leather head-band studded with four whelk-shell buttons to represent the four cardinal directions" (Loeb 1962:55). The royal crown was *haundungulungu* [made of tripe from the little stomach of an ox or giraffe]. The four whelk-shell buttons, one in each direction,

represented the idea that a king could see in all directions. It symbolised the king's supervision of his country and its people. The tassels ornamented with *ouputu* [copper beads] were a traditional symbol of fertility.

The marriage of the king and queen was a special one for the whole country. It was officiated by a medicine man who cut two small wounds in the arm of the bride and of the bridegroom with a special heated knife. The two crossed their bleeding arms to mix their blood. Thereby, it was believed, the two became one in life and in death. Thus when the king died, the queen had to be killed immediately. A similar operation was performed between the young king and the queen by the Mdluli in Swaziland (Kuper 1947:79).

A former senior headman, son of King Uejulu, a correspondent of Loeb, described his father's coronation ceremony as follows:

When Uejulu took the throne, there was a meeting of all the people, both men and women, in the council room (olupale) of the king's kraal, accompanied by the rapid tattoo of small drums. A nobleman stood up and told the people the name of the king and his new orders. At the end of the address he exclaimed: 'He is your king now, He is both your mother's brother and your father!' The old men beat the ground with their kerrie-sticks and clapped their hands, exclaiming, 'Oh Uncle, Oh Uncle' (quoted in Loeb 1962:56).

The enthronement story of King Uejulu lacked the basic information probably due to some modifications took place in the traditions in the region as well as the total dependence on oral tradition.

With the election of a new king in the Kwanyama land, positive attempts were made to prevent unnecessary wars between princes who were eligible for election for the throne in the royal clan. The king thus assured the nation of his strength, which meant the safety and security of the nation. The kingly outfit for the enthronement symbolised the power invested in him. The custom of receiving the throne from the king of Humbe preserved the memory of the origin of the royal institution in the region. The mixing of blood between the bride and the bridegroom made the royal marriage special. The practice is also an indication that Ovawambo marriages were originally

monogamous. Polygamous marriages were a response to the demands of an agricultural labour

The tradition of having informal advisers to the enthroned king was significant because it officially gave the commoners the opportunity of telling the newly ascended king the bad and the good about the kings who had preceded him. Concerning the bad kings, the king was advised that kings also had weaknesses and shortcomings; to tell the new leader that people were unhappy when such bad things happened; the king was warned not to repeat or to do the same things. On the positive side, the king was assured that all the people of his nation fell under his rule. He was therefore encouraged not to fear to tell the people what was right; he was given to the names of good kings and the good things they had done for their people; he was reminded that qualities of good leadership never die with him; he was told that people saw these qualities good leadership and that they were happy; through the adviser, the group of people present encouraged the new king be a good leader.

The wife of the new king's predecessor had to be killed because it was a tradition to do so. By that tradition she was bound to an oath that she would remain his wife in life and death. It was considered a disgrace and shame if she married another man. Being a first wife of the king she knew many of the secrets and of the kingdom. Assassinating her meant preventing her from spreading this valuable information. She could also be politically feared by the new king who was in the process of settling down. Likewise, the killing of the chief adviser of the predecessor was politically motivated. His killing was not a demonstration of culture of cruelty, but a fulfilment of one of the ancient traditions. The theory was that each new king had to choose his chief adviser from among his loyal comrades. It was somehow a pre-planned appointment since each prince had his own shadow government before election. The tradition was that the chief adviser, whether he was good or not, had to be alive during the reign of his king and to die with his king. He had to die because he was politically regarded as a threat to the new king and especially to his new chief adviser. He knew about the activities of the former royal court and of the whole nation. Young inexperienced counsellors saw him to be one of the "fathers" who would prevent them from doing what they wanted. The culture did not tolerate the existence of oppositional political thinking.

The state had a political tradition of protecting the lives of its own citizens. Its followers had to

be shown that the state was strong enough to protect them against their enemies. Wearing hides of strong or terrifying animals and being anointed with a mixture of lion fat and human marrow revealed the nature of the leadership of the kings. Also his wearing of the skins of fearsome powerful animals was designed to show the common people his power.

4.2.1.4 Further strengthening of the power of the new king

A male calf and a boy who had not reached adolescence, were slain, skinned and their meat cooked together. The blend meat was poured into a bowl from which the king's advisers and elders of the kingdom shared meat. The two skins were used for *oilanda youpule oko haku xweketwa oiketi yomofingo* [magic necklaces on which (small) horns are hung around the neck] (Shituwa quoted in Hiltunen 1993:135). The rule was that the candidate who was about to receive fortification was not allowed to have sexual union before the rite. The magic necklaces were put around the neck of the king by the diviner pronounced these this words. "Banish all your equals" (Shituwa quoted in Hiltunen 1993:135).

A self-confessed medicine man and Lutheran pastor, Noa Shangheta who died in 1947, told his confirmation class how he strengthened kings. On the day before the strengthening of the king, Noa made a hole in a tree called *omunghete* with his axe. He filled the hole with water and covered the entrance carefully with the piece he had chopped out. He ordered the king to wake up early the next morning and to sit in the large reception area of the court at his sitting place. From there the medicine man instructed the king and his noblemen together with ordinary people to sit closer to the tree he had prepared. The king was told to sit facing away from the place where the hole had been made in the tree. The medicine man chopped out the piece that closed the entrance with a stick and the water poured on the king's body. The women ululated and men shouted saying, *Ohamba ya pameketwa moshilongo*, [the king was strengthened in his country]. After this the king and his subjects went back to the court from which they had come There the medicine man stood behind them. He carried *oshikangwa shi noimbodi nomeva* [an earthenware vessel containing a solution of water and herbs]. The medicine man spread the logs of the large reception area of the king and the king's advisers with the solution he took from the earthenware vessel (Nailonga 1999).

Similar rituals were found among the Zulu. The king as a representative of his people had to be strong, physically and magically as well. The belief was that the king as a representative of his tribe had to be fortified against all harm so that dangers would not strike the nation through him. The fortification was carried out on his accession. To achieve the most powerful strengthening, human parts were believed to be required. For the Zulu, Krige writes:

The human body is the strongest and most powerful of all medicines, and for doctoring a king the most effective parts must be used, including the lips, ears, nose, eyes and the human skull. The head is the strength-giving part of the body just as the sexual organs impart reproductive power and fertility. Men are therefore dispatched to kill any human being and to bring back the necessary parts, very often only the head" (Krige 1950:241-242). "The top part of the skull will be neatly cut and made into a basin for the king. In this basin the king will, every evening before retiring, pour some water, and this he will use next morning to wash his face. The water will have absorbed strength from the skull, and the king is able thus daily to fortify himself. This basin is used by him until he dies, and his successor will require a new one (Krige 1950:242).

3.2.2 Evaluation

Kings wished to be and were considered by many to be superhuman beings. To achieve this objective, a human being was killed and eaten at the enthronement and strengthening of a king. The eating of human flesh fortified the king and made him a special leader. The life and the rule of the king was perpetuated by the human lives offered during his accession and strengthening, so it was believed. The superhuman nature of the king was marked as extra-ordinary: for example, nobody in the country, except the king wore magic necklaces as described above.

4.3 Kings not chiefs

Like other rulers in other kingdoms in Owambo, the Kwanyama rulers were kings and not chiefs as foreign authors used to call them. A king was a royal hereditary ruler of *oshilongo* [a country], while a chief was *elenga* [headman] a member of the nobility designated by the ruling king to a position which could be terminated by the same king or lost when the ruling king either died or was dethroned. According to the Kwanyama understanding nobody was born a chief, and thus

there was no chief if there was no king to designate him as such. The Kwanyama rulers, like the rulers of other kingdoms, were anointed rulers with official robes, crown and sceptre, unlike the Herero chief who was neither anointed, issued proclamations nor had sceptre or throne (Loeb 1962:286). These were symbolic of the succession as well as the elevated position of the monarch. There is a disagreement between Loeb and Aarni as to whether to call Owambo kings divine or sacred. Loeb was of the opinion that they should be called divine kings. He based his argument on the fact that a king “was believed to be the incarnation of the High God” (Loeb 1962:41), and his followers, like those of the Egyptian and Shilluk monarchs called the king Kalunga [the High God]. Loeb writes: “A king is divine because he represents a bond between nature and man...” (1962:41). The belief was that a king never dies. Through crowning of the new king Kalunga leaves the deceased king and enters into his successor. The divine power located in the deceased was not lost but entered the his successor. A euphemistic expression “the king has gone away” (informant quoted in Loeb 1962:41) was used instead of saying that the king has died.

A king was believed to be divine because he had his possessions, his special words, his way of speaking and acting. The house of a king was called *ombala* and not *eumbo* [homestead] like that of a commoner. His grave was *ouwilo wohamba* and not *ombila* [a grave for a commoner]. According to Shrewsbury, “the chief [king] was thought of as a ‘bull’ or an ‘elephant’ whereas commoners were referred to as ‘dogs’ or ‘black men’” (quoted in Peires 1981:128).

Aarni used the word “sacred” instead of divine to describe Owambo kings. He argued that Owambo kings did not have “immanent essence of the divine” and were not gods. I quote:

The word ‘divine’ means, if we apply its meaning to the Ovambo king, that he possessed immanent ‘essence’ of the divine, and that he had to play the role of god and also that this god was considered to have been incarnated in him. I think that the Ovambo kings had neither any ‘divine essence’, nor did they play the role of god, and they were not incarnated gods. Accordingly, we can draw the conclusion that the Ovambo kings ought to be regarded as the ‘sacred kings’, not ‘divine kings’ (1982:90).

But, Aarni did not underestimate the respect and honour kings had in their communities; a king and his entire royal family, but especial his mother and his sisters, were honoured as sacred

persons. In his book, *Onakuziwa yandje*, Auala recorded some of his memories at King Kadhikwa's court:

When people were approaching the king, one had to keep the hands together in a 'praying position', -One always had to crawl on one's knees when approaching the king, and finally sit on the feet, the knees pointing towards him. One must not look His Majesty in the eyes but towards the ground in front of him....Before one is allowed to speak, one has to cough twice or three times until the king gives the sign to speak. - Queen Victoria Kadhikwa, the sister of King Kadhikwa, trained me how to hold my hands...how to answer...how to serve the beer, how to prepare and make fire in his pipe...how to hold the cup when passing the beer...on which side one had to go...and always speak the truth, never lie, even if one could be punished...how to answer every question with different titles and forms of address" (1977:64, 57-58).

The above practice is similar to one found among the Zulus:

The subjects greeted the Zulu king while "squatting on their hams" (Isaacs quoted in Krige 1950:239) "and approached him in a crouching position, women moving on their knees before the king, men approaching by lying on one side and crawling along thus (Colenso quoted in Krige 1950:239).

I believe that Loeb was influenced by the Kwanyama proverb that says: "He who kills the king becomes the king". The proverb is built on the wish to keep the soul of the dying king and to have it entered mystically into his successor. But it was not necessarily the successor himself who had to kill the old king. He could order even a close subordinate to do it for him. It was understood that a king receiving someone's soul through this process was regarded as being physically vitalized and prolonging his life and rule on earth. A proverb which shares the same meaning is in the form of a compliment and is used by commoners when addressing the king. "*Ohamba nai kale alushe i nomwenyo*"[May the king live forever]. The two proverbs do not say the same thing. Both however, convey the perception that there was a wish among the people for the king not to die. Since it was understood that if the king was allowed to die a natural death his soul would be lost and his successor be weak, a king was slain just before he breathed his last breath. It was also believed that the king who was old or sick lost commanding authority and then he either committed suicide or was deposed. It seems he was not physically persuaded to commit suicide. Two things are implicit here. Deposition or killing were the two ancient alternatives used to get

rid of the old state and to create the opportunity for a new ruler to emerge. The election of the king as mentioned before was a new development. The concept of retirement and its usage seemed not to be a known practice among the Kwanyama. Like other kingdoms in Owambo, Oukwanyama was a one political party state and therefore it would not allow the former king to live. However, the killing of the predecessor was a big blow to ancestor veneration. How can someone whose name would be added at the list of ancestors as the new go-between the ancestors and the living be thus humiliated?

The notion of Kalunga incarnated in the king or the example of Queen Nekoto's calling herself, Kalunga (Warneck and Hukka quoted in Aarni 1982:81) is foreign to the Kwanyama concept of a ruling king. The following proverb clears the relation between Kalunga, the ruling king and his subjects. "It says: *Ovanhu ova Kalunga, munyembala okwe va pewa (e va lele)*" [People belong to God; he gave them the king to rule over them]. "Kalunga [the High God] is portrayed as the supernatural figure who possesses power over fertility, rain, and the growth of cultivated plants and a rich harvest", writes Rautanen, (quoted in Williams 1991:99). Missionary Pettinen tried to clear the above confusion by saying that one of the functions of the king was to increase fertility, to provide rain and to act "as the symbol of life for his people" (quoted in Williams 1991:99). The king, it was believed, had performed the above not as God but as God's representative.

It should be mentioned that there might be some confusion because the same words and expressions were used for Kalunga and for the king. For instance, the word *Omwene* in Oshikwanyama and *Omuwa* in *Oshindonga* means Lord. A king is also addressed as *omwene/omuwa wange/gwandje* [my lord]. Jesus is referred to in the Bible as the lion of Judah whereas the Owambo king is referred to as *Onghoshi/Nkiyama* [lion]. But, despite contradictions shared in this section, Owambo kings were indeed sacred for they were highly respected religious leaders but never regarded as gods.

4.3.1 The vehicles of supernatural power

4.3.1.1 The sacred cattle

Nominally, cattle belonged to the king who had the power to dispose of all property in the land. These cattle came from various resources. Thus he must be the one possessing more cattle than others in his kingdom. The king inherited some cattle from his predecessor who was either his brother or his maternal uncle. He had to inherit some cattle from his father whom he had killed immediately after his accession. The other cattle came from cattle raids he conducted during his probation year or which his army confiscated from people during his reign. The cattle were divided into two groups, namely, the sacred and the ordinary cattle. The sacred cattle constituted the cattle the king inherited from his predecessor and those seized from his paternal side. The ordinary cattle usually were entrusted to the care of members of the nobility and famous headmen in the country. The king and his progeny received milk and butter from the sacred herd. They were not slaughtered for daily consumption but in case one of them was killed or died, the monarch and his household “ate head and liver” (Loeb 1962:47). The horns and skull were hung on sticks prepared specially for them at the centre of the *olupale*. It was believed that the “variety of moss that grew on the bones had supernatural power to strengthen the vitality of the king” (Loeb 1962:47). The sacred herd neither went to cattle posts, nor mingled with foreign herds nor was it given to anybody to care for. They stayed in the king’s personal cattle kraal.

The sacred cattle of the king were not venerated in Kwanyama land. The Kwanyama did not regard the sacred cattle as divine, but they believed that the sacred cattle of the kings went with their owners to the next world and there became ‘spiritualised’ and capable of communicating with the Big men of *Ombala* who were permitted to enter the sacred groove, the entrance to the netherworld (Loeb 1962:25).

Security of the life of the king was maintained at all cost. The food, but especially the milk and butter he ate, had to be from special animals which were closely watched and looked after by a herdsman appointed by the king himself.

4.3.1.2 The sacred sheep

Sheep, especially the fat-tailed type, were kept for two reasons. They were considered by Ovawambo as holy animals which, together with sacred water and sacred fire, humankind had received from *Kalunga* [the High God]. Sheep had the superior nature of not grumbling when attacked, slain or caught by thorn bushes. Because of these good characteristics, sheep were presented at coronations, men's circumcision and girls' puberty rites. At these rites, the king gave each boy a sheep to protect his future herd, while girls were given sheepskin handkerchiefs. It was a norm that every newly born royal baby "must be carried in a sheepskin; his pillow, too, was of sheepskin" (Loeb 1962:49). To kill sheep without the authorization of the king was punishable by death.

The Ovawambo wanted to transfer the superior nature from sheep to people. The giving of a sheep to young circumcised men is one of the few cases where a king offered a precious thing to commoners. It was an encouragement and blessing so that they would own a herd of cattle in the future. It was a special occasion for girls and boys from poor family backgrounds to receive something of worth from the hands of their king.

4.3.1.3 The sacred fire

Ovawambo like Ovaherero kept the sacred fire. The belief had been that it was presented by Kalunga to the first ancestor (Pettersen quoted in Aarni 1982:86). The fire was a symbolic fire in which Kalunga was supposed to live (Töttemeyer quoted in Aarni 1992:87). The Ndonga and the Kwanyama kingdoms fetched their sacred fire from Iinenge after the death of the king (Kaulinge; Uugwanga quoted in Williams 1991:117). In the royal court the fire was looked after by its custodian. Custodians led messengers of lamentation who fetched fire from neighbouring countries. The Oukwanyama collected the fire from Ondonga (Kaulinge quoted in Williams 1991:109), Oukwambi from Ongandjera (Tshilongo quoted in Williams 1991:109), and Ombalantu from Ombadja (Himanen quoted in Williams 1991:109). Some writers regarded it as an Indo-Germanic and Semitic-Hamitic symbol. It is an ancient tradition. The fire was continuously kept in the centre of each the *olupale* facing east in the open air. The fire at the

king's courtyard and sleeping hut was kindled by a girl from the Roan Antelope clan. It was also noted that to tend the sacred fire was the primary task of the head wife and her first daughter when not menstruating (Sckär quoted in Loeb 1962:47).

The sacred fire was considered as the substitute of the sun during the night. It was believed to be a protector and a symbol of welfare, luck, prosperity and fertility in the land (Bruwer 1967:31; Aarni 1982:86). "The belief was", writes Loeb, "that if it was properly tended it would keep all misfortune from the kraal [homestead]; no snake would bite the cattle, no hyena would steal them" (1962:48). It had a mystical, purifying, destroying and life giving nature. It had a paradoxically nature that it destructed when burnt woods, for instance, and life-giving that it protected people and animals from misfortune. When the house owner or his son went to war or on a journey he ate food cooked over the sacred fire for his protection. Dangers would not befall him in his absence from the house.

The fire in the palace symbolised the life and well-being of the king and his subjects. In case it died out it was believed that the king and the whole kingdom would die. Thus it was allowed to die when the king died to symbolise the death of the king who kindled it when he ascended to the throne. This meant that during the mourning period, there was no symbol of life in that kingdom. The new king, who was a symbol of life and fertility among people and animals, kindled a fire to represent him and his people.

4.3.1.4 The sacred water

Omeva oshilongo [the water of the country] is the water that was fetched from a well made at a place called Osamba. According to Ovawambo migration legends, Osamba was a place in Ondonga where the divisions of kingdoms took place. Together they dug a well at Osamba in which they believed that Kalunga placed the water of the country. After the kingdoms separated, each kingdom used to come to this place to draw water. Each house owner kept his sacred water in a container in a private hut. The purpose of the sacred water was to refresh the holy fire especially during important ceremonies such as the men circumcision and the girls puberty rites. Some drops of the sacred water were mixed with the ordinary water. Out of this mixture each

morning of the ceremony the holy fire was refreshed."Refreshing the fire" (unknown informant quoted in Loeb 1962:48) is called *etalaleko*. Later, alternatives were found. Ovakwanyama substituted the holy water with rain water from hollow tree stumps while Ovangandjera and Ovakwaluudhi dug wells in their own regions.

The holy water was considered to be a source of vitality, thus it was meant for the re-strengthening of the holy fire that burned continuously during the lifespan of one ruler. In its continuous burning it seemed to lose the initial freshness and needed to be refreshed.

4.4 The running of the kingdom

The king was the ultimate ruler of the kingdom. He appointed a national council "of six or more senior counsellors". The nomination was "based on merits of age, intelligence and experience..." (Pettinen; Savola; Narhi quoted in Williams 1991:106). The council acted as the judicial, advisory and legislative body of the kingdom. "It meets under the chairmanship of the king, at set times and also in emergency cases like during a war situation. All decisions of the council are kept secret" (Kaulinge; Pettinen quoted in Williams 1991:106). Among the counsellors was the king's chief adviser, "the chief minister" (Williams 1991:106). He assisted the king in leading the royal court and supervised all activities in the kingdom (Kaulinge; Pettinen quoted in Williams 1991:106). The chief minister who was such an experienced person was slain on the king's burial day because he was the deceased king's faithful friend (Möller 1974:122).

It was also the duty of the king to provide the wards with under-counsellors. These he promoted "from among the courtiers, warriors, hunters, and those who have the honour to be promoted" (Pettinen; Savola quoted in Williams 1991:106). The main functions of under-counsellors were to deal with trivial problems occurring in the wards and to maintain law and order in the wards. *Ohava kunguda nokutuma eemhale dambala molupe leengobe, oilya, oikafa noivela* [They collect and send the royal tribute in cattle, grain, skin and iron implements]. They co-ordinated the cultivation of the king's plots in the wards as well as the sending of the harvest to the king. They made sure that the wards' members participated in the keeping of *ombala* by providing it with palisades and firewood (Savola quoted in Williams 1991:107). Pettinen further records that

under-counsellors were members of the district council, but took also part in the general meetings of the kingdom (quoted in Williams 1991:107).

The royal court had courtiers who were servants from the same kingdom but had been appointed by the king himself. The royal court leader was the butler who took care of all activities in the court. Those under him were the body guards, attendants, messengers, cupbearer, chief herdsman, cooks, and even the king's closest friends. Each group had its functions. The bodyguards provided security. But the closest bodyguards were the attendants for they helped the king to overcome stress and insomnia by massaging his feet until he fell asleep (Kaulinge quoted in Williams 1991:107). Messengers were divided into two categories, those who carried the king's messages throughout the country and those whom he sent to other countries. The cupbearer ladled *omalodu* [traditional sorghum beer], *oshikundu* [meal drink] and *omaongo* [marula wine] for the king (Kaulinge quoted in Williams 1991:107). Cooks, who were always men in the Owambo kingdoms, cooked the king's meat at *okashila* [a kitchen run by men] while the women prepared the porridge in another special kitchen (Estermann 1976:122; Kaulinge quoted in Williams 1991:107). Besides the above courtiers, the king also appointed the religious leaders who were the custodian of the sacred fire, the master of initiation ceremonies, the head of the salt-pan excursion and the chief herdsman (Williams 1991:109).

4.4.1 Critique

When one looks at what the courtiers, hunters and warriors did, one concludes that the daily activities of the royal court, as well as those of the whole country, were led by commoners. This does not rule out the fact that many of these commoners originally came either from noble clans or were sons of former kings. There are two obvious reasons: the king kept members of the royal clan at a distance from fear for his own safety; commoners were made to believe and be satisfied with their subordination as servants who had to serve the royal clan members faithfully and did not have the right or intellectual ability to rule a country.

4.5 The judicial court organization

4.5.1 Procedures of court case

There were three levels of judicial courts in the country. The first level was the court at the homestead and under the jurisdiction of sub-headman of the ward court. It listened to and dealt with minor issues. Here follows a brief description of the legal procedures as described by Loeb's informant. If, for instance, someone stole either cattle or beads and refused to give them back, the *omunyekwi* [the plaintiff] complained to his sub-headman. Should both the defendant and plaintiff belong to his village, the sub-headman would deal with the matter himself. The matter was brought before the king if one of the two did not belong to the sub-headman's jurisdiction. The defendants who were found guilty and accepted their fine to bring back the stolen goods, they were treated fairly. In case they refused (which was rare I suppose), their refusal made the king angry and he ordered *oshitondokela* [a punitive party] against them.

The cattle captured by the punitive party were brought to the king who gave some of them to the plaintiff and divided the remaining beasts between himself and members of the party involved. A division feast was held after an ox was killed for it (Loeb 1962:70).

The second level was under the jurisdiction of the district headman. It dealt with more important cases referred to it by the wards' courts. Some referral issues were concluded there whereas others were referred to the final court, that of the king.

The third level was the court at *ombala* [the king's court] which was under the jurisdiction of the king himself. All judicial powers in the kingdom belonged to the king, who was the owner of the whole country. It was he who pronounced the final judgement in the country. He worked in close consultation with his counsellors to a certain extent. But King Haimbili (+1863) was too autocratic that he paid no attention to the suggestions of his counsellors (Estermann 1966:124). Unlike the sub-headman and the district headman the king never tried and judged a person directly. He designated *omutokoli woihokolola* [a man entrusted with deciding judicial cases] to perform significant functions in the judicial court on his behalf. Beside him were either one or two

counsellors and men from noble fathers.

There were some instances when the king ordered a punitive party to demand payment from the wrongdoers. These wrongdoers included householders whose cattle had eaten stubble, who repaired their huts before *epena* [summer ceremony] before the king sanctioned it; a person who did not bring the required stakes for building *ombala* or amarula fruit at the suitable time to the royal court was penalised. A person who either made a young girl pregnant or ate sweet stalks before *oshipe* [harvest feast]. These types of culprits were forced to pay fines in cattle, goats and other possessions. King Uejulu was said to send female servants on such confiscation expeditions.

4.4.2 Criminal penalties

Major cases such as treason, murder, witchcraft, adultery or conjugal sodomy were under the jurisdiction of the ruling king. The penalty for treason, witchcraft and adultery with one of the wives of the king was death. In case of voluntary or involuntary murder eight to ten cattle were paid to the deceased's clan members. If the victim lost an eye the culprit paid eight to ten cattle and a certain annual amount. The penalty for conjugal sodomy was the confiscation of all property belonging to the perpetrator. A penalty for theft was dealt with almost in the same manner as murder. A householder whose homestead was attacked by the thief had the right to defend himself either by catching or shooting at the thief. If thieves were apprehended but too poor to pay reparations, with clan members also too poor to redeem them, some were chained into stocks, while others were sold into slavery. But if a thief was killed while in the act of stealing, the value of his life and of the stolen property would be compared. The killer had to pay immediately or a clan member would be killed in retaliation by the injured party (Uejulu quoted in Loeb 1962:75). Every husband was expected to look after his wives and it was up to a husband whether to fine his wife's lover or to kill them both. The wife is not allowed, even today, to have sexual intercourse before and outside marriage, but the husband is.

It is interesting to compare the corresponding Nguni customs. The Nguni in South Africa regarded murder, witchcraft, assault and slander as offences against the state, namely against the king himself. A member of the Stavenisse crew in 1689 reported the following:

Revenge has little or no sway among them, as they are obliged to submit their disputes to the king, who, after hearing the parties gives sentence on the spot, to which all parties submit without a murmur: but should the matter in dispute be of great importance, and when he cannot rely on his own judgement, he refers the parties to an older king in his neighbourhood. When a father beats his son so as to draw blood, and a complaint is made to the king, he must pay the king a cow as a fine (Moodie quoted in Wilson 1981:153).

Missionary Hahn describes the usual form of torture practised in former Owambo kingdoms as follows:

...to bind the hands behind the back, pass a long pole between the arms and by means of the latter to twist them gradually tighter and tighter until they are wrenched out of their sockets. After all the desired information has been extracted from the victim in this manner, his property is taken by the Chief [King]. The witch doctor, however, also receives a fair share in payment for his services. The *omlothi* [witch] is then handed over to the Chief's [King] executioners, generally a band of half a dozen Bushmen or other natives from other tribes, to whom it is left to put an end to his life near or within the Chief's [King] kraal. This is done purposely to remind the tribe that the Chief [King] is supreme (1928:6).

Taking revenge by members of the clan whose member was slain, was legal. The slain person's clan members did whatever possible, either to slay the murderer or a clan member of his. If the culprit was not found, the angered clan members attempted to seize either the mother, brother, sister, uncle or aunt of the murderer.

When a murderer was apprehended, he was chained and placed in the stocks. He could be released only upon payment of a large fine, between eight and ten head of cattle. Even so there was no assurance that he would not be killed or sold into slavery. If he was unable to pay his fine, his clan mates usually made the payment for him. As soon as possible, his relatives brought in a large ox as the first installment of the payment, to prevent his sale or execution.... (Loeb 1962:73).

The chances of reaching a compromise were also utilised in some instances. Vilho Uejulu gives this information:

A murderer and his relatives hurried to round up cattle to give to the dead man's clan. The peace party that brought the gifts placed *amarula* fruit skins on the ends

of their spears to show their intention. When the eight or ten head of cattle had been presented to the aggrieved clan, members of the clan removed the murdered person's intestines and stretched them on the ground. Beside them the guilty clan must lay out an equal length of ostrich shell beads. They must also give a brick of salt of the same size as the dead man's head. The final step, the payment of a bowl of tobacco, insured peace (*ombili*). A pipe was passed around and each person took a few puffs. Smoking the pipe of peace was called *lamua kombija*... (Loeb 1962:73).

The three levels of judicial courts in the country were an attempt to bring a judicial service to the people concerned. It was a way of decentralising the judicial powers of the king. Through this decentralisation the ward sub-headmen and the district headmen, who became the co-workers of the king, were not only entrusted with judicial responsibility but also strengthened. The three levels helped with the division of issues among courts treated at a particular court. Minor issues were treated and resolved by minor judges, namely the headmen whereas the most difficult ones ended in the final court.

Civilians as well as their property were protected. Criminals and perpetrators were punished. But it seems that if there was no clear-cut theoretical distinction between civil and criminal laws. Practical differences were clear enough: like modern governments who employ political intelligence units to spy for their countries, the kings had spies who kept them informed about the prevalent situation in their countries. The negative consequence was that kings often acted according to biased information furnished by spies.

The kings were represented as autocratic, authoritative and cruel rulers. The cruelty is illustrated by the ways they punished defendants who disagreed with their verdicts; the division of the captured animals between the kings and the soldiers who participated in the raids; the dependence on information furnished by spies. The information did not depend on eye-witnesses, proof or when plaintiffs were not allowed to disagree with the verdicts passed against them; people were punished when they violated minor laws such as eating sweat stalks and repairing huts; the political assassination of rich noblemen as well as the granting of opportunity for the grieved party to practise revenge. These are, surely examples not of cruelty but of simple injustice.

4.5.3 Sanctuaries

A foreign country could give sanctuary to a murder, but there were four kinds of sanctuaries within the country. These were: the seizure of the king's knees; the touching of the king's milking calabash; touching and holding a former king's grave; and the eating of meat and blood cooked in a large iron pot (Loeb 1962:74).

4.6 The king as a custodian of the land

Generally, Oukwanyama land was regarded as property kings have inherited from their matrilineal ancestors. The country was referred to here as *edu noikalikulo aishe* [the land and all things on it], *ovanhu* [the people] *noimuna* [and animal husbandry]. When a king ascended the throne it is said even today that *ohamba oya nangala oshilongo* [the king lies down on the country]. This means *oshilongo oshi li koshi yohamba, nohamba oi li kombada yasho* [the country is under the king, while the king is on top of it]. The king rules something which he possesses. *Oye mwene woshilongo* [the king is the owner of the country]. The same word *okunangala* is used when a householder irrespective of gender, occupies a new dwelling.

For the king's rule over every citizen in the country, the land was divided firstly into districts which were sub-divided into wards. Secondly, the division was the creation of an income generating resource. Normally, districts were ruled by noblemen who were placed there by the king provided that each paid the number of cattle the king required for a district. Besides the payment of cattle, a nobleman channelled gifts and tributes he collected from his subordinates to the king. The nobleman, the sub-headmen and the householder did not have the ownership of the land they bought. The sub-headman who had paid the number of cattle asked, for a ward from the district headman, but with the consent of the king, and he forwarded the gifts and tributes to the headman's capital. The consent of the king was sought as a way of informing the king who wanted to buy a field from the district headman. A householder bought a field from a sub-headman became his subordinate who had to contribute to court discussions and other responsibilities in that ward. The queen mother was entitled to own a ward while an old woman owned an *okaumbo* [a woman's house/small house]. A field cost one ox in the olden days. King

Uejulu ya Hedimbi (1883-1903), because of the density of the population during his rule changed the price to five oxen a field or twenty American dollars (Tönjes quoted in Loeb 1962:43).

The land ownership system was feudal: the king was the overlord from whom the land was borrowed, while the nobles, sub-headmen and householders were individuals who rented the land and, with their subordinates, rendered services to the king. Although the king was the absolute ruler over the land it did not belong to him: he had custodianship over the land which belonged to the nation. The land therefore could not be inherited. The king as a custodian of the nation was entitled to transfer land to various people but he also the right to revoke the land granted to a nobleman or to other people as well. He was also entitled to interest on the land thus granted. Ward sub-headmen rented fields to widows it after the death of their husbands or to anyone else who wanted it.

The disadvantages of a feudal system is that it favours the nobles by granting them the second place of leadership after the king. In so doing it turned the clan of nobility into a clan only secondary to the royal clan. This meant that it became a way of keeping commoners out of higher-ranking positions. The ownership of land was purely nominal, a system which deprived land from commoners practically. The provisional usage of the land by common people left them with no land of their own. They were deprived of the right of owning land and the right to sell it if they wished to do so. The king and his noblemen often abused the trust invested in them.

4.6.1 The powers of the king and the taboos that shaped them

The king was the symbol of unity and the spiritual as well as the material protector of the kingdom. He was the centre of spiritual life by mediating between the national ancestors who were former kings and the living inhabitants. "The king was first of all the great initiator of the seasonal occupations and ceremonies" (Tönjes quoted in Loeb 1962:44). He performed the necessary annual rituals before fishing, hunting and the eating of new crops. In his capacity as a ruler he stood between the nobles, the property-owners and the poor, propertyless. He communicated his proclamations, commands and decrees to nobles who executed them and made sure that his subjects adhered to them. It was his primary duty to protect the poor against being

plundered by the nobles. To reduce the cattle of the nobles so that they would not surpass the king's in number, the king confiscated cattle from them. The king was in charge of wars, but he appointed war leaders who went to the battle field with the troops. The crops, nature conservation, and the planning of annual ceremonies were all under the supervision of the king. The measurement of each field was strictly controlled and it was the king who authorised the starting of cultivation every year. King Mandume had laws that prevented the chopping down of trees especially of big fruit trees. According to these rules, the picking of green fruits from trees was punishable. Hunting took place during the dry season when the animals had already given birth. Like a Zulu king, the Kwanyama king as the tribal representative was believed to have direct contact with his tribal ancestors to ask for tribal blessings from them directly (Krige 1950:233)

The commoners and the king mutually protected each other. Commoners could become members of the king's bodyguards, the army or vigilante citizens. Successful warriors brought him cattle, while hunters, fishermen and field owners provided him with portions from their production. They owed him their total obedience. Men again waged wars and maintained the *ombala* by chopping and collecting stakes for it while women participated in planting and harvesting.

Missionary Sckär presented a king as someone who laid down rules of behaviour. He did not participate in manual labour but instead travelled from one part of his kingdom to the other. He writes: "The king decided when the fields should be sowed just before the October first rains. He also decided upon the time of the harvest ceremony. In that season he generally went hunting in the south. When the cattle were let into the fields after the crops were garnered, he hunted in the east. His people were obliged to report to this hunt and those who did not were penalized severely" (quoted in Loeb 1962:58).

Brincker was more informative, detailed and positive when compared with Sckär. He saw that the powers and duties of the king were to a great extent limited. To Brincker the Kwanyama king

...was lord over the life and death of the common people; it was only necessary for him to say a word or make a sign to cause his executioners to take a poor man's life and throw the body into the bush. On the other hand, in matters of state, such

as alliances, concessions, the building of missionary stations, making war and concluding peace treaties, the king was not the sole ruler of the tribe. He was advised by the old people and above all by the *omalenga* and the *eehamba* [noblemen and members of the royal family], and was subject to the judgement and will of his mother; under no circumstances could he proceed without their approval. He could not kill a prominent man without the advice of the majority of his council, nor could he order a missionary to be killed (quoted in Loeb 1962:58; Tönjes 1996:109).

4.6.2 Disadvantages to the nation of absolute kingly power

Commoners were prevented from carrying out their day to day work and planning. Too much control hampered the people's independence of thought. Precious time was wasted. People had to wait for the king to tell them when to cultivate or to harvest. For instance in case when the royal command came after the first rain had started or when the crops were ripe, commoners would be faced with severe consequences. The *Ombala*'s custom of not furnishing the nobles and other workers in the *ombala* with food was a sign of the perpetual greed of the king in the system. According to the policy, people visiting or working in the royal court had to bring their own food. The content of the policy was that commoners had always to supply the king with whatever they had but not vice versa. The Kwanyama Kingdom, like other kingdoms in Owambo, did not have defined classes as seen in developed societies but classes had existed there.

Promotion was depended on obedience to the king and royal clan. On the one hand this left very few opportunities of promotion for commoners who had no relation whatsoever with the king. On the other hand, such a system of promotion was a way of establishing an administration consisting of the king's promoted obedient personnel. A modern analogy would be a ruler or president establishing an administration consisting of the leaders from his own political party, which the king could easily and uncontroversially control. The promoted leaders on their part could not be critical of the king for he was an absolute leader whom nobody could oppose. This does not of course mean that he did not need constructive criticism. However, the system was such that the promoted obedient headmen often tended to secure their positions and to benefit from the same administration. Their positions became the priorities instead of the people they served. They were concerned with remaining headmen forever and never becoming commoners. As it is the case today with various cabinet ministers, the headmen knew that they occupied such

positions by the king's grace. It should also be noted that there was no law protecting them against the wrath of the king. Their lives were always in great danger if the relationship between them and the king was damaged. Today analogously leaders who hold positions by the grace of their employers render their service to them, instead of to the people they are supposed to serve.

4.6.3 Taboos applied to the king alone

There were taboos that applied solely to the king. For instance, after his enthronement the king was neither to cross the frontier of his country nor to meet a neighbouring king. It was believed that interaction between him and another king would lead to the death of one of them (Aarni 1982:85; Vedder 1934:72). But an Oshiwambo proverb which says: *Eendjamba mbali ihadi ombo moshixwa shimwe osho tashi ti ovapangeli vavali ihava kala moshilongo shimwe* [‘two elephants cannot be in the same shade of one shrub’, meaning ‘two rulers cannot be in one country’] seems more applicable (Williams 1991:100). In case a king sought asylum in a different kingdom the saying used was “*okwa lyata eehoni/iifo, hano a tutuka* [has lost authority] (Uugwanga and Haapanen quoted in Williams 1991:100). Savola and Närhi reveal that this taboo aimed both at honouring the territorial borders between the kingdoms and at preventing territorial conflicts (quoted in Williams 1991:100). As a symbol of life and fertility for the nation, the king was not allowed to engage in matters that could shed his blood.

Traditionally, the king was not supposed to eat pig or goat meat (Hoppeasalmi quoted in Aarni 1982:85).

It was not explicit why the Kwanyama king's fathering of twins was not approved at. The account of how the Herero treated twins and their parents sheds more light that leads to the understanding that the Kwanyama kings had fathered twins many centuries ago. The author suspects that the kings might have changed the practice because they did not want to adhere to the birth rights to rule which were associated with twins. Luttig has this to say on the birth rights of twins among the Herero:

From the time of their birth the twins also have definite rights. No one would dare to curse a twin or to refuse any kind of food requested. The entire werf would befriend a twin if he were in danger. At the death of a werf head the younger of

a pair of twins (if he is a male) inherits the position. His father will act for him if he is too young” (quoted in Loeb 1962:291).

The Kwanyama king was strictly not to father twins for the simple reason that of avoiding common children given royal names. To avoid the confusion that might be caused to the matrilineal successor, the uterine brother of the king, one of the babies was always killed at birth. Estermann offers a different reason why royal twins were killed when he says: “For twins of the royal family, there was no purification that was adequate; they were inexorably killed after birth” (1966:60). Twins were regarded as an unclean and shameful occurrence. People were shy about it. The Ovimbundu in central Angola regarded “twins something of a disgrace” (Hambly quoted in Loeb 1962:290). The Nyaneka always killed one twin at birth (Lang and Tasteving quoted in Loeb 1962:290). It seems that the fathering itself could not be a deliberate transgression. Fathering of twins was not a taboo, but royal twins were taboo.

Taboos applied to others in connection with the king were, for instance, that any commoner wanted to speak to the king had to do so through an intermediary, a noble. It was a norm that anyone who entered the royal court, had to take his/her sandals off. Entering the royal court with sandals would have meant that a member of the royal clan had died so one came to comfort the royal court members.

The system placed the king at the centre of life in the kingdom. He opened and closed annual activities. The reciprocal protection between him and the commoners though seemed to have benefited the leader more than was good. There was a mixture of reactions, especially among early missionaries, concerning the abuse of power by some of the kings. As indicated before, the powers of the kings were under *oidila* [taboos], but the manner of their use was terrifying.

4.6.4 The death and burial of a king

The death of a king was kept secret from the commoners for some weeks (Estermann 1966:119). A commoner was buried on the same day for fear that keeping a corpse outside spreads death (Nangolo 1999). Loeb specifies four days (1962:61). During the days of secrecy “the big men”

elected the new king (Uugwanga quoted in Williams 1991:101). As said earlier that only the king could start the wars, an impression among subjects and the neighbouring nations was created that the king was alive, the chief minister ordered the chief commander to attack a neighbouring country. There were three reasons for doing so: A pretense that the king was alive; to prevent a power struggle among eligible princes in the royal clan; to minimise the opportunity of being attacked by enemies during *ongodji* [the mourning period of a ruling king] when the country had no "owner" (Uugwanga; Estermann 1976:120; Pettinen quoted in Williams 1991:101).

According to Loeb the corpse was seated in a squatting position before its joints became rigid; the head was pushed down between the knees which were drawn up. Butter mixed with red ochre was used to rub the corpse which was also ornamented with black beads. Black beads were the symbol of death (1962:61). Estermann talked about the corpse being kept in his sleeping hut with a young slave girl guarding the remains (1966:119). There was a belief among Ovawambo that as the corpse decomposed the life of the deceased took refuge in a worm which appeared to be bigger than the others. The slave was to prevent the disappearance of the worm with life so that its burial with the other remains was ensured.

Estermann speaks of the deceased king being buried in a grave dug near the door of his sleeping room. A slave was buried alive with the cadaver of the deceased king. People who attended the burial filled the grave with soil. The burial was not, however, a public event attended by everybody. The grave of a king is called *ouwilo wohamba*. It was enclosed with great sloping poles which met at the top. Later the sleeping hut and palisades were removed so that the grave could be approached from all directions. A guard was designated to watch over the grave (1976:119).

Loeb spoke about a burial that took place ten days after the death of the ruling king (1962:62). Eventually the death was announced by a loud voice with a small drum as accompaniment. The voice and the drum beat could be heard far and wide. Messengers were also sent throughout the country. During the mourning period the kingdom was considered to be ownerless: "Anarchy" prevailed until a new leader succeeded to the throne. On the ninth day the grave was dug. The place where the grave was dug was not specified but the digging was performed by a man from

the Cattle Clan. Members of the same clan slaughtered and skinned a black beast. On its skin, which was placed in the grave, “a young girl from the Roan Antelope Clan was placed alive...the king’s head was placed on her lap” (Loeb 1962:62). An old man present addressed the deceased, saying: “*Tatekulu, ino lyeendela. Tambula omupija uoye U katume omundilo ngashi Ho tumu shito* [Uncle, you must not walk alone. Here is your servant so you may send [for] fire as you sent before] (Loeb 1962:62).

Before the grave was filled with soil, the deceased and the living the slave girl, were wrapped in the skin. A black cow and its calf were driven over the grave as a token of a continuous milk supply and then the grave was sprinkled with water as a symbol also of a perpetual provision of water for the deceased monarch.

Four days of feasting with meat and beer followed the burial. The fire of the deceased was put out and its ashes were sprinkled outside the royal court. According to oral tradition, the wailing continued until a member of the Cattle Clan died and was buried. How it happened I do not know. The wailing period is called *ongodji*. People were neither allowed to leave the country nor to enter it. No burial of a member of another clan, agricultural work, hunting or moving a homestead from one place to another was allowed to take place.

The understanding was that the king was the symbol of the life of his people. When he died the life of the nation also stopped. Someone was buried with the deceased to make sure that the *ovakwamhungu* [ancestors] were not angered and that the king was honoured. The mourning period was long, because it was believed that the longer it was observed, the more respect it showed for to the deceased and his ruling clan. Movements internally and externally were prohibited. Presumably, to prevent disorder and more anarchy, because the people considered *ongodji* as a period during which the country had no leader to prosecute perpetrators of crime. The result was that if *ongodji* took place during the cultivation period, agricultural production could be seriously hampered.

The secrecy about the king’s death had negative implications. Information of what was going on was withheld from commoners who were told meaningless stories. Attention was only paid to

members of the royal clan, so that they had sufficient time to discuss who would be the successor and so that eligible princes did not have the opportunity to contest for the throne. A commoner's life was regarded as of lower value than the respect for a dying king. Thus a slave girl was buried alive with the corpse of a deceased ruler. One wonders why a king was not buried with a member of his own clan. It would have made more sense to bury a member of the royal clan with a member of his clan. The reason quoted that a commoner was a servant of the king who had to continue her servanthood in the underworld is not enough. Clans were always kept apart in life. No compensation was paid by the royal clan to the Roan Antelope clan.

4.6.5 Succession

The rule of succession was always matrilineal. The king came from the *Ekwananghali* [the Mourning Clan], which is still the royal clan in the country. The deceased king's uterine brother closest to him in age had the first right to succeed him to the throne (Tonjes 1996:113; Hahn 1928:8; Bruwer 1967:31). In case the deceased had no brothers, his eldest sister's eldest son to the throne succeeded him, (or any eligible member of the royal clan). A prince who was left-handed, or had a cataract in his eye, was out of the contest. Succession followed the Owambo pattern. The sons and daughters of the king never inherited their father's throne, since they did not belong to the royal clan which is called the Mourning Clan that bore the kings for the kingdom. Instead of becoming kings, they were made nobles during their father's rule. The Oshiwambo proverb says: *Oshigenguti ha kala, omuna gwokombanda hamuwa* [The weaving reed is not cole, the son of a king is not a noble man] (Kuusi 1970:)

4.6.6 Evaluation

The lifelong position of a king had both positive and negative implications. If a leader leads in the interest of the nation, then its people prosper in all aspects of life. But when a despotic, negligent and cruel king succeeded to the throne, his subjects suffered for a long time. Except for his mother and his closest advisers none was allowed either to rebuke or to reprimand the king. The result was, in most cases, that he was ousted by force or by assassination. His eminent relatives planned these coups. People were left with no alternative for expressing their dissatisfaction.

The author does not condone the inherited status at all. He supports the idea that the son of a leader who has the necessary leadership qualities, should get the chance to rule or his closest uterine brother. As it was, only the line of the clan was followed and not the leadership qualities. Inherited status is obviously neither ethically acceptable and nor socially profitable, but, matrilineal line of succession was a great stumbling block to the lives of the sons and daughters of the kings. It robbed them of what they believed to be their biological right to be the heirs of their fathers' throne. They are regarded as commoners. But in reality they had royal blood, and therefore they wanted to have a recognized status in their communities. Their fathers paid no serious attention to their future careers and performance. Like the clan fathers they rejected their biological offspring and instead busied themselves either with their brothers or sisters' sons and daughters. This system breaks the family apart. The Tswana had a fairer practice than ours I think. A deceased chief was succeeded by the eldest son of his chief wife or of his wife next in rank in case his chief wife had no male son. The succession was then passed to the deceased's younger brother or relative if there was no successor in the household (Schapera 1971:51).

4.7 Initiation ritual for diviners in Oukwanyama

4.7.1 Introduction

This topic does not condone authority. Divination was considered to be one of the three important characteristics of the traditionalism system. The other characteristics are the male lineage and the conception of the Supreme Being (Nürnberger 1999:197). "The fabric of reality as such is perceived to be constituted by 'dynamistic' power" (Nürnberger 1999:196). Dynamistic power is neutral and beyond human control. The same power can be used for the betterment or for the destruction of the community. Both the betterment and the destruction processes take place through appropriate rituals. The traditional leaders for example are in charge of national rituals such as rain-making and sacrificing to the ancestors. With the assistance of diviners, these rituals direct the dynamistic power to profit the nation and to protect it against detrimental flows of power. Detrimental flows of power are secretly caused by sorcerers and evil spirits. The difference between profitable and detrimental power is that the latter is used for personal gain and is therefore against the national interest. The difference between the legitimate and illegitimate use

of dynamistic power is the purpose and not the magical meaning (Nürnberg 1999:197). The inclusion of this topic here is to provide further information about the initiation of the diviners, the manner of their equipment to carry their task, and the significant role they played in relation to the Owambo traditional leaders. Not only were they the closest and most important advisers of the kings, but they had a technique of detecting criminals.

4.7.2 Preparation of diviners

There are various ways of preparing *eendudu* [diviners]. An informant, called Moses, gave Loeb details about the institution of the diviner in the Oukwanyama. According to him the lowest grades, which included midwives, were only trained in medical herbs. The second grade was that of diviners who had homosexual as well as ancestral spiritual experiences. The third grade of diviners performed blood offerings to ancestral spirits and participated in the training of the two lower grades. They wore hide strips around their heads as an official badge. The fourth grade, which excluded women, was that of initiators of diviners, preparers of amulets, war leaders and healers of sick people (quoted in Hiltunen 1993:49). The word diviner means somebody who can access information about the divine dimension, for example to smell out a sorcerer, or to establish whether the ancestors have a grudge against their descendants. Therefore diviners are normally distinguished from healers. Healers use herbs to heal. Obviously some people can perform both tasks.

The initiate was either to be someone who has recovered from sickness or whom the ancestral spirits has ordered to become a diviner. The lowest grade was of diviners who could not afford to pay the initiation fees. Consequently, before they were taught how to diagnose sicknesses, they were healed first. After healing the learners were taught how to rub ash on the palms and to practice cunning enquiring of the hot knife. A novice was given a piece of porridge mixed with medicine powder but tied with a string that had two loose ends. The diviner held one end while the sick person swallowed the other end with the porridge. Pulling the string and causing the novice to vomit was believed to bring out the spirits. The trainer then “wounds the new healer’s wrists, chest, forehead and neck with a piece of aloe. The blood coming from the wounds is mixed with the porridge and the novice will eat the porridge. The instructor finally spits in the armpits

of the novice thus wishing him good luck” (quoted in Hiltunen 1993:49-50). The novice was not given a badge for office.

There were two stages diviners of the second grade had to undergo. The first stage was a two nights dance which had to be attended by the diviners. The dance was accompanied by the *omakola* [calabash drums] and led by *eshenge* [homosexual diviner]. Besides having sexual intercourse with *eshenge*, which was regarded a fee for the rite, the novice had to bring a dog and a cock with him. Both animals would be killed and the novice would drink blood of one of the two. During *the omakola* play, novices pretended to die and to come to life again. A solution of herbs was poured in their ears and nose as they came back to life. Finally, the homosexual diviner and his novice became blood brothers by mixing their blood that came from small wounds cut on their upper arms. Before the two ate a porridge mixed with their blood, the novice was trained to diagnose sicknesses by using ash and the used the knife to discover witches (quoted in Hiltunen 1993:50-51).

The second stage was to spent from four days to several weeks or even months with the diviner depending on the potential of the novice to learn. The novice was tested to establish whether he had the ancestral spirits with him. He was asked to pay an ox which the diviner speared. The blood was collected in a container, the gall bladder and the large stomach were cut into pieces and put in *onhembra* [a big clay pot] with blood, water and medicinal plants. The pot stayed in the diviner’s private room. The two ate from this first solution with their left hands and then with their right hands. After that the diviner tapped the novice from the back of his head to his back and from his forehead to his navel with two teeth from a male pig. The diviner spat water onto the underarm areas of the novices, washed them and asked them to wash themselves, to warm themselves at a fire in which medical herbs, pieces of stomach and of gall bladder were being burnt. “...the diviner cut a piece of aloe and scratched the novice’s forehead, hands and breast at the point of the heart. Then he took ash from the fire and rubbed the whole body of the novice with it” (quoted in Hiltunen 1993:51). As with diviners of the lowest grade, the novices were shown how to use herbs and bush; how to use the knife along his palm so that it could tell them what it detected; and how to suck out objects such as snakes, and other reptiles which sorcerers put into people. These objects put into the bodies of patients are called *oikupa*.

The third grade of initiation was more complicated than the first two. For instance, trainees had to crawl through the peritoneum of a killed ox, and were given a pot of blood from which they drank four handfuls. They received a cord fastened with hen feathers as objects of magic, ox hide bracelets and amulets filled with herbs. It was *oshidila* [taboo] for a diviner to eat the head of an animal, the backbone of an antelope, to light the fire with wood other than *mopane* and *omuve*. Accounts of the practices seem not to be extant. The initiation rite for grade four could not be found.

4.7.3 Evaluation

The existence of the institution of the diviner tells us of the urgent need the community still today for a skilled and well-trained medical work force. What we see in these few lines are the positive attempts of people who experienced human suffering caused by sicknesses in their community. They tried to work out something by using natural resources. The herbs may be natural, but the rituals are cultural and religious. The information acquired by the very few was communicated to the novices.

Like many other good ideas, diviner initiation which was initially meant for transmitting the acquired knowledge of healing to others was spoiled when it was turned into an income generating business. Aimed at convincing the trainees of their effectiveness after training, the training process was made complicated and expensive. Cunning ways such as the initiation of former patients, novices who were supposedly ordered by their ancestral spirits, causing novices to vomit out spirits, having sexual intercourse with the homosexual diviner, and the use of an ash and knife to discover witches were introduced. These are promoted even today. The situation worsened when hierarchical structures were created in the healing services. Competition went up and because nobody had any qualification, cheating and cunning used.

Both the kings and with their subjects believed that diviners had special eyes to see things which other people could not see with their naked eyes. The kings who were only politically powerful wanted to complement their powers by associating themselves with diviners. It was a common custom among the kingdoms in Owambo that each king had to have his head diviner whom he

summoned at any time he needed to do so. Traditionally, there was a strong belief among the Kwanyama that if the king did not have a diviner who protected him against other diviners he would not be able to live long or to prosper. It was believed that other stronger diviners would either kill him or prevent him from prospering. So, each king was forced by this ancient tradition to choose a head diviner whom he considered to be the strongest in his country. The ordinary people would also want to serve a leader who was able, through his diviners, to see what would happen and protect them against misfortunes. Diviners claimed to have the power to detect information which nobody could oppose or prove wrong. The kings needed someone with such power to help them detect some of the complicated issues they were not able to handle. For instance, it was a belief in those days that there was no such a thing as natural death on earth. Any person who died was believed to have been bewitched. A diviner was needed to intervene and to find out who the culprit was. Because of this belief, the diviner played a very significant role in detecting supposed criminal activities. He gained the prominence of having the second last say, before the king pronounced a verdict.

4.8 Clan fathers

Customarily, marriage is a union between a man and a woman from two different clans. The two clans were never united. The offspring belonged to the side of the mother and, as a result, it was monitored by their mother's brother whose kinship title was *tatekulu womekoto* [the uncle who was cut from the same belly button/ empirical cord as my mother]. The children of his sister were called *oimhumba yomekoto* [children of his sister who was cut from the same empirical cord as himself] (Shemuvalula 1982:20). Women were considered as the right people for expanding their mothers' clans, whereas men expanded their wives' mothers' clans. The wife's and husband's brothers and sisters are *oohaukwe oosuwala* [in-laws]. Each of the couple is *oshitenya* [in-law] of the other's clan members.

Every clan had its *eedyaaleli dalo, oohekulu yedimo* [clan fathers who were its uncles and leaders]. As among the Herero, the Kwanyama clan fathers had "power of life and death over members of his clan" (Loeb 1962:286). "No blood revenge follows" if by chance an uncle killed his nephew while disciplining him (Gibson quoted in Loeb 1962:288). Together the uncles had

the final authority of directing the youths of their clan on the clan members they could marry and those they could not. Luttig writes: "A maternal uncle protects his nephews and nieces from the fathers' harshness and they might seek asylum at his kraal" (quoted in Loeb 1962:288). The controversial question at hand is, if the maternal uncle who was the child's clan father was not answerable for the death of his nephew through his harsh discipline, isn't it odd that nephews and nieces would seek protection against their fathers from their uncles? It is obvious that not most of the uncles applied harsh disciplinary measures to their nephews and nieces.

Among them was a leading clan father who kept the clan wealth and distributed the property of the deceased in the clan. This clan leader was called *Nakakoma* (Shemuvalula 1982:20). The criteria for his promotion were *omaongelwandunge* [experience], common sense, trust, *oungudya* [expertise in managing wealth] (Nditya and Ndadilepo 1999). He could assign someone he trusted to do the distribution on his behalf. *Ookaukongholwa* [dissidents] in clans did not comply with this order, and they often drove the cattle of the deceased from the cattle posts and hid them before they came to the mourning rituals. Therefore it was taboo in some clans to drive the cattle of the deceased. Dissidents were often the deceased's brothers' or sisters' sons. Other members of the clan were the youths who belonged to the side of the mothers. Each clan often had *ovakwa vomombiya, hano ve he fi vetimba* [relatives who had joined the clan and thus did not inherit property or participated in any payment for an offence against the clan].

4.8.1 The empowering of a clan father

Like a king, a clan father was fortified in order to enable him to carry out his functions properly. Maria, a daughter of a well-known medicine man, Hamutoko, said that a clan father *oha tumbikwa* [was made stronger mentally and physically]. Both Maria and Nditya confirmed *etumbiko* [the empowering] but could not remember the rite or the medicine used for this purpose. The verb *okutumbikwa* means to prepare someone, especially a young person, to be stronger mentally and physically. The claws of either a vulture or an eagle were put on sinews around the neck of a young boy or a puppy (Nditya and Hamutoko 1999). The idea behind this was to make the boy or a puppy eagle-eyed; it was the wish that the positive characteristics of seeing very far be transferred either to a boy or a puppy. The word is also used when, for instance,

young persons are trained to carry out tasks which are beyond their natural possibilities.

The system of clan fathers as leaders of their clans kept the next of kin together. This had remarkable advantages in traditional Owambo society: the children of sisters and half sisters were able to know, and to relate to, each other; they were able to be taught which taboos were associated with their clan and which were not. For instance, youngsters were advised from which clan and household they could marry and from which not. Obedience, good manners, hard work, a good upbringing, wealth, status and physical appearance were some of the criteria for when choosing a life partner. The sisters and half sisters of the clan fathers had the significant task of educating their juniors to know their clan members, especially their uncles. A foundation upon which various methods can be applied was established.

The picture of the Kwanyama traditional marriage does not show the family cohesion that it would represent. The husband, if he was not living with his nephews, was a stranger among people of a different clan (s). Children were brought up in a way that upheld matrilinearity. One of the famous expressions was thus. "*Nyoko oye omukweni, ho omuyeni gwanandjili yaKakoko*" [Your mother is a member of your clan, your father belongs to a different clan] (Lehtonen 1968:67). Disharmony between the father and other members could erupt easily. Misconception as well as mistrust existed. Uncles thus abandoned their biological offspring and looked after the children of others. It was a system that forced the husbands to abandon their offspring and instead to give their service to the next of kin. However, the traditional Kwanyama family, despite the picture said above, was cohesive.

Matrilineal principles had more advantages for Owambo wives than patrilineal ones had for the Herero wives. Except that the patrilineal marriage system was said to give the opportunity to wives to inherit cattle from their uncles and to have a harmonious married life, it had many disadvantages (Schinz quoted in Loeb 1962:288). In accordance with the patrilineal principles in the Herero community there was, "a definite bride-price that was actually a price paid not only for the woman but also, and especially, for the ownership of the children that might be born in the marriage" (Loeb 1962:288). In the matrilineal Kwanyama society, on the other hand, the same author writes that "a man pays only a nominal bride-price and he 'owns' his wife only in theory"

(1962:316). A mother-in-law who is still a respected person by her son-in-law in a matrilineal society, was someone whom the son-in-law could buy along with her daughter in a patrilineal society. No official marriage ceremonies were held for wives who were married after the first wife. These wives were bought (Brincker quoted in Loeb 1962:288), and could be lent to friends or strangers (Luttig quoted in Loeb 1962:290) or disposed of easily. Neither of these was practised in matrilineal society: in a matrilineal society wives played a significant role in agriculture and obtained divorce often, which was not the case in a patrilineal society.

4.8.2 The householder and his authority

A house was believed to be a small universe for its owner. Loeb describes a house owner as “king in his own castle” (1962:134). To him alone belonged the disciplining and commanding of the wives and other house inmates. Each wife was an independent economic unit at her own *epata* [section/department]. Wives were the backbone of agriculture in the nation but particularly in a household. The marriage rank of each wife was determined by her position in that marriage. The first wife for instance, was the assistant of her husband, whereas the second wife had the duty of cooking for the husband. The head of the house had his own area and the youths had their quarters and sleeping huts. Punishments such as whipping, kindling the fire in early morning, scaring birds from the gardens and drawing water in the evening were strictly under his order (Uejulu quoted in Loeb 1962:134).

The householder acted also as a ruler of his homestead. Some rulers ruled that fire must not be kindled at night, that water was not to be drawn after the cattle had come into the kraal and that cooking pots were not to be pulled at night. In those cases the fire was only permitted at cooking places, sleeping huts and at *the ohupale*, the place of the sacred fire. The rule concerning the fetching and handling of water at night was a way a householder controlled the possibility of any wife's lover or thief entering his house. The culprit who pulled the cooking pots, would be bitten by a snake. It is not known to the author what the objective behind this rule was.

The head of the household was also a priest of his household. For the good health and protection of his people sacrifices were offered by him on a daily basis, as well as on important occasions.

It was he who summoned *onchudu* [medicine man] in the case of emergency, sickness in the family, house purification or migration. Both Loeb and Sckär spoke of husband and head wife praying to the rising and setting sun on special occasions. Sckär Writes:

When someone in the kraal was ill, or when one feared misfortune, or when a husband was about to go on a trip, or when the time came for the *efundula* or the circumcision ceremony, the husband went with his first wife to the kraal entrance both entirely naked, to sacrifice to the sun. As soon as the first rays appeared, they made the motion of seizing them with their hands and stroked them over their faces and breasts, breathing deeply. Then they pretended to spit, 'Ptuh!' and threw mopane leaves at the sun (quoted in Loeb 1962:135-136).

The division of labour in the homestead was laid down by an ancient tradition. According to the ancient tradition men were always in charge irrespective of their incompetence. The women, especially the younger women, always had to do the hard work. In accordance with the above custom the house owner apportioned various tasks to the members of his household. Each person was kept responsible for the work assigned to him or her. It was a method of urging each member to contribute to the social and economic well-being of the entire family. The division of labour prevented excuses being made by irresponsible persons when they failed to accomplish their duties. Wives were not the householder's equals. In a well-to-do family, he had his food cooked separately and ate alone (Hahn 1928:24). A similar event whereby a Nguni shunned "contact on an equal basis" by not "drinking from the same cup or bowl as Tsonga or Ndau..." (Liesegang 1981:183).

The issue of clan fathers and householders clinging to their matrilineal family members had two objectives. Firstly, they avoided to identify themselves in unity with their wives who were regarded as land loaners. Each wife had her section which was economically independent from other wives' sections and from the husband's land. Like the household, the field was also divided into the main division which belonged to the husband, and other divisions allocated to the wives, girls and boys. Like the husband, each wife kept her products in her granary and in bins and like the husband they ate from them during the resting seasons. The husband normally distributed millet to his wives' sections when they started working on his field. In accordance with the lending system, unlike the practice at district level, sub-headmen and householders' wives did not provide

householders with tributes and gifts. Wives were his workers. In a nutshell, they paid with the work they performed for the husband. And as in the relation between the employers and their employees, the husband would not want his wives to be equal to him. Secondly, there was, I think, a constant fear of losing the old social unit, the matrilineal clan, on the one hand, and creating and maintaining a new one on the other hand. The result was the maintenance of the matrilineal system.

4.8.3 Evaluation

The negative aspect of the division of labour was that it was divided according to gender. A son was kept away from his mother and the daughter from her father. None of them would develop close love and compassionate feeling for the opposite sex. Mothers and daughters who were the backbone of daily life in that they provided agricultural products were regarded as inferior to fathers and sons who were pastoralists. Although members of the household depended on agricultural products for their daily survival, cattle breeding was regarded as superior to crop cultivation.

The Kwanyama household was an exact reflection of the royal court. Like the king, the head of the homestead occupied its centre while other members stayed at its periphery. Being at the centre, the householder was served by other members who had to carry out his orders. He had the last word in every respect. In some families, he ate alone like the king. Like a king he was the go-between the ancestors and his members of his homestead. He also acted as the intermediary between the medicine man and his people. The householder was a priest-ruler like a king. The homestead was the basic foundation of the authoritarian leadership style. In the homestead children were taught how to behave, to accept without objection the rules of the parents and elders, to observe the rules of the house and laws of the nation. As long as the parents lived they had special commanding power over their adult sons and daughters. The Kwanyama saying that says *Oye omona walye hano* [Whose son or daughter is he/she?] is revealing. The saying which questions the quality of upbringing parents offered to children is spoken after a person, especially a youth, has behaved immorally. Because of too much powers invested in the householder he prevented wives having sexual affairs with outsiders whereas he himself could practise adultery.

The tradition treated him as the leader who was not necessarily expected to adhere to the rules he upheld.

4.9 The Ndonga Kingdom

In the Kwanyama Kingdom there are twenty-nine clans, whereas in the Ndonga Kingdom there are twenty-five (Loeb 1962:99-102; 270). The Ndonga royal clan is *Ekwanekamba* [the Hyena clan]. "Earlier traditions tell us that the Hyena clan gained their dominant position because of their knowledge of, and skill in rain-making" (Rautanen's Diaries quoted in Williams 1991:97). Someone who was a king by birth was called *omukwanihwa*. The ruling king and the members of the royal clan were called *aakwanihwa* [the kings]. The queen mother who lived in her separate homestead was referred to as *ombala*. She conducted the main ceremonies. She took the place of the ruling king in this respect.

4.9.1 The election of a king

When the health condition of a king deteriorated, only counsellors kept close contact with him and attempted to answer all the questions about his health. It was mentioned above that the death of a king was withheld for some time, because this was the time when counsellors organized the succession of the deceased. In Swaziland the king's death was also kept secret until his successor was installed (Kuper 1947:86). Hahn reports that in case the rightful successor was not liked by counsellors, they often plan a secret political scheme to depose him, either by banishment or assassination. His younger brother or nephew was enthroned in his stead (1928:14). The criteria used in electing the king were the person's bravery and potential to defeat his opponents. Liljeblad records that the custom in the Ondonga was that "the new king was sent to Inenge, the ancient capital of Nembungu, the son of Amutundu, to find power insignia hidden under the 'national palm tree'" (quoted in Williams 1991:102).

Hahn reports an election that took place quickly after the Ndonga King had died. Immediately after the death of the king his successor was taken by the elders into the state room of the deceased and notified of his election. A senior member of the elders gathered and addressed the

new king, saying: “Our Chief [King] has gone. All the good and great deeds achieved by him were gained through the good advice and guidance of his counsellors and elders. You will follow him and keep his tribe [kingdom] alive” (Hahn 1928:14).

The new king accompanied by the same counsellors went outside the royal court to meet the group of people representing the nation as a whole. There the king sat on a log prepared for him. The senior counsellor prompted *omuvilikili* [a spokesperson of mourning] or someone with a fluency of speech to address the nation. Standing behind the king but in the company of elders he announced: “Our Chief [King] is dead, our new Chief [King] has been sent” (Hahn 1928:14). The spokesperson could repeat this sentence many times and request the group to pronounce their wish to have the new king. The more courageous members ran closer to the new king and with their knob kierries beat the ground while exclaiming: “*Kala unomwenyo*,” meaning, “Our Chief [King], you have come to live a long life” (Hahn 1928:14). Elders invited all present to partake in the feasting of porridge and meat. Beer was not allowed at this occasion of mourning and, after eating, all people departed except the guards of the new king.

Filippus ShilongoUukule, a senior district headman of Ondonga, my informant, has a different story about the election. According to him, when the ruling king died, the mourners gathered at *onkulumbala*, [the deceased king’s palace] until the wailing period was over. During this period the kingdom was without a king; this was therefore the time when advisers of the royal clan gathered to discuss who would be the successor of the deceased. All young male kings in the royal clan were evaluated. The one that met the criteria applied in the evaluation was elected king. The elected king was notified and asked to respond to his election to and express his acceptance or rejection of his election. *Efiku lehalakano* [on the departing day] all mourners are called together. The new king was made to sit among his noblemen. One of the noblemen introduced the king to those present by pointing at him. The people present accepted the king, women ululated and men shouted at the top of their voices.

4.9.2 Enthronement

Little information about the coronation ceremonies in Ondonga was given to me. The coronation ceremony is called *oshivilo shomukwaniitwa ta lala oshilongo* [a feast of a king ascending the

throne]. The king is anointed with lion fat during the enthronement ritual. According to informants, at the coronation the enthroned king ate lion and slave meat. It is not known whether the two kinds of meat were cooked together or separately. Other reliable sources maintain that the king did not eat such meat with his noblemen. In the Ndonga and the Mbadja kingdoms the sinews of the slain slave were used as thin ropes to string a kingly necklace (Shikongo quoted in Williams 1991:105)..

Longmana, the informant of Loeb describes the coronation ceremony in the *Ondonga* as follows:

In old times when a king took the throne he first fought a war for cattle and killed some of the cattle for a feast. Then he killed his father and took his cattle. Today the father gives his son some cattle. The people got up early in the morning and carried kraal stakes. The people and the king killed a cow. They removed the skin, dried it in the sun, mixed the blood with the manure and malt, and buried it in the holes they were making for the new kraal. Then the people began to build the kraal. When the kraal was finished the king went inside and took the skin of the cow that had been killed to the hut of his first wife. He stayed in her hut for four days. On the day of coronation the king gave a big feast for which four or five oxen were killed. An old nobleman made a speech to announce the accession of a new ruler: 'we have a new king. Anyone with complaints must come to him'. Food and beer were served (quoted in Loeb 1962:271).

As in the other two kingdoms, there was a contest between eligible princes. In the Ndonga kingdom the nominated were sent to Linenge with the intention of preserving the history of the people. There is disagreement between Hahn and Uukule concerning the time of the election of the successor took place. Hahn speaks of the appointment of a new king immediately after his predecessor's death. The notification of the appointee took place in his predecessor's state room, whereas those present stood outside the old court where they were informed about who the successor was. They wished him a long life and long rule. Beer was not a drink prepared for the feast for it could spoil the mourning atmosphere by making the mourners happy. Uukule speaks about the election carried out after the wailing period was over. He left out the trip to Linenge, his procession to the state room and the ceremony outside the court. There are two ways to explain the difference. Hahn might not have comprehended entirely what he had been told by inhabitants, simply because of language problems. Alternatively, Uukule might have forgotten some of the details.

The following passage indicates that the practice described is common to all three kingdoms.

First, the high-priest, who also served as the master of ceremonies would dispatch *Aakwankala* [San people] to hunt a lion; second, he would order his men to catch and strangle a young 'slave' man to death; and third, he would order a bull to be slaughtered. Small pieces of flesh were cut from the human body, and from the lion and bull carcasses; they were mixed with some herbs and cooked in one pot, after which they were put into wooden sauce boats and served to the councillors and some warriors" (Kandongo and Ashipembe quoted in Williams 1991:104). A slight difference here was that in the *Kwanyama* kingdom a specialist, *kimbanda* [medicine man] served such mixture to the new king which was not the case in other kingdoms (Estermann 1976:122; Loeb 1962:52).

As in the Kwanyama Kingdom, the Ndonga king had the sacred cattle, sheep, fire and water. Thus like his counterpart in the Kwanyama land, he was expected to kill his father in order to seize cattle from him and start his sacred herd with these animals. The father killing incident ended with King Nangolo dhaAmutenya whose father, Mpingana, managed to escape this kind of death. Since then an alternative has been found, that of a father giving his enthroned son some cattle to begin his sacred herd.

4.9.3 Strengthening the enthroned king through magic rituals

4.9.3.1 Initial arrangements

The magic practice which was performed for the purpose of assuring the king that the kingdom was in his hands and for the strengthening of his administrative authority took place one month after the king's accession. Here follows the sequence as told by informant Ashipembe Eelu. It was the king who invited the diviner to his court and asked him to "produce corn, cattle, people" for him, "raise" him above all people, so that he "shall reign"(quoted in Hiltunen 1993:128). The king and the diviner then agreed on the payment and two days later the diviner would come back to the court.

4.9.3.2 Methods of strengthening

The diviner came in the afternoon of the agreed day.

The following night the diviner sleeps with the king in the main bedroom. The king's chief adviser is present. The diviner smears his tattooed penis with butter, into which he had mixed *oimbodi* [herbs] powder and proceeds to have anal intercourse with the king. After a while he does the same to the chief adviser. The diviner goes to sleep in another place in the court. The chief adviser goes to his home in order to lie there with his first wife by a big grain bin at the outer entrance. The king goes to fetch his first wife and lies with her by the big grain bin of the court. When the coitus has ended, they spend the night in the main bedroom...(quoted in Hiltunen 1993:128).

The king was taken to the termite stack by the diviner the afternoon of the following day. There the diviner made a fire on which he put a small pot with *oimbodi* [herbs]. In the same pot he put glowing coals to burn the herbs and breathed in the smoke from the pot while he kneeled down over it. He did this while he wished him good luck. The diviner smeared the face of the king with herb powder while he held the king's head over the pot and the king expressed two wishes for himself.

The next step was for the king to crawl symbolically through a termite mound. The diviner and the king went on the other side of the termite mound. There the king is given two mushrooms in both hands and urged to "dig through" the termite mound. The king pretended to do this by pushing his head into the termite mound. After this the two went back to *okalupale kamutyakemo* [a hiding room of the hosts] in the court.

There the diviner smears him with *olukula*-fat [red-ochre]. He slashed small wounds inside and outside the king's wrists, biceps, the upper part of the chest muscles, the shoulders, at the end of the forefinger, between the middle finger and forefinger, in between the big toe and the second toe, on the side of the metatarsus, on the thigh in the strongest place, between the eyes and at the tip of the tongue. The diviner smears the king's penis with *oimbodi* powder. After this they eat food reinforced by magic powder with *omboga* sauce and drink *ontaku* (meal drink). When they have finished eating, the king smears himself with *uupule* [magic] fat (quoted in Hiltunen 1993:129).

A black ox was slaughtered on the second day and before it was skinned an opening through which the diviner took out heart, lungs, liver and tongue was made at the back. He further removed the sinews on which he fastened the *oshiva* [whistle]. He took the big intestine, the tip of the tongue, the point of the heart and burnt these to ashes. These ashes together with *omugolo*-tree coals were stamped to powder which the diviner mixed with butter and with this mixture he filled the horn.

Small wounds were slashed on the various parts of the king's body:

on the king's forehead, on the nose, on the tip of the tongue, between thumbs and forefingers, on the biceps and between the big toe and second toe on the side of the metatarsus. He smears the small wounds with his fingers with the fat mixture he has made. He also smears the king's face, draws with his fatty hands along king's body, breastbone and stomach to the genitals and also smears the legs and the feet (quoted in Hiltunen 1993:129).

After he has been smeared, the king in his royal, official garments walked behind the diviner who led him to a palm-tree. The diviner urged the ruler to climb on the palm-tree and asked him to say what he saw from there. First the king answered that he saw nothing, but the healer asked if he did not see the kingdoms, and he replied that he saw Oukwanyama and Oukwambi. When he failed to see other things, he was called down and together they went to the house. There the king's forehead, nose, mouth to the navel was smeared with herb powder. They went back to the palm-tree and this time the king saw a male elephant which meant that he saw his kingdom. The diviner cooked *ombidi* [spinach sauce] and porridge which he poured on to the ground and he, the king and his chief adviser, ate this food. The meaning behind this eating was that the king had taken the kingdom for himself in eating the food given by it. The king, his adviser and the diviner held their hands over on the fire; this was a way of strengthen themselves for watching over the kingdom.

From there the three went to stand towards the east of "the elephant" with the king standing between the others. The diviner who stood at the rear of the animal, the adviser being the right of the king the diviner scattered herbal powder around the men and the elephant. The three knelt

down after the diviner returned to the elephant's rear. Before they left for the court, the diviner collected urine and dung from the elephant in a container. The urine was mixed with cooked butter, lion, leopard and black mamba fat. The king and his first wife smeared themselves with this fat on big feast days such as marriage feasts and the home-coming feasts of men who brought salt from the saltpan, *olwenge* [home-coming feast of the cattle after harvesting]. From the hide of a black ox given to the diviner, "a belt, band and shoes are made for the king" (Hiltunen 1993:130). Its meat was divided by the diviner who gave a shoulder and a hind cut for the king and for himself and the rest to other people. Onto the king's cooked meat he scattered "*olukoka, omudhimbuluki, okankete, oshilombo* and *ombambi omkodhi* [herbs]" (quoted in Hiltunen 1993:130).

"Upon departure the diviner has anal intercourse first with the king and then with the main adviser in the same way as he did when he came to the courts. The diviner received his payment from the field: two cows with their calves" (Hiltunen 1993:131).

The belief behind anal copulation was the strengthening the life force, fertility, power, and wealth of the king, and the fertility of his subjects, cattle and corn. The sexual union between the king and his first wife, the chief adviser and his first wife was a completion of the fertility rite. The filling of the magic horn with various organs from the slain ox points to the qualities required of the king. The black ox was an offering to the ancestral spirits. The first slashing of the king with small wounds and smearing them with magic fat means the fortifying of the king's life force and richness. It was believed that "the eye [i.e. wisdom] of the chief [king] makes the millet grow" (Knappert 1981:197). The king's climbing of a palm-tree was a symbol of receiving the kingdom from the diviner. He took the kingdom when he fed himself with the porridge and sauce on the ground. The mixture of *omaadi oupule* [magic fat] smeared by the king and his first wife on feasting days signified *okulismushupaleka* [to create a frightening impression towards subjects and strangers alike]. Symbolically, going through a termite mound was an introduction to the ancestral spirits who were expected to bless the new ruler. Termite mounds were believed to be abode of the ancestors.

4.9.3.3 Evaluation

It was a contradiction that the anal copulation between the highest officials in the kingdom was considered something positive. A homosexual is seen as a betrayal of his sex and a person of very low status in the community. Lesbians, if there were any, are unacceptable people even today. Conjugal sodomy was punishable by law. A thing that was forbidden by moral law and punishable by customary law was practised illegally by the law makers. A ruler who was a king by birth and therefore a rightful inheritor of the kingdom degraded himself twice by having anal copulation and by receiving the kingdom from a diviner who was counted among the commoners. These practices clearly show that divination and magic were practically believed to be above the kingship as well as its protectors and sustainers. It also shows that the ruler did not operate at the same level of dignity as his subjects, but he was morally at the lower level than his subjects. It was a diviner who acted as very special person and as a servant of a high power that guided the king. The king who was believed to be a sovereign ruler of the kingdom allowed himself to be guided by a diviner. Nominally, this commoner's life and death belonged to the king. The strong wish in a ruler to acquire supernatural powers and the ability to be above all people subjected him to these shameful acts. The other weakness is that of believing in a diviner who possessed the techniques of enriching others while the diviner he remained poor.

4.9.4 Levels of judicial court organization

As in the Kwanyama and the Kwambi kingdoms, there were levels of courts: the village, the district and the national. Homesteads constituted a village. Each homestead was under the control of *mwene weumbo* [the householder] who was in charge of the homestead and to whom each member of the homestead was accountable. Householders could also act as advisers to sub-headmen in matters of importance. Each district was divided into villages and each village was under a sub-headman. Sub-headmen acted as advisers of the chief (Nambala 1994:30).

A kingdom was divided into *oikandyo* [districts]. Each district was under a senior headman who dealt with matters at a district level. Normally there were many chiefs under the king. Things that transcended the jurisdiction of the village level yet were not at the national level of jurisdiction

were dealt with by the headman. They were petty cases compared to the serious offences referred to national level. District headmen received land from the king and allotted it to ward sub-headmen at a fixed price. They acted as implementors and supervisors of the proclamations and laws of the king in their districts. In important matters they acted as advisers of the king.

Nominally, land, people and all property in the country belonged to the king. He appointed counsellors to whom he allotted land. International matters and questions, including affairs of the state, were attended to by the king personally. All serious crimes, such as conspiracy, treason, theft, murder, raids and disturbances which were referred to him by district courts were tried and settled by the king himself. He sought advice from elders and trusted counsellors especially on serious matters and matters related to policy making.

The person against whom the king's verdict was directed had to compensate the plaintiff and the king and to pay *efilo lyoompadhi* [the wiping out of his tracks to the king's court/a reward for the conclusion of the case]. The payments were made in cattle. In case of capital punishment the execution was carried out by executioners who were either Bushmen or foreigners from other kingdoms. In the Ndonga Kingdom a common method of execution was a slow process of strangulation. The event took place either outside or in the vicinity of the king's homestead for the purpose of demonstrating the powers of the king. Both adultery committed with the wife of the king and abortion were punishable by death.

Efilo lyoompadhi which is still a practice is an extra payment in addition to the compensation that must be paid to the plaintiff and to the king. It is an exploitative practice. The practice can be interpreted as a punishment or a method designed to intimidate defendants not to allow their complaints to reach the king's court. The keeping of foreign executioners and the carrying out of executions in the vicinity of the royal court indicated how the kings maintained their positions of power. Disagreement with the king meant either severe punishment or death. The result was the creation of a passive and obedient people.

4.9.5 The burial of the king

Two types of royal burial were practised. They differed according to whether the king was circumcised or uncircumcised. A circumcised king was addressed as *omukuluntu* [elder]. He was not buried under the ground, for he was considered to be a father, ruler and owner of the country. The corpse was wrapped in the skin of a black ox slaughtered for that purpose. It was carried to the cattle kraal and placed in a sitting position. Around the corpse heavy wooden poles which met at the top were planted and formed a grave called *ompampa*. The king who was not circumcised was also buried in a sitting posture in the grave dug in the ground but not surrounded with heavy poles (Hahn 1928:15-16). The difference in the burial rite was maintained to demonstrate that circumcision signified the status of an *omukuluntu* [elder]. The burial took a short time and two keepers were designated to guard the tomb. After the new king went to his newly composed court, the old court was handed over to an old nobleman. He would use the same stakes to build his house not far from the old court and leave *ompampa* in the open space.

Circumcision was a sign of respect and so kings were not excluded from it. Every man and especially all male members of the royal clan and the nobility were circumcised for a symbol of status. Often the foreskin was considered to be unclean. Other than this, the author does not know what good circumcision offered to the nation.

4.10 The Kwambi Kingdom

Little has been written about the Kwambi kingdom. Ovakwambi are classed with the Ondonga linguistically. The girls' initiation ceremony in Oukwambi is similar to *ohango yOshindonga* [girls' initiation ceremony in Ondonga]. It differs completely from *efundula lOshikwanyama* [girls' initiation ceremony in Oukwanyama]. Lebzelter says that 'Ukwambi Land', is actually the country in which many `ombi' [eembe] fruit grow (quoted in Loeb 1962:282).

4.10.1 Election of a new king

As in the Kwanyama and the Ndonga Kingdoms, people belong to different clans in the Kwambi

Kingdom. As in the Ndonga, *Ekwanekamba* is the name of the royal clan (Hahn 1928:8; Namuhuja 1996:6). All kings must come from it. The queen mother was said to be the real source of power. There were moments when it was said that she helped to choose a new king or dismissed him if she was not satisfied with him. As in the Ndonga Kingdom she was the rain-maker, offering rain-making sacrifices at Iijale ceremonies. According to the informant, pastor Jason Amakutuwa, there were two methods of electing a king. Firstly, the ruling king appointed a girl from *Ekwanekamba* clan and anointed her with lion fat. The anointment was an official indication that she would bear the future kings. Such anointment would not prevent the offsprings of that girl not to be anointed at their enthronement. Secondly, two competing male candidates from the royal clan were appointed. Before the competition a stone of the country was “hidden in the ward called Iiyale, in the field where Nuukata the son of Tshiinga lived” (Laurmaa 1949:58). The two were instructed to find it. The candidate who managed to find it secured his election as the ruling king of the kingdom. The other candidate accepted his defeat. The third method was a physical fight between the two successful candidates. The winner became a ruling king (Laurmaa 1949:59).

4.10.2 Enthronement

My informant, Pastor Amakutuwa, remembers that it was a custom among the Ovakwambi that someone must be killed at every death of the ruling king and again at the enthronement of his successor. The symbol of enthronement was the anointment of the king with lion fat. He continues by saying: “*Penangeko lohamba moshilongo opa li ha pa kala yo omamhenghulo oo ame itandi a dimbulukwa*” [During enthronement ceremony sacrifices which I am not able to tell were offered]. “In the *Uukwambi*, some of the king’s cousins were adorned with human leather bangles made from the skin of the sacrificed victim” (Shikongo and Kandongo quoted in Williams 1991:105). It was a practice in all the kingdoms that the ascendent king would receive the royal insignia, the symbol of power as described before.

The Kwambi Kingdom had a closer connection with the Ndonga than with the Kwanyama Kingdom. The anointing of a girl from the ruling clan to bear the future king was a positive move. It was long range planning on the one hand, and a well-planned precaution against competition

among royal clan members. The competition for the throne among royal members often led either to the deportation of some members into neighbouring countries or to political assassinations.

4.10.3 Initiation of diviners in the Oukwambi land

The information used here was provided by Aini Aarni through interviews she conducted among the Ovawambo. As in other kingdoms, the ancestral spirits called novices to enter the profession of divination. The objective, according to the information, was to guide the people. As a test novices had to find a hidden *ontena* [magic axe]. When they found it, they dug a hole in the ground in which *ontaku* [meal drink] was poured. The novices then had to drink part of the meal drink through the rectum of a slain dog, and to pull up the magic axe with their teeth. Part of the dog meat would be cooked and eaten with the porridge the next morning. A portion of the food would be dedicated to the ancestors. Towards the end of the initiation the young diviner's tongue, chest and wrists were slashed with a knife. The wounds were smeared with herbal powders.

The young diviner would be trained in the using of various herbs, and in the behaviour appropriate for a healer. An important condition was that he had to be married so that his marital bed could be used to keep the medicinal herbs powerful.

The combination of blood and medicinal herbs was believed to have the power to heal. The dog, cock and black ox were animals often associated with healing and the spirits. The information Aarni furnished seemed to be somehow influenced by Christian teaching. She talks about the novices called by the ancestral spirits to help the people of God. Ancestral spirits would call the novices to carry the tasks they called them for.

4.10.4 *Oompampa* [graves of kings]

Laurmaa talks about the *ompampa* [grave] of King Nuujoma Iipumbu at a place called *Iino*. *Iino* means thorn bushes. It was believed that at the trunk of one of the thorn bushes were two rain eggs. A culprit who identified this special thorn bush was thought to be innocent and therefore freed. The belief was that the culprit would be killed by lightning (1949:58).

4.11 The typical characteristics of the system as a whole

4.11.1 The practicality of the system itself

4.11.1.1 The political powers of the state

The king always had people from various clans at his disposal. It was a common custom for each clan to have its members serve in the offices of the kingdom. A king inherited the servants of his predecessor (Shindondola quoted in Williams 1991:106). Former counsellors, courtiers and fathers who were close friends to the royal clan used to introduce their sons to the king. The king himself asked people to give him children for his service (Williams 1991:106). The latter were trained as warriors who waged wars and captured cattle and people from surrounding kingdoms. Other warriors were recruited with the help of the counsellors in the country. In all of the three kingdoms compared, the king was the commander-in-chief of his army. Except King Haimbili and Mweshipandeka who "commanded their own warriors" (Kaulinge quoted in Williams 1991:108), each king appointed a war commander, who presided on behalf of the ruler. The king had the executioners with him.

The state needed to be strong militarily in order to maintain law and order and to protect its citizens. The tradition was that all political power was in the hands of the king. As a ruler he maintained the policy which did not tolerate different view points after the decision has been reached. Nor did he allow opposition and he demanded absolute obedience from his subjects. Nürnberger writes: "Indications of deviant thoughts, attitudes of behaviour arouse suspicion of a sorcerous (=antisocial) potential in a person, which is the most phenomenon in traditional societies" (1991:308). No other groups in the country were allowed to share in the political power of the king. It was a political situation that gave "no place for a legitimate power struggle among interest groups" (Nürnberger 1991:308). The tradition was strictly observed and it was thus impossible to remove the king from power.

4.11.1.2 Social relation between the superior and the subordinate

The ancient laws, edicts, taboos and proclamations derived their authority from the king. The status of a superior vis a vis that of a subordinate was therefore always emphasised. Subordinate had to conduct themselves in a special manner in the presence of the superior.

When one gave or received a gift, one used one's right hand, holding the left hand under the right wrist or elbow. If a king were the giver, one received the gift 'with two hands'. In talking to a superior, an ordinary man spoke in a low voice and refrained from shouting and also from spitting or blowing his nose. He sat at a level lower than the seat his superior occupied, and he did not cross his legs (Loeb 1962:68).

The relation of parents to children sometimes inspired fear and was threatening. It included 'imprecations or mortal curses' (Estermann 1966:62). The same author records two separate cases when both a father and a mother lost patience after the unsuccessful correction of a son and daughter and as a result cursed them. In the first case, the father says, *Kaanaa ve hai ku dengele oda koshifidi ndee to fi!* [Boy, I beat with my male member against a stump on your account; you shall die!]. In the second case, the mother says, *Hai ku tuulile eteta lange!* Or *Hai ku nyamene evele!* [I lift my apron cache-sexe!] or [I suck my breast on your account!] (1966:62). Both curses expressed anger and conveyed the message that the disobedience of the son or daughter had forced the parent to do something extra-ordinary which might caused the death of the guilty youngster.

Some of Oshiwambo proverbs warn children to be uncritical of their parents. The author have two as an examples: *Mahudi iha ludhikwa naho, mapatamo iha patamwa nanyoko* [Do not debate with your father or your mother] (Angula quoted in Laurmaa 1949:150). It means that children should not argue with their parents, but accept their views uncritically.

The other proverb is *Ohoni yomukulunhu ongeyo* [The shame of an adult person is anger] (Angula quoted in Laurmaa 1949:151). This was a warning to subordinates to deal carefully with their superiors.

The customary laws and edicts concerning obedience and respect that should be attributed to superiors and parents were very significant. They had a solid foundation of morals and social custom on the one hand. But, on the other hand relationships between superiors and subordinates were regulated in such a way that subordinates had no chance to express themselves publicly. “To differ with one’s superior would not only signify insubordination and a threat to his/her inherited position, but also a conflict with the community as a whole which cannot be tolerated (Nürmberger 1991:308). It was a custom whereby all signs of disagreement and opposition in the country were crushed immediately and resulted in subordinates being subservient.

4.11.1.3 The economic powers of the king

The customary laws in the country placed the king at the centre of the country’s economic life and therefore put most of its resources of income at his disposal. Apart from the court honoraria and other tributes mentioned earlier, the ruler received also voluntary contributions. It was a custom that anybody who visited the king should take a bull with him as a present (Estermann 1966:125). Kings in the region adopted the custom called *okashava* whereby armed boys from the royal court raided cattle belonging to the king’s own subjects. The same brigands on the orders of the king, captured women and carried young girls from surrounding kingdoms. If found by her relatives a captive woman was exchanged for a lot of cattle but if not, she was sold into slavery (Estermann 1966:125). Another method the kings used to generate revenue at the cost of others, was to wage wars against other kingdoms.

The king needed the sources of income to meet his needs. But other income should have been used for state purposes. No provision was, however, made between the king’s personal and the state’s treasury. The result was that the king became economically stronger than anybody else in his country. What increased the corruption and self-enrichment of the king in the economic system under discussion was the absence of “administrative, legal and political checks and balances built into the system (Nürmberger 1999:315). Instead of the system providing itself with legal checks and balances that could and expose irregularities, it made opportunities for irregularities readily available.

4.11.1.4 A pattern of a court settings

The pattern followed in the kingdoms was not always the same. But the differences were frequently minimal. The following example of the district court proceedings could represent them all. As mentioned before, the district court was under the leadership of the district headman who had sub-headmen under his supervision. Court procedure was very simple. Except for children, the court was open for all adults to attend. At the place where they discussed cases, the sub-headmen took their seats which were arranged in a circle (Bruwer 1967:37). Suppose it was a transferred case from the court of the sub-headman to a district court, before the plaintiff and the defendant were led into the meeting, the sub-headman of the unit where the plaintiff lived summarised the case. He was followed by the sub-headman of the unit where the defendant lived. The plaintiff and the defendant were made to sit on their heels in the centre of the circle. The presiding sub-headman asked the plaintiff to put the complaint forward and then the defendant responded. Should there be *eembangi* [witnesses] they were called in to give witness. After that there might be the chance for the presiding sub-headman or any members of the court to question them. The plaintiff and the defendant might also be allowed to cross-question one another. This continued until all relevant questions had been attended to.

At the beginning of the second session both the plaintiff and the defendant and their relatives were asked to leave the court. With the presiding sub-headman continuing to be in the chair, sub-headmen and other members of the court and district discussed the case freely. Disagreements among the participants were somehow dissolved in that those on the other side of the argument joined the others on the other side. What frequently happened was that ordinary participants abandoned their standpoints and judgment and supported the leader's. The headman kept silent as if he were not the leader in charge of the court. While members of a court debated, the chairperson kept in mind the best suggestions and passed them on to the district headman. To reach the decision, the headman repeated the suggestions to people to assure himself what the court members meant. Having got the assurance he made his comments and suggestions which might not be far from other suggestions. Very cautiously the head-man brought the court members to a consensus and a unanimous decision was reached.

The third session started with the calling in of the plaintiff and the defendant, witnesses and relatives. When they had taken their seats, the district headman told them of the judgement of the court.

The court was open to every adult but the old people were given preference. Exchange between the plaintiff and the defendant and the court members was communicated through the presiding sub-headman. Such an arrangement maintained a good flow of communication from both sides as well as the respect of the leaders present. The decision was not reached by a showing of hands, but by agreement. In a consensus of this kind every person present was covered and therefore nobody had the right to criticise or to oppose something agreed upon by all people present. The headman kept silent most of the time as if he was not participating. As he were the ultimate leader in the meeting, he knew that ordinary people would fear to criticise his suggestions. His silence was a space offered to the ordinary people to speak their judgments freely. The sending out of the plaintiff, the defendant, their witnesses and relatives was a means found to protect court members from further prosecution.

4.11.2 Checks and Balances

4.11.2.1 The Clan Council

The checks and balances of the ruling king were checked by his close matrilineal members. It was so because he ruled on behalf of the matrilineal clan. He acted as their representative, so they were responsible for checking him closely. The queen mother was a very important person. "On special occasions the king went in person to her kraal to ask her advice, and having received it, he followed it in most instances", writes Loeb, (1962:56). Bricker puts it more strongly when he says that the king "was subject to the judgment and will of his mother" (quoted in Loeb 1962:58). The same author mentioned that King Ueyulu was persuaded by her mother, Ndatyooli, to allow the German Missionaries to settle in the Oukwanyama land (quoted in Loeb 1962:29). Next to the queen mother were her sisters and her daughters who were the sisters of the king. According to the matrilineal system the king's sisters were at the centre of the royal clan because they bore future kings. The brothers of the king were also advisers whom the king kept at a distance. They

came to visit him at his court, but he did not seek advice at their homesteads for fear that he would be killed. The chief nobles who were members of his clan played a very significant role in advising the king. The clan council had legal power to depose the king. It has been said that the queen mother in the Kwambi Kingdom had the power to elect or to depose the king. This was, however, personal, not legal power.

4.11.2.2 The Advisory Council

Apart from the clan council the king had an advisory council to assist him in his ruling of the nation. This council consisted of influential headmen, competent elders and loyal relatives secretly appointed by the king himself. Possibly also members of the national council could be members of an advisory council. This council operated informally and secretly and was consulted secretly by the ruler. The king was advised by elders. The prime function of the advisory council was to help the king to initiate a rough programme of his own tasks. The advisory council helped the king to prepare and formulate policies that were to be discussed in the national council. Because its members lived in various districts and wards of the kingdom, they informed the king of public opinion and general events. Individuals used to bring confidential issues to some of the headmen who were loyal to the king for consideration. An advisory council acted like a cabinet in modern government and carried a very important task. However, since it was not part of the legal administration, the king was not officially bound to its advice.

4.11.2.3 The national council

Besides the advisory council the king had the formal national council which operated on a broader basis than the advisory council. It consisted of the nobility, senior headmen who were in most instances district leaders and sub-headmen, the heads of wards. These were the leaders who worked closely with the king and without whose approval the king could not introduce any major change. Among them was his chief adviser who assisted him with the administration of the country and of the *ombala* [royal court]. The council had the function of promulgating laws and policies, debating national issues, initiating activities for the king and checking on his moral conduct. The formal check included his moral conduct; not listening to the advice of counsellors;

deviating from the established customs; making laws that challenged the ancient advantages of the immediate nobles. The king's abuse of power could lead to his assassination by his subjects (Loeb 1962:34-35; Aarni 1981:81). The national council largely implemented the suggestions of the advisory council. Except in special cases where the behaviour of the ruler threatened the welfare of the country, the national council had no power to prosecute or to prevent the king from what he decided to do. Traditionally, the king was above the national council and not vice versa. He listened faithfully to the advice of the council, but it was actively formed to help him achieve his objectives at a national level.

4.12 The influence of Owambo political traditions on current leadership patterns in ELCIN.

4.12.1 Similarities between offices and titles

There are similarities between the traditional political offices and titles of the Owambo and those of the clergy in the church. We shall compare the hierarchies. The word *ohamba* or *omukwaniilwa* [king], meaning is not far from the meaning of *omuwilikingeleki* [bishop or the absolute leader of the church or diocese] (ELCIN Constitution 1993:17). Both are addressed as *tatekulu* [king, honourable, knowledgeable]. The office of the king which was at the top of the ladder in the country, according to traditional politics, corresponds with that of the bishop in the ELCIN Church today. The king was an absolute ruler of the entire nation. While every citizen was accountable to him, he was not accountable to anyone. The bishop is a leader of either the whole church or a diocese. Under him are the deans, pastors, evangelists, deacons or deaconesses and all ordinary parishioners. As the king was a chairperson of the national council, the bishop is a chairperson of the Church General Synod, Diocesan Synod, Church Council, Executive Council and the Pastors' Convention. The remaining difference between the two offices is that the king's was a political and religious inherited office, while the bishop's is solely religious.

The district headman like the circuit dean, is in the second position in the hierarchy of the traditional government. The Oshikwanyama word for a district headman is *omunashikandyo* or *elenga loshikandyo*. It denotes his being someone promoted by the king to be in charge of a

portion of his country. He has a jurisdiction over many sub-headmen and their villages. He chairs the district court; he is advised by sub-headmen and he, in return advises the king; rented the land that was allotted to him by the king to sub-headmen to control it over. The circuit dean is called *omupashukilishitaingeleki* which literally means a supervisor appointed by the Diocesan Council members along with the bishop to supervise a group of pastors who are leaders of parishes in his circuit; he channels the money he receives from parishes to various offices in the church and chairs the Circuit General Meeting and other circuit meetings. Under him are the circuit evangelist or deacon and the financial director (ELCIN Constitution 1993:101). Each of these two leaders supervises a big portion either of the nation or of the church and both offices are ascribed ones.

The office of a sub-headman corresponds with that of a pastor. Both offices are regarded as the lowest in the community and church hierarchies. *Mwene womukunda* or *elenga lomukunda* [sub-headman, controller of the village] is the word for a sub-headman, promoted by the king and placed under the district headman. The sub-headman's jurisdiction includes one ward irrespective of how many homesteads are in it. He is the leader of the ward court in which householders act as his advisers. Under each sub-headman there is his assistant who is his messenger and called is *Kapatashu*. The sub-headman is accountable to the district headman and he brings gifts and tributes from his people to him. The word for pastor is *omufitaongalo* [shepherd] which puts his/her role on shepherding his/her flock. The other word commonly used is *mwene weongalo* [owner or controller of a parish] It implies that the pastor is a controller of the parish. As the sub-headman is assigned to a village, so the pastor is assigned by the Diocesan Council and with the bishop to a parish (ELCIN Constitution 1993:21). The same diocesan Council has placed the pastor under the circuit dean. The pastor is a leader of the parish, the chairperson of the Parish Council and of the Parochial Meeting in the parish. The pastor has the Parish Council members to advise him/her. The parish consists of a group of Christians from far and near various wards and areas. An evangelist or deacon (ess) serves under a pastor and usually acts as a messenger. The parish pastor who is accountable to the circuit dean, leads a parish that includes people from various villages. It is one of the tasks of the pastor to make sure that collections, membership fees, contributions, church annual taxes and other money from the parishes reach the office of the dean in time. Each of the two leaders was put above his audience by his promoter and employer.

4.12.2 Informal advisers to the consecrated bishop

For clarification the author has borrowed seven verses from the praise poem *Omubishopi omutivali* waELOK [the second bishop of ELOC] as written and presented by Pastor Josia Mufeti on the consecration day of Bishop K. Dumeni. Its aim is to interpret these verses and to see whether the message they convey to the bishop do not correspond with what the informal advisers of the enthroned king convey. I was not able to trace whether there was an informal adviser to the late Bishop Auala in his consecration ceremony. But in the consecration ceremony of Bishop Kaulinge which I attended nothing of that kind was presented.

Omubishopi Omutivali waELOK [The second bishop of ELOC]

Verse two

Omukuluwambo kuyadi [He is a full resident of Owambo],

OmuELOK ngoo dingi [A full member of ELOK].

Omombalanhu a kulila [He was brought up in Ombalanhu],

OmOndonga a putukila [He spent his adult life in Ondonga].

Verse three

Eedula daye kadihapu [He does not have many years],

Omunyasha filufilu [He is young enough].

Nande omutwe hasho tau ti [Even if his head does not say the same],

Haukulupe tau shi ti [What the head say is not age].

Verse four

ELOK oye mu koneka [ELOK knows him],

Shaashi okwe i dingilila [Because you travelled it throughout].

A hovela kOluvango [Beginning at Oluvango (Angola)],

Ndee katee Okavango [Until at the Kavango].

Verse 5

Nande ke fi omuunguli [Although he is not a contract worker],

Ke na komboni ehe shii [There is no compound which he does not know].
Kolange oko ha kala [He pays visits at Oranjemund],
Ovenduka inya kupula [Do not mention Windhoek].

Verse 9

Hamufika woye va hokwa [Voters do not like your height],
Ndele ohole yoye va panda [But they like your love].
Ouladi oo va hafela [They are happy about your courage] ,
Ombili oyo va nyakukilwa [They are happy about your peace].

Verse 10

Tate Dumeni, dimbulukwa [Remember, Mr Dumeni],
Mefimbo eli wa hoololwa [During this time in which you were elected],
Omu na vahapu tava lili [There are many who are crying],
Shaashi vehe udite ombili [Because they do not have peace].

Verse 11

Owa tulwa po omulalekedi [You are put there as an announcer] ,
Moshiwana u vilikile [To announce to the nation].
U popye elaka lombili [To express the peaceful message],
Kwaavo tave li kuwile [To those who cry for it/need it] (Omukwetu 30 July 1979:8).

In verse two the poet assures the audience that it has elected someone who is a resident of Owambo, ; a full member of the Evangelical Lutheran Ovambo-Kavango Church who was brought up in the Mbalantu Kingdom and has lived most of his adulthood in the Ndonga Kingdom. The message is that Bishop Dumeni is exposed to the two cultures.

The poet tells the audience in verse three that the consecrated person is a young leader; the grey hair he has is something he was born with. The message is that Dumeni is the youngest bishop ELOC ever had.

The fourth and fifth verses turn to the church experience of the consecrated. He travels extensively and therefore he visits the mission field in Angola, the parishes in Kavango circuit, various compounds and cities in the country. The message is that the Bishop is a leader with broad knowledge and experience. He knows the social, political and economic situations in which his people are.

The poet turns to the consecrated person himself and the purpose of his election in verses nine, ten and eleven. He tells the consecrated person that the voters elected him because of his love for his people and church; his courage to represent his people; his method of carrying out things peacefully. The message to the leader is that Christians in ELOC need a leader who is ready to suffer with his people. The poet tells the new bishop in verse ten that his task is to tell the people about peace and not about war. The message in verse eleven is that the task of the bishop is not to go to war himself but to tell the parties involved to start with negotiations.

There are some similarities between messages conveyed to the enthroned king and to the consecrated bishop. This is clearly observed in verses nine, ten and eleven of the poem. It is unfortunate that it was only one poem. If there were more than one, then I would have been able to compare the differences between them. I found the poem one-sided, because it spoke only about the good and neglect the bad aspect of the consecrated leader. Nothing is said about the leadership qualities of his predecessor or the good or bad qualities of other leaders. Such a practice needs to be developed and encouraged to continue in ELCIN because it creates the informal opportunity for the ordinary people to inform the leader on public opinion and events.

4.12.3 The superhuman characteristics

The superhuman characteristics of church leaders differ from the secular characteristics described above. Here the leaders believe that they receive power and guidance from Christ the Lord and founder of the Church and not through magic. But, there is a competitive among leaders of wishing to be above others. A pretension that denies that a leader is equal to other leaders whether they are under his/her supervision or not and to other Christians as well. Based upon that type of belief there is a tendency among church leaders of trying to be extra-ordinary. The result

is the pretence of omniscience and therefore of refraining from asking advice from people whom one knows to be superior; avoiding asking help from co-workers, especially those who are under one's supervision; avoiding sharing confidential matters with colleagues but sharing these with high ranking officials, including foreigners; withholding information as a means of strengthening one's position; demanding a central position and therefore always receiving special attention from colleagues and co-workers.

The cause of such pretensions could in the first instance arise from the failure to understand what ordination means. There is a tendency among pastors to consider ordination as an assumption of leadership over others. The Lutheran understanding should be that ordination is an official ritual through which a pastor enters the office of word and sacrament. The other problem might be that Owambo Christian leaders find themselves in the church where the equality of leaders and their members is an issue rather than their community and cultural background. The result is that there are moments especially in difficult situations when leaders would want to adopt the traditional patterns of leadership in order to maintain their superiority.

4.12.4 Keeping the competent candidates away from top leadership positions

In accordance with Owambo traditional politics the king had to get rid of those whom he suspected of wanting to depose to succeed him. As a result the competent princes were assassinated. Members of the nobility who thrived economically were secretly assassinated or ambushed. This does not, however, happen in the ELCIN church. But in the church there is a desire to prevent competent leaders from climbing the leadership ladder in the organization. It happens that some of the competent candidates who have leadership qualities are kept away especially from top positions. Assigning them to far away places of work to hamper communication possibilities or to remote areas where voters would forget them easily, is one way. Having a constitution that lay down the terms office for bishops is another way of keeping competent leaders from serving their church and people (ELCIN Constitution 1993:17). Yet another is that of not empowering one's deputy through consistent leadership training and delegation. There is a tendency to ignore the constitution and regulations so that some leaders are kept for too long in key church positions. In his book, *Ondjokonona yaasita naateolohi*

muELCIN (1925-1992), Nambala records that there are some leaders who have served in the same capacity for more than three consecutive terms of office (1995:190; 54;58;61;83;43). Except for the unlimited bishopric term of office in ELCIN, the norm is five years. Assign the leaders who furthered their studies in specific areas of interest to disciplines they did not specialize in, is a way of preventing their developing their careers and gifts and leads it to unutilized talents. Competent leaders such as Seminary lecturers are deterred from developing their professional abilities if they are not encouraged to do so at church meetings and conferences. And a low morale is maintained by not encouraging young leaders to improve their qualifications and pursue professionalism in their work. All of these are ways of maintaining the leadership of status quo.

It is true that there were times in the church when leaders were retained in positions because the church was in the process of establishing itself, or because it lacked qualified candidates to replace them. Auala maintains that he wanted a graduate candidate to become a first indigenous bishop of ELCIN, but none available (1977:163). The same argument could however be used to prevent competent leaders, especially those who are controversial not to enter into leadership circles. The consequences are that the church would be deprived leadership gifts and the gifted leaders would face things such as burnouts and betrayals. The author talks about people who are gifted potential leaders who are never appointed or promoted in top leadership positions in the church. With the “burnouts” the author means simply that gifted potential leaders who are not appointed to positions said above, are demoralised in their careers by such tendencies in the system. They feel betrayed by the system currently practised in the church.

4.12.5 Who runs the church administration?

Like the members of the national council in a traditional kingdom in Owambo, most members of the councils of the church are old people. The criteria applied for council membership are the same in both: intelligence, experience and merits of age. Youths are thought of as unstable. Male and female members are not equally privileged. There are few women in top leadership positions and most are at levels. There are many clergy in top leadership bodies and mostly lay members at grass roots levels. As the king provided the wards with under-counsellors from his own royal court, so each Diocesan Council chaired by its bishop assigned pastors to parishes. At top levels

of leadership where there are executives top leaders at those levels are the chairpersons and pastors act as their executive secretaries. There are no proper channels of consultation of ordinary members by the executive bodies before they pass decisions. Secrecy of decisions in emergencies is a habit which is difficult to break away from.

The church has a policy of assigning leaders to parishes: a policy it has inherited from traditional policy of a king provided districts and wards with headmen and sub-headmen. But it has failed to innovate new ones or to develop the inherited criteria to fit the transformed community. Such church policy creates a situation whereby a pastor is imposed upon parishioners from above- a circumstance that denies the parishioners the authority to discipline or to dismiss the pastor.

4.12.6 Judicial courts as compared with councils

Currently, there are three levels of councils, namely, Parish, Diocesan and Church Councils in ELCIN. The numbers correspond exactly with the three courts; the ward, the district, and that of the king in the Owambo traditional judicial courts. The procedures followed in both the courts and councils have been the same. As plaintiffs had to complain to their sub-headman, parishioners have to complain to their Parish Council and pastor. In case defendants do not belong to the same parish, a notice is forwarded to the Parish Council of their parish. Should the defendant acknowledge their guilty and confessed, the reconciliation take at the Parish Council. But if one of the two parties is not satisfied with the way the issue was handled, the matter can be taken further to the office of the circuit dean and even higher. A plaintiff can complain directly to a dean or a bishop because there is no prohibition from doing so. But it is recommended that plaintiffs should complain to their Parish Council which should have the priority to deal with their concerns. The councils have adopted the practice from the traditional courts whereby both parties are ordered to leave the place during the taking of a decision. In both the courts and councils, the leader at that level is the chairperson.

Because of the close similarities between the procedures in courts and councils, a parishioner raised his complaint as follows:

You teachers cut off the path to you for sinners; if one comes to speak about his fall you listen but then you say; 'Well, I shall convene the parish elders and we shall talk this over in a meeting'. Do you think any Christian will come a second time? Along this line the care of the soul has become a police duty, the leader of the congregation is a judge and the evangelist a law-giver" (Kivinen quoted in Löytty 1971:34).

The method of a court or council taking a decision in the absence of both parties is questionable for two reasons. The first of these is that it does not give both parties clarity on how the issue was finally concluded. Secondly, it can cause one party to doubt if there has been fair treatment. The author recommends that the decision be made in the presence of both parties involved. This would help the persons to come to terms more easily with the council's judgement.

4.12.7 Promotion procedures

In the kingdoms, promotions depended on obedient attachment to the king and the royal clan and the person to be promoted . It is hard to tell how promotions are made in ELCIN today. Because of the secrecy surrounding the issue, the promotion procedures are not clearly stipulated. Criteria commonly used are whether candidates are trustworthy and faithful and whether they have experience the candidate has in working with senior leaders. To work with senior leaders candidates are expected to have a sound cultural upbringing and to be obedient and respectful towards their leaders. Young leaders who furthered their studies after Diploma in Theology are often promoted, but as said already , not necessarily to their areas of interest. Candidates are not consulted.

In both traditional politics and in the ELCIN church, the competence of the candidate is not a priority for promotion. The level of education and the skills a candidate has accumulated come second. The priority lies with the nature of the relationship between the leader and the candidate to be promoted. As was the case in the Owambo traditional political organization, so now in the ELCIN church opportunities for the promotion of local pastors, who have no close relationships with the top church leadership, are limited.

4.12.8 Property rights in ELCIN

In the feudalistic Owambo tradition, all property in the country belonged to the king. The king had to be the richest person and the controller of the riches of the nobles in the kingdom. According to the ELCIN constitution, all movable and immovable property in the church, dioceses, circuits, parishes and institutions belong to the church as an institution (ELCIN Constitution 1993:22). This property includes the office-buildings of all the aforesaid offices and the parsonages. The selling, the buying or renting of each of these properties have to be carried out with prior Church Council approval, signed by the bishop or the General Secretary of the church (ELCIN Constitution 1993:22-23).

The tradition of a king as the richest person in the nation has a negative impact on the church which has adopted the same tradition. From its initial stage on, the ELCIN as the church has attempted to give to its top leader, the bishop, the highest salary in the church. His salary therefore became the yardstick for all other salaries in the church. This tradition is not applicable in a modern world where salary is determined by qualification and experience. It is unfair for the highly qualified pastors and lay leaders to have lower salaries than the spiritual leader.

To declare all the property as church property would help parishes who for instance find themselves under financial constraints not to sell or to rent the property without the advice of their church leaders. The leaders might knowledgeably know advise them. But, except for the head-office buildings and offices, the buildings at dioceses, circuits and parishes were built by the parishioners themselves. So, the existent policy takes the responsibility of utilizing the property economically away from the parishioners. And they feel betrayed, because after the hard work of planning, fundraising and construction the authority over the buildings has been taken from them. It obvious that the Head-Office cannot properly look after these properties. It should rather act advising parishioners on how the property can best be used in a consultative capacity.

4.12.9 Concept of succession in ELCIN

The Owambo traditions of succession followed a matrilinearity basis which is not the case in the

ELCIN succession policy. The criteria for entering bishopric candidacy is 50 years and above; being a parish or institution leading pastor for seven years and above. But, there are several myths which seem to favour succession of bishopric candidates to take place according to the manner which mission work was started. This means that the first kingdom where the first baptism took place would produce the first church leader, and so the last kingdom would be the last in this imaginary circle to produce the leader. The first myth was confirmed when the first bishop came from the Ndonga Kingdom where the Finnish missionaries first settled. From there the missionaries proceeded to the Kwanyama Kingdom. So the second myth says that the second bishop came from the Kwanyama Kingdom. Unfortunately, the second bishop actually came from Ombadja, the last kingdom to be converted to Christianity. The third myth says that the third bishop came from one of the Western Kingdoms. It was proved wrong in 1996 when the third bishop came from the Kwanyama Kingdom. The current guess from which kingdom the fourth bishop came was also proved wrong this year (2000) when the bishop came from the Ndonga Kingdom.

The succession of old pastors by young ones was not easy in some of the ELCIN parishes. Pastor Shikomba who served under the late Pastor Kaulinge told me how his senior divided the parish office tasks among them. Attending to prominent figures in the parish, baptism, confirmation and the serving of holy communion belonged to the tasks of the senior pastor (Shikomba 1999). The young leader did all other activities in the parish. The Evangelist Nakale told me what the advice of the late Pastor Nailenge to young pastors was. *Vafita nye ovanyasha inamu kendabala okweenda ovafita ovakulunhu pomunghulo, ndele va landuleni osheshi ovo ve lineekelwa kovakwaneongalo* [Young pastors, do not endeavour to surpass the senior pastors, but follow them for they are the ones trusted by the parishioners] (Nakale 1999). Parishioners in parishes served by old pastors for a long time had problems in accepting the young leaders (Haufiku 1999; Nakale 1999).

The bishopric office and the title, bishop, itself is considered by many as something that elevates the kingdom from which the leader comes. The kingdom of the bishop's origin today is regarded by some as akin to the royal clan of olden days. The myths express the wish among some people that the election of bishops should rotate, starting with the kingdom that hosted the first

missionaries. The above wish seems to be a paternalistic attitude whereby “seniors in Christianity” want to play their seniority role in church leadership. Age limit here reflects two things: that the society and the church has been led by old leaders for a long time, so it is difficult to break from that tradition; and that the old leadership is threatened by the emerging young leaders who are better equipped than they are.

4.13 A critical analysis of traditional leadership patterns in the Kwanyama Kingdom

4.13.1 Positive aspects of the Kwanyama traditional leadership patterns

The contest between eligible princes was introduced and established in all three of the kingdoms studied. The author is not able to verify when this positive development commenced, but a flexible situation was created in which eligible candidates could compete. It also required that the participating persons accept victory or defeat. The acceptance of defeat by the losing prince was a step forward. The step forward prevented assassinations and violent conflicts which could easily erupt because each prince had his own ward and followers ready to do everything possible to have their candidate enthroned.

Two developments ended or at least minimised the assassinations of the king’s potential successors and their fathers in the Owambo kingdoms. These were the introduction of elders and senior counsellors into the election system and the provision of cattle to the crown prince by his father. They changed the original understanding to a remarkable extent. Assassinations of the kings’ opponents who were his own uterine step-brothers, nephews and other eligible princes had been the practice through which the national leadership position was achieved and maintained. The same practice was current among the royal Khumalos in the former Ndebele state. It was said that “royal men who developed real or imagined personal ambitions for the crown were got rid of” (Cobbing 1981:163). The assassinations were not necessarily done from lust to kill but as a necessary process to create a safe environment for the new king. The author is, however, attempting a justification of the horrible killings carried out by various kings. The important point is that there was a time in history when the king’s of his clan members who could usurp the throne

was accepted. Williams questioned the period of time of the introduction of elders and senior counsellors into the election system. According to her there was a division of opinion in the Ndonga Kingdom, in 1857, as to who should succeed King Nangolo dhAmutenya. This is proof that a recognized method was used to solve the succession problem (1991: 103). This was a second development of that kind within the Owambo kingdoms. The other development that took place in Ondonga is that the fathers of the ascendent king provided his son with cattle with which to start his sacred herd. The first mentioned development put an end to the killings of royal princes whereas the other ended the killings of the fathers..

The Kwanyama kings, like others in the region, both preserved the symbols of power and succession and the vehicles of supernatural powers. As already described, these symbols are a clear attestation that Owambo rulers were kings and not chiefs. Their kingship had a long history of inheritance and succession. When the country fell under the rule of foreigners many traditional values got lost. Royal courts were one of the resources to provide the picture of the kind of people the Ovawambo were many years ago. The training of workers will serve as an example. The king's attendants were offered special training which enabled them to know and to do the jobs assigned to each one of them perfectly and without mistakes. The author does not condone the severe punishment associated with any mistake committed, but emphasises the high quality of training and service rendered in the royal court. The high quality referred to is something we all still desire. Every manager or employer looks for employees with quality skills, expertise and performance.

The appointment of the national council was a positive move towards democracy. The six or more counsellors served as the advisory, judicial and legislative national council. The following Oshiwambo proverbs express the point I am trying to make: *Ouxuku vokuliyengela i hava di* [to do things as one decides without involving others is dangerous]. and *Eendunge iha di wanene omutwe umwe* [One head is not enough for all intelligence needed]. The latter proverb corresponds exactly with the English proverb that says that 'two heads are better than one'. Many of the kings were young princes who needed advice in national affairs as well as in their day to day responsibilities. Since the criteria of their appointment included merit of age, intelligence and experience, they enabled young, intelligent men to serve their country at an early age. The

majority of the council members were old men. In our view the young intelligent men should also have had a close relationship with the king.

The Kwanyama kingdom, like others, had respect for the territorial borders but not a non-aggression policy against people. Territorial respect is shown in these proverbs: *Eendjaba mbali ihadi ombo moshixwa shimwe. Tashi ti:Ovapangeli vavali i hava kala moshilongo shimwe* [two elephants cannot be in the same shade of a shrub, meaning that two rulers cannot be in one country]. Another proverb shows this concern when it says: *Omakipa manene i haa pi mbiya imwe* [Big bones cannot be cooked in the same pot]. The pot will break apart. Kingdoms waged wars against each other and captured people, cattle, beads and other property but not the land. They did not have land confiscation and occupation policies.

On analysing the royal burials in all three kingdoms the author realised that Ovawambo had great respect for their kings. They did whatever possible to ensure that the king received unending service from his subjects. Were it not for the low levels of technology prevalent in the region, Ovawambo could have found ways of embalming the king's body. The desire to do so is manifested in the good maintenance of *ompampa/ouwilo wohamba* [the grave of the king]. Strong stakes lasted for decades and were replaced immediately when necessary. Some of these graves are still in good condition today. Before burial a slave girl not only guarded the corpse but kept the remains together so that things went as planned and the big worm which was believed to have life can be buried with other worms.

4.13.2 Negative aspects of the Kwanyama traditional leadership patterns

Human life, especially that of commoners, was not valued. I shall give some examples. The waging of unnecessary war against one of the neighbouring kingdoms during the king's probation year led to many deaths and the confiscation of property. A servant in the king's clan was slain and his marrow mixed with the lion fat that was used to anoint the new king. A slave was killed and his flesh eaten with that of the bull and the lion at the inaugural feast; the chief wife and the chief adviser of the deceased king were assassinated; they were people whose experiences upon which the new ruler could have build his nation perished with them; it was also a common custom

in the old days for a king to get rid off either some of his predecessor's counsellors or widows. The king's father was killed for the sake of confiscating cattle with which to begin the king's sacred herd; a girl from the Roan Antelope clan was buried alive with the corpse of the deceased king; twins were killed traditionally to avoid the cost of the rite that made them harmless.

Only some of the Owambo kings were authoritarian. Mention will be made here of some of the malpractices some of the kings committed. Generally speaking kings were said to have a spy network throughout the country. Usually spies accused people with well established economic backgrounds, that is headmen and other well-to-do people, of being disobedient to the king. Ambushes and assassinations were organised and carried out secretly by the king to eradicate them from society. Commoners were said have invited to the king's court, forced to drink strong alcoholic drink until they were unconscious and then executed. They were stabbed to death or had their throats cut. People were killed for no reason at all. I quote:

Under King Musipandeka[Mweshipandeka] people were executed sometimes for very small offences or for no offence at all. A report to the king that a certain man had been disobedient, or was a sorcerer, or had disobeyed a royal proclamation, or owned too much property, brought the offender to the court, where he was slain by the official executioner, a man named Kamuxulifwa. The accused was speared or shot and his body thrown into the bush to be eaten by wild animals. His relatives were not allowed to mourn. Sometimes later they would come to the king and say, 'Uncle, you have been angry with your servant. But the fault was his.' The king would reply, 'Yes, I have been angry. He was at fault.' These words signified that the family did not share the criminal's guilt (Loeb 1962:72).

Missionary Lebzelter reported the employment of torture of culprits as a means of extracting information (quoted in Loeb 1962:69), whereas Sckär claimed torture was practised in the Kwanyama Kingdom (quoted in Loeb 1962:69). Tönjes writes: "Both the plaintiff and the defendant had to give large presents in order to obtain a judgement. In most cases the rich man who was able to make lavish gifts obtained a favourable judgement even though his fault was as clear as a day" (quoted in Loeb 1962:69). Some kings were also reported as fining people randomly. They carefully protected their status but sided mostly with the influential ones (Brincker quoted in Loeb 1962:69). Hahn maintained that the king had the last word in all matters in his kingdom. His decisions were beyond a canopy challenge. He cited King Kampaku of

Ombalantu who made his subjects carry a roof over him. King Shikongo of Uukwaluudhi ordered the hands, feet, nose, tongue and ears of foreigners cut off as punishment for being foreigners in his land. King Mandume of Oukwanyama (1911-1917) had a slogan that prisoners must die. "They were often made to roast meat on their hands held over burning coals. Others were scalped and thereafter given their own scalps to cure (brei)" (1928:8-9).

Too much trust was invested in medicine men. Like Fijian chiefs, Owambo kings were made to believe that human flesh was the strongest medicine and could provide the essential fortification the king needed. I quote: Men were slain, "for the bathing feast" and "offered up to the chiefs of Levuka, baked and eaten", according to olden Fijian custom (Hocart 1941:36). A man was killed and eaten after the mourners of the deceased king had bathed (Hocart 1941:37). It seems that human flesh was regarded as something that cleans the mourners from death and misfortune. The belief that divination was a protecting and sustaining power for the king and his kingdom encouraged the kings to comply with everything the diviners told them. So they were made to accept perverse practices such as anal copulation with the diviner, receiving the kingdom from the diviner; and the discovering through magic of witches.

Both national council members, and the district and ward headmen, were representatives of the king and not of the people they led. Firstly, they were all appointed by the king, and not by the people whom they claimed to represent. They were, in fact, the king's trusted servants who were ready to represent him whatever the circumstances. A promotion to a better position was attached to obedient attachment to the king. This type of appointment was an imposition of the ruler's best friends upon the voiceless people and was therefore undemocratic. The danger of such promotions is that it silences the individual promoted. Often the individual neither challenges the ruler nor takes the grievances of his subjects to his master. This is why the decisions of the national council, which was chaired by the king himself, were kept secret. One can guess that those decisions were one-sided and unbalanced since each headman knew that his disagreement with the king would mean demotion.

The position the king occupied in the nation was very complicated. Officially, the three most powerful offices in the state, the legislative, executive and judiciary, were invested in him. He

found himself ruler, law maker and national judge at the same time. As a law maker and promulgator he wanted subjects to comply with all the laws. But when he had to judge a person who had violated one of the laws, it must have been difficult to acknowledge a possible weakness in the law itself. For a judge to deal critically with the laws he himself had formulated would normally seem to be self-contradictory. The king was left to rely too much on his own decisions. It was also a fact that the majority of kings were young and therefore inexperienced when they were appointed. Apart from receiving advice from chief advisers, elders and counsellors, kings were not obliged to refer complicated issues to more experienced persons.

The feudal system which prevailed in the kingdoms did not promote an equal distribution of products among the inhabitants. No property or wealth was gathered or invested collectively for the purpose for instance, of developing the country or alleviating poverty among its people. It is obvious that the king had to receive an income. But the fines imposed by a court had to be national property. The following fines were imposed; people who violated trivial rules were made to pay the king in cattle, the prevalent currency of those days; defendants who were convicted in the king's court were fined; the share of the king from the division of the captured cattle of the defendants who disagreed with the king's verdict. The property of tortured and executed perpetrators went to the king, who offered a certain portion to the medicine man for his service. Indirectly, both the king and the diviner worked for their own gain.

It was wrong for the state to allow the angered party to do whatever he wished with the clan members of the culprit. Allowing such actions meant encouraging the aggrieved party to take the law into his own hands. It was also wrong to grant the husbands the absolute power to deal with their wives as they wished. Irresponsible husbands ill-treated, injured or even killed their wives for trivial reasons. The state which was the custodian of law and order on behalf of the citizens, had to act on their behalf in every respect. The author's personal judgement is that such a thing was allowed to happen because the aggrieved party did not share the imposed fine with the king but paid.

The king's judicial courts in the three kingdoms had foreign executioners, mainly Bushmen. They did not belong to the people they were hired to execute. They carried out their tasks mercilessly.

The relation between the king and the Bushmen remains puzzling to the author. The Bushmen were, however, people who struggled for economic survival. Physically and mentally they were dependent totally upon the benefactor's decisions. As outsiders they could easily be manipulated because they did not understand what had happened among the people they executed. Politically, they did not have the political power either to undermine or to threaten the position and authority of the king. The point is, that since the execution of humans was a sensitive issue, the king chose to work with people whom he could manipulate.

The custodianship of the king over the land benefited some, while it left others landless. The king and the closest members of his clan benefited most from the land. They were the lords who allotted the land to others. Traditionally, the land was, seemingly, the king's private property. The theory that the land belonged to the king was not understood to mean the king represented his own people. His people did not have any practical benefit from the land. Kings not only allotted portions of the land to members of the nobility, but also received their payment for the land and enjoyed gifts and tributes from them. Members of the nobility, the sub-headmen and the householders, benefited temporarily from the land. Their land control over as renters was tenuous, for the king could revoke or discontinue it at any time. The understanding that the whole country was communal land which meant that it belonged to all its inhabitants was not known. No private land was allocated for commercial purposes, since commercialization was not a practice in Owambo at that time. Therefore the land and access to it was under the firm control of the king.

4.14 Conclusion

In all of the three kingdoms studied princes eligible for the throne entered into a contest. In the Kwanyama Kingdom, each contesting prince organized his followers to find hidden stone. The second kind of contest was that each prince instructed his followers on killing and bringing to the old *ombala* an unskinned bull deer with long horns. The prince whose people succeeded in carrying out his instruction, would access the throne. The others accepted defeat. In the Ndonga Kingdom the eligible princes were sent to Iinenge to find hidden power insignia According one source the election was carried out by counsellors in consultation with the advisers of the royal clan and its members. An elected king was immediately brought into the state room of his

predecessor and there he was told about his election. After that he was led to those outside the old *ombala*. The other source says that election was carried out by counsellors on the last day of mourning. In the Kwambi Kingdom the queen mother had the power to elect and to dismiss a king if she was not satisfied with him. A royal girl was anointed with lion fat by a king to be the mother of future kings. Further practices were the discovery of a stone of the country at Iijale by eligible princes and the physical fighting of the eligible princes.

According to sources from the three Kingdoms, a human being was killed and a mixture of human and animal flesh were eaten by the king and his nobles during the enthronement feast preceded by a circumcised medicine man. The aim of the feast was to strengthen the king physically, magically and to prepare him for the coronation. The magical food prepared consisted of the sexual organs of the bull and those of the male slave. Pieces were cut from the slave's heart, from the tip of his tongue, nose, the sinews of his joints and his big toes. Insuring that the king had strength, courage, the ability to follow a trail, speed in flight or following enemies was taken magically from the enemy into the king.

Enthronement took two days. The first day included the occupation of the new court and the promulgation of the new laws. A procession entered the court from the East. The king wore his royal robes. He was welcomed by the *ombala* caretaker and his household at the main entrance while other dignitaries welcomed him in the courtyard. There women ululated and men shouted. A mixture of boiled lion fat and human marrow or of boiled lion fat and *efindapia* [a herbal medicine that keeps misfortunes away] was used by a designated old man to anoint the king. Two other old men advised the king. After that the king promulgated his proclamations.

The symbols of office were a chair-like throne, situated at the householder's place and a sacred bow with three arrows from the King of Humbe. The other symbols of power given to the king were the national girdles, the dagger of honour, the national bow and its arrows, the national knob-kierie, the national iron whistle and other iron tools. The marriage of the king and queen was special because it was officiated by the medicine man who anointed them with lion fat and made them mix their blood. The king was crowned with a crown that pointed in the four cardinal directions. The enthronement tradition in the Ndonga Kingdom was that a big feast was prepared

for the occasion. One of the noblemen introduced the new king to the people present and invited those who had problems to go to him.

It was a belief among the inhabitants of the three kingdoms that the king needed a continuous magical strengthening. The first took place the before his enthronement ceremony; the second strengthening took place in a special ritual prepared for that purpose. The magical food consisted of the pieces of meat from both the corpse of a slain young boy and a carcass of a male calf. Threads to hold magic necklaces were made from the skins of a boy and that of a calf. The second method was to splash water from the *omunghete* tree on the body of the king. The process also included the spraying of the logs with herbs at the main reception centre of the king and his advisers. The purpose was to increase the fertility of the king, his people, cattle and corn and to keep the king above his subordinates magically.

The king did not rule the country alone. Normally he appointed a national council of six counsellors of which he was a chairperson. This body acted as the judicial, advisory and legislative representative of the nation. Its decisions were kept secret. The chief adviser who had the task of supervising the activities in the kingdom and in the royal court was among the six. The king also appointed the ward sub-headmen among his courtiers, hunters and warriors.

The king was the go-between the ancestors and the living. All seasonal occupations, annual rituals and ceremonies were initiated by him. He decided when to start cultivation the land and when to harvest. But the king received advice from his mother, members of the royal clan, elders and especially his advisers on matters of state. These were, for instance, alliances, concessions, waging wars and concluding peace treaties. Some of the taboos limiting the king were: not visiting neighbouring king, not shedding his blood, not fathering twins, not eating pig or goat meat.

Judicial court organization followed the procedure of a plaintiff complaining to his ward-sub-headman who dealt with all issues under his jurisdiction and referred those beyond him either to the district court or directly to the king's court. The district court dealt with issues referred to it from ward courts, internal issues or other issues not yet under the jurisdiction of the court of the king. The king's court dealt with issues referred it either from the wards or district courts. All

issues ended in the court of the king because he had the last judgement upon any issue in the country.

Customarily, the death of a king was purposely kept secret for many reasons. It was the moment to elect the successor; to avoid the information to leaking to surrounding kingdoms who might attack the country in mourning; to avoid fighting breaking out between eligible princes contesting for the throne. The burial hole was dug near the hut and girl was buried with the corpse. The burial took place immediately or after ten days. A guardian was designated to look after the grave. As a sign of continuous milk supply to the king a black cow and its calf were made to walk over the grave. Again, water was poured onto the grave as a symbol of unending water supply to the monarch.

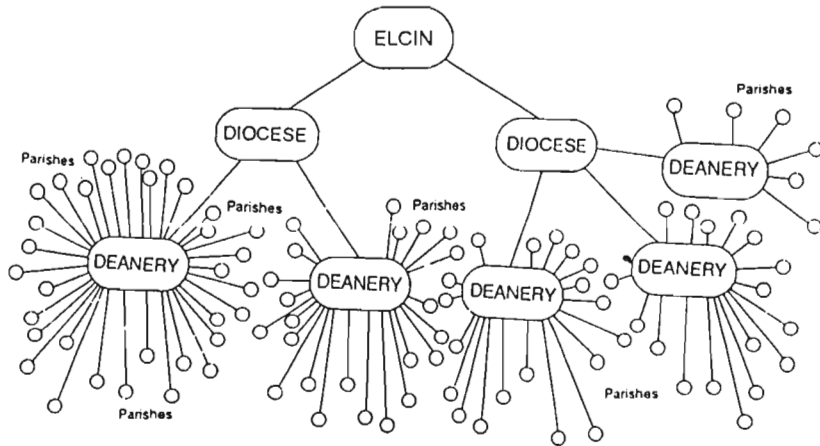
Throne succession followed the inheritance and matrilineal pattern. The rightful inheritors of the throne were the king's younger uterine brother, the eldest sister's son or any eligible prince. The biological sons and daughters of the king, since they belonged to the matrilineal line of their mother, could not inherit the throne.

The traditional political organization in the Owambo kingdoms apparently did not tolerate political views which challenged the tradition whereby a leader ruled until he died; a tradition that believed that leaders were born and not ascribed and that therefore all kings were from the royal clan. It was tradition which did not believe that ordinary people could rule. The social relationships between superiors and subordinates were controlled. There was not enough space for subordinates to express themselves: therefore they became subservient citizens. The leaders enriched themselves economically because the system did not provide legal economic checks and balances. Its patterns of decision-making were greatly influenced by its policy of avoiding dissension at all costs. To reach consensus ordinary people were often persuaded to support the judgment of the leaders. No one was allowed to oppose the agreed decision. The checks and balances in clan and advisory councils was personal and outside the legal system and therefore toothless. The national council was also without teeth, for it dealt with the king who knew that he was above it and also above the law in the country.

The impact of the traditional political organization under discussion is reflected in the ELCIN church in similarities between the titles of officers and offices; the offering praise poems to consecrated church leaders; the tendency among leaders to prevent equality with their colleagues and to maintain their superiority in a traditional way; to promote candidates whom they favoured irrespective of their incompetence; to assign pastors to parishes and to avoid participation in these decisions; to follow procedures which are very similar to those used in courts and councils in the church; to “lease” church property to parishes and institutions in the church; to maintain the policy of appointing old people to serve in councils and to adopt a constitution that had no episcopal term of office.

The administrative structure will be revised. The present structure according to which ELCIN subdivides into 2 dioceses, 5 deaneries and 98 parishes and gives the division ratio of 1:2:5:98 is very top-heavy. This makes administration relatively expensive and still individual parishes are not effectively reached. Most deaneries have too many parishes for effective communication and supervision (Figure 1.).

Figure 1. The present division of ELCIN into Dioceses and Deaneries.



A deanery should not have more than of 7 - 8 parishes. Such small deaneries could be supervised by experienced parish pastors. There would be thus 16 - 18 deaneries, each of the 3 diocese having 5 - 6 deaneries (Figures 2. and 3.). This would give the division ratio 1:3:16:115.

Figure 2. The proposed division of ELCIN into Dioceses and Deaneries assuming 2 Dioceses.

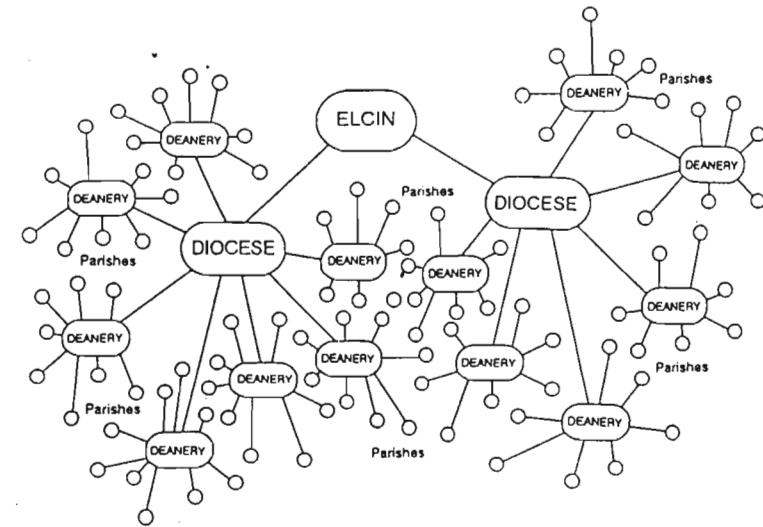
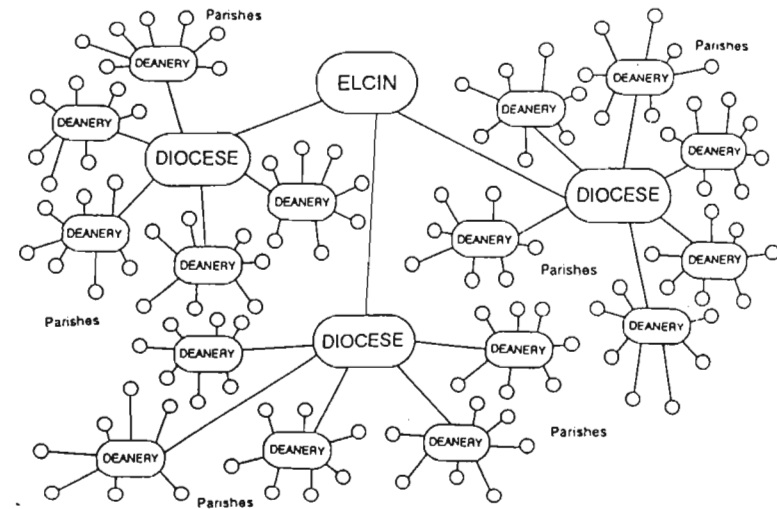


Figure 3. The proposed division of ELCIN into Dioceses and Deaneries assuming 3 Dioceses.



CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS OF PATTERNS OF LEADERSHIP IN ELCIN

5.1 Introduction

Chapter five comes after chapter four which deals with Owambo traditional leadership patterns and its heritage on ELCIN and precedes chapter six that explores possible strategies needed to transform the authoritarian leadership style of the ELCIN Church. This chapter addresses the unlimited constitutional powers invested in the ordained personnel over against the very limited powers of the lay people. Its aim is to suggest the creation of a balance of constitutional powers whereby the laity and the clergy share the leadership responsibilities. This will be done by examining how the constitution was compiled and what the impact of the sudden adoption of the episcopal office on ELCIN was.

To broaden the scope of our leadership analysis and to learn from other churches, the chapter compares directly the structures, functions, members and executives of decision-making bodies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN), previously called the Evangelical Lutheran Ovambo-Kavango Church (ELOC) with that of the German Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (GELC), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (ELCSA), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa, Natal-Transvaal Region (ELKSA NT) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia (ELCRN). The decision-making bodies of ELCIN to be compared with their equivalents in the other churches studied are the Congregational Meeting, the Congregational Council, the Parish Meeting, the Parish Council, the Circuit Meeting, the Circuit Council, the Diocesan Synod, the Diocesan Council, the Church General Synod, the Church Council, the Pastors' Convention, the Episcopal Council, the Executive of the Church Council, the Ministerial Council and the Office of the Bishop. The decision-making bodies of the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria (L. C. C. N.), the Lutheran Church in America (LCA) and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) were also studied but not compared directly with those of ELCIN .

The chapter investigates resolutions of Parish Council Meetings in six parishes which belong to **three** different deaneries. Issues that will be looked at in this regard are the composition of the attendance of parish council meetings, sharing of portfolios and duties, participation in issues discussed and the groups that have been left out. It further examines the leadership models of six parish pastors in the church and their influences upon present day pastors and their parishes. This will lead to a better understanding of lower and higher levels of the church.

The chapter also deals with the negative attitude towards collegiality and team work among church workers. The way of pursuing such objective will be to compare the relationship between pastors and evangelists as well as between evangelistic and pastoral ministries. Various developments which took place in the long run are part of the examination.

The chapter deals with two examples of the ELCIN associations namely, the Women's and the Youth Associations, and the decision-making procedures as stipulated in their constitutions. It briefly examines the ways how women in ELCIN have become members of the decision-making bodies. This includes the difficulties Owambo women underwent when they became Christians, boarding school girls, women seminarians, public teachers, nurses, members of the Women's Association, association directors, women theologians and women pastors, the latter being the top position which they currently occupy in the church. Both the Women's Association at parish, circuit, diocesan and national church levels as well as the historical background of the role of women in ELCIN will be investigated. An in-depth analysis of the rules and the constitution of the association will be conducted. The objective behind the analysis is to find out what kind of governance is operating in the association, and whether it has the right to initiate its own plans and pass its own decisions.

The chapter also investigates the decision-making procedures of the Youth Association and its governing boards at parish, circuit and national church levels. As in the case of the constitution of the Women's Association, the constitution of the Youth Association and its history of leadership will be analysed. The impact of the constitutions on decision-making procedures of both associations will be checked.

The material recorded during the interviews will be evaluated so as to check the effectiveness of

the procedures of decision-making in an association. Supervision at parish and circuit levels, a practical example of a parish visitation as well as supervision in general will be looked at. The positive and negative aspects of the diversity in the ministry are part of this investigation. The chapter ends with the conclusion.

In view of the aim of this thesis, which is to transform the authoritarian leadership style in ELCIN, we have to analyse the different leadership patterns in ELCIN. Our intention is to explore how far ELCIN was influenced by the Finnish heritage and Owambo traditional leadership style. This chapter intends to refer ELCIN to revisit Luther's own approach on the power the laity in a congregation have to call their pastors, criticise their teachings and to dismiss them in case they either become not trustworthy or teach false teachings. Luther's own approach on the balance of power between the clergy and the laity would help ELCIN to develop a more comprehensive concept of a participatory leadership style.

5.2 The Owambo mission field becomes a church

The baptism of Eva Maria Nanguroshi Haikali in 1876 in Finland, followed by many baptisms of Ovawambo converts was the beginning of the new church in Owambo. Its numbers grew to the extent that its independence from FMS was inevitable. As stated before, the preparations started with the training of men teachers and pastors, followed by nurses.

The Finns who played a role in these preparations were Viktor Alho, Heikki Saari, August Hänninen, Kaarlo Petäjä, Eino Pennanen, Erkki Lehto and Veikko Teinila (Nambala 1996:86). Missionary director Birger Erksson speeded up the process of self-reliance when he, in consultation with the Church Council, compiled a constitutional draft using other constitutions from various Lutheran churches in Africa. It took two years, 1952-1953, to work on the constitution and to allow the Church Council members to critique it. Finally, it was adopted and finalised in the two consecutive General Church Synods at Engela in 1954.

5.2.1 The formation of the church constitution

5.2.2 Initial steps that led to the ELCIN constitution

The Finns kept church order in the mission field by holding exclusive meetings for missionaries. When Owambo Christians increased in numbers, a second kind of meeting was introduced, where Finnish missionaries and Owambo parishioners came together to share information, ask crucial questions and advise each other. This kind of meeting had no constitutional power. The first draft of the constitution and the corresponding regulations which were meant to direct missionaries in their work, was drawn up in 1906 and endorsed by the FMS in 1908. It included sections on missionaries, baptism, children's Christian education, holy communion, worship, church discipline, marriage and funerals. The above guidelines proved to be insufficient and the missionaries in their 1908 meeting discussed, among other topics, church discipline and the development of a church constitution. In the same meeting a commission was appointed to draft the "constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Ovambo" (Shejavali 1970: 110). The draft which consisted of sixty-nine articles, was used temporarily for at least six years before its approval by FMS in 1924.

Some of the regulations were copied directly from the regulations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland. Its first article reads as follows: "The Evangelical Lutheran Church in *Ovambo* is a daughter church of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland..." (Shejavali 1970:110). The constitution remained vague on the independence of the daughter church. It read: "The board of the Finnish Missionary Society will lead the *Ovambo* Church until such time that its assistance is no longer needed" (Shejavali 1970:110).

The Church was named *Ovambo* Church but up to this stage *Ovambo* Christians were not yet members of the Church Council according to the church constitution. All its members, elected by the Finns at their meeting, were Finns. The qualification for *Ovambo* Christians for this post was that *Ovambo* Church should be able to pay at least half of the salaries of pastors, teachers and evangelists.

5.2.3 The church constitution developed

The historical meeting which is counted as the first Church General Synod of Ovambo Church was held on 25-26 September 1925 under the new constitution. Parishes were put under Parochial Meetings. They appointed parish councils with the parish pastors as chairpersons of both bodies. Gradually, leadership developments also took place in the Church Council. It reached a stage when all its members, except its chairperson, the missionary director, were Ovawambo. Most of these developments took place during the leadership of Viktor Alho (1937-1952) and Birger Eriksson (1952-1958) as missionary directors (Shejavali 1970:113).

It was in 1954 at Engela when, at a Church General Synod chaired by missionary director Tuure Vapaavuori and in the presence of Bishop Simojoki, who represented the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, a decision was made to register ELOC officially as a church. Three years later (9 May 1957) the official registration process was completed, and its constitution and regulations endorsed by FMS on 9 July 1958 (Shejavali 1970:113).

During these years, 1952-1953, tireless efforts were made by presiding missionary Birger Eriksson to unite Owambo and Kavango parishes under one church. Because of the inclusion of parishes from the Kavango region in the young church its name was altered to the Evangelical Lutheran Ovambo-Kavango Church (ELOC) (Auala 1977:161). Shejavali shows that there were nine Finnish missionaries and a hundred and twenty-one Ovawambo members in the General Church Synod of 1958; while in 1969, the Finnish members had decreased by four persons and the indigenous had increased by sixty-three persons (1970:113).

Constitutionally, the Evangelical Lutheran Ovambo-Kavango Church was made an episcopal Church. Therefore a pastor was to be elected as bishop. According to Shejavali the first Finnish moderator, Alpo Hukka, was elected in the 1958 General Church Synod to lead the church (1970:114). Auala, in his book *Onakuziwa yandje*, mentions two further Finnish moderators, Birger Eriksson, 1954-1958 and Alpo Hukka, 1958-1960 (1977:162), whom he succeeded as the first indigenous moderator in a 1960 General Church Synod.

The ELCIN church constitution has undergone four revisions now, the first in 1959, the second in 1978, the third in 1988 and the fourth in 1993.

5.3 The impact and influences of the abrupt adoption of the episcopal office

This section tries to explore what significance the sudden adoption of the episcopacy in ELCIN had on its leadership style. The episcopal office in ELCIN came unexpectedly. The 1960 Synod agenda posed a question to its members as to whether the time to elect an indigenous moderator was ripe. This was a constitutional question, for the constitution said that, when the time is ready, the Synod will elect a moderator out of its indigenous pastors (ELCIN Constitution 1959:17). It was not stipulated clearly when this would be implemented. Missionaries presumed that for an undetermined period of time the mission field would be under their leadership.

An argument against the election of an indigenous moderator was that there was a lack of university graduated candidates. Some of the participants believed that the time was not ripe for such an election. A political consideration, which was controversial but in support of the idea to elect an indigenous moderator, was that the Finnish missionaries might leave South West Africa as the German missionaries had done in the Oukwanyama Kingdom during the First World War. The Germans had twenty-five years of missionary work there but were unable to establish an indigenous church leadership (Laurmaa 1949:133). The argument was that to wait for better graduates was sensible but the unknown future political situation of South West Africa remained a threat. Auala writes:

Pamwe tatu tameke ngaa omalongekido kutya paasita yetu mba tu na, pu tamekwe ngaa omaidheulo gewilikongeleka yetu, sigo opethimbo ndyoka tatu ka pewa aasita aavalelwamo ya putudhwa nawa. Shi vule okuninga `uuna lwomilema olo uuna to kola ombwa'[It is probably better that we make preparations so that some of our pastors should start with church leadership practices until such a time when we will have qualified indigenous pastors. `It is better to raise up a dog with time rather than doing it within a day or so before darkness approaches'] (1977:158).

The motion to elect an indigenous moderator was supported and a resolution passed that Auala

be elected as the first indigenous moderator. Auala's election to this office was an opportunity created for Owambo pastors to have access to church leadership. This was not a gradual development. No preparation was made in advance and therefore the leader had no basic leadership skills to serve in the highest office in the church. Auala rose to the occasion and become a good leader. Like every person appointed to a high office he had gained experience.

The consecration of Auala to the moderator position was carried out by Alpo Hukka, his predecessor, and his assistants during the last evening of the last day of the Synod. Things were done in a great rush. The Auala family was verbally informed the same evening. The short invitation was: *Ileni kohungi yoshigongingeleka, omu na oshituthi shelangeko lyomumati gweni moshilongawiliko lyongeleka* [Come to the evening session of the Synod tonight for there is the consecration of your son in the leadership position of the church] (Auala 1977:159). The same message was extended to his wife.

Three years later, in 1963, the Synod leadership came up with a new suggestion, namely to introduce the episcopacy in ELOC. The suggestion was accepted by the same meeting. Moderator Leonard Auala was elected the first bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Ovambo-Kavango Church. The election took place in April with the consecration executed by Bishop E. G. Gulin, who was the bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, on 30 June 1963 in Oniipa parish (Auala 1977:163). In order not to presuppose the apostolic succession, another bishop was not brought in.

The sudden adoption of the episcopal office in ELCIN has led to various conceptions found among parishioners. To some it is an extension of the proclamation ministry of the church of Christ. This is a servanthood ministry, whereby the leader serves his/her subordinates as illustrated by Christ when he washed the feet of his disciples and told them to do the same (Jn. 13:1-16). As with other offices it tries to fulfil the commandment of Christ, "... do as I have done to you" (13:15) and what is in the Great Commission, as recorded in Matt.28:19-20 (Shivute 1998).

According to other parishioners the episcopal ministry is presumed to be extraordinary; something superior and above all other ministries in the church. According to such presumption the bishop

is believed to be someone far closer to God than other pastors and members. Hitula confirms the latter point when he says: *Paitavelo omubishofi okwa yooloka komupashukilishitaingeleki osheshi omufika womubishofi ou li lunga popepi naKahungalela. Hangaashi omupashukili. Okuyakulwa kwaau e na edidiliko lomushiyakano li wetike halo naalo u he wetike* [On the basis of faith, the bishopric ministry differs from the deanery ministry because the hierarchical level of the bishop is closer to God than that of the dean. [Therefore] the service rendered by a bishop who wears a cross seen with naked eyes cannot be compared with the service rendered by a dean, who according to ELCIN tradition, does not wear a cross] (Hitula 1998). This is not a Lutheran belief. It is a Roman Catholic teaching that the pastoral office of the pope and the episcopal office rests on divine institution (Stockmeier 1969:73). The likelihood is that members are confused. They do not know the difference between the Roman Catholic and the Lutheran bishop and therefore with this confusion they render the wrong reverence to their bishops.

Office-bearers of the episcopal ministry, the deanery ministry and the pastoral ministry are seen by some local parishioners as special titles in their communities. The bishop is regarded as the figure on top of the church followed by the dean and the pastor. As a result there are big gaps in importance and status between the bishop and the dean, the dean and the pastor and the pastor and the laity. The importance and status of a person is not measured by the quality of his/her ministry but by his/her position in the hierarchical ladder. There is the human pride in some parishioners to want either to associate with, or to be served by, someone who is on top of the ladder (Nakanwe; Shiyandja 1998).

The episcopal office has been detached with “privileges that belonged to the office-bearer because of his position and for his own sake...” (Stockmeier 1969:76). Cyprian, an ancient theologian, insisted that such practice did not exist in the church of the first centuries (quoted in Stockmeier 1969:76). Today the bishops of ELCIN are offered gifts during their consecrations. These gifts are referred to as tokens of remembrance. Regardless of whatever their qualifications, the remunerations of bishops are the yardsticks of church salary scales (Iithete 1996). Bishops associate with the nobles and the well-off in society. This is seen in marriages, funerals, feasts and celebrations of nobles and well-off people. Marriages of the nobles and the well-known are often solemnized by bishops. In periods of bereavement and at funerals in royal families, bishops often

act as their spokespersons (Shivute 1999). It has become a tradition that bishops associate themselves with the business community by means of visiting or attending their feasts. The result is that the episcopal position is counted among the well-off positions. In parish visitations bishops are offered gifts just as kings are. In 1995, at the author's parish of Ekoka, an ox was offered for the parish visitation conducted by a dean. Two years later in 1997 another ox was given as a gift for the bishop in his parish visitation. The irony was that, during the last incident, parish workers had not received their remunerations for three consecutive months. Fortunately, Bishop Kaulinge accepted the honour paid to him, but humbly requested the parish to receive the ox back from him, which it did.

The status accorded to the episcopal office directly or indirectly influences pastors and deans also. The Pastors' convention of 1999 rejected the proposal tabled by the Church Council that the presiding bishop after Bishop Dumeni should be consecrated in the Synod together with the newly appointed church council members (Munyika 1999). The reason for the rejection was that the consecration of the bishop is a ceremony to be attended by all pastors in the church wearing their pastoral gowns; a ceremony to be attended by most church members whenever possible. These were not theological reasons. It is a good thing for pastors and members to witness the consecration of their leader when circumstances allow it. However, it is not a must. The Pastors' argument in this regard was that the presiding bishop is someone higher and more respected than the church council members, therefore his/her consecration ceremony should be a special occasion and not part of the Synod.

But not all agree with the above perception. Some have different views on the hierarchical levels in the church. For them hierarchical rank makes no difference in service (Shigwedha 1998). The official capacity of a church leader does not change or influence the effectiveness of the service rendered (Shiyandja 1998). There is no difference between the various ministries and their services. The difference between the ministries is that each of them is meant for a different group of people at a certain level. The gospel they proclaim in their services is similar. The office of the Lutheran bishop is not a special office in terms of status but in terms of the gospel it proclaims. According to the Lutheran view this office, like the pastoral office, is not elevated above the Christian offices. As the pastor the bishop is not elevated above other Christians. Neither his/her

ordination nor his/her consecration has power to do that (Simojoki 1982:80). Simojoki maintains that the office of the bishop is merely one of the manifestations of this ministry (1982:80). In ELCIN (ELOC) for instance the fact that the bishop is the chairperson of all councils and meetings in which he/she is a member, is to say that he/she is an indispensable leader. It makes him similar to a king in the traditional terms. He/she is considered to be an expert in all aspects in life, which he/she is not.

First and foremost the episcopal office, which has been in the church for thirty-seven years, is not known, simply because it has not been researched and studied before it was adopted by the church. Its abrupt adoption was thought to have been a parallel to the status of the king. It should be taken into account that the adoption has taken place in the patriarchal and authoritarian society of Owambo. However, in accordance with the draft of the new constitution the minimum age requirement for an episcopal office candidate is fifty years and above. Members seem to have realised that something is wrong with the life-long occupation of the episcopal office. The alternative found is to elect someone who is not far from approaching his/her pension age. Another reason is that one would also prefer an old person because he/she has acquired more experience and has proved his/her integrity and competence over many years. To normalise the situation, research that aims at the restoration of the office of the bishop as a means to strengthen the administration of the gospel ought to be conducted in ELCIN. However, the answer would be to stipulate a time limit for the office of bishop, say eight or ten years, as we have it in the political sphere. This may not be acceptable in a patriarchal and authoritarian culture where the people's perception of an office focuses on status rather than function. People cannot imagine that once a leader has conferred a superior status, he/she can take it away again, no matter how well the incumbent exercises his/her function.

Deans in ELCIN are believed to be second in rank after the bishop. The fact that deans administer institutional offices, drive church vehicles, supervise many parishes and their resources in their deaneries and have other personal privileges has strengthened the belief. ELCIN is currently engaging in a process of changing the policy of deaneries led by deans who are not in charge of parishes to deaneries where deans are the pastors of their own parishes. A smaller type of deanery is better able to dismantle an inflated concept of authority at the institutional levels.

Constitutionally, deans would be defined as superiors who are drawn close and attached to the people they lead. Deans would become full-time church workers in parishes and share equal status with other parish pastors. The deanship, which is an additional office besides the latter, would be clearly understood. The belief that statuses of superiors are measured by the number of parishes they supervise would be dismantled. Administratively, a smaller type of deanery gives leaders opportunity to offer quality supervision to few parishes under them. The advantages of superiors being among their followers is that they would be able to identify the needs of the people. They not only identify the needs of the people, but empower, trust, train and delegate them, and by doing so, deans build up a Christian pastoral spirituality while the lay leaders improve their leadership skills. This process is difficult to implement because deans are regarded as leaders in their own communities (Ngodji 1999). Some of the deans are against such decentralization. Their arguments are that such decentralization of power towards the grass roots members reduces the members under each dean. The hierarchical figure, the popularity related to the deanery and the level itself will be dismantled.

5.4 Comparisons between the decision-making bodies of some of the Lutheran churches

This section analyses church decision-making bodies in various Lutheran churches in Namibia and South Africa with the purpose of learning from them. Literature material was used for this analysis and no interviews were conducted among the local church members. The comparison will be between units which have full time pastor, namely, congregations in ELKSA (NT) and parishes in other churches.

5.4.1 The Parish Meeting (Parochial Meeting)

The chairpersonship of the pastor versus a lay person in the Parish Meeting/Parochial Meeting: In ELKSA (NT) the chairperson is the lay person, in ELCIN (ELOC) and ELCRN it is the pastor (ELKSA Const. 1990:16; ELCIN Const. 1993:70; ELCRN Const. 1985:10). ELKSA (NT) takes the equality between clergy and laity more seriously than ELCIN (ELOC) and ELCRN. Lutheran

theology believes in the priesthood of all believers; the clergy are not meant to exercise authority over all dimensions of life but empower the laity spiritually so that they can participate better in the mission of the church as a whole. The empowerment of the laity fosters participatory leadership in the whole church.

5.4.2 The Parish Council

Except for the ELKSA (NT) where the Parish Council is chaired by a lay person, the Parish council in each of the three churches is chaired by the pastor (ELKSA (NT) Const.1990:2; ELCIN Const.1993:14-15; ELCSA Const.1984:24; ELCRN Const.1985:7-8). ELCIN (GELC) has no Parish Council. In ELKSA (NT) the pastor is not eligible for election as a chairperson; the capacity he/she has is that of other members; it is a practice that shows that the pastor is not an indispensable leader; the pastor may be an expert in theological matters but not necessarily in administrative matters; but even as if he/she is an expert in administrative matters, he/she needs to exchange gifts and experiences with others; the practice gives the pastor more time to deal with theological matters. All in all, the pastors are doing administrative work for which they are not trained, while the elders are supposed to look after the spiritual affairs for which they are not trained. But, the attitude of emphasising spiritual aspects among the ELCIN (ELOC) and ELCRN parish elders often results in them abandoning other dimensions of life; the negative impact of spiritualization is that elders leave administrative or spiritual tasks in the hands of the pastor; such a tendency leads to an imbalance among parish council members. Most parish meetings choose “spiritual members” and leave behind those who are poor spiritually; the weakness of the practice is that not all people who are rich spiritually have the administrative skills; the result is stagnation; the combination of elders of various skills would redress imbalances.

5.4.3 The authority of the congregation/parish to call its pastors

Parishes/congregations in the ELCIN (ELOC), ELCSA and ELCRN have no right to call their pastors. In the case of ELCIN (ELOC) and ELCSA, pastors are assigned to them by the Diocesan Councils. Pastors are assigned to congregations by the Church Management in the ELCRN

(ELCIN Const. 1993:87; ELCSA Const. 1984:16) In the ELCIN (GELC) and the ELKSA (NT), congregations call their own pastors (ELCIN (GELC) Const. 1997:3). ELCIN (GELC) and ELKSA (NT) have lifted up the rights of the congregations to call their pastors. This move is in agreement with Lutheran theology that teaches that a parish/congregation should have the right to call and to dismiss its pastor. The other three churches should learn from Lutheran theology and from other churches as well.

5.4.4 The authority of the parish/congregation to be in charge of the liquidation of assets

Parishes/congregations in the ELCIN (ELOC), ELCSA and ELCRN have no property ownership and therefore are not in charge of the liquidation of assets. The Church Councils are in charge of the liquidation of assets (ELCIN Const. 1993:22-23; ELCSA Const. 1984:26). In the ELCIN (GELC) and ELKSA (NT) congregations have property ownership and therefore are in charge of the liquidation of assets. A provision should be made in the constitution of the congregation as to how the liquidation of assets will be carried out. A written consent should be obtained from the Church Council before any move is carried out (ELCIN (GELC) Const. 1997:4; ELKSA (NT) Const. 1990:6). ELCIN (GELC) and ELKSA (NT) have lifted up the property ownership of the parishes/congregations. This is in agreement with Lutheran theology that teaches that the providers of the financial resources have to be in charge of the resources (Haendler 1981:74). The Church Councils which are in charge of the property rights and ownership of parishes/congregations are interfering in the rights, property and authority of the parishes/congregations. They should learn from Lutheran theology as well as from other churches.

5.4.5 The Circuit Meeting (Synod)/District Meeting

In ELCIN (ELOC) and ELCSA the Circuit Meeting is chaired by the dean, while in ELCRN the District Meeting is chaired by a local pastor (ELCIN Const. 1993:100; ELCSA Const. 1984:27; ELCRN Const. 1985:12). In ELKSA (NT) the Circuit Synod used to be chaired by a lay president who was a chairperson of the executive committee of the Circuit Synod (ELKSA NT Const. 1990:8-11). There is no Circuit Meeting any more, probably because the whole

organization was too small to warrant such an elaborate system. ELKSA (NT) was more serious than other churches in empowering its lay leaders. The sharing of the leadership positions in meetings is an attempt to strengthen lay leaders; ELKSA (NT) portrayed an educative example in its former Circuit Synod when it invited to its Synod all individuals who serve at all levels in the church. The aim was to enrich deliberations with their views and experiences. The ELCRN and ELKSA (NT) Circuit Meetings treat deans as spiritual fathers and not administrators; spiritual father is a position that offers them time to concentrate on spiritual and theological issues while the administration is done by lay leaders.

5.4.6 The Circuit Council (Circuit Committee)

The ELCIN (ELOC), ELCIN (GELC) and ELCRN Circuit Meetings have no Circuit Councils as ELCSA and ELKSA (NT) do. Councils in the ELCSA and ELKSA (NT) are appointed by Circuit Meetings and chaired by deans (ELCSA Const. 1984:27-28; ELKSA (NT) Const. 1990:11). Because there are no more Circuit Meetings in ELKSA (NT), there are no more Circuit Councils either. The significance of the Circuit Council is that it shares the circuit authority with a dean; it is one of the democratic attempts that prevent a dean from becoming an autocratic leader; if rightly applied, it reduces the authoritarian attitude of some of the deans; it ensures that circuit issues, suggestions and recommendations are forwarded quickly but to the advantage of all people in the circuit. The chairpersonship of the dean in each of the Circuit Councils demonstrates that the legacy of authoritarian leadership is there.

5.4.7 The Diocesan Synod (Meeting)

ELCIN (ELOC) and ELCSA are divided into more than one diocese. ELCIN (GELC), ELKSA (NT) and ELCRN are still churches with one diocese each. The Diocesan Synod of ELCIN (ELOC) is chaired by the diocesan bishop (ELCIN Const. 1993:82-84). The Diocesan Synod in ELCSA is chaired by a lay president for a period of six years (ELCSA Const.1984:30). This means that the ELCSA takes the empowerment of the lay persons more seriously than ELCIN (ELOC) does. ELCIN (ELOC) and ELCSA made an effort to bring decision-making bodies close to the grass roots people when they divided their respective churches into dioceses. It has been

an attempt to reduce the absolute power of the Church General Synod and that of the Church Council at the national church level. The Diocesan Synod is meant to share power and authority with the latter bodies. It is a decentralization process from the highest authority to the next level. But for the person in the parish the Church General Synod/ Assembly is even more remote than before because there is another intermediary authority. The structures of these dioceses are authoritarian because in both Diocesan Synods and Diocesan Councils under discussion, none of them have a lay chairperson. The powers of the lay persons to lead are not yet defined.

The Diocesan Synod of ELCSA elects its bishop and his deputy, while in the ELCIN (ELOC), it is the Church General Synod that elects the diocesan bishop (ELCSA Const. 1984:31; ELCIN Const.1993:77). The ELCSA Constitution gives the power to the Diocesan Synod to elect its bishop. This means that the diocesan bishop is accountable to the diocese and its people who elected him/her. ELCIN (ELOC) follows its traditional leadership style which fosters bishops to be above Diocesan Synods.

In the Diocesan Synod in ELCIN (ELOC) a representative of the diocesan associations is appointed there. Leaders of church leagues and institutions are non-voting members in the Diocesan Synod in ELCSA. Here ELCSA encourages participatory leadership when it includes as many leaders as possible from lower offices with the intention to empower them with the available information.

5.4.8 The Diocesan Council

Since the ELCIN (ELOC), ELCIN (GELC) and ELCRN do not have Diocesan Synods/Meetings, so they do not have Diocesan Councils either. The Diocesan Councils of the other two churches are each chaired by the diocesan bishop (ELCIN Const. 1993:83-84; ELCSA Const.1984:32-33). The two churches remain where they were in terms of empowering the laity. They follow the traditional leadership patterns whereby the bishop always has to be the chairperson.

Like the Diocesan Synod the Diocesan Council in the ELCIN (ELOC) does not have the power that it should have. As stated before the Diocesan Synod is meant to share power and authority

with the highest bodies, but in practice much needs to be done to implement the deal. The result is that the Diocesan Council of a Diocesan Synod in the ELCIN (ELOC), for instance, does not plan its manpower and its own financial policy. The Church Council is responsible for the latter (ELCIN Const.1993:80, 87). The highest body should not do these tasks because the Diocesan Council can do them by itself if it is granted the necessary power. To establish a decision-making body without the necessary power to do its responsibilities, is to counteract the purpose of such establishment. The Diocesan Council should have power and authority at its disposal at the diocesan level.

5.4.9 The Church General Synod/Assembly

In ELCIN (ELOC), ELCSA and ELKSA (NT) the chairperson of the Synod is either a presiding bishop or a bishop, while in ELCIN (GELC) and ELCRN the chairperson is a lay president (ELCIN Const.1993:90; ELCSA Const 1984:37; ELKSA (NT) Const.1990:14). ELCIN (GELC) and ELCRN are ahead of the other three churches when it comes to sharing of leadership responsibilities between the clergy and laity at this level. This attempt supports the principle of the priesthood of all believers as emphasised by Luther and will give the laity the opportunity to utilise their skills and gifts. The transference of this responsibility to the lay leaders means that they are allowed to bring forth their leadership contributions to the leadership of the church.

In ELCIN (ELOC), the number of lay persons is eight to fourteen (ELCIN Const.1993:15). ELCIN (GELC) Constitution speaks about the Church Council members, synodal members elected by congregations and at least six members nominated by the Church Council (ELCIN (GELC) Const.1997:5). In the ELCSA Assembly there are eight lay persons representing each diocese. Representatives of institutions and associations of the church are lay persons (ELCSA Const.1984:37). Forty-eight members of ELKSA (NT) Synod are lay persons with twelve pastors and at least six members nominated by the Church Council (ELKSA (NT)1990:8). Each congregation meeting in ELCRN chooses and sends its lay representative to a Synod. A congregation that has more than 4000 members, chooses a second representative. Except in ELCIN (ELOC), it is not clear how many lay persons are in each Synod, but it seems that there is a large number. The presence of a large number of lay persons helps to balance decisions. This means, for instance, for a decision to be passed, support from both clergy and lay person members

is required. It helps to promote representative decisions and the development of the spirit that works towards consensus rather than polarization.

5.5 The Church Council /Church Management

With regards to the chairpersonship of Church Council, the Church Councils of ELCIN (ELOC), ELCSA, ELKSA (NT) and Church Management of ELCRN is chaired by a bishop. The only exception is the Church Council of ELCIN (GELC), which is chaired by a lay president (ELCIN (GELC) Const.1997:10), ELCIN (GELC) goes a step ahead of the other four churches by implementing the sharing of leadership tasks between clergy and lay persons. It fosters the lay persons to take responsibilities in higher offices. In cases of former disadvantaged people, it inculcates the culture of upliftment of the lowly. Clergy and others are ensured that the laity have the potential to lead the church. However, to maintain that clergy must always be chairpersons is to encourage authoritarianism to thrive.

The requirement that a Church Council of ELCIN (GELC) is obliged to report its activities to the congregations twice a year is encouraging (ELCIN (GELC) 1997:10). Constitutions of other churches are silent on this matter. It carries the meaning that the congregations are its masters, while the council is their servant. It also teaches the congregations that reporting one's activities to one's superior is very important.

5.5.1 The Executive of the Church Council/Administrative Management

Each of the Executive Councils in ELCIN (ELOC) and ELCSA is chaired by a bishop. In the ELCRN the General Secretary is the chairperson of the Executive Council while the bishop is an ex-officio member of the body (ELCRN Const. 1985:19). The bishop is kept informed by the General Secretary about the developments. It shows a positive sign. I suggest that the process needs to be carried further so that a lay leader may have the opportunity to lead the same body.

5. 5. 2 The Pastors' Convention/Convocation

ELCRN has no Pastors' Convention. In ELCIN (ELOC), ELCIN (GELC) and ELCSA a Pastors' Convention is chaired by a bishop (ELCIN Const.1993:96; ELCIN (GELC) Const.1997:8; ELCSA Const.1984:29), while in ELKSA (NT) the chairperson is appointed from among its members. In ELKSA (NT) the appointment of a chairperson is more open than in the other three churches. The strength here is that members are free to nominate any experienced clergy who is a member to lead them. There is no term of office for the leader. Exchange of leadership positions depends on the members of each meeting Convention. But the Pastors' Convention in ELKSA (NT) seems to be only at circuit level.

Members of Pastors' Conventions in ELCIN (ELOC) and ELCSA are pastors only. Administrators of pastorates who are evangelists in ELCIN (ELOC), are not members (ELCIN Const.1993:96-97; ELCSA Const.1984:29). In the ELCIN (GELC) and ELKSA (NT) Pastors' Conventions are for pastors and administrators of pastorates (ELCIN (GELC) Const.1997:8; ELKSA (NT) Const.1990:12). ELCIN (GELC) and ELKSA (NT) take seriously the equipment of lay leaders in their churches. The participation of administrators of pastorates in Pastors' Conventions is a positive development because it opens up the understanding that the pastors' meetings are not secret, but meetings in which co-workers discuss their responsibilities; it also opens up the notion that the lay persons are indirectly/directly participants of the meetings, for the ministry of the church is about sharing of tasks.

5.5.3 The Episcopal Council

Except for ELCIN (ELOC) and ELCSA, the other three churches have no Episcopal Councils. Each of the Episcopal Councils in ELCIN (ELOC) and ELCSA is chaired by the presiding bishop (ELCIN Const.1993:95; ELCSA Const.1984:40). In the ELCIN (ELOC), members of the Episcopal Council are limited to bishops, while in the ELCSA, each diocese is represented by a pastor in the Council. ELCSA attempts in this regard to indicate that pastors and bishops are all theologians entrusted with the task of shaping and reshaping the theology of the church. The exclusion of pastors from the Episcopal Council in ELCIN (ELOC) creates the impression that

the Council is beyond the pastoral level which it is not; the bishops are tempted to see their offices as something special. However, the participation of the pastors in the Episcopal Council narrows the gap caused by the different statuses between the bishops and the pastors; it reminds both the bishops and the pastors that they are co-workers in the same ministry of the church; the Episcopal Council in ELCIN (ELOC) should be open for pastors.

The Episcopal Council in ELCIN (ELOC) does its tasks in conjunction with the Church Council and together they draw the agenda of the meeting; the ELCSA Episcopal Council appears to be an autonomous administrative and spiritual body that helps the councils at all levels in the church (ELCIN Const.1993:95; ELCSA Const.1984:40). ELCSA takes its Episcopal Council seriously by developing it into an independent entity and thus it is ahead of ELCIN (ELOC). The danger lies here that the Episcopal Council became an executor of the interests of the Church Council. The ELCIN (ELOC) Episcopal Council should become autonomous and draw up its own agenda.

5.5.4 The Ministerial/Ecclesiastical Council

Only the ELCSA and ELKSA (NT) have Ministerial Councils, the other three churches do not (ELCSA Const.1984:34; ELKSA (NT) Const. 1990:22). ELCSA and ELKSA (NT) have advanced in their efforts by bringing into existence bodies that deal with doctrinal matters and training for ministry. The existence of such Councils in the church would promote the growth of theology in the church as a whole; it creates a balance of interest between theological and administrative issues. The growth of theology would help the church to deal efficiently with theological issues; the Council remains a reminder to theologians not to forsake theology which is their special field. Churches which do not have such Councils should be encouraged to introduce them in their structures.

Each of the Councils above is chaired by the bishop. Both ELCSA and ELKSA (NT) follow the traditional patterns of bishops being appointed chairpersons of every body in which they serve. That is an authoritarian practice and turns bishops and leaders into authoritarian leaders. Pastors or lay persons who are members of such Councils, should lead and do administrative work, while bishops deal with theological issues. It is important for bishops to deal with theological matters

because their office is there to teach the gospel and to train others.

5.5.5 The Bishop

In ELCIN (ELOC) and ELCSA a bishop holds office until his/her retirement (ELCIN Const.1993:17; ELCSA Const.1984:35). In ELCIN (GELC), ELKSA (NT) and ELCRN the term of office for a bishop is six years (ELCIN (GELC) Const.1997:9; ELKSA (NT) Const.1990:17-18; ELCRN Const.1985:21-22). The latter three churches have transformed the traditional office of the bishop into an office that is flexible. Thus the term of office for the episcopal office and other offices as well is a source of strength for the office-holder to carry out his/her tasks perfectly in a limited period of time. Also the term of office inspires other leaders in the church to avail themselves for that position. The exchange of an episcopal office is a utilisation of leadership diversity of many church leaders.

In ELCIN (ELOC) the bishop is considered more as an administrator than a spiritual father. He/she is also seen as a reporter of the activities of the Church Council to the Church General Synod with less emphasis on theological training. It seems to be the opposite in the other four churches. The other churches seem to have developed a positive understanding of what the episcopal office stands for. It is an office responsible to foster the ministry of the church and supervise the theological training in the church.

5.6 Examples of leadership models in some of Parish Councils in ELCIN

The prime objective of including this section in this chapter is to examine how lay leadership development is motivated and maintained at parish level. The procedure that will be followed is to give a synopsis of the records of the files of the Parish Councils of six parishes, two from each deanery. Where possible an investigation of the files of each Parish Council for a period of six successive years was done. We shall examine the composition of the Parish Council, the representation of groups in the Parish Council, the sharing of portfolios, topics for discussion, the compiling of an agenda, how the duties are understood and shared and the groups left out. Engela and Ongenga parishes belong to the Engela Deanery which is a combination of parishes from the

former Oukwanyama and Western Deanery. Both former deaneries kept resolutions of Parish Councils in separate files for many years. It was possible, therefore, to record more Council resolutions here than in other deaneries. For the attendance of Councils we have added the number of female and male members who attended Parish Councils. Unfortunately it was not possible for the author to obtain parish membership of some of the parishes in the Deanery files or at the Office of Statistics in the ELCIN Church. The consequence was that it was impossible to state the number of people represented by Parish Council members. A comparison of the participation of people in the Councils, of duties performed, and of issues discussed, highlights differences between parishes on a two year basis. This was done because of the limited space and to avoid repetition. The criterion used for the evaluation was evidence of an authoritarian leadership style over against a participatory approach.

5.6.1 Comparisons of Parish Council Meetings

5.6.1.1 Introduction

The perception of the ministry, the relation between men and women and the relation between spiritual and material concerns of the Parish Council Meetings of the following parishes were compared. Engela, Ongenga and Ondobe Parish Council Meetings were put in group one, while Epembe and Oshigambo Parish Council Meetings were in group two and Oshaango Parish Council Meetings in group three. A period of six years (1980-1985) of activities in group one and four years each in group two and three (1993-1995, 1998; 1992, 1995-1997) were studied .

5.6.1.2 Group one: Engela, Ongenga and Ondobe Parish Council Meetings

TABLE A

1980-1985

Issues	Engela 45 sessions:	Ongenga 53 sessions	Ondobe 9 sessions
Perception of the ministry	pastor's duties: 147 lay duties: 68 ratio: roughly 2:1	pastors duties: 207 lay duties: 29 ratio: roughly 7:1	pastors duties: 34 lay duties: 12 ratio: roughly 3:1
Relation between men and women	men: 256 women: 119 ratio: roughly 2:1	men: 314 women: 126 ratio: roughly 2.5:1	men: 53 women: 61 ratio: roughly 1:1
Relation between spiritual and social concerns	baptism: 6 marriages: 14 reconciliation: 17 unemployment: 0 migrant labour: 0	baptism: 7 marriages: 4 reconciliation: 15 unemployment: 0 migrant labour: 0	baptism: 1 marriages: 4 reconciliation: 4 unemployment: 0 migrant labour: 0

The perception of the ministry was recorded as follows: The pastor performed 147 duties and the lay leaders carried out 68. The pastor chaired all 45 Parish Council Meetings in Engela parish. The ratio is 2:1 in favour of the pastor. In Ongenga parish, the pastor performed 207 duties, while the lay leaders carried out 29. He/she chaired all 53 Parish Council Meetings. The ratio is 7:1 in favour of the pastor. In Ondobe parish, the pastor carried out 34 duties, while the lay leaders performed twelve. The pastor chaired all nine Council Meetings. The ration is 3:1 in favour of the pastor (Engela 1980-1985 Deanery files; Engela 1980-1985 Deanery files; Northern Deanery 1980-1985 files). From this statistical information one can deduce that the pastor and the members seem to believe that the pastor is the prime authority, not a colleague among many equal members. On this basis I conclude that a new participatory perception of leadership must be fostered in ELCIN.

The relation between men and women was recorded as follows: Over six years the ratio of men to women who participated in these Parish Council Meetings was 2:1 (256 men, 119 women) in Engela parish; 2.5:1(314 men, 126 women) in Ongenga parish and 1:1 (53 men, 51 women) in Ondobe parish in favour of men (Engela 1980-1985 Deanery files; Engela 1980-1985 Deanery

files; Northern Deanery 1980-1985 files). From this observation one can deduce that there is a tendency in the church, which does not accord dignity and authority to women. This trend does not lead the church to a participatory leadership style, which is democratic but, rather consolidates authoritarianism.

The relation between administration, spiritual and social concerns reveals these characteristics: Over six years the Parish Council Meetings at Engela parish discussed baptism six times, marriages fourteen times, reconciliation seventeen times, unemployment and migrant labour never. In Parish Council Meetings at Ongenga parish, baptism was discussed seven times, marriages four times, reconciliation fifteen times, unemployment and migrant labour never. In Ondobe parish, Parish Council Meetings discussed baptism once, marriages four times, reconciliation four times, unemployment and migrant labour never (Engela 1980-1985 Deanery files; Engela 1980-1985 Deanery files; Northern Deanery 1980-1985 files). From these findings I deduce that the Parish Council Meetings kept themselves busy mainly with administrative and spiritual matters and not with the concrete needs of the community. The church must develop a more comprehensive concept of its mission.

5.6.1.3 Group two: Epembe and Oshigambo Parish Council Meetings

TABLE B

1993-1995,1998

Issues	Epembe 8 sessions	Oshigambo 24 sessions
Perception of the ministry	pastor's duties: 12 lay duties: 18 ratio: roughly 1:1.5	pastor's duties: 79 lay duties: 29 ratio: roughly 3:1
Relation between men and women	women: 81 men: 34 ratio: roughly 2.4:1	women: 119 men: 80 ratio: roughly 1.5:1
Relation between spiritual and social concerns	baptism: 0 marriages: 1 reconciliation: 4 unemployment: 0 migrant labour: 0	baptism: 14 marriages: 1 reconciliation: 20 unemployment: 0 migrant labour: 0

As stated before, the activities of these Parish Council Meetings were studied on a four years (1993-1995, 1998) basis. The perception of the ministry was that over four years the pastor in Epembe parish carried out 12 duties, while the co-leaders performed 18. He chaired all 8 Parish Council Meetings. The ratio is 1:1.5 in favour of lay leaders. The pastor in Oshigambo parish carried out 79 duties. Lay leaders performed 29. The pastor chaired all 24 Parish Council Meetings. The ratio is 3:1 in favour of the pastor (Northern Deanery 1993-1995, 1998 files). From these findings I deduce that there is a trend which accords more power and authority to lay leaders in Epembe parish than in Oshigambo parish. The tendency leads to a right direction. Despite the fact that it lacks the sharing of the chairpersonship between the pastor and his/her co-leaders, it must be fostered to develop a more comprehensive concept of its participatory leadership style.

The relation between men and women was that the ratio of women to men averaged 2.4:1 (81 women, 34 men) in Epembe parish and 1.5: 1 (119 women, 80 men) in Oshigambo parish over these four years (Northern Deanery 1993-1995, 1998). From this statistical information, I conclude that there is a positive attempt in the two parishes that acknowledges the dignity and authority of women and must, therefore, be encouraged.

The relation between administrative, spiritual and social concerns reveals that the Parish Council Meetings discussed marriages once, reconciliation four times and never discussed baptism, unemployment and migrant labour in Epembe parish. The Parish Council Meetings discussed baptism fourteen times, marriages once, reconciliation twenty times and never unemployment and migrant labour in Oshigambo parish (Northern Deanery 1993-1995, 1998). The observation is that, like the three parishes discussed before, they mainly spent most of their time on administrative and spiritual matters and did not busy themselves with the concrete needs of the community they served. As with the previous parishes, these parishes must develop a more comprehensive concept of their purposes.

5.6.1.4 Group three: Oshaango Parish Council Meetings

TABLE C

1992,1995-1997

Issues	Oshaango 21 sessions
Perception of the ministry	pastor's duties: 69 lay duties: 45 ratio: roughly 1.5:1
Relation between men and women	men: 133 women: 89 ratio: roughly 1.5:1
Relation between spiritual and social concerns	baptism: 12 marriages: 5 unemployment: 0 migrant labour: 0

Four years (1992,1995-1997) of Parish Council Meetings were examined in Oshaango parish. The perception of the ministry was that over four years the pastor carried out 69 duties, while the co-leaders performed 45. The pastor chaired all 21 Parish Council Meetings. The ratio is 1.5:1(Northern Deanery 1992, 1995-1997 files). From these findings one can conclude that the pastor and the members presume that the pastor is the supreme authority in the parish. All power and authority in the parish are vested in him/her. The elders are there to assist him/her whenever he/she needs their help. This is authoritarianism and a wrong direction. ELCIN must develop a leadership style that guarantees the full participation of lay leaders in its decision-making processes.

The ratio of men to women who participated in the Parish Council Meetings over four years is 1.5:1 (133 men, 89 women). This reveals that the church favours men over against women when it appoints leaders to leadership positions. The church must develop an inclusive leadership style that treats men and women equally. From there the church has to be certain that its voters are trained and well informed concerning its objectives

Over four years the relation between administrative, spiritual and social concerns was that the

Parish Council Meetings discussed baptism twelve times, marriages five times, reconciliation twenty-one times, unemployment and migrant labour never. The observation is that the Council Meetings did not deal with the social concerns of the people they served. Instead they principally dealt with administrative and spiritual matters. Because administrative, spiritual and social concerns are important, the church has to develop a leadership concept that maintains a balanced relation among these matters.

The concluding remarks are that the pastors carried more duties than lay leaders. Except in Epembe and Oshigambo Parish Councils Meetings, men were in the majority in the four Council Meetings. This indicates that men run the administration of the church. Women, who are in the majority when it comes to church membership, play significant roles in church attendance and other parish activities, are excluded from church administration. For the church to transform the current situation, it must develop a more comprehensive concept of participatory leadership style.

5.7 Examples of leadership models from six pastors of ELCIN

The objective behind this section is to unpack the parish life of some parishes and the leadership styles and models of some pastors of the ELCIN Church. These were early pastors who may have had an impact on the leadership styles of later pastors. It is an effort to analyse the leadership situation at the grass roots level. Such exposure hopefully leads us to an understanding of the leadership styles at the level of the lower offices, and their impact upon the people.

5.7.1 Pastor Paulus Haufiku Hamutenya

He was a headman of Edundja, a grandson of Nghililewanga, who was one of the noblemen known in Oukwanyama. He was baptized on his sick bed at Onandjokwe Lutheran Medical Mission, on 31 August 1919 (Nambala 1995:81). He became a witness of Christ who had healed him. It seems that Paulus, who was among the first Ovawambo ordained pastors in 1925, did not have primary education, but had received basic skills from the Rhenish missionaries prior to his pastoral studies at Oniipa seminary.

After his ordination Hamutenya was installed at Edundja congregation where many people had repented either willingly or unwillingly, and a church building was soon erected under his leadership. He forced people directly or indirectly to convert to Christianity. Shejavali writes: *Okwa li ete ovanhu papangelo ndele nopamhepo yo* [He overpowered people by temporal and spiritual governance] (1970:76). Hamutenya applied 2 Thess 3:10 which says: "If anyone will not work, let him not eat". He made certain that his villagers did their work properly. Like many other pastors of his time, Hamutenya had many followers. Therefore he was concerned that his followers, and especially the future Oukwanyama generations, should have enough land to live on. Because of these aspirations, Hamutenya left Edundja in 1929 and settled at Eenhana village. It is not known whether he consulted his church authorities before he left Edundja congregation or not.

Hamutenya went with many subjects to Eenhana which was a wild place. He was also able to help the San people and the Angolan converts. He was appointed as the headman of the region. Besides the above position, Hamutenya was the founder of Eenhana parish. He was an authoritarian leader. Shejavali has this to say: *Ou a enda eendjila domilaulu, a handukilwa ndele a dengwa neeshokoto. Ou a taataa omwalikadi waye, a li e na oku ke mu talifwa meemhadi ditalala, oovene vomikunda opo ve mu wapalele, ova li ve noku ninga ovakriste. Ovanhu ova li tava li tava pi ...* [Anyone who walked by dark ways was beaten with whips. Any married man who divorced his wife, had to fetch her back immediately. In order to be at peace with him [Hamutenya], his sub-headmen became Christians. People were in a troubled life situation...] (1970:77).

Under his leadership the Eenhana church building was erected; village schools, a clinic and water holes were established before Hamutenya's death in 1932. The growth of the place and its surroundings was very fast during Hamutenya's ministry. His establishment of Eenhana parish led to the establishment of Omundaungilo, Kongo, Onangolo and Ekoka parishes. The parish is still growing even today. But when one judges it according to the growth in its outstations, one sees that it had only brought Onangolo parish to financial and spiritual autonomy.

5.7.1.1 Evaluation

Immediately after his conversion Hamutenya witnessed to Christ and adopted Christian norms. On the one hand he practised what he believed. Laurmaa writes: *Paulus Hamutenya a pewa uunongo wokupukulula aantu, e noondunge nelidhidhimiko li shi kuinekelwa, omuntu a kole meitaalo lye* [Paulus Hamutenya was a talented counsellor for his people, knowledgeable and had the needed patience that strengthened the people's faith] (1949:110). As a spiritual leader, he had organised his congregation to build the church buildings. His followers, who had the experience of building *ouhamba* [a palace] for earthly kings, managed to understand the purpose of building church buildings for the new King, Jesus Christ. It was Hamutenya's dream that his people have land, basic education, health care and water. Because of his vision he travelled long distances to establish schools and identify places where water holes could be dug.

On the other hand Hamutenya failed to understand that faith is a conviction which cannot be forced upon somebody. He regarded his parishioners and subjects as children who should be beaten with whips in order to mend their ways. Marriages were kept intact, prohibiting divorce of any kind. Little is heard about his assistants in the two congregations he served, or the establishment of outstations and its representatives. The two full-time offices entrusted to him, namely pastor and headman, were also higher offices and were thus too demanding for him. They should each have been occupied by one leader. They also contradicted each other. The dualistic approach to leadership was that as a spiritual leader, he was to be a servant and a promoter of servanthood, but as a headman he was expected to be a national figure, a law-giver and its promoter. It was a faulty expectation because according to Luther secular leaders should also serve. Luther further says that secular leadership should be in the hands of the laity so that they and not the clergy serve the community in any capacity that happens to be needed.

Despite his authoritarian leadership style, people accepted his leadership, firstly, because it was partly the style which they were used to from the kings. Secondly, since his leadership model was a mixture of traditional and Christian styles, the people accepted his leadership for they were in a learning process on how Christian leadership operates.

5.7.2 Pastor Andreas Negumbo Kanhalelo

He was born to Fiina Mushokola and Kanhalelo Ipinge in 1902 at Oshuungu in Oukwambi Kingdom but was brought up by his uncle at Oshali in Oukwanyama. His second name Negumbo shows that he was named after King Negumbo IyaKandenge of Oukwambi who brought up his father.

The first school Andreas attended was baptismal classes at Omakango near Ongwediva. After his baptism he furthered his basic education through correspondence. From 1926-1928 he attended a boys' boarding school, continued with sewing skills from 1929-1931 at Engela and operated a school clothes store at Ongwediva. Andreas was trained at Oniipa teachers' training seminary from 1932-1934, studied as a pastoral student from 1935-1937, and was ordained and installed at Eenhana parish in 1937 (Omukwetu 15 June 1976:1).

Kanhalelo served Eenhana parish for four years (1937-1941) before he became a chaplain of Owambo soldiers who were drafted into the British forces during the Second World War (1942-1945). After the war Kanhalelo planned to extend his service to the San people and other non-Christian people in the Omundaungilo area. He wanted to turn the place into an outstation for the Eenhana parish. Commissioner Bauken, who wanted Omundaungilo to be developed into an autonomous place, turned down his application that requested an outstation and promised to give the place to the church if Kanhalelo was to be assigned to it personally (Ngodji 1996:6). After consultation with the Finns, Bauken ordered the Finnish missionaries to establish a parish at Omundaungilo and to install Kanhalelo as its pastor, which they did.

The parish gained members through hard work. It turned people away from their traditional religion, beliefs, marriages, ways of living and sacrifices to mention only a few. The region was turned into a Christian area. A majority of the people were baptised; modern marriages, new ways of worship and of offering gifts to the service of the church were introduced. In a poem entitled *Tatekulu Kanhalelo* [Grandfather Kanhalelo], F.N. Hainghumbi describes him as *Oshela yeendjovo daKalunga, oshela ya xwiko ombada, omamhenghulo, neexula. Oshela ya shasha ounona, ovanyasha nooina ovo va muka mombada* [He is referred to as the light that burnt

polygamy and sacrifices; the light that baptized children, youngsters and mothers who ran away from polygamous marriages] (Ngodji 1996:37). In his evangelization, Kanhalelo put emphasis on youth conversions assuring youth that they were the church of today and tomorrow. He extended the parish by implementing various strategies such as village and house visitations, the training of sub-headmen as outstation preachers, the training of parish inspectors, the sending of youngsters to boys' and girls' boarding schools with the idea of creating future leaders, and the training and installation of [public] school teachers for proclamation. In every village there was *omuti waKanhalelo* [a tree of Kanhalelo] (Ngodji 1996:10) where people came together to worship. Kanhalelo's vision was based on an Oshikwanyama phrase that says: *Oulume vahapu ovo hava lu* [Many young boys do much work within a short period].

Under his pastoral leadership the first mud church building was built in 1947, the second in 1953 which was struck by lightning in 1962. A short while after that, the cement and corrugated iron building was erected. Six outstations out of fifteen in this parish were served by sub-headmen who were also preachers, and who were subordinate to the parish. Each outstation had a primary school, so that there were eighteen schools altogether. All of the first four youngsters whom he sent to school became teachers in this parish. A clinic, a girls' boarding school, water holes and a borehole were made available to the people.

5.7.2.1 Evaluation

Kanhalelo, who served ELCIN as a pastor for 39 years (1937-1976), was an artist, builder, musician, with many other talents. His relationship with his parishioners was that of friends who shared ideas and agreements. Mika Jakob, one of the youngsters sent to school, said: "Pastor Andreas Kanhalelo's service to this parish [Omundaungilo] has been humble, diligent, loving and of good heart" (Omukwetu 15 June 1976:1). Unlike many of his counterparts, Kanhalelo did not apply rules such as sacramental refusal to parish members who failed to pay their church building contributions. He provided the parishioners with the needed information, then let them contemplate it and make their own decisions. His strategy was of consulting the parishioners together with his assistants.

Some of the Omundaungilo parishioners developed a sign of grass roots autonomy. They indirectly refused to submit themselves to the main centre and avoid all the inconvenience of travelling. Instead they waited for the pastors at their outstations. They expected the pastor to serve them just as fully as the main centre. Their absence in worship services at the main centre was often observed. I do not think that parishioners failed to understand Kanhalelo's initial strategies which were meant to bring them to Christ. It seems that parishioners, to an extent, feared to submit themselves to the main centre and lose the autonomy of the outstations. The probability is that Kanhalelo offered them a servant-type of service that was brought to them often. Parishioners on their side failed to recognise the church building and its parish office as the central place of the parish. However, it is obvious that the central place became the centre, for instance, in terms of infrastructure, wealth, economic power, roads and various services to mention a few, at the expense of the outstations. It might be that there were some local leaders opposed to the idea of promoting Omundaungilo village into a regional centre by going there every Sunday. Besides the latter reasons, the questions remain. Why should the outstation be discriminated against in favour of the parish centre? Why should those people have to travel, while those who happen to live in the centre do not?

People accepted his leadership because he created chances for them to participate in the plans of the parish at the initial stage. It was good that parishioners expected to be served by the pastor in the outstations, as Pastor Kanhalelo did. But one has to admit that because of long distances it was often impractical for a pastor to meet these demands. To some extent Kanhalelo respected the autonomy of the outstations and, therefore, promoted participatory leadership style in his parish.

5.7.3 Pastor Vilho Mwadikange Kaulinge

He was a grandson of King Mweshipandeka shaShaningika, born to Ndikwetepo Nanyemba Mweshipandeka and a sub-headman Kaulinge Hakwena at Ondjedi ward in 1890 in Angola during the rule of King Ueyulu Hedimbi (1884-1904) (Nambala 1995:115). Nauyoma Mweshipandeka, his uncle, brought him up; later he and other noble boys were taken to King Hamalwa Hedimbi's palace at Omunghete. After the king's death, the noble boys were taken to King Nande's palace

at Omukumbwaimbi. Nande died also and a queen Hanyangha Hamutenya, who was predicted to be the next ruling queen, took the noble boys with her to Oukwangali. The noble boys were brought to Mandume's palace at Ondjiva after his enthronement as Ovakwanyama king.

In this palace Kaulinge was honored as *omupindili wohamba* [someone who gives the king beer to drink], an officer in charge of the king's ammunition store, and an army commander. In the wars against the Portuguese at Omongwa and the English troops at Onamakunde, Kaulinge commanded the Oukwanyama troops (Shinana 1992:1; Nambala 1995:115).

After his baptism, together with many noblemen of the Oukwanyama Kingdom on 8 August 1920 at Omafo, Kaulinge engaged himself in the attempt to win people for Christ. His faithfulness and leadership skills were identified when, together with Mika Hiyoonye, he led Ovakwanyama converts to build Engela mission station for missionary August Hanninen. From there he was recommended and sent to the teachers' training seminary at Oniipa, where he studied from 1922-1924. After his seminary training, Kaulinge was appointed to teach at Engela boys' boarding school. He founded Ondobe village, became its sub-headman in 1925, and was appointed a school inspector from 1928-1932. He received his pastoral training at Oniipa Pastoral Seminary from 1933-1936, was ordained in 1937 and returned to Ondobe which he established in the same year as a parish (Shejvali 1970:79; Nambala 1995:115).

Vilho Kaulinge, who served Ondobe parish and its surroundings for 55 years (1937-1992), was a leader with strategic plans. The parish had a main centre and three outstations. They were Eembaxu, Ohaukelo and Etomba. The first two became autonomous parishes. Etomba remained an outstation of the main centre.

Under his leadership, Ondobe parish was the first in Oukwanyama Deanery to erect a corrugated iron church building, to have a girls' boarding school and a clinic which later was turned into a district hospital. Like Hamutenya, Kaulinge supervised the private work of his parishioners and villagers. The irresponsible and lazy ones were disciplined by him. He liked order, justice and truth. He insisted that no bottle store should be built in his village. Marta Ndeutapo was his first convert wife. When she died his second marriage was with Natalia Petrus. The two marriages

were blessed with thirteen children of whom Bishop Apollos Kaulinge was one.

For many years, Kaulinge acted as a member and vice-chairperson of the Church Council. In 1961 he was commissioned by ELCIN to evangelise among Finnish parishes in Finland. Kaulinge was a member of the ELCIN delegation that met Mr B. J. Vorster, the then Prime Minister of South Africa, in 1971 during Namibia's liberation struggle (Nambala 1995:115; Shinana 1992:5).

5.7.3.1 Evaluation

When baptized, Kaulinge adopted an approach of no longer wanting to be referred to as a nobleman but rather as a winner of people for the heavenly kingdom. There he emulated Heb. 11:24-25 "by faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin". The strong wish he had before his conversion to maintain Oukwanyama as an autonomous kingdom turned into a serious desire to win souls for Christ. Shinana and Shejavali write: *Vilho yaKaulinge ina kala ha tonyala nokutula, onyati oyo a li nayo mokukondjela ouhamba wokedu, oya lundululwa meshasho, ndele tai ningi ouladi wokukondjela ouhamba weulu* [Vilho yaKaulinge was not someone who underestimated himself and was fearful, his bravery in defending the worldly kingdom was turned at his baptism into a bravery in striving for the heavenly kingdom] (1992:5; 1970:79).

Kaulinge was such a gifted person in saying what he thought was right, that he was a helpful advisor to many of the noblemen, his colleagues and his parishioners. He made sure that his people had the word of God preached to them as well as basic education, health care, water and development.

He was very strict but one can approve his strictness because such disciplined life was essential for his people and community. It was good that he supervised the work performance of his parishioners and villagers to turn them into a hardworking and self-reliant community. Shinana has this to say: Vilho yaKaulinge had led the parish with love and diligence, however, he ruled his people with kingly powers (1992:4). Kaulinge disciplined the irresponsible adults. His action in

this regard agrees with Luther's view that the law is not necessary for true Christians (Althaus 1972:32). It was mentioned above that his leadership was shaped by various authoritarian leadership styles during his early upbringing. He wanted his people to undergo the hardship he underwent so that they become diligent people. He lived at the point in life when his people, adults and children went through the cultural transition from the Oshiwambo tradition to the "Christian" culture. As a pastor of his people, he saw himself as someone who had to inculcate the "Christian" culture in them. Of course Kaulinge was aware that the adults had been brought up by their parents in the traditional way. But he considered himself as a teacher of the new Christian structures aimed at the culture of diligence, efficiency, reliability and responsibility. It should also be noted that it was a common understanding among Ovawambo that adults can also be disciplined. This meant that discipline had no age limitation. So, wives and grown-up sons and daughters were beaten by their parents. The understanding was that people who behave like children undermine their adulthood themselves and obligate leaders to impose external structures upon them.

The bottom line is that the leaders should not abuse the opportunity granted to them. Kaulinge was right in his own time. His parishioners and community members depended on the basic skills and discipline he provided them with. His culture of diligence had an impact on the present church. Ondobe parish and its daughter parishes, for instance, are financially independent institutions. As in most parishes in ELCIN, the basic needs of parishioners and community members are among the priorities in these parishes. As in the case of Hamutenya, the people accepted Kaulinge's leadership because he was authoritarian, honest and a transformer of the lives of his people into a better life. Kaulinge's leadership style is not appropriate today because most people acquire basic leadership skills through education and other training. Traditional family structure has ceased to exist. People are aware of their human rights and are part of the democratic dispensation in the country. But on top of that, Kaulinge's leadership style is not participatory therefore it is outdated.

5.7.4 Pastor Filippus Enkali Kalonda Iimene

Iimene served ELCIN for thirty-two years, four years at Oshitayi parish (1959-1962) and twenty-

eight years at Onyaanyaa parish (1962-1990). He was born in 1919 at Onyaanyaa village in Ondonga Kingdom as a son of Iimene yaAmulungu and Selma Katumbo. In 1938, at the age of nineteen, Iimene underwent baptismal classes and was baptized before he started his basic education in 1941 at Oshitayi; from 1951-1952, he attended the boys' boarding school at Ongwediva. He studied for his two year teaching certificate at Oniipa Teachers' Training Seminary from 1953-1954 before taking upgrading pastoral courses at Oshigambo High School, in 1955-1956. Iimene did his pastoral training at Elim Theological Seminary from 1957-1959 and was ordained at the end of his last year at the Seminary (Nambala 1995:96).

Like many other pastors in ELCIN, Iimene was a contract worker before he became a pastor. He worked as a farm worker at Maltahohe from 1941-1944, at Stampriet from 1945-1946, as a mine worker at Tsumeb Corporation Mines from 1947-1948 and as a worker at Swakopmund from 1949-1951. He applied this background and experience to the ministry.

Iimene's leadership vision was that his parish should have seven outstations situated at primary schools surrounding the parish centre. Public school teachers were preachers. The church clinic, which was later developed into a district hospital, and Uukule Secondary School are at the centre of the parish. Ondonga Deanery recognised Iimene's various talents and appointed him to serve in categories such as pastor for mission work in a deanery and a member of the evangelization managerial board (Nambala 1995:96).

5.7.4.1 Evaluation

His sermons were positive challenges to his parishioners. He gave them something to contemplate on for the whole week. It is remarkable that the youngsters of his parish decided not to attend Sunday service at other parishes because they did not want to miss what Iimene had prepared for them on that particular Sunday (Kamanya 1996).

During my three months' internship at Onyaanya parish in 1986 I witnessed Pastor Iimene's strong ties with his parishioners. These ties were based on close friendship. The parishioners paid their pastor friendly visits. In their conversations, I heard them say, "We come to say hallo to you because we long to see you." When I visited the outstations, the parishioners there, instead of

gossiping about their pastor, enquired about the wellbeing of their pastor. In my interview with him, Iimene confirmed that as a parish leader he aimed at creating a flexible way of communication. According to him, this was necessitated by the authoritarian leadership style the parish inherited from his predecessor, the late Pastor Juuso Shikongo. He did not avoid the risk of being isolated by his fellow pastors because of his approach. As a leader he felt that this was one of his priorities.

Iimene's approach of maintaining friendly relationships was to some extent hindered by the Owambo patriarchal culture that expected the leader to play a patriarchal role. The second obstacle was that he was kept at the same parish for twenty years of his service. This prevented him from utilising his leadership skills effectively. The reason for him not being transferred to other parishes was the lack of parish parsonages in most parishes of his time. Traditionally, the people often moved from one village to the other with their leaders. As pointed out in the case of Hamutenya and Kaulinge, the leaders used to move together with their people. When the latter practice became impossible in the parishes, it became difficult to move a parish leader from one parish to the other. This contradicted the fact that a pastor is the pastor of the community, whether it moves or not. Pastors could also be transferred from one (moving) community to another (moving) community. The point is not geographical movement but attachment to the same parishioners.

Some of his parishioners, especially the men, felt threatened by the friendly approach of the pastor. They felt that their leadership position as authoritarian figures was undermined by the friendly relationships practised by the pastor. They watched to see what would happen to a parish under such leadership. All in all, parish members who used to fulfil their responsibilities when forced to do so, found it difficult to cope with such leadership style. They found themselves not knowing what to do with the freedom granted to them.

Iimene had a vision to transform the authoritarian leadership style found in Owambo culture. He applied the culture of efficiency and hardwork through amicable means. Teamwork which led to some extent of participatory leadership style was promoted. Of course his approach was strange to his colleagues, parishioners and community members of his own time. Iimene's leadership

approach has had an impact on the present church in that intellectuals members in ELCIN today prefer leaders like him. Iimene's leadership style is useful even today.

5.7.5 Pastor Titus Kasindani Ngula

He was born on 3 August 1926, as son of Sheya Andreas Ngula and Johanna Nangoma, at Onyaanya village and was brought up by his own parents. He served ELCIN for thirty-two years (1964-1996) as a pastor.

Ngula got his primary education at Onyaanya in 1934, Onamulunga in 1937, Oniipa from 1938-1943, the boys' boarding school at Olukonda in 1953. He studied for his evangelist certificate at Engela Parish Institute during 1959-1962 before taking up pastoral training at Elim Theological Seminary and Paulinum United Theological Seminary from 1963-1965 (Ngula 1995:19).

Like many older generation pastors of the Evangelical Lutheran church in Namibia, Ngula brought with him contract work experience. He was employed as a shepherd and milker of cows at Omaruru during 1944-1946; a domestic worker at Gobabis farm in 1946; a shepherd at Outjo from 1946-1947; a Tsumeb Corporation mine worker during 1948-1958 (Nambala 1995:167; Ngula 1995: 2-13).

5.7.5.1 Evaluation

Ngula's leadership vision was to lead together with his parishioners. The parish was divided into outstations which were led by lay leaders. Ngula was a reconciler. Under his leadership Oshitayi parish managed to reconcile the former South African ex-soldiers from Ondangwa military base with other surrounding parish members. One part of the base was also turned into an integrated outstation. He was one of the best preachers in ELCIN. However, Ngula did his ministry mostly through music. Although he was a talented singer, he was only a parish choir member and not its leader. His motivational approach was one of identifying and developing the potential of the parish. Because of this gift the parish developed a commitment to mission and diaconate work. His flexibility and openness towards new ideas made him popular among youth circles. Ondonga

Deanery, as well as ELCIN as a whole, has benefited from Ngula's service. He served in categories such as deputy to a church council member, a deputy dean for Ondonga Deanery, a youth pastor in the same deanery, and a member of the Managerial Boards of Mission, Music, Evangelization and youth work in the same deanery.

Pastor Ngula did not have the opportunity to study further, probably because he joined the pastoral work as a married person, otherwise he could have broadened his abilities. The second obstacle was that he was kept for twenty-seven years at one parish. This prevented him from having a broad spectrum of ideas. Like Pastor Iimene, Pastor Ngula's leadership was accepted because of the close but friendly relationships he had with his parish members. His leadership allowed for the participation of lay leaders. It had an impact on the present church also, for when Pastor Ngula retired, the Parish Council of his former parish requested the Diocesan Council to assign a younger pastor to their parish. Ngula acquired more leadership experience and proved his integrity and competence over many years, therefore after his retirement his former parish requested him to develop one of the outstations in the same parish.

5.7.6 Pastor Leonard Nangolo Auala

He was the grandson and a namesake of King Nangolo dhaAmutenya of Ondonga. Nekwaya (Loide) Shikongo, Leonard's mother, was a daughter of Shikongo, son of King Nangolo. His grandfather, Shikongo, was named after Shikongo shaKalulu who, together with King Mweshipandeka, had pleaded with Hahn to send them missionaries. His father, Vilho Auala, was a son of Auala Mukwiyu, who was a village sub-headman at Omandongo (Auala 1977:15).

The upbringing of Auala was very complex. He lived with his parents and then with his missionary guardians who were the Tylväs family, Erkki Lehto, Suoma Terho and Hilma Kupila. King Martin Kadhikwa (1891-1942) was counted among his guards. At the mission station Auala was trained as a typist and a printing press worker. This motivated the king to make him the first Ondonga kingdom office secretary.

Auala was among the few early pastors of ELCIN who had primary education. He attended the primary school then the Teachers' Training Seminary from 1929-1931, both at Oniipa. After his

two years of further studies at Augustineum Teachers' Training Seminary (1934-1935) (Auala 1977:135), he taught, firstly, basic education at the same primary school, and secondly in the Teachers' Training Seminary (1936-1941).

Pomona was Auala's contract working place before he joined the ministry. Between 1926 and 1928 he was employed as an office cleaner and mail distributor; a hotel worker at Hotel Europa Hof at Lüderitz; and a worker in a workshop called Werkstatt in Kohlmanskop. It is not clear how it happened that he was employed at all the above mentioned places within only two years, changing from one employer to the other. According to his own biography, one of his cruel employers beat him simply because he did not water the flowers properly (Auala 1977:96).

Due to the shortage of teachers in the Teachers' Training Seminary, Auala's pastoral training was limited to one year. This meant that he was a teacher in the Teachers' Training Seminary and a pastoral student at the same time. So for the first two years of pastoral training he could not attend classes (Auala 1977:148). He furthered his theological education at the Moravian Theological Seminary in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, from 1956-1957. Auala served Oniipa parish for sixteen years, 1942-1958, after which he became the first indigenous dean of Ondonga Deanery. Two years later in 1960, the General Church Synod elected him the first indigenous moderator, and the first indigenous bishop of ELOC in 1963.

5.7.6.1 Evaluation

The leadership visions of Auala were obvious. He regarded his election to the three executive official positions, namely, dean, moderator and bishop, as a preparation that would lead to competent and proficient leadership in ELOC. He said the following during his election as a dean: *Epangelongeleka lya fa ano lya tula ndje, ndi kale manga okati kokuyeleka uule womeya, ngele opu shi ku pitwa nenge acawe* [It seems that the Church Council makes me a yardstick to measure if the depth of the water is one that allows it to cross over or not] (Auala 1977:154). The depth of the water here means the intelligence and competence of Owambo pastors to hold the office of a dean.

Auala repeated the same statement at his consecration as a moderator and again as a bishop. The depth of the water meant on these occasions the incompetence in him and other Owambo pastors because of their lack of a university training that could shape their leadership. It is true that university training does not make one a good leader. But Auala was not referring to the general perception among missionaries and Africans themselves at that time, that they may not be ready to take over from missionaries and colonists. The point he made was that missionaries did not offer them enough training opportunities to take over the leadership in ELOC. Leadership positions were not gradually introduced in the church. No preparations were made in advance. He was not talking about any natural incompetence in Owambo pastors. But in his consecration as a bishop Auala writes: *MuApilili omumvo 1963 Leonard Auala a li a hogololwa, a tamekithe uuepiskopi muELOC* [In April of 1963 Leonard Auala was elected to initiate the episcopacy in ELOC] (1977:163). He realised that he did not qualify for the episcopal office, but held it to get it going while graduated candidates were prepared for the future. Auala is not saying that the university trained leaders necessarily have greater competence than seminary trained leaders. He is saying that the seminary trained leaders are also competent, but lack exposure to highly theoretical scientific orientation, various skills and techniques obtainable at the university level. These techniques are very necessary when one interprets, deals with and looks at issues. This is so because the seminary training is often much more geared to the practical requirements of the ministry. It is a basic training and therefore cannot provide more advanced skills and techniques. The university trained leaders have the upper hand when compared with seminary trained leaders.

According to Auala, a person's daily life depends on God's mercy. To him there was no distinction between the value of his life and that of his neighbour. He writes: *oshoka okukalamwenyo kwomuntu kehe, ano nokwomubishofi nokwomwana gwomubishofi, ka ku shi sha shilwe aawe, okwo esilohenda lyaKalunga alike, lyesiku kehe* [Each person's daily life, the bishop's and his/her descendants' included, depends on God's mercy that is available everyday] (Auala 1977:86).

The leadership ability of Auala was also recognised outside the ELCIN. In the country, he was appointed the first president of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in South West Africa (UELCSWA); he was one of the signatories of the Open Letter to Mr B. J. Vorster, the then Prime Minister of South Africa in 1971; he led the two Lutheran Church delegations that met the South

African Government's top officials in attempting to find a peaceful solution for Namibia's independence (Nambala 1995:59).

The author agrees with Nambala when he writes:

Omubishofi Auala ota talwa koyendji kutya oye gumwe gwomaawiliki aanandunge ya holokele moshilongo shaNamibia muunene tuu mOngeleki yaELCIN. Okwa li a tseyika omulumentu omunambili, omwiidhidhimiki, omugongeli gwaantu, omwiiifupipiki, ependa, nomupu okuthikwa kuye. Okwa li ha yolo naayehe, unene ohole ye naanona oye mu talitha koyendji ongohe yoshigwana... [Bishop Auala is seen by many as one of the intelligent leaders Namibia and especially ELCIN produced. He was known as peaceful, patient, a reconciler, humble, brave and someone easily approached. He cracked jokes with anybody, loved anybody, but his love for children made many to regard him as the father of the nation...] (1995:59; Mpanda 1996:83).

Outside Namibia, Auala was highly respected because of his firm roots in the faith and his unbeatable ambition to lead his people to total liberation. He served as a member of the Executive Council of the Lutheran World Federation from 1963-1970. He was honoured with four honorary doctor's degrees. They were a D. D., awarded by the University of Helsinki, Finland in 1967, the Edward W. Browning Achievement awarded by United States of (USA) (sic) in 1973, a D. D., awarded by the Columbus Evangelical Lutheran Seminary, USA, and a D. D., awarded by the Muhlenberg College, USA, in 1974 (Nambala 1995:59).

Concerning the awarding of a D. D. in 1967 by the University of Helsinki, Finland, to Bishop Auala, Shejvali writes: *Oilonga yaye neendunge daye nouladipenda waye owa wana oku mu ningilifa ngaho...* [Auala's dedication to his work, his intelligence and bravery made him qualify for an honorary doctorate degree...] (1970:116).

Auala appeared to be too humble for some of his followers. They anticipated a kingly bishop. He came at a time when democracy and democratic principles were not known by many in his society and in the church also. It was therefore difficult for Auala to implement some of his ideas. When he proposed the partitioning of the church into two dioceses at the 1969 Synod, its members rejected his proposal. The same proposal was not accepted seven years later, in 1976, when there

where only two years left before his retirement (Omukwetu 30 July 1976:5). The political situation in Namibia had forced him to invest more intellectual resources into that than what he spent on developing his own theology. To him it was a Christian responsibility to liberate his people. He did not challenge, for instance, ELCIN's authoritarian leadership style as well as its financial policy that broadened the gap between the financial income of pastors at national church levels and pastors at parish level.

Auala acted as a forerunner of the participatory leadership style at the national church level. Despite the fact that his kind of leadership style needs to be reshaped to fit into the new dispensation, it is still appropriate today and I approve it. I say this because it seems that in order not to disrupt the cordial relationships he had with his pastors, he avoided implementing some of his plans. The one impact of Auala's leadership on the present church is that his leadership style shaped ELCIN to become a church that addresses injustice in the social, political and economic lives of its people. People accepted his leadership because he did not elevate the office of the bishop above the people, but led together with them. Such style empowered his pastors.

5.8 Lack of collegiality and a spirit of team work among church workers

5.8.1 A brief historical background of the Ministry of Evangelists

There is a difference between the recordings made by Shejvali and that of Mufeti concerning when the training of evangelists started in the ELCIN. According to Shejvali, the evangelist training was first accommodated at Oniipa Theological Seminary, but was later shifted to the Engela School for Evangelists with missionary A. W. Björklund as its first principal. The first induction of ten evangelists took place on the same day and place as the first indigenous pastors, on 27 September 1925 (1970:98). The same school was upgraded into the Engela Parish Institute in 1950 with missionary Erkki Hynönen as its principal (Löytty 1971:37). According to Mufeti the first two groups of student evangelists entered their training in 1943. A group of eighteen men began at Oniipa Theological Seminary on 22 February while the other group of sixteen men was accommodated at the Engela School for Evangelists as from the beginning of the same year (1971:19-20). Their induction took place towards the end of 1944. Mufeti records seven classes

totalling 217 evangelists whose training occurred at Engela during the years, 1943-44, 1946-47, 1953-54, 1954-55, 1956-1958, 1959-61, 1962-64 (1970:19-27). In 1963 the training of evangelists was replaced with that of deacons and deaconesses.

At the initial stage, admittance criteria for the course were literacy, abstention from alcoholic drinks, God fearing character and faithfulness. As from 1968 the academic requirement to enter the evangelist training was a Standard Six Certificate (Shejavali 1970:104). The duration of the course was one year at the beginning. It was upgraded to two and then to three years.

Student pastors and student evangelists attended the same classes, and wrote the same examinations. Student evangelists were those who had difficulty in learning and as a result passed with low marks in examinations, while student pastors were the competent candidates. Pastors were ordained and evangelists inducted. The choice of students for the theological courses was carried out by the Administrative Board of the Finnish Ovamboland mission until 1946 when the Administrative Board of the Evangelical Lutheran Ovambo-Kavango Church took over the task (Löytty 1971:37). The separation of the two courses came when more sophisticated subjects such as New Testament Greek were added to the student pastors' syllabus. Löytty writes that "the teaching of evangelists at the theological seminary became problematic" (1971:37). This limitation of the curriculum of the student evangelists prevailed due to their lower level of education. The student pastors were competent enough to proceed with theological courses. The alternative that was found was the establishment of an institution where lay parish leaders including evangelists could be trained. In short, that is how the Engela Parish Institute came into the picture.

Up to this stage no tension was recorded between the two groups. They maintained good relationships. The duration of the learning periods, which was three years for an evangelist and four years for a pastor, remained the same as before. Each group seemed satisfied with its position and achievements. There was only one liturgy which both evangelists and pastors followed during worship services. This was the liturgy the Finnish missionaries compiled and which was to be followed in worship services led by the first indigenous pastors. To many senior ELCIN Christians this was considered to be the original liturgy. Until this stage, both lay people and clergy were allowed to conduct the worship service from the altar.

As time went on major developments took place. The first development was the establishment of a hierarchy among church workers. Many evangelists and pastors were trained and many parishes were established. The church structure peaked at the Head-Office, with the bishop as the overall leader of the church. Constitutionally, the deans occupied the second hierarchical level in the church after the bishop. There were four deans in charge of four circuits. So, parish pastors longed to be granted overall authority over parishes. For such transformation to take place a united conference of pastors and evangelists was convened at Engela in 1950. Spokespersons on these issues were the following pastors, Paulus Nailenge, Sem Kaukungwa, Vilho Kaulinge, Jason Amakutuwa and missionary Erkki Hynönen (Nakale 1999). Pastors were now on a higher level than evangelists and in charge of evangelists. The outcome of the conference was the separation of the job descriptions of the evangelists from those of the pastors, the formulation of a second liturgy, the application of the blessing instead of induction and the issue of clerical outfits for evangelists.

5.8.2 Church workers categorised according to their job descriptions

5.8.2.1 Constitutional job descriptions of an evangelist

The job descriptions for evangelists led to the formulation of several articles in the church regulations. Resolution ninety-five, article one, for instance, reads as follows: “The task of an evangelist is to proclaim the word of God especially among pagans. He should carry this task by means of preaching and counselling. In an emergency, a pastor can also use an evangelist in other parish services.” Article two of the same resolution reads: “An evangelist is not permitted to baptise or to administer holy communion from the altar unless in a case of emergency as stipulated in resolution five and forty-five of the regulations.” Resolution ninety-seven, article one, says “An evangelist serves under a parish pastor...” (ELCIN Constitution 1993:59).

Shejavali describes the job descriptions and status of an evangelist in the parish as follows: He is not a leader of a parish, but he is a worker under the parish pastor. He is a preacher who travels through villages in the parish and visits homesteads of parish members, but particularly goes to the homes of non-Christians. The main emphasis of his work was meant to lie on visits to non-Christians, renegade

Christians, the sick, the aged, but also to other Christians as well. It was envisaged that an evangelist would reach far places which the pastor was not able to reach because of his/her many official commitments (1970:104-105).

5.8.2.2 Constitutional job descriptions of a pastor

The job descriptions of a pastor were defined as: “The work of a pastor is to unite, to train and counsel the parishioners with prayers. The task includes also mission and deaconate. In this service a pastor is authorised to preach, to teach Christian doctrine, to administer the sacraments, to conduct counselling and many other parish duties. In his service, a pastor is authorised to make use of the service of faithful Christians in the parish except in matters that were assigned to the pastor only” (ELCIN Constitution 1993:79).

5.8.2.3 Constitutional job descriptions of a deacon/deaconess

The job descriptions of a deacon/deaconess which were outlined at a later stage are as follow: “A deacon/deaconess should engage in activities that offer him/her the cash, foodstuffs or materials which he/she can offer to the needy people. Therefore a deacon/deaconess should visit houses especially those of the sick, aged, blind, deaf etc. for these are in desperate need of love and Christian assistance. Therefore it is the job of the deacon/deaconess to initiate and coordinate deaconate work and establish diaconal committees for practical assistance in each parish” (ELCIN Constitution 1993:60). The job description seems to confine his/her activities to handouts, while what is needed in many cases of poverty is development. This, if taken seriously, is a severe restriction of the diaconate.

5.8.2.4 Other developments

The second development was the formulation of a second liturgy performed away from the altar. It is a liturgy to be conducted by lay people. It does not have any part where the leader chants. It is the pastor alone who is entitled to lead the liturgy from the altar. However, the proclamation of the word from the pulpit can be done by any faithful Christian, male or female, who was trained for the occasion.

The third development was the provision of a clerical outfit for the evangelists. At first, they had no talar or any other robes. They themselves raised the garment issue and it was debated for a long time. Eventually the late Pastor Timoteus Shipanga, who was authorised by the church authority to buy materials, sewed the outfits. The garment is black in colour like the gown worn by a pastor, but shorter in length. It was purposely made short to indicate the difference between the gown worn by a pastor and that of an evangelist. A pastor wears a black shirt, worn with a white round collar with a white starched *baffchen* while an evangelist wears a grey shirt with a white round collar with a white upside-down *baffchen* (Nakale 1999).

The fourth development was that of the interpretation of the word ordination. The induction of the evangelists and later deacons/deaconesses was interpreted to mean *epuniko/eyambeko* [blessing] while that for a pastor remained *eyapulo* [ordination] (ELCIN Constitution 1993:59-60,54; ELCIN Altar Book 199:116).

5.9 The attitudinal struggle about who is to remain at the centre of a parish

5.9.1 Analysis of the developments

The status of the pastor in a parish was raised. Except that the pastor has to be on higher level than an evangelist, other measures used were not theologically based. The arrangement was not based on the scriptural knowledge or the expertise of the pastor, but on his status. Lutheran theology and its concept of the office of Word and Sacraments was not part of this debate. As householders, the pastors wanted to be put constitutionally in charge of the parishes and of all workers in parishes. The pastoral work became office-oriented, whereas evangelistic work became peripheral. The pastors were elevated to a higher status than the evangelists. The evangelist felt despised and drawn into confrontation with parish pastors, who were their superiors. But the evangelists were also elevated over against the laity because they wear gowns.

The introduction of the evangelistic ministry in ELCIN could have been advantageous. Pastoral, evangelistic and lay person levels are needed, for they are complementary. There are many ELCIN parish members per pastor and these are not in cities and towns but live in scattered areas. More than

one church worker is needed to provide an adequate service to these members. The main objective is to expand the ministry in the parish. In the beginning the church wanted to offer its evangelists and pastors equal training and academic standing. The purpose was to enable both groups of workers to deliver quality proclamation and to be of equal status. It was also the purpose of the church to present the parishes with competent workers. The provision of each group with its job description is a positive move so that each group knows its area of operation, and its limits. The pastor's position as an instructor and trainer is encouraging. He/she is accountable for transforming members into instructors like himself /herself.

But considering an evangelistic ministry as a project that was only meant to expand and to develop the parish is problematic. There is nothing wrong with expansion and development, but such ministry is considered to be only for people who reside in the bush and underdeveloped rural areas. The central part of the parish is presumed to belong to the ministry of word and sacrament. The complementary nature of the ministry is not valued. Based on this wrong notion, an evangelist is not expected to share the pastoral ministry with the parish pastor. In short, the ministry is not considered in terms of its contribution to the parish concerned and the church in particular, but in terms of the work a pastor cannot do because of his/her many commitments. No mention is made either in the constitution or anywhere else that an evangelist is a co-worker rather than an assistant of a pastor. The relation between them is defined on a power basis. An evangelist is defined as someone who works under a parish pastor, someone who must not administer sacraments, except in emergencies, and then only with the pastor's permission. An evangelist should be recognised as the co-worker of a parish pastor and, like the pastor, a minister to all parish members.

The replacement of the evangelistic ministry with the diaconate came about because of several reasons. One, non-Christians became fewer. Two, it was to defuse the mounting tension between evangelists and pastors, and three, to introduce a kind of welfare plan which was not a challenge to the pastor's parish leadership. The latter fact is not an underestimation of the importance of diaconate and its contribution in the ELCIN Church.

The introduction of two liturgies is not appropriate and not acceptable. The author is of the opinion that the initial liturgy needs upgrading and developing. What is meant here is to have one liturgy where

all liturgical sections are included which are to be used by both pastors and lay persons, and one that contains sections that can be omitted where not needed. Flexibility is needed and not a second liturgy. The policy that prevents a lay minister from conducting the liturgy from the altar needs to be changed, for though an altar is holy because the word of God is read from there, it is neither a holy of holies nor an Old Testament tabernacle. Its holiness is equal to that of the pulpit because of the word of God which is preached from there. Lay leaders are justified sinners like the pastor. This is an extraordinary development because it assumes that the liturgy is of higher status than the proclamation. In terms of Lutheran theology this is indefensible. It also assumes that the altar is of higher status than the pulpit, which is also not the case.

The term used for the induction of lay leaders as “blessing”, needs to be re-considered. Ordination and blessing do not convey the same meaning. To ordain is to entitle someone to have the authority to serve people with the Word of God and sacraments on behalf of the church, whereas to bless is either “to make sacred” or “to bring happiness/wealth to someone” (Collin 1992:51, 372). The term ordination is reserved for pastors, whereas the term induction is for lay leaders, but by both we mean to transfer authority for the ministries they deal with. What is incorrect here, is the attempt to make ordination a decisive point in power relations and not a transfer of responsibilities. Clerical gowns should have no major role to play since they are *adiaphora*.

The parish ministry should be understood in terms of its diversity and complementarities. It is wrong to uplift the ministry of word and sacrament and to lower others. They are equally significant and part of the one ministry of the church of Christ. So, it is advisable that new job descriptions for the pastors and for the laity be compiled and presented to the Church General Synod and Church Council. Hierarchical status does not belong to the core of the ministry. The emphasis on status must be avoided wherever possible. The understanding should be that the stronger has to help the weaker, who is also indispensable (1 Cor 12:23). A platform should therefore be created upon which co-workers share their practical problems and encourage each other in their daily lives.

The creation of the above institutional differences was not a painful process by itself but their implementation hurts. Because of the overall constitutional authority and power a pastor has over the parish, some pastors misunderstood their statuses and positions so as to put themselves at the centre

of all activities in the parish. The pastor made himself/herself a great figure in the parish. The position of this figure is at the centre of all parish activities. I do not say that this struggle was a deliberate and planned conspiracy of pastors against other workers. I say that parish pastors managed to push other parish workers to the periphery. The central place of a parish is the parish office, the church building and the parsonage. A pastor is also regarded as an authentic representative of the parish in all respects whereas other workers are perceived to be his/her assistants. The perception is that the pastor is a father who should be at the centre of the house. A pastor stays in the parsonage while other workers stay either in their private houses or with friends and relatives. The homestead which is used as the parsonage in most rural parishes is, until today, built by the parishioners themselves, just as countrymen build a royal court for the ascended king. The head office should provide a house because most parishes in rural areas cannot afford financially to do this by themselves. The other prevailing notion is that evangelists, deacons/deaconesses and other lay leaders should conduct services only at outstations in the bush and not at the main centre.

Parish pastors therefore do not consider evangelists or deacons/deaconesses as their co-workers (Haindongo 1999). Because of this notion, some pastors do not attend meetings organised by either evangelists or deacons/deaconesses. What happens, for instance, is that a pastor goes to a meeting to open or to close it with a pastoral liturgy. There is no team-work and parishioners are, therefore, not motivated to work in a team. Deacon Filippus Hamalwa told the author how his parish pastor ordered him to use the church building as his office. The deacon who was cautious not to quarrel with the pastor decided to use his sleeping room as his office, instead of the church building. He further chose to spend most of his working hours in the villages with the people. He has done this to avoid possible confrontation with the pastor (Hamalwa 1999). Another worker, Haindongo, told the author how her parish council membership was withheld and ignored for many years in a parish served by a part-time retired pastor. Both Haindongo and Newaka are of the opinion that some pastors decide not to recognize the lay leaders as their co-workers for they see parishes as their own households. As in the traditionalist household model, every inhabitant must comply with the rules of the parish leader (Haindongo and Newaka 1999). However, such a model must be changed.

There is an attitude imposed upon followers to act as people whose knowledge is lower than that of the leader. A subordinate is always expected to be silent in the presence of the leader. The latter

secures his/her position by leading in every aspect of life. Former parish elder, Rebekka Namunyekwa said: *Mongeleki omuneamo la nghi hole ku pitwa pitwa komesho.* "[There is an attitude in the church [ELCIN] that a leader dislikes a follower who interrupts him/her now and then] (1999). Because of this attitude members together with co-workers keep silent when the leader presents something to them. An Ethiopian proverb that says, "when the great lord passes the wise peasant bows deeply and silently farts" is applicable here (Scott 1990: vii). Their silence seems to be a sign not only of respect but also of the acceptance of the greater intelligence of the leader. But this is not really the case. Members and co-workers are silent as a way of avoiding the consequences of interrupting the leader, which engenders hatred from the leader. They echo a favourite proverb of Jamaican slaves which says, "Play the fool, to catch the wise" (Patterson quoted in Scott 1990:3). Thus, it is still acceptable for a pastor to deliver a second sermon after the first delivered by an evangelist/deacon. People under domination often give false deference to high status. Hochschild observes the following:

to have higher status is to have a stronger claim to rewards, including emotional rewards. It is also to have greater access to the means of enforcing claims. The differential (sic) behavior of servants and women - the encouraging smiles, the attentive listening, the appreciative laughter, the comments of affirmation, admiration, or concern - comes to seem normal, even built into personality rather than inherent in the kinds of exchange that low-status people commonly enter into (quoted in Scott 1994:28).

The attitude also goes together with the belief that a leader is a privileged person while his/her followers are unimportant. Examples of privileged positions are those of elders having open access to pastors, pastors to deans and deans to bishops. *Ovawiliki ovo va fika peongalo/pongeleki* [leaders have access and say in congregational/church matters] (Namunyekwa 1999). On the side of the leader the attitude reveals selfishness and egocentrism.

Another negative attitude is expressed in the words *Eamo la ohatu tale omukomesho; itatu piti omulengwa komesho* [an uncritical attitude which avoids confrontation with the leader; not to say something against the elevated leader] (Taapopi 1996; Namunyekwa 1999). The position one occupies should be based on one's excellent performance and not one's determination to elevate one's status. Practically, the attitude referred to is common between parishioners and elders, parish pastors and deans, deans and bishops and the diocesan bishop and the presiding bishop. Each of the supervised

leaders depends on his/her supervisor for direction. Except for the direction, the supervised person must know his/her area of operation and job description so that he/she can serve within that framework and never mistakenly trespass into the superior's terrain. Knowing one's area of operation and job description is fine, but what is actually implied here is the protection and securing of a superior's position. Should the area of operation of the superior be violated, resentment, hatred and tension develop between the two. The resentment is often expressed in these words by pastors of parishioners who do not want to submit themselves: *Nghi hole eshi ngadi e li holele komesho afa eyulu lombwa,; Ovanhu vamwe ohava kala tava ningi oinima inave i ufilwa.* [I dislike so and so because he/she likes to be in front like a nose of a dog; some people do things they were not authorized to do] (Namunyekwa 1999). It is public resentment uttered in the presence of such an offender. In the words of Scott,

the dominant, for their part, also play a role in maintaining the appearance of the public transcript of deference (sic) and compliance. To call attention to detected forms of resistance and defiance might expose the fissures in their power and erode their authority and perhaps encourage other acts of insubordination. Elites, in other words, have their own compelling reasons to preserve a public facade of unity, willing compliance, and respect and so to keep the conflict out of the public record (quoted in West 1998:33).

A negative attitude towards the sharing of the administration of holy communion has also developed. Constitutionally, holy communion should only be administered once a month in the worship service by a pastor using an altar book (ELCIN Constitution 1993:40). The pastor gives holy communion to the sick and the aged where they are because they are unable to come to holy communion services. Only in emergency cases, when the pastor is not available, can an evangelist, a deacons/deaconess or an elder administer holy communion (ELCIN Constitution 1993:41). Most pastors understand the above text as saying that only they must distribute the communion and no-one else beside them. The holiness of the sacrament is perceived as something that should be handled only by ordained ministers. Most parishioners have concluded that holy communion is only valid when it is received from the hands of the ordained pastor. Hamalwa said that his parish pastor is determined not to share responsibilities with his co-workers. He carries both the chalice and the plate with bread at the same time when distributing holy communion. In this process, the parish leader pronounces "the body of Christ given for you; the blood of Christ shed for you" to three or four people at a time. When asked

for the reason for doing so, he replied that he can serve alone (Hamalwa 1999).

In practice only ordained ministers are allowed to administer the sacraments. But ministers are not special Christians. They are ordinary Christians like others. They have not been vested with extraordinary powers that make sacraments valid. In Lutheran theology, every baptised believer has the right and the duty to preach and administer sacraments in principle. So there is no difference in status between the clergy and the laity. But for the sake of order this common task is entrusted to the ordained minister, or anybody officially asked to do it on behalf of the church. Any authorised lay person does this in cases of emergency when there is no pastor around. This means that the church is following an order which is built on certain principles. Apart from controlling the administration of the sacraments, the pastors are also responsible for keeping records and issuing valid documents. Because the tradition is meant to maintain proper order and is not based on a theological principle, it should be flexible. As it is now, it creates the impression that it protects the status of the ordained ministers. It is not only the pastor who should maintain order in such a special occasion.

The tradition that protects the status of the ordained ministers creates tension between evangelists and their classmates who were promoted to pastorate through ordination.

Personally, I think that the tradition that elevates the status of the clergy above the laity should no longer be adhered to because it serves no purpose in most parishes in ELCIN. There are faithful and competent Christians who can be entrusted with the administration of sacraments. They are people who can take records, issue necessary documents and handle the work efficiently and precisely. The question as to why the administration of sacraments is entrusted only to ordained ministers is frequently asked by parishioners in the ELCIN. These inflexibilities must be addressed otherwise these developments pull the church back into Catholic assumptions and practices.

It is not difficult to administer holy communion. Any competent Christian can be trained to do it. What is difficult for all of us is to interpret a text for a sermon. The practice in most parishes is that pastors become holy communion administrators and leave the task of interpreting the Word of God to lay persons. They abandon the Word, which is the life of the church. It is the responsibility of pastors to train lay leaders how to administer sacraments and interpret the Word as well as to work

hand in hand with them.

Pastors are often not available at the outstations. Parish members at these outstations suffer the consequences. They spend months and even years without being visited by their ministers. The distances between some of the outstations and the parishes are long. Pastors have no transportation or there are no financial resources to maintain the vehicles. In such circumstances, well-trained lay leaders should be authorised to serve these parish members at the outstations.

The working programmes of lay leaders are not classified among the priorities of parishes. They are considered as appendices. It is implied that a pastor's working programme and activities are at the centre of parish life. In the Parish Council, for instance, pastors outline their own agendas without including other topics from the council members. The contributions of other members will be passed on as unimportant information, if time allows after all topics on the agenda have been discussed. In parishes a pastor's plans for the year are presented to the parish separate from the programmes submitted by parish associations. As the pastor's plans occupy the central place of a parish, the separation of other programmes creates an impression that these are insignificant. This attitude is especially confusing in most new parishes in ELCIN which were established under the leadership of lay leaders, evangelists, deacons/deaconesses or elders. Lay leaders were active and effective before the installation of an ordained pastor. Parish members can not understand why the working programmes are not integrated into one programme of the entire parish.

In his interview Hamalwa often referred to the pastor who did not announce his plans, lost the notes he gave him, or informed him in the service that there was no time for announcements related to diaconal activities (Hamalwa 1999). Deaconess Haindongo told me about how her work was delayed by the Parish Council. The Parish Council has the policy of approving or disapproving her three months working programme. According to Haindongo, the Council failed to utilise this policy. But when she became a member of the Council things changed gradually thereafter (1999). Elders accepted her as one of their leaders which is what she expected. Some of the elders who do not know the distinction between the role of a pastor and a deaconess often request her to play the pastoral role. Melksedek Namidi, who was sent to a lay preachers' course by the Parish Council of his parish, was not allowed to serve for a period of one year when he came from training (Namidi 1997). He was also

not informed officially what the problem was.

Not all working relations between evangelists, deacons or deaconesses and pastors were bad. Evangelists Nakale and Hamukwaya confirmed during the interview that they had a good working relation with their pastors. In evangelization and visitation trips each had containers of wine and wafers with them to give communion to the sick and the aged. Again, both recalled how often they were approached by their leaders informing them of the financial constraints in their respective parishes (Hamukwaya 1998 ; Nakale 1999).

5.10 Two examples of ELCIN church associations and the decision-making procedures in their governing boards

5.10.1 ELCIN Women's Association

5.10.1.1 A brief history

Traditionally, there was a strong belief among both men and women in *Owambo* that household, ward, district and national leadership belonged to the men. To the women belonged the kitchen, the bearing of children and caring for the household (Seppälä 1978:26). The division of the tasks was based upon the Oshiwambo saying that: *lindunge yaakiintu itayi gwanene pombanda* [the intelligence of women is low and therefore it cannot deal with sophisticated issues of leadership]. Mothers and grandmothers inculcated the belief in young girls. Young girls were trained "to be 'obedient and subservient' to their men and to be good wives to their husbands" (Kazombaue & Elago 1987:198), to keep the household, to work in the field, to know kitchen tasks such as grinding millet, cooking and basket-making, to mention but a few (Seppälä 1978:27). The training included also "the growth of the clan" (Kazombaue & Elago 1987:198) and the preservation of its customs, norms, legends, faiths, traditional beliefs and ethics.

The etiquette of the day was that every girl had to go through *efundula* [girls' initiation] before marriage for the recognition of her adult status. The bridegroom had to give an ox and eight hoes to the father of the bride. The ox, which is provided even today, was a supply of meat for the girl's feast,

a means of strengthening the marriage, a thanksgiving to the mother of the bride for her upbringing, an honour for the ancestors and the promotion of productivity (Seppälä 1978:27). A man could marry as many wives as his economic status could bear (Kazombaue & Elago 1987:196).

Substantial developments concerning the remaking of the status of women in the region were initiated by young Finnish women missionaries in the mission field in 1912. Congregational women's meetings were introduced whose programmes included Bible studies, music, health, cleaning, cooking, child care and many others. These were followed later by other developments such as the weaving of materials for clothing, a boarding school for orphan girls at Oshigambo, the training of fiancées of theological students, the erecting of boarding schools, a nursing school and a seminary for women teachers at Okahao. Initial difficulties occurred because the Finnish women were not members of the decision-making body in the field. They had no influence on leadership decisions. Only male Finns were members. The decision-making body on the mission field represented the Finnish Missionary Society (Seppälä 1978:30). Owambo young girls were allowed to enter baptismal classes after girls' initiation (Seppälä 1978:29). It was only around 1900 when women were allowed to attend congregational meetings as observers. But after the second World War the position improved when the first women elders were appointed to many Parish Councils in the church.

The basic work started by missionaries among the women was a foundation laid for ELCIN to speed up women's participation in decision-making bodies. A school for women deaconesses was established at the Engela Parish Institute in 1963. Women directors for this school and the domestic science school, for the Music Association and Sunday School work were trained and sent to other institutions in Finland and South Africa to further their learning. The idea of a full-time woman director of the Women's Association was initiated by Dr Mikko Juva during his visit in ELCIN 1961. The implementation of such an idea took place in 1964 when missionary Eevi Halminen was appointed the first woman director of the Women's Association by the Circuit General Meeting of Kavango. Her successor, Lea Ilona Kolehmainen outlined the first Women's Association constitution in which she introduced a governing board as a supervisory body for each level in the Association. Both Raili Seppälä and Wilhelmina Amweelo, women theologians, were appointed women directors for the Women's Association by the Church Council of 1974. One year after this, a governing board of the Women's Association at national level was appointed by the same body.

The first women theological students, Hilma Tshilongo and Wilhelmina Mpingana Amweelo, entered the seminary in 1968. It took men theologians four years (1972-1976) to debate whether the women theologians should preach from the pulpit (Seppälä 1978:36). The debate about women's ordination took twenty-four years (1968-1992) before the first women theologians were ordained in 1992.

5.10.1.2 The ELCIN Women's Association at parish level.

Full membership with voting rights is limited to women who are confirmed and active participants of holy communion. Others are associate members. The Women's Association at the parish level is led by a governing board which consists of seven members. These members, including its director, are appointed by the Parish Council. Their term of office is two years. The governing board does not have decision-making power but is accountable to the Council which chose it. Thus it sends suggestions and discussions to the body concerned for final approval. It plans annual camping occasions for parish women. The women's parish director convenes and chairs the governing board, visits women's groups, provides them with the working programme, acts as the caretaker of the main funds of the parish women and submits a yearly report on women's activities at parish level to the governing board of the Women's Association at the circuit level (ELCIN Women's Association constitution 1991:2).

5.10.1.3 The ELCIN Women's Association at circuit level

The governing board members of the Women's Association, including the women director at circuit level, are appointees of the top leading body in the circuit, the Circuit General Meeting. The term of office of the director is three years. Like the governing board at parish level, it channels its suggestions and discussions to the dean's office for confirmation. The functions of its director, carried out at circuit level, are exact copies of that of the parish woman director (The ELCIN Women's Association constitution 1991:2).

5.10.1.4 The ELCIN Women's Association at diocesan level.

The seven members of the governing board of the diocesan Women's Association, as well as its director, are appointed by the Diocesan Council. Their term of office is five years. The women's leader

deals with women's groups and convenes the governing board at the diocesan level. The governing board forwards its suggestions to the governing board of the Women's Association at national church level for confirmation before their implementation. It also has the right to propose its diocesan treasurer, its annual meetings and leadership courses (The ELCIN Women's Association constitution 1991:2).

5.10.1.5 The ELCIN Women's Association at national church level

Both the general woman director of the ELCIN Women's Association and the seven governing board members whose term of office is three years are appointed by the Church Council. The outgoing board members propose names of their successors and forward them to the Council for confirmation. It meets three times yearly, excluding emergency meetings, in which women directors at circuit and diocesan level governing boards can be invited to attend. Its resolutions are forwarded through the governing board of the Department of Christian Education, which is the umbrella body over the Sunday School, Women's, Men's and Music Associations, before reaching the Church Council if need be. The board plans its training of the women leaders at parish, circuit, diocese and national church levels. The general woman director, who is the secretary of the women's governing board at national level is the leader of the ELCIN Women's Association. Her term of office is five years. As in the above examples, she works through the women's governing board at national level, visits women parish conferences and meetings, convenes the board, takes care of the women's main fund and submits the association's annual report to the Church Council (The ELCIN Women's Association constitution 1991:2).

5.10.1.6 Analysing the role of women in ELCIN

The baptised women were gradually introduced to basic leadership skills. Their leadership scope and responsibilities were expanded to include the leading of Bible studies, Sunday School, choirs and later membership of the Parish Council. Women were given a voice to express themselves and to participate in church discussions and decisions on an equal footing with men. Through public education that was ran and supervised by the church, women have achieved the vocation of public teaching, nursing, business woman, manageress, mayoress, councillor, government minister, to mention but a few.

Through church institutions the women have achieved the status of elder, mission worker, deaconess, pastor, association director. This transformation helped Owambo men and women to change their understanding of a woman as someone who is always dependent upon a man for guidance, decision-making and protection. It has led to the realization that, like a man, she can rely on herself when carrying out her tasks. She is not a dependent person, but, like a man, she needs the interrelationship and interaction with other women and men.

The Christian education women were provided with, although being liberative to some extent, robbed them of their status according to the old culture. They have lost their traditional role of being custodians of customs and norms in the nation. When they embraced Christianity, they were taught to forsake their traditional custodianship role, culture and religious beliefs. It is still believed that one has to abandon oneself before one can become a new person through baptism. This does not mean that the change was literally imposed by force. The Finns came from an advanced culture whereas that of the indigenous people was underdeveloped. The indigenous people who knew how to plan and organise within the confines of their own situation and cultural assumptions were excluded from planning together with missionaries. Missionaries preferred to do the planning alone. The Finns and the indigenous people had a relationship of superiors and subordinates. The indigenous people did not know any other denominational approach to cultural change so they did not critique the approach applied. The missionaries believed that they had to replace the indigenous culture with the "Christian culture". The approach followed in Christian education was authoritarian. The educators were presumed to be knowledgeable instructors who knew "everything" and instructed converts about what was right and wrong. Like children the indigenous people were expected to be obedient and receptive.

It is now difficult to go back to the previous culture because Christianity and its exclusive approach has become a deep-rooted culture for the indigenous Christians. ELCIN has not engaged in cultural dialogue with its members. The traditional culture is known only by the majority in the rural areas. Traditionalists are considered to be "pagans", backsliders and people who practise syncretism. Traditionalists who are Christians do not practise traditional ethics, because they do not want to risk their reputation among their fellow Christians. So, some Christians attend worship services during the day and traditional meetings engaging in ancestor veneration at night. This attitude is partly a traditionalist type of attitude which avoids change. However, most of the elderly people believed what

they were taught and so they do not allow a mixture of Christian and traditional religious beliefs. It was painful for the women to lose what they had. Their loss was worsened by the fact that they could not understand the dualistic theology exerted by the missionaries to destroy the indigenous culture. The little traditional role the women had was not upgraded but crashed down. They received Christianity. But the danger is that their progeny would find it difficult to accept a faith that was imposed on people after they were stripped of their identity. I think that the alternative is for the church to engage itself in dialogue with the cultures of the people among which it serves.

Precious traditional types of beads such as *onyoka* [ostrich-egg-necklace], *ondyeva* [ostrich-egg-shell beads], *omushambe* [black beads], were not permitted to be worn by Christians. The Owambo women's traditional clothes, particularly *onguwo* [a married woman's dress made out of a hide of a black ox], *eteta* [a front apron made from intestines of an ox], *elambakwa* [leather panel which is an apron made out of the hide of a black ox worn by mothers with babies], *nouputu* [copper beads], *oivela yopeemhando nokomaoko* [anklets and armlets], *eemba* [whelk shell buttons] *nomamanya* [varicolored beads] were not accepted (Yalyatamo 1999 ; Loeb 1962:188-190). Because it was husbands who owned these ornaments, so women, who were without them, were regarded as married to poor men. So, economically, it was a loss of property for the husbands whose wives became Christians. The decorative ornaments were considered as valuable and expensive property. Loeb writes that "at the time of the kings two *eemba* [whelk shell buttons] equalled an ox in price" (1962:189). Nothing of their old culture accompanied them into their new lives. Thus, the beads and other parts of their culture have not been a contribution to the new church life. Girls' initiation which was their mark of adulthood and a continuous communication to their ancestors, was replaced with confirmation. Women should have been allowed to wear their beads and ornaments because they do nothing to contradict their faith. Female Finnish missionaries wore theirs. The danger was that the traditionalistic men and women who lost their property when either their clan members or wives became Christians decided to preserve the remaining property instead of becoming Christians. The church should have transformed the lives of the people and left the decision regarding what to wear and what not upon the people themselves. This approach was also authoritarian because missionaries decided what they thought the indigenous people must wear or not wear.

The women's status in the church remains controversial when it comes to top church leadership

positions. This means that what Christianity has done for the emancipation of women is not enough. It is a fact that women were taken out of their traditional subservience but they have not reached the status of men. Both the traditional and the ELCIN leadership styles fell short in this regard. Paul who teaches that "... there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal.3:28), teaches also that "I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to keep silent. For Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. "Yet woman will be saved through bearing children, if she continues in faith and love and holiness, with modesty" (1 Tim 2:15). These and other biblical texts have reinforced the traditional belief described above, namely that the intelligence of a woman is lower than that of a man. She is not regarded as being capable of performing as well as a man when it comes to representing the community as a leader. Women theologians had a voice neither in pastors' conferences nor in Church General Synods (Seppälä 1978:36). As stated before, it took the church many years to debate the leadership position of women theologians in the church. The women ordination debate has become part of history today. At the grass roots level, there are still a few parishes who do not want women pastors assigned to them. Hierarchically, there is no woman who is a dean, lecturer, or bishop in the church, whereas in the political sphere women have climbed the ladder to the highest hierarchical position, that of being ministers. Much remains to be done in the church.

5.10.2 The ELCIN Youth Association and its decision-making procedures

5.10.2.1 A brief history

The work among the youth was initiated by missionary Erkki Lehto when he led meetings at Onayena in 1919. Eleven years later missionary Sylvi Kyllonen continued where her predecessor ended. Confirmation classes among unconfirmed youngsters were initiated by missionary Erkki Hynönen in 1957. The first full-time youth director appointed by the Church Council (1957-1962) was missionary Laukkanen. His main task was to organize camps mostly for boys. Oupundi, the youth camping place at the north-east of Ongwediva was established by him. Four evangelists were appointed to work among the youth on a circuit basis as from 1960. They were Oiva Shikwaya in the Kavango, Verner Shangheta in Oukwanyama, Andreas Kalumbu in Ondonga and Tomas Shigwedha in the Western circuit. The first full-time indigenous youth pastor, K. Dumeni served from 1961-1972 (Uushona

1978:21). Other developments were the domestic training and furthering of the education of directors in Finland and America; the decision of the Youth Association to do mission work to youth by employing three full-time evangelists to work among non-Christians and the short training courses for girls' leaders and Sunday School instructors in parishes (Shejavali 1970:132). The constitution of the Youth Association was outlined and approved by the Church Council in 1967 and applied in 1968. In the constitution the three levels of the Association, each with its governing board, are clearly identified. The governing board appoints parish pastors on a part-time basis to work among the youth in circuits. The main fund of the Youth Association was put under the care of the full-time youth pastor. Boy Scouts and Girl Guides were introduced among the youngsters by missionary E. Hatakka and his assistants (Shejavali 1970:131).

Pastor K. Dumeni who worked in consultation with missionaries Raili and Matti Seppälä during 1964-1966, was succeeded by Pastor Heikki Uushona in 1972, whose term of office ended with his appointment at Oshakati parish. Josaphat Shanghala took over from him on 1 February 1978. His successor, Joseph Avia, led the Association until its division by the church's decentralization policy as outlined in its Five Year Plan (1996-2000).

5.10.2.2 The ELCIN Youth Association at parish level.

Membership of the Youth Association includes all male and female youths reaching the age of fifteen years, who are parish members, confirmed and are participants in Holy Communion. Those who are not, are associate members. There is a governing board, members of which are the parish pastor, a parish youth leader and his/her deputy, a parish treasurer, a parish deacon(ess), a mission worker and a parish youth secretary. The board supervises the necessary training the youths need in order to serve the parish in its various activities including catering for spiritual and physical needs (The ELCIN Youth Association constitution 1988:3).

5.10.2.3 The ELCIN Youth Association at circuit level.

According to resolution 189 article 5 of the ELCIN Constitution and regulations, governing board members should be appointed by the Circuit General Meeting (ELCIN Constitution 1993:101).

The governing board of the Youth Association at this level has the task of appointing a full-time circuit director who is often an evangelist. The name of the appointee is forwarded through the top governing board to the Church Council for approval. Its suggestions and discussions regarding its tasks are channelled to the youth governing board in the church for information and for approval (The ELCIN Youth Association constitution 1988:3).

5.10.2.4 The ELCIN Youth Association at national church level.

Its seven to nine governing board members are proposed by the outgoing youth governing board and, when they have gained the support of the governing board of the Department of Christian Education, they are confirmed by the Church Council. The board appoints its own office-bearers from its own members. The term of office is three years. As in other associations, it is the Church Council that appoints the director of the Youth Association in the church. The same body appoints pastors to secondary schools and deacons/deaconesses to minister to the youngsters in those institutions. The term of office is five years with one re-appointment. A director who occupies this office for ten years must not be re-appointed. However, if a successor cannot be found after the period of 2-5 years, the former director can be re-appointed (The ELCIN Youth Association constitution 1988:2). The governing board of the ELCIN Youth Association supervises the development and spiritual growth among youth. The same body supervises all youth activities and forwards them to the Church Council for confirmation. The reporting of use of financial resources, the initiating of annual meetings and the appointment of both a treasurer and financial inspectors for the association are conducted by the governing board.

5.10.2.5 Analysing the leadership role of the Youth Association

The establishment of the ELCIN Youth Association in the church is an acknowledgement of the presence of many young people in the church. It shows the seriousness of the church concerning the education of its members, particularly the youth who are the church of today and tomorrow. Traditionally, special attention was given first to elders and then to other adult people and this is still the norm. For instance when the *omalodu* [home brewed beer] was shared, youngsters received *onhafi* [the thick last part]. There are cases when adults eat meat together with porridge

while children eat porridge with traditional spinach. An adult sits on the log while a youngster sits on the ground. It seems that such norms were reinforced by texts such as, "Those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children" (Mat 15:38). The church endeavours to serve all members equally. Youth from various ethnic groups in the region have the chance to learn and to do new things together and to enhance national integration. This is a valuable opportunity for the youth who were raised in authoritarian traditions to develop self-expression, self-reliance and decision-making. Youngsters lead themselves through the Youth Association. However, they lacked the right to choose their leaders, and, except for a few choruses the youths offer sometimes, their ministry is not turned into an integral part of the Sunday worship services. These people love their parishes and are, therefore, eager to be entrusted with responsibility, for instance, to deliver one song or so each Sunday. If they have nothing to contribute they will find other places which will offer them such opportunity. The latter is also true for the children. A brief sermon for children is not a practice in most ELCIN parishes. Children and their Sunday School instructors are often not motivated to share their contributions with other parish members. The disadvantages are that children grow up with that ill-feeling of not being attended to in worship services and they observe that ministers are not as interested in them as their teachers. So some drop worship services when they become independent from their parents.

The ELCIN Youth Association had no constitution for a long period of its existence. Were the youth perhaps too submissive, or was it a case of negligence among leaders? It is not yet clear to the author why its initial founders did not do this. Even the first full-time indigenous pastor among the youth served for nearly ten years without a job description (1961-1968). The record of good governance in the ELCIN Youth Association is hindered by an attitude of non-compliance with the determined terms of office as stipulated in the constitution (Ndamanomhata 1999:3). Its first indigenous director served for eleven years (1961-1972), his successor seven (1972-1978) (Uushona 1978:25). The second term of office of the third director was interrupted by his further studies, but he served at least for five years (1978-1982), while the present leader has served for sixteen years (1983-1999). The decision to put the main fund under the supervision of the full-time director is dangerous, for it can be a source of corruption on the side of the leader. A financial committee, consisting of the chairperson, secretary and treasurer, has to be found for such a responsibility.

5.10.3 The impact the constitutions have on the decision-making procedures of both Associations

The policy concerning full membership in the ELCIN Women's Association is an exact copy of resolution 129, article 2 of the ELCIN Constitution and regulations. It reads: *Ovakwaneongalo ovo tava tokola ovo ava, va wanifa omido 18 nove na eitavelo lokuya kouvalelo Uyapuki*" [the parishioners who have the voting right are those who are eighteen years of age and are participants in holy communion] (1993:69). The requirements concerning full membership in the ELCIN Youth Association are the age of fifteen years and confirmation (The ELCIN Youth Association constitution 1988:1). The constitutions of both associations require that the members of the governing boards at all levels be appointed by the executive of the highest body of authority at that level. These bodies are the Parish Council in the parish, the Circuit Council in the circuit, the Diocesan Council in the diocese and the Church Council at national church level. However, such appointments give the impression that members of the boards are above the people whom they lead. People under their guidance often feel that they cannot subject their leaders to responsible and constructive criticism. The method concerned hampers the exercise of the democratic right of each person to choose his/her leader. It is time that each group of people appoints its leaders. The names of the appointees should be forwarded to the authorities concerned for information sake.

Like the members of the governing boards, a director is also appointed by the highest authority at that level. Like a pastor assigned to a place of work, the director is assigned to an association (ELCIN Constitution 1993:21). The requirement that suggestions and discussions be sent to the body in authority for confirmation leaves the board without power to pass and to defend its own decisions. It loses the autonomy and capability of producing and maintaining qualitative decisions. Governing boards and associations are thus dependent entities and act in a spirit of subordinates. Instead of forwarding recommendations to higher authorities, the association should provide them with continuously updated information. The governing board members should be accountable to the people whom they lead and not only to the authority above the association.

At all levels of the two associations, one sees how activities such as visitations, convening

meetings, outlining work programmes and supervising training are performed by governing boards and directors. Decisions remain with those in authority. This type of decision-making procedure is a method of control. It gives the higher authority an opportunity to approve proposals which are in its favour and reject those not in its interest. Associations which are under the umbrella of the Department of Christian Education and whose resolutions are first confirmed by its governing board before being channelled to the Church Council, have an unnecessarily long procedure before the decisions needed are approved and implemented. Lots of time is wasted in this process. There is no uniformity between the two associations concerning terms of office. The term of office of the woman director is two years at parish level, three at circuit level and five years both at diocesan and national church levels (Ndamanomhata 1999:2-3). The youth director's term of office is five years at all levels (The ELCIN Youth Association constitution 1988:2-3). It is good to have a director who is more experienced than his/her governing board members. But the disadvantage is that it might encourage the leader to think that he/she is better than the new members. New members might also regard the leader as their elder. I suggest that the director and the board of each association should have equal terms of office for all office-bearers so that together they can develop and grow in knowing their responsibilities.

Except at parish level, the terms of office of the governing board and its members at all levels is three years as it is at all levels in the Youth Association (The ELCIN Women's Association constitution 1991:1-4; The ELCIN Youth Association constitution 1988:2). All the women's governing boards meet three times yearly while no such meetings are mentioned in the case of youth governing boards.

5.11 Interviews with some directors of ELCIN church associations

5.11.1 Unobserved constitutions

Having scanned through a lot of material and interviewed association directors concerning the procedures of decision-making that are followed by the governing boards of associations, I acknowledge that ELCIN church associations do have an insignificant role to play when it comes to decision making processes in the church. In the following section I attempt to present two kinds

of examples as to how ELCIN church association directors with the assistance of existing constitutions and decision-making procedures implement their plans.

Pastor Joseph Avia who has been the ELCIN youth director for sixteen years, shared with the author the difficulties the association underwent to start a brick-laying project. The partnership negotiations with a youth association in Germany were started in the eighties when Namibians were involved in the war of liberation against the former apartheid government of South Africa. The impact of the war on the negotiations was that foreigners, particularly whites, were regarded as spies either of the SA authorities or of their own governments. A youth representing the partners in Germany was sent to the two Lutheran churches in Namibia (ELCRIN and ELCIN). The main objective was for the partners to know each other better. The agreed arrangements were that the visitor stayed for a period of one month in each church. The office of the youth director in ELCIN followed proper procedures in that it requested, and was granted, the approval from the Church Council in advance to host the guest. The same day when the guest was already in the region and expected to arrive at the youth centre any time, he was refused acceptance. It was an order from the office of the bishop, in the person of the former deputy bishop, Pastor Matti Amadhila.

Despite the instruction, the director and his board members kept their original decision to receive, and to stay with, the guest for a period of one month as previously planned. He was accommodated in a boys' room in the director's house. In order not to worsen the tension between the office of the bishop and that of the youth director, the initial plan of the visitor visiting youths in their respective parishes was slightly changed. The youth were invited to welcome the visitor at the office. Thereafter the guest went back. The strong stand of the board members paid off in the long run.

Some years later, the ELCIN scholarship office negotiated for scholarship opportunities and Avia was fortunate to be offered one by the same church whose youth wanted to enter into partnership with the ELCIN Youth Association. The partnership initiated was strengthened and also developed during the director's one year study in the partner church in Germany. Good relationship and communication continued to exist after the completion of the studies of the youth

director. Exchanges of youth groups took place on both sides. Out of this good partnership an agreement was reached whereby the youth partners in Germany offered the ELCIN Youth Association a brick-making machine, money to buy a vehicle and other equipment (Avia 1999)

The project has started. The brick-making machine is currently producing bricks for communities who are near and also far away in the northern region. People of these communities who used to build their homesteads with poles, which are no longer available, are delighted to have such a service. A vehicle has been bought and many more plans are underway.

The beneficial aspect of church associations having partners is that they learn new things, support each other in times of difficulties, share their burdens, happiness and visions with each other.

However, the way the issue of the youth representative was handled, posed a question of trust to the youth leadership. It created the impression that the youth leadership concerned was not considered to be strong enough to detect who was spying and who was not. The other way of looking at it is that despite all the efforts made in advance to disclose the objectives of both partners, the church authority wanted to be in control. The immediate stand taken by the youth leadership to continue with the visit was fair. It is an open indication that the youth leadership was a responsible, mature governing body. Its members neither organised a public rally to embarrass their church leaders in the eyes of a foreigner, nor did they send their visitor back. Cautiously they chose silent disobedience. They shared the prevailing situation and their stand in the circumstances with their visitor. The tenacity to continue the partnership was evident when the same leadership resumed its ties with its partners in Germany after some years. The Church Council was kept informed about all the developments.

The Church Council recorded the brick-making project among all the church properties without the consent and agreement of the Youth Association governing board. It also wanted to decentralise and divide the project into two diocesan projects with the youth vehicle to be kept at the Head-Office. This seemed acceptable, for all properties belong to the church. The youth governing board was very cautious. Its members knew well that the church authority had not

shared the pains it caused to the youth at the initial stage of the project. But they accepted that it was the authority in charge. Agreements were reached that the project became the property of the church but that it should not be divided because it was planned that it take place in consecutive phases. The rationale of not dividing the project was to protect it so that it could grow and reach the completion of all its phases as planned.

The youth governing board chose the way of silent disobedience to avoid discord between the two governing bodies. It stood firm in its decisions to continue with the visit of the youth representative and to keep the vehicle for itself. It had reasons to challenge the top leadership. In this regard, silent disobedience did not help the top leadership to reconsider its authoritarian methods of controlling its subordinate groups. The youth governing board, instead of entering into verbal confrontation with the Church Council, kept the issue to itself. I suggest that the two governing bodies should have convened a meeting to reconcile their differences and to defuse tensions between them. Pastor Avia is right when he says: “An association director has to be an obstinate person if he/she has to be successful in his/her work in this church. It is always a win or lose situation. If one succeeds, one’s achievement becomes the achievement and property of ELCIN, but if not one bears the consequences alone. Church associations do not have the power to make decisions” (1999).

While in conversation with the director of the Sunday School, Mrs Eva-Liisa Shitundeni, about the power the association has through its governing board, she uttered the following: There is no rule, nothing in the constitution and regulations that authorizes an association to do or not to do something. *Ame oinima ohandi i ningi pahamutwe mukukutu, shimha ashike ndi shii kutya osho handi ningi otashi humifa komesho oilonga yombelewa yange* [I do things obstinately as long as I know that the things I do will improve the quality of service in the association]. She told me how she initiated the discussions which led to her association being offered a computer and a printer by fellow Christians, the Bush family, from the United States of America. She took another initiative when she introduced a big income-generating project in the Sunday School Association. She did this when she entered into personal discussions with the former executive director of the Lutheran Communion of Southern Africa (LUCSA), Pastor F. F. Graz, who took up the matter with the decision-making body in LUCSA. The outcome of the discussions was an amount of

N\$12000, for purchasing a threshing machine for N\$10 000 and N\$2000 to maintain it. Lastly, she told me how she secured her part-time scholarship in Office Management, again through LUCSA (Shitundeni 1999).

When the author asked her how she does all this, she replied that she works closely with the governing board members. The leadership of the association together with their partners establish firm, deep relationship and communication. Together they try to reach provisional agreements which are not easy to ignore. The Church Council endorsement will then be requested at this stage. She recalls the responses the church authority often gives to such initiatives. It is, *Oshikondo/oshimhungulonga otashi inditwa shi twikile nomalongekido ngaashi sha hangika she a tameka nale* [the department/sub-division is asked to continue with the preparations it has started] (Shitundeni 1999).

ELCIN Constitution and bylaws say very little concerning children. Resolution 37 article 2 says that each parish has the responsibility to bring children and youth to a mature knowledge of the Christian faith, to be faithful church members, to acquaint themselves with various church activities, and to help other parish members in their spiritual and physical needs. No specific reference to a church association is made (ELCIN Constitution 1993:37). Without rules each person does what seems right to him/her. I suggest the association be governed by clear instructions and guidelines.

The obstinacy of Mrs Shitundeni in doing things that improve the quality of the service in an association means that she has developed a mechanism whereby she pushes things through decision-making bodies. It is a method which she is assured the authority will find difficult to ignore. She does so because the rules under which she works do not provide her with the chance of initiating the things she wants to do. As said before, suggestions and discussions have to be forwarded to the authority in charge for approval. It is a painful exercise, one that is time consuming. One does not know whether one's suggestions will be accepted or rejected. It seems also that she had followed the rules which led to nothing. She seems to have lost confidence in the channels put in place by the authority that was supposed to help her. She feels betrayed by the decision-making procedures. The result is that now she takes the authority into her own hands.

This is an underground disobedience which came about as a result of too much control imposed on the association. However, as I said before, the governing board of the Sunday School Association should have taken the courage to discuss these issues with the authority concerned. Underground disobedience does not work in the Owambo traditionalist society in which even trivial conflicts are avoided.

The Church Council can respond to plans initiated by the associations in a variety of ways. One of them is that the church office does not hamper the continuation of the work the association has started. But silence could mean that the church authority is not really in favour of those initiatives. The association is indirectly told that it does things at its own risk. Two, the response could be that an association that does things it is not allowed to do, is considered to be a stiff-necked body. Such a body should not ask for an endorsement from the church if it continues its insubordination. In a nutshell the association concerned would neither be blessed nor condemned for the initiative it has taken by itself. Three, the response could be that the church authority is doing a cover-up operation so that what is happening can not be seen by other associations. This could be a way of avoiding insubordination from other bodies. It endorses the plans launched to avoid direct confrontation with the association concerned. A public confrontation would open the eyes of other groups and would give a bad name to the church authority. Fourth, the response could be that there is nothing specific in the constitution that prevents associations from initiating plans. This is again a cover-up of the shortcomings in the constitution.

An example of good wording when accepting an initiated project could be like this. *Oshikondo/oshimhungulonga ota shi pandulitwa omadiladilo oo sha eta po. Otashi halelwa eyokomesho liwa moilonga yasho no tashi tuwa omukumo shi longe shili opo eyokomesho li holoke* [The department/association is commended for the new ideas it has contributed. It is therefore wished speedy progress and encouraged to work tirelessly so that the envisaged development can become a reality]. In my view, the association does not need permission from the higher body to enter into a venture. It needs continuous consultation and advice from the higher body.

Pastor Paulus Heita, director of the ELCIN Mission Department, and Pastor Salomo Elago,

stewardship director in the Eastern Diocese, represented ELCIN in the *Mission Two Thousand* meeting in Windhoek in 1999. They went without having the authority to enter into any agreements on behalf of the church that delegated them. It was a meeting in which various churches in the country shared ideas and made united and long term strategic plans as to how to prepare themselves for the year two thousand and beyond (The New Millennium). Members shared in the deliberations on presentations by various delegates. But when it came to the moment of passing the decisions, the delegation from ELCIN tried in vain to convince other delegations to postpone decisions. They wanted more time to allow their church leaders to transfer the required authority to them. Being in the majority and having representatives mandated with the requisite authority, member churches went ahead with the plans and left ELCIN behind (Heita 1999).

Obedience is a good thing, but blind obedience is dangerous. The question here is how can important church officials, directors at a national and diocesan levels, attend a meeting without the mandate to pass decisions? One suspects that each of these officials had represented the church in different meetings before.

The other issue is how and when is the authority to participate in decisions on behalf of the church transferred to someone? There may be many ways of transferring authority from a higher official to a lower official. May I mention two of them. One is to transfer authority to officials on a temporary basis, and the other, on a permanent basis. On a temporary basis means that the officer concerned is given authority to carry something out. After the completion of the assigned task, the authority is returned back to the official concerned. The second is in contradiction to the first approach, namely a transfer of authority to an officer on a permanent basis. In the above mentioned case, the problem was not that the authority was temporary rather than permanent, but that no authority to speak on behalf of the church was given to the officers at all. If authority had been given temporarily, but binding for this case, it could have worked. Its shortcomings were disclosed by their powerlessness in the meeting. It caused unnecessary embarrassment to both the delegation and to the church authority. Normally, when a bishop, for instance, is sent to a meeting, he would be expected to report back to the Church Council who would then either support the decisions or withhold their support. I do not believe that only top officials are authorised to carry

authority, which is invested in them for the whole of their tenure. But if this is the case in ELCIN, then such a practice gives the impression that the top church leadership is in charge of everything. This practice is authoritarian and should not occur in the church of Christ. What is done in such cases the world over is that the delegates have full authority to speak and participate in the decisions on behalf of the body which sent them, but the decisions taken need to be ratified by the sending bodies concerned. This is important because decisions may sometimes fundamentally contradict what the bodies are able to support.

The following was shared with me by the ELCIN Men's Association. The interview was conducted with Pastor Avia, instead of Pastor Hosea Iiyambo, its director, who had an appointment at the time of this interview. The association runs a "Male involvement in Safe Reproduction Programme Project". The Programme educates people in sexual issues, family planning and the sharing of related information. The project came about as a result of its director being sent to represent his church in a similar programme in California in 1997. During his stay in California he entered into provisional partnership discussions with a men's group which was ready to fund such a programme in ELCIN in Namibia. In his report to the Church Council, Iiyambo reported that there was a group of males who were ready to fund the programme in ELCIN. The suggestions were totally rejected in the first meeting by the Council members. A second attempt was motivated involving an amount of N\$50 000 for the ELCIN Men's Association and N\$50 a day for the parish that attended such a gathering. To put resources together, this time the youth director accompanied the men's director to the Council. On this occasion, the project was accepted in principle but with Church officials declining to sign the agreement concerned. Instead they ordered the director to do so on behalf of the church. Later a vehicle, which is now in ELCIN's usage, was provided for the programme (Avia 1999).

The acceptance of the Men's involvement in Safe Reproduction Programme Project in ELCIN is not clear. Firstly, the Church Council accepted the invitation and made arrangements for the men's director to attend the training in a far country. It was an expensive exercise in terms of transportation, training, accommodation and meals. Now if this was the case, how could the church refuse to implement the skills acquired through that expensive training? Secondly, the project was accepted in principle, but only after N\$50 000 was offered. The question here is

whether the project was really accepted or whether this was a way for the church to access money. It is difficult to guess what the church had in mind when they declined to sign the agreement. But the go-ahead for such training given to the programme cannot be reversed. It seems to be a contradiction. It seems that they did not want to be responsible for the outcome of such a training. There is also a possibility that church leaders were convinced that the church needed money but probably feared the survival of its teaching on human reproduction. Fourthly, it seems that the top leadership did not understand the objectives of the programme. In order to cover up their own confusion, the men's director was confused when he was ordered to sign on behalf of the church.

The Men's involvement in Safe Reproduction Programme Project is against ELCIN's teaching on human reproduction. The higher body should have withheld its support. An authoritarian approach, whereby the higher officials decided not to say that such a programme was fundamentally contradicting what ELCIN could support, was used by the higher body. It did not use its power to withhold its support for the report tabled by the director of Men's Association. In my view, this was so because it did not know the content as well as the objectives of the programme well. The Church Council should have withheld its support or asked time to investigate the matter further.

5.12 Empowerment, team work and supervision

5.12.1 Empowerment and team work

Apart from the job descriptions of each worker and the pastor as the leader of the parish, the constitution says nothing about the supervision of parish workers. The result is that most pastors do not consider a parish as a place where lay leaders are trained and supervised by the local pastors. There are no workshops, meetings, seminars or other types of educative opportunities created in the parish. This, they believe should be organised at circuit, diocesan and national church levels. Team-work is not encouraged between pastors, evangelists, deacons/deaconesses, parish secretaries and leaders of associations. Each ministry seems to be on its own. The Parish Council is frequently the sole active group under such circumstances. But in most cases elders function as untrained assistants of the pastor who are not properly supervised (Taapopi 1996).

The meeting of the workers, which is not binding constitutionally, and thus found only in some parishes, remains the sole unifying body in the parish. The rationale behind its establishment is to have a group of working people who raise funds to assist the parish main fund in times of its financial constraints and during parish visitation.

The disadvantages in such a working environment is the lack of empowerment of lay leaders by the local pastors. The overall leader makes sure that his/her operational terrain is not violated, but spends no effort in equipping others to help themselves. Team-work is prevented. Instead the parish workers find themselves in a departmentalized working situation where each ministry is left to do its own tasks separately. This is a situation in which the highly educated people in the community find it difficult to serve because of the monotonous and authoritarian attitudes of some parish leaders.

5.12.2 Supervision at a parish level

5.12.2.1 The parish visitation as a practical example

No guidance is provided in the constitution on what is meant by a parish visitation. The following are suggestions following an examination of both Bishop Dumeni and Bishop Kaulinge's visitation agendas. Both visitation agendas are identical because they followed the agenda inherited from the presiding missionaries.

Normally, visitations in ELCIN are conducted during the weekends. They happen from Friday until Sunday afternoon. The Parish Council, together with the episcopal delegation meet on Friday at three o'clock in the church building. The Bishop chairs the meeting. The parish pastor usually opens the meeting with a short devotion. A member of the delegation, usually a bishop, addresses the Council members with the word of God. This Bible study type of address is followed by discussions whereby the elders have to put forward the same topics of discussion they had sent to the bishop's office before in preparation for the meeting. After thorough discussions, resolving problems and misunderstandings, the group agrees as to which points are to be tabled in the parish workers' and parish meetings the next day and Sunday. A member of the delegation closes the

meeting either with a short homily followed by a prayer, or a prayer only.

At nine o'clock on Saturday, the delegation visits the parish office to examine its condition, organization, book-keeping and the keeping of the history of the parish. A meeting with the employed people in the parish is held as from eleven o'clock. Either the parish pastor or one of the workers opens the meeting with a prayer. This is followed by a sermon delivered by a member of the visiting delegation. The annual report, which should describe the situation of the parish in its various aspects, is given by the parish pastor, followed by discussions and suggestions as to how to present some of the issues which will be raised at the parishioners' meeting with the delegation. The delegation closes the meeting.

In the afternoon of the same day the delegation visits either an aged person, the sick or has individual discussions with parish members where needed.

On Sunday, the worship service starts at the normal time, which is ten o'clock in the morning or eleven o'clock during winter. All parishioners are ordered to remain in the church building while the elders together with the delegation observe a prayer in the parish office. From the parish office a procession of two by two is formed with the elders in front followed by their pastor and the delegation at the end. Once in the church building, the local pastor gives to the bishop the opportunity to introduce the visitation and its objectives to the parishioners. The worship service, led by the local pastor, starts. In case there is more than one pastor in the parish, one leads the liturgy while the other the homily. The bishop and his assistant conduct a service for children at a place prepared for the occasion. The assistant preaches and a bishop blesses the children. The collection of offerings, which ends the worship service, is done and after that the visitation resumes.

The last part of the visitation entails a meeting with the parishioners. It starts with the local pastor introducing the bishop and his/her delegation to the parishioners. The bishop delivers a homily which is followed by a brief annual parish report by the parish pastor. The discussions here are on issues discussed previously with the Parish Council and the workers' meeting, as well as on issues the parish was ordered either to do or to improve during the bishop' last visitation. New

responsibilities are given to the parish to fulfil.

All employed workers in the parish are invited to come forward, and are addressed and blessed. The visitation is concluded with the pronouncement of the benediction for all participants. A procession, with the bishop and his/her assistants leading and the parish council members following, moves to the parish office, where they pray together and depart (Dumeni 1989:1-2; Kaulinge 1984:1).

The visitation of parishes by bishops remains a source of support to many parishes and their leadership. They are encouraged when their progress and development is regularly monitored/checked. Those who have domestic problems can be helped to sort them out. Topics of discussions are formulated by the parish concerned. It is one way of helping parish members to sort out their problems. Special attention is given to children when a special worship service is organized for them. The bishop attends to the children. This is important because in some parishes children are not attended to. The delegation does diaconate work by visiting either the sick or the aged. The agenda is attempting to create a balanced parish service that includes the elders, parish workers, the aged, the sick, and the children. It is right to discuss the progress of the parish through the eyes of the parish pastor by listening to the annual report. It is a good idea to commission the parish workers with the responsibility of catering for the parish in all its needs. When elders and the local pastor lead the procession they lead the delegation into the worship service. But when the delegation leads the procession at the end of the service, it is perceived to mean that it leaves the leadership and supervision of the parish in the care of the pastor and the lay leaders. All these are positive aspects.

However, there are the following weaknesses. According to both agendas followed, the visitation is not well defined and formulated. The visitation is too spiritualised because too many homilies are delivered. I am aware of the fact that the rationale behind a homily is to encourage parishioners to be spiritual so that their spirituality can compel them to do the right things. However, too many and too long homilies are boring. The main problem is that the purpose of the visitation is not clear. Preaching is done every Sunday and not only during visitations. This cannot be their main purpose. The congregation may want to hear the bishop preach once in a while; but then his

sermon should be the only one. Parish visitation is the official inspection of the parish in which the inspector inspects the achievements of the latter. This means that the members of the parish inspected should be involved. The programme of visitation does not prioritise the issues under discussion. Things such as visiting the sick or aged and listening to confessions should be done by the local leaders. The visiting group should be present to inspect the work done by the local leaders, while they are doing it, rather than doing it themselves. The style in which a bishop chairs all meetings during a visitation and talks all the time is outdated. Most people, especially in the rural parishes, do not feel comfortable to dialogue with a bishop who is the overall leader of the diocese. The result is that people do not express their feelings freely. A bishop is an inspector of the parish visited, so he has to take the place of a listener, observer and adviser. The local lay leaders should be encouraged to chair meetings during parish visitation. The tendency of reserving the children's service for the bishop only is wrong. The exclusion of the families of the pastor and of other church workers from the agenda needs re-consideration. The visitation is also in the form of a traditional feast that entertains the leaders of the church. Such a feast is too expensive and unnecessary, and its nature compels the parishioners to offer special gifts to the bishops. One could almost see it as a form of corruption. In 2 Cor 12:14 Paul says that children should not gather treasures for the parents, but parents for the children. The visitation programme is outdated for it has not been upgraded since ELCIN's independence more than forty years ago. The agenda used up until today is the one inherited from the missionary directors.

I suggest that the agenda be upgraded to fit the current situation. The inspection should be somehow informal and as cheap as possible. Members of the visiting delegation should frequently include experts on issues to be discussed. The workers who are the educationists and financial supporters of the parish should participate in its decision-making processes and not only in visitation meetings. The office of the local pastor together with the lay leaders should be encouraged to develop a vision for the development of the parish and not rely on the superficial tasks assigned to the parish by a bishop during visitations. It is the task of the local pastor to share the future plans for the parish with his/her church leaders in advance.

5.12.3 Supervision at circuit level

Constitutionally, the circuit dean has the task of supervising the parish pastors, evangelists, lay theologians, deacons/deaconesses, nurses, teachers and other church workers in his/her circuit. The circuit pastors' convention and other meetings are prepared and chaired by the dean. He/she convenes and chairs all meetings of circuit associations; makes sure that the needs of the participants in these meetings are met and formulates agendas; visits parishes and supervises parish and financial administrations both in parishes and at the circuit office and arranges and chairs the Circuit General Meeting (ELCIN Constitution 1993:99-102).

A structure of supervision has been put in place where the dean is in charge of most of the leading positions in the circuit. Practically, it seems impossible for him/her to carry out all these responsibilities alone especially in circuits that have more than thirty parishes (Akudhenga 1998:1). Except for the circuit pastors' convention that frequently takes place, meetings for circuit workers rarely take place. As in the case of the few circuit meetings that do take place, the circuit pastors' convention is normally dominated by the annual report of the dean instead of sharing experiences and difficulties from parishes. It is an outdated style of leadership where the leader does most of the talking in the meeting. As at other levels of supervision, the leader seems to miss his/her target which is to bring other leaders to effective empowerment and proficient fulfilment of their responsibilities.

5.12.4 Supervision in the church as a whole

Concerning the visitation of parishes, church departments, and associations by church leaders, it seems as if there is an expectation among the church leadership that they should be on good terms with local leaders who are weak intelligently and poor economically. This sounds positive, but the purpose is actually negative. It is not to uplift the weak, but to avoid challenges and criticisms from critical local leaders. Firstly, uncritical and materially poor local leaders do not pose a challenge to the top leadership. Instead *ohava kala ve li tala keenyala nge odomayeile ile odopaliko* [the uncritical local leaders consider the visiting leaders as their financial and moral supporters]. Secondly, it is a known tradition in many of our parishes that during the episcopal

visitation, parish leaders whose parishes are not able to supply their financial needs, are offered financial assistance to assist them pay out outstanding salaries. In contrast, parish leaders and department directors who initiate new insights and try to work independently are either left to work on their own or are hindered in proceeding with their plans (Haufiku 1999).

Supervision of church workers is done on a hierarchical basis. Constitutionally, there is no platform in the church where church workers from various levels of work and responsibilities gather as a body and help to solve each other's problems. Each level deals with its own problems separately. There is no room for interconnectedness among individuals from different hierarchical statuses. Hierarchical status is emphasised on a daily basis. May I mention three examples! One, there was a time in the eighties when three households of three pastors, each with a different hierarchical status in the Western Diocese, were in disagreement. They were the household of the local pastor, the household of the principal of a church institution and that of the dean of a circuit. The church leader who was assigned to deal with this issue visited each of the three households more than once but never called them together as a means of reconciling them. Two, during the 1998 episcopal visitation in Ohaingu parish, Bishop Dumeni realised that a deaconess did not participate in the procession together with the elders. This indicated that she was not a member of the Parish Council. The church leader immediately ordered the Council members to take her in (Haindongo 1999). Three, it was in the same visitation when the visiting members realised that the parish office books were written up by the deaconess who happened not to have the required skills to do so. It was clear to them that the recording took place in the absence of the officer entitled to do so. The parish office secretary on her side defended herself when she confirmed that she did not ask for help from the deaconess to do the recording. In the presence of the parish secretary, the Bishop commissioned the parish pastor to tell the deaconess to discontinue the recording. The secretary and the deaconess were left accusing each other (Shitundeni 1999).

It was wrong for the bishop to ask the deaconess to join the procession and commission the pastor to tell the deaconess to discontinue the recording. Firstly, it was as if the bishop was demonstrating that he has the overall power to command anyone. Secondly, the deaconess was not present. People will not trust a leader who says bad things against someone in his/her absence. Both issues should have been discussed by the bishop and the parish pastor who should make sure

that the shortcomings are rectified.

There is no platform provided whereby parishes, departments and associations are able to know the future plans and programmes of the circuits, dioceses and the national church. Each body outlines its own plans separately. The annual reports of parish, department and association submitted to the Parish Councils, Circuit Councils, Diocesan Councils and Church Council respectively are not discussed in the presence of the reporters who are pastors and association directors. The positive or negative recommendations and comments made by the Council are read in the resolutions of the Council. There is no culture of openness from the side of the top leadership. Things are done and kept secretly. As in traditional Oshiwambo courts, where the plaintiff and the defendant and their relatives were sent away during the passing of a sentence, ELCIN Councils do not impose disciplinary measures in the presence of a person under discussion. The simple reason is to protect the leadership concerned. The guilty person should not know who was for or against him/her. There is no platform for encouraging and advising individual local leaders. Pastors' conventions are held in an academic atmosphere with too many topics presented and a little time for discussion. They lack the spirit of sharing practical problems and attempting to alleviate them. In parish visitations the emphasis is on educating parishioners and familiarising them with their parish responsibilities. There is no time put aside in the programme for the visiting group to discuss problems with the local leader alone, unless he/she transgresses one of the church rules.

5.12.5 The positive aspects of diversity in the ministry

A big group should be divided into smaller groups with the intention to reach everyone. To reach everyone means to pay attention to each one of the persons in the group. An opportunity is given to everyone to contribute to the whole ministry of the church. The parish for instance, is a big body consisting of many members. These members should be divided into many groups. The Apostle Paul uses the body and its parts as a picture to illustrate the significance of each part in the body. The body is the church of Christ, each part refers to a church member and his/her contribution. Positive aspects observed concerning the associations consulted are as follows.

Women, youth and children who were traditionally made to be totally dependent on men in most aspects of their lives have found a little space in their associations to be on their own. Women found a space not pre-determined either by their husbands, parents or clan fathers but by themselves. They have the freedom to discuss their daily problems. In the light of the word of God women analyse their religious, political, social, economic situations. They put it clearly that men and women are equal in the eyes of God their Creator, thus both men and women are called into the ministry of the church (Haiping 1999). Men and women can be ordained to serve God's people. This is a valuable contribution women have made to the life of the church. Their contribution has opened the eyes of many men and women in the church and community. As said before, women are now in the process of educating themselves about being women representatives in decision-making bodies and procedures. Their status in the church and society is uplifted.

Like women, youth and children who were used to spending most of their time in the bush looking after animals and were not allowed to be together in big groups now have the opportunity to be together. Together they have learned new things, such as to have a relationship with each other, church governance, relationships between the associations, the Main Office and other church bodies. There is also the chance of learning about other cultures when they interact with youths of different ethnic groups. Access to various financial resources is one of the many benefits of this ministry. As youths are the future church, the wisdom they have acquired during this time is a valuable asset for the church and the whole society.

A positive move took place when delegations were sent to represent the church in *Male Involvement in Safe Reproduction Programme* and at *Mission Two Thousand and beyond*. The good aspect lies in delegation. Leaders who dealt with the ministries under discussion were delegated. A director of the ELCIN Men's Association should be in a position to know the needs of men and the strategies needed to address them and so should the director of the Mission Department.

Apart from the above mentioned voluntary and part-time ministries, the evangelistic and diaconal ministries also play their significant roles. Both exist for the extension of the ministry to the un-churched and the needy. Both ministries, but especially the diaconal ministry, attempt to serve a

person holistically. They deal with non-Christians, people with disabilities and the needy. The presence of either the evangelistic or the diaconal ministry in the parish creates space and time for the parish pastor to act as an instructor and trainer of his/her parish members.

The vigorous activities and quick delivery of the lay ministries towards the people they are supposed to serve, and especially their participation in mission work have brought most Christians to a better realization of the significant roles lay ministries can play. It happens that often lay leaders do home visitations, conduct Bible studies, give communion to the aged and do many other things.

5.12.6 Negative aspects of the divided ministry

The mechanism of appointing board members by the ultimate body of authority at any level should be re-considered. The alternative should be that each association appoints its leadership and presents it to the authority for confirmation and installation purposes. The practice of a body of authority assigning a director to the association (ELCIN Const. 1993:21) which is equivalent to a pastor being assigned to a parish, should be done away with. An association should call its director by advertising the post, interviewing candidates and selecting the most competent candidate. As suggested above, the candidate appointed should be presented to the authority for confirmation and installation into that post. Bodies of authority have too much controlling power when it comes to decision-making processes. It is they who decide at all levels what is wrong or right for an association. All opportunities for flexibility have been taken away from associations. This kind of indirect control puts an association in a dependent position whereas it is supposed to be an autonomous body in its own area of concentration. An association should have the power to deal with issues that arise in its own constituency. There should also be uniformity in the terms of offices of all office-bearers (directors and board members). It is important that the director and the board members grow in experience and leadership matters together.

The danger which lies with both the paternalistic and the autocratic leadership styles is the underdevelopment of the people being led. They are underdeveloped in terms of thinking and doing things independently. The young leaders, for example, would want to have the elders with

them always, simply because the prevailing leadership style makes them believe that they cannot manage without them. Old leaders and elders are made to believe that they are indispensable.

The incident of the youth representative from Germany sheds light on the authoritarian leadership style. After it was discovered that the visitor was not a spy, the Main Office did not reconcile itself with the governing board members of the Youth Association. The Main Office demonstrated that it was in charge. It was a custom in Oshiwambo that if your father beats you, it is you who have to beg for forgiveness for having been disobedient. In this case the Main Office probably expected the governing board to ask for pardon from the authority. There is the example of a king who killed a clan member and expected the relatives of the dead to reconcile themselves with himself. Apart from the spy issue, the Main Office also continued to record the property of this youth project among church properties, as well as dividing the project.

(ELCIN Const.1993:22).

5.13 A critical analysis of ELCIN's leadership model

5.13.1 Positive aspects of the leadership model of ELCIN

Late Bishop Auala laid down the basic understanding for ELCIN concerning episcopacy, the ministry, lay leadership, the status of normal parishioners and especially the family. He acknowledged that the episcopacy is the highest office in the church. When he examined his own historic background, he came to the conclusion that he was not suitable for that office. According to his own judgment, two things which questioned his credibility were that, in his early years, he wanted to become a headman or a soldier. He termed these his own human ambitions. However, from childhood on his parents taught him that he belonged to God. His mother promised God that if God gave her a baby boy she would dedicate him to the service of God. When Auala was born, both she and her husband kept that promise and dedicated him to the service of the church. He recalled that, as a boy, he was often reminded about this decision either by his own parents or their Christian friends. In other words, he was well-informed about what would be his future role in the church. When he investigated his own life, he came to the conclusion that initially he did not have an interest in what his parents were telling him in this regard. He wanted worldly things.

The conclusion he drew out of his own experience was that each person, the bishop and his children included, has personal desires and ambitions that lead him/her. He became a bishop because the Almighty God, whose will was manifested in him, is stronger than his own desires and ambitions. This God reshaped Auala's understanding day by day, bit by bit until he brought him back to him. Auala says the following: *Mokukalamwenyo kwandje onda dhimbulula kutya oKalunga mwene ashike a kala ta kelele* [I am aware that in my whole life it was God who has continually kept me close to him] (Auala 1977:85).

There is nothing wrong when one wants to become a headman or a soldier. Auala made a comparison between the office of the headman in the community and that of the bishop in the church. To him, the office of the headman which he wanted during his youth, did not fit a Christian leader. Such office was regarded unclean and irrelevant for Christians. It was a pietistic perception of the office of the headman. One has as to bear in mind that most headmen in Owambo remained traditionalists during Auala's life time. They decided to remain custodians of the culture of their own people and so some were not baptised. By being the custodians of the culture, headmen were considered to be obstacles in the ways of ordinary people becoming Christians. It was an office where most officers enriched themselves instead of offering a qualitative service to their own people. Soldiers were believed to be people who do not comply with the fifth commandment that says, "You shall not kill" (Ex 20:13). These beliefs were predominant among many Christians during the time of Auala.

Auala considered the episcopal office as the custodian of the gospel; it is an office of honour and servanthood. Unlike the office of the headman, it is the office of justice. It should deal justly with people and their issues. He considered the bishop not as someone who enriches himself/herself at the expenses of his/her church members. It is the highest office in the church but not qualitatively different from other offices in the church. It is only one of the offices in the ministry of the church. Pastor Nghipandulwa refers to Auala as a leader who requested advice from his fellow pastors and Christians (Nghipandulwa 1998). He further describes Auala as a leader who shared his official problems with his co-workers. As is the case in all other offices, Auala believed, it is God who calls a bishop to this office. He did not consider his own calling to the episcopal office as influenced by any qualities within himself. Therefore he told his biological children that God can

call one of the boys, who made a noise at the local bottle store near the bishopric house to be a bishop (Auala 1977:85). The fact that he had asked for early retirement, in the early sixties and initiated the partitioning of the church into two synods in 1969, proved that Auala did not have the intention to stay in the office for life. He referred to the members of the Church Council, including himself, as servants of the Church General Synod (Mukwetu No.22 November 1966:3) Auala also told his wife and children that they do not differ from other Christians. To him the bishop's family is not a special family but ordinary believers who depend on the grace of God in believing Christ, the Saviour.

Under indigenous leadership, ELCIN has grown quantitatively on a parish and congregational level. We shall try to point out the qualitative growth later. After a period of eighty-four years of missionary work, from 1870-1954, when it was handed over to the indigenous leadership ELOC had 63 451 church members (Shejavali 1970:111). It had 31 parishes and 41 pastors (Nambala 1996:84,88). Even though the leadership model was not perfect, the church has achieved the following. 1996 statistics put the membership at 522 329, 234 080 in the Eastern Diocese and 288 249 in the Western Diocese (ELCIN Statistics 1996:8). ELCIN's membership is more or less equal to half of the population of Namibia (1.6 million). According to these statistics, within forty-two years of labour, 1954-1996, the church members had increased by 422 329 members. Parishes had increased to 105 (Omukwetu 28 February 1998:1).

The membership growth was a result of mission work conducted by lay people among the San and Caprivian people in the Eastern Diocese, in Oukwanyama, Caprivi, Ondonga, Kavango and among the Ovadhimba Nkumbi and Ndongona in the Western diocese. The Kunene Mission Field in Angola became an independent church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Angola. Lay people intensified mission work that bore positive fruits in these mission fields. Their diligent mission work led to the ordination of the two San pastors, Pastor Junias Haixuxwa and Pastor Lukas Masiro; two Caprivian pastors, Pastor Sinabu Muunda and Moses Muunda, and an Omudhimba pastor, Pastor Johannes Tolu. Mission work was also done within the borders of congregations, parishes, hospitals and deaneries. The church has also extended its service among contract workers in the southern industrial part of the country.

Missionary Pentikainen highlights three other points when he says: *Ehapupalo loilyo yongeleki ei, oha li etwa unene kovapaani vahapu have li shashifa, kounona wovakriste tau dalwa nakanini kwaavo tava di momaitavelo makwao* [The growth in numbers of the members of this church is caused especially by many new converts, baptised infants of members and by a few converts who came from other Christian churches] (Omukwetu May 1974:5).

These achievements have been possible because of the leadership of the parish and congregational pastors. Although most of them have been authoritarian, as mentioned before, their leadership contributed much to the growth of the church. They have been shaped by the perception that the task of doing mission is a task for every Christian (Omukwetu 30 October 1978:1). The result is the participation of lay persons in mission work, diaconate, health care, evangelization and a variety of lay ministries at all levels in the church. Their names are associated with mission stations, for instance, Evangelist Eliaser Lomboleni and Padelia Mukumangeni worked at Kongo mission station in Oukwanyama East. Hileni Ingula and Maria Jeremia at Onankali mission station in Ondonga East. Evangelist Sakaria Nantanga and Selma Kanana at Onyuulaye mission station in Ondonga East. Evangelist Mise at Muparara mission station in Kavango; Evangelist I. Antonius Max at Eunda and Edward Shihengo at Omindamba mission stations in the Western Diocese, to mention only a few of them (Shejavali 1970:144-159).

Parish Councils are in the process of improving their elders' leadership skills. In three of the six Parish Councils examined, Oshigambo, Oshaango and Epembe, women form a majority. Epembe went a step further in that its Council has a youth representative and voluntary advisers. This Council acknowledges the need to compile the agenda, evaluate the budgets and the parish activities together. A sign of progress was also experienced at Oshaango when the retired pastor attended a Council chaired by a deacon.

At deanery level, tireless efforts are being made to change the shape of the former tribal- oriented deaneries into non-tribal ones. In the Church General Synod that passed a resolution to divide ELCIN into dioceses, a decision was taken to draw borders for new deaneries (Nambala 1996c: 99). Except for the Kavango Deanery in the far Eastern region, the boundaries of deaneries in former Ovamboland were drawn in such a way as to accommodate the new plan. It resulted in

Northern, Nakambale, Okahao and Engela Deaneries. The Northern Deanery is a combination of parishes from the former Oukwanyama and Ondonga Deaneries. Nakambale Deanery consists of some parishes which belonged to Ondonga Deanery. Okahao Deanery comprises of parishes which belonged to Western Deanery. Engela Deanery is a combination of parishes from former Oukwanyama, Ondonga and Western Deaneries.

The church is in the process of dividing the current large deaneries into smaller ones (ELCIN Five Year Plan 1996:11; Omukwetu 30 May 1998:1). The purpose is to bring the deanery service closer to the parishioners; to maintain the financial resources economically; to minimise tribalism and to do away with unnecessary hierarchies. According to the new plan the old type of deanery system is to be replaced by a system in which a dean is a full-time parish pastor with a few parishes under his/her supervision (Eastern Diocesan Council resolution 126 of 1998). The job descriptions of such deans are being drawn up (Omukwetu 30 May 1998:1). The parish secretary of the dean's parish acts as the deanery secretary.

The principles of democratic rule and their functions were put in place at all levels of the church in its constitution. There are seven decision-making bodies in ELCIN. They are the Parochial General Meeting, Parish Council, the Deanery Meeting, the Diocesan Synod, the Diocesan Council, the Church General Synod and the Church Council. Each decision-making body makes its decisions at its particular level. This means, for instance, the parochial meetings make decisions for the parishes, deanery meetings for the deaneries and diocesan synods for the dioceses. But decisions differ depending on the level of the body that makes them. Decisions of the Church General Synod and Church Council bind the whole church, whereas decisions of the Diocesan Synod and Diocesan Council bind the whole diocese and decisions made by a deanery meeting bind the deanery.

The national church has been divided into two dioceses. They are the Eastern and Western Dioceses. This was a development which the late Bishop Auala initiated in the sixth Church General Synod which took place on 1-4 July 1969 at Okahao (Nambala 1996:99). It took the church twenty-two years to implement this decision (Nambala 1996:99). Presently each diocese has its own decision-making bodies as well as its bishop. The Eastern Diocese, which hosts the

Head-Office at Oniipa and is constituted of nine deaneries (six are not yet recorded in the Constitution), is led by Bishop Apollos Kaulinge, who is also the presiding Bishop (Eastern Diocese Council resolution 159 1999), whereas the Western Diocese consists of four deaneries (two are not yet included in the constitution) and is led by Bishop Shivute.

The Evangelical Lutheran church in Namibia is in a process to make herself a church that opens its doors to every Namibian. To commit itself to this transformation, the church changed its name from the Evangelical Lutheran Ovambo-Kavango Church (ELOC) to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN). ELOC means the church that either works among Ovawambo and Ovakavango or the church that belongs to Ovawambo and Ovakavango. ELCIN means the church in Namibia which extends its membership to every Namibian irrespective of his/her origin and former beliefs. Furthermore, ELCIN accepts its task of spiritual upliftment among its members working in the south of the country by establishing parishes and congregations among them. Otjiwarongo and Swakopmund parishes were established two years ago (Omukwetu 28 February 1998:1,6-7). As in other towns in the south of the country where there were Lutheran congregations before, ELCIN established its own parishes in these towns. The reason is that like other churches do, ELCIN follows its members wherever they are. I am also not aware of any agreement reached among the Lutheran churches in the country that prevents a Lutheran church from to establishing parishes in towns where others have established themselves already.

The church leadership has tried to keep the academic standing of its pastors high. It was in 1957, three years after it gained independence from FMS, that the theological seminary followed a fixed curriculum for the first time. The curriculum was later developed further (Löyty 1971:36). In order to upgrade the theological education of its students ELCIN has entered a joint theological venture with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia. The two churches established one united seminary which has offered a Pastoral Certificate, Joint Diploma and BTh (through UNISA) as from 1968 (Niinkoti 1977:41; Shejvali 1970:103). The first female theological students were admitted to study together with male theological students in 1968.

With financial assistance and scholarships granted to the church by, among many others, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland, the Finnish Bible Society, UNESCO and the LWF, many

pastors were able to achieve degree levels at various seminaries and universities abroad (Niinkoti 1977:45-46). The academic standing of ELCIN's pastors and theologians in 1992 was as follows. There were nine unordained theologians (people who underwent exactly the same theological training together with others who were ordained later, but who declined to be ordained), ninety-seven pastors with Pastoral Certificates (45 of the 97 are pensioners), fifty-seven pastors with Diplomas in Theology, six with BTh degrees, two with BTh Honours, seven with Master of Divinity degrees, fifteen with Master of Sacred Theology degrees and six PhD holders (Nambala 1995:36-212). Twenty-four pastors have joined the governmental departments and three are employees in the private sectors. Their academic levels are as follows: Four Pastoral Theological Certificates, eighteen Theological Diplomas, three BThs and two Masters candidates. There was also one student studying for BTh, two for masters and two for PhD.

ELCIN was able to run and to maintain public schools, hospitals and clinics until the time when either the South West African or the Namibian authorities were ready to take over. It had achieved these through financial assistance it was provided with by the FELM, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland, the LWF and other bodies. Presently it owns two private schools, Oshigambo and Nkurenkuru High Schools, and Onandjokwe Lutheran Medical Mission.

5.13.2 Negative aspects of the leadership model of the ELCIN Church

5.13.2.1 Further constitutional modifications required

The Constitution and the Bylaws which guide the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia have undergone slight additions and changes resulting in four editions thus far. These were suggested in the 1960, 1963, 1966, 1969, 1971, 1973, 1976 and 1977 and years for editions three and four Church General Synods. It took a period of nearly nineteen years (1959-1978) before the second edition was printed (ELCIN Constitution 1978:3). To extend the argument further, the author examined the following sections and articles which deal with church leadership at various levels. The investigation is done by comparing the difference, if any, between editions two (1978) and four (1993).

Section A, article VIII: (2nd & 4th ed.) Parish leadership: The term of office of elders is three years in both editions. The number of parish elders remains six for a small, and nine for a large parish. Parishes such as Okahao, Okaku, Onyaanya and many others have more than ten thousand members (ELCIN 1996 Statistics: 5-7). The population density in townships, suburban areas, towns and cities is increasing day by day. Many parishes are stretched out while some Christians became inactive. Therefore the number of elders per parish should be reconsidered so that the current situation can be dealt with effectively.

Section A, article IX: Dividing the church into deaneries (2nd ed.) and dioceses (4th ed.) According to the 1978 edition this is done by the Church General Synod. According to the fourth edition dividing a diocese into deaneries is done by the Diocesan Synod and no longer by the Church General Synod (ELCIN Constitution 1978:13; 1993:15). To decentralise authority and power to people, the responsibility to divide the diocese into more than one diocese is vested in the Diocesan Synod which should work in consultation with the Church General Synod. The Diocesan Synod depends on the support it receives from the representatives from diocesan parishes in order to pass its decisions. It is not a democratic principle for the Diocesan Synod to depend only on the support of parish leaders. But before the meeting of the Diocesan Synod, surveys must be conducted among the parishes which will be affected by such division. The purpose is to create opportunities for people not only to participate in the diocesan plans, but also to show their consent or disapproval in advance.

Section A, article X (2nd ed.) Article XI (4th ed.) Church General Synod: According to the 1978 edition pastors and elders of ELCIN represent their parishes. Three to four Finnish missionaries represented twenty Finnish missionaries in ELCIN. Missionaries from other churches had no voting rights (2nd ed.). The fourth edition reads that members of the Synod are the presiding bishop, the diocesan bishops, deans, 4-6 pastors depending on the size of the diocese. There are Finnish missionaries as representatives, and eight to fourteen elders who are members of the Diocesan Synod. Edition two did not stipulate the functions of the Church General Synod which the fourth edition did (ELCIN Constitution 1978:13-14; 1993:15-16). The number of members of the Church General Synod are few. The fourth edition did not go far enough from the second edition. It decreased the number of the Synod members to make the decision-making body

functional. But, as a legislative body of the church, it is not representative. The number of lay leaders is very small, therefore it should be increased. Leaders of church institutions and associations should be co-opted into the body. Wherever possible an constitutional expert can be co-opted in the meeting.

Section A, article XII (2nd ed.) moderatorship and episcopal office article XIX (4th ed.) episcopacy in church leadership: The 2nd edition stipulates that a moderator should be either a missionary or an indigenous pastor who has been a leading pastor in the parish or institution for five years. He leads in the period between two Synods so that the new leader can be elected in the next Synod. When the time is ripe, the Synod will have the power to elect an indigenous bishop who has been a leading pastor for at least seven years. The term of office was no longer stipulated, which implies that the bishop is chosen for life (ELCIN Constitution 1978: 15-16). The bishop's term of office should also be limited as was the case with that of the moderator. The academic standing of the candidate and his/her age should be considered in this regard. It is obvious that ELCIN inherited the tradition from its mother church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland. Missionary director T. Vapaavuori suggested that, because of the oppressive heat in Africa, a bishop should retire at the age of 65 years. He further articulated his suggestion when he said: *Oshoka omuwiliki apwa oonkondo ngele ta kala natango miilonga ota ningi oshilemo momagulu giilonga niilonga i tayi ende we nawa* [For if an old leader continues to occupy the office he/she will be rust in the wheels which hinders the smoothness of the work] (ELOC 1954 Synod resolution: 10). I think that the term of office of a bishop in ELCIN should be restricted to five or six years as is the practice in some other Lutheran churches.

According to the 4th edition the Synod elects the Church Council and the bishop to lead the church on its behalf, while the Diocesan Synod does the same when it elects the Diocesan Council but not the bishop. The Diocesan Synod should have the power to elect its diocesan bishop. This election of its leader mandates the Diocesan Synod with authority to supervise him/her. The diocesan bishop will be accountable to the Diocesan Synod and the entire diocese as a whole.

Church General Synod members become fewer but the Finnish representatives are still members of the Synod after forty-six years (1954-2000) of autonomy. Their presence in the Synod has been

unavoidable especially at the initial stage of the ELCIN Church. It is a fact that they are still needed in the church as co-workers and fellow Christians. It seems that their presence in the top decision-making body is needed for economic security reasons. Their presence will enable the Finns to know what is going on in ELCIN and to present a clear picture of the situation to FMS or ELCIF. However, I believe that they should not have a representative in the Synod. Being in the Synod they play an influential elder brother/sister role over against indigenous leaders. The indigenous leaders will not grow to their full maturity by doing things by themselves. So, they depend more on these Finns as well as upon the Finnish Mission Society than they do on their own people. This is one of the reasons that indigenous leaders at church national level do not pay serious attention to parish and congregational developments.

Section A, article XIII (2nd ed.) XIV (4th ed.) Church Council: The second edition shows that there are two Finnish missionary representatives in the Council. One of them is a liaison secretary between ELCIN and FELM. The ratio of pastor/lay representatives at deanery level was not taken into account. It states, for example, *Miilyo mbika ine omu noku kala aasitagongalo yaali nenge ye vule po* [of these four members two or more should be ministers].

The 4th edition shows that the Finnish liaison secretary is still a member of the Synod. The number of Finns in the Synod has decreased from two to one. Pastor and lay representatives on the diocesan level are equal in number. The change came accidentally. A representative of the departments appointed by the Church Council was added (ELCIN Constitution 1978:16-17; 1993:18-19). The representative of the associations is appointed by the Church Council and not by those he/she represents. The danger is that he/she will serve the interest of those who appointed him/her. He/she should be appointed by the associations he/her represents in the Synod.

Section A, article XV (2nd and 4th ed.) Diocesan Synod: The only difference between the editions is that the 4th edition mentions the departments' representative which the 2nd edition does not (ELCIN Constitution 1978:13-14; 1993:19-20). The 4th edition did not go far enough from the 2nd edition. It should stipulate its strategies of empowering grass roots leaders in its diocese.

Section A, article XVI (2nd and 4th ed.) Diocesan Council: There is no difference between the

formulation of the 4th edition and that of the 2nd edition. The difference between the editions is the addition of the representative of associations in the 4th edition (ELCIN 1978:16-17; 1993:20). As at the Synod level, the representative of the Associations should be appointed by associations.

Section B, article 122 (2nd ed.) 126 (4th ed.) Parish leadership: No change took place between the two editions. The leading pastor, or the dean, or the pastor sent either by the Diocesan Council or dean is the chairperson of the Parochial General Meeting. The dean or another pastor acts as a chairperson when the local pastor is either not well or when his/her problems/relatives are discussed (ELCIN Constitution 1978:63; 1993:68). A dean or a pastor sent either by him or by the Diocesan Council are outsiders in matters concerning that particular parish and therefore often they can hardly get to the bottom of the problems. The parishioners should be empowered to solve their parish issues themselves. Outsiders should be consulted only as a last resort. A constitutional amendment is needed to grant the Parochial General Meeting the power to elect a lay person to chair the Meeting according to the terms of office provided.

Section B, article 120 (2nd ed.) 130 (4th ed.) The functions of the Parochial General Meeting: There is no change. The current educational standard of parish members and their leadership qualities in the church and communities have not been taken seriously. In this Meeting the pastor chairs and delivers the annual reports on two important portfolios (ELCIN Constitution 1978: 61-62; 1993:70). This is undemocratic. This practice may have been appropriate when the majority of the parishioners were uneducated. Now the majority are better qualified than many pastors in the parishes. Members are not comfortable in discussing reports of a leader who also chairs. The practice neglects and underestimates the skills and talents of the laity. The pastor should do the reporting and a lay person should chair the Meeting.

Section B, article 125 (2nd ed.) 132 (4th ed.) Secretary of the Meeting is appointed during the session: The 4th edition is a copy of the 2nd edition (ELCIN Constitution 1978:64; 1993:71). What happens is that anyone can be appointed to act as a secretary for the Meeting for no reason other than being known, for instance, as a teacher. For sure not all teachers know how to record minutes of official meetings. It is unprofessional to appoint just anyone to this position if one wants to get things done efficiently. Notes should also not be taken by the pastor because portfolios should be

shared. I suggest that the parish council secretary should do this job assisted by one of the parish association secretaries.

Section B, article 132 (2nd ed.) *Epangelo longerki* [church government], article 138 (4th ed.) *Elelo longeleki aishe* [national church leadership]. The wording was modified: *epangelo* [the government] is a noun from the verb *okupangela* [to govern or to rule]; *elelo* [the leadership] is a noun from the verb *okulela* [to lead or to show the way] The change represents a new perspective: *Elelo* [leadership] signifies that church leaders have to lead while government leaders rule. However, practically, the difference remains a proposal on paper. My suggestion is that first and foremost the bishops have to empower the pastors through training so that they can reach a stage of helping themselves and their parish members. This will free pastors from the top leadership dependence syndrome.

Newly introduced bodies and their functions (4th ed.) These are the Diocesan Synod and its functions, the Diocesan Council and its functions, bishops', deans' and pastors' conference in the Diocese (ELCIN Constitution 1993:82-98). Evangelists and deacons/deaconesses who are full-time church workers have no constitutional conference. They fall under the same category as government workers such as teachers, nurses, pastors' wives, whose meetings take place in emergency cases (ELCIN Constitution 1993:99). My suggestion is that, as in the case of pastors, evangelists and deacons/deaconesses should have their own conference.

5.13.2.2 The reasons for the top-down decision-making process

There are some important issues that need clarity before we proceed. The Bible supports a patriarchal system. In the Old Testament men were in authority. They acted and mediated as human agents between God and God's people. According to the family law in Ex 21:2-10, the patriarch was still considered to be the owner of his spouses, children and his slaves (Nürnberg 1991:77). Sarah calls Abraham "my lord", meaning men were lords in their homes. In the New Testament women and children were not counted (Matt. 15:38-39). Paul's application of his revolutionary idea in Gal.3:28, which says that "there is no Jew or Greek, no slave or free, no male or female" is inconsistent. Women are left out in 1 Cor 12:13, which is a similar text to Gal 3:28.

In Col 3:11 slaves are omitted, while in 1 Cor 14: 33-35 women are required to keep quiet in the congregation. Women and slaves are requested to be obedient to their husbands and masters in the Deuteropaulines (Col 3:18-4; Eph 6:5-9). The Pastoral Letters (1 Tim 2: 11-15) “legitimate the dominance of men over women with a theological argument...”(Nürnberg 1997:8-13). The contradictions in the argument are that the sequence of creation has something to do with our standing before God. Women will be saved by having children. The argument is not only inconsistent, but contradict Paul’s teaching “that salvation is a gift of grace accepted in faith, not achievement...” (Nürnberg 1997:8-13). It was said earlier that male Finnish missionaries were patriarchs who were not clear on these issues and therefore failed to transform the Owambo patriarchal culture in this regard.

Owambo culture and its traditional norms are male centred. According to Loeb’s informant, men acted as masters of ceremony in girls’ and boys’ initiation and as priests in veneration ceremonies and offerings. They acted as leaders of all decision-making processes. Senior headman Vilho Ueyulu, an informant of Loeb, confirms that four, six or eight men conducted boys’ initiation ceremony in the grove near the *ombala* [palace] (quoted in Loeb 1962:237). Information in their camp was kept secret. Women and children must not have information of what went on in the grove. The leader of the girls’ initiation ceremonies was chosen from among the circumcised priests of the *ombala*. *Omupitifi* [A passer-by] was an old circumcised man. *Omupitifi* is a noun from the verb *okupitifa* [to officiate the leaving of the girlhood to a procreative status of the girls]. Normally women are in charge of girls’ initiation ceremony. Old men were believed to be the mediators between the living dead and the living. The elders spoke to their ancestors, their fathers (Aarni 1982:47). They had the function to make life more harmonious in the clan and society, but especially between the living dead and the living. Kopytoff attributes these functions to the contention: “The power of the kin-group is represented to me by my father, as his father represents to him (sic). My father ‘worships’ (respects) and ‘sacrifices’ (gives tribute) to his dead father, as I respect and give tribute to him” (quoted in Aarni 1982:61). Women participated as members of the clan that offered sacrifices. Women and children had little influence on those performances. So the patriarchal nature of Christianity, instead of being challenged was embraced.

The decision-making bodies are all put in place. Putting democratic principles in place means an

invitation of participation being extended to all church members. The crucial question is whether parishioners see themselves as receivers of or contributors to decision-making in these bodies. The roles of parishioners in these bodies are of advisory capacities rather than contributors to decision-making processes.

There is a strong belief among many ELCIN parishioners that they have to subject themselves to all decisions which their church leaders have taken. The belief is that church leaders are experienced senior ecclesiastical persons. What proceeds from them cannot be ignored or criticized by inexperienced junior parishioners (Nakanwe 1998). Decisions passed by these bodies are understood as rules and laws applicable to all parishes. There is no need to assess them. They come from respected and responsible persons whose task is to make important decisions for their people.

The church is understood to function in the pyramid model. The Church General Synod, the Church Council, the Diocesan Synods and its Diocesan Councils and the Deanery Meetings are considered as top decision-making bodies who make decisions that control and affect the daily lives of the parishioners. The leaders are at the top. Here the weight rests on the base, the grass roots people. The stones at the top carry least weight. The pyramid is sterile and static. However, in the model of the tree the leaders are the trunk. They are at the bottom and carry most weight. The members are the branches and leaves which are at the top. The function of the trunk is to raise the branches and the leaves into the sun. It also channels the sap from the roots to the branches and leaves, so that these can flourish and bear fruits. I have developed these ideas which I received verbally from Nürnberger . Kaulinge confirmed the tree picture when she said that *oshoongalelengeleki osho efina longeleki*. [the Church General Synod is the trunk of a church] (Kaulinge 1998).

The authoritarian and participatory principles are opposites. The weakness of the authoritarian system is that it encourages total dependence on the leaders, for top bodies and their leaders are believed to be the sole decision-making agents. The lower bodies, their members and even their leaders are seen as receivers and implementers of such ready-made decisions. Biologists have proved that through a process called photosynthesis leaves form foods called carbohydrates (Van

der Merwe 1995:91). But nevertheless these foodstuffs cannot save the tree from dying if it were to be cut off from its trunk. The total dependence upon the decisions of others undermines one's ability either to develop or to do things proficiently. A dependent person prefers to know the decisions of his/her seniors before putting his/hers across. He/she thinks in terms of appeasing his/her supervisors even in cases when it is wrong to do so. The capacity for independent thinking, which is a vital contribution to any discussion, vanishes if it is not utilised.

This illustration of the function of the tree made many think upside down. They placed the parishes at the bottom instead of putting them at the top where they belong and the offices were put at the top instead of at the bottom. According to such perception the parishes are regarded as the roots and trunk, which carry the task of feeding the top leadership. Offices are called the top bodies which should be served by the parishes who are either roots, trunk, or the leaves. A mind shift is needed here. The function of the leadership (trunk) is to feed the parishioners who are the branches and leaves. The proper feeding with the Word of God would make the leaves flourish and flower and bear fruit. The latter is an indication that it is the leadership which carries the whole weight, so that the parishioners can live and grow. The current situation in ELCIN at the moment is that the top leadership live a decent life. On one hand the parishioners carry the leadership that is supposed to carry them. They put together contributions from their meagre incomes so that they can maintain the decent lives of their leaders. I do not suggest that the bishops should take money out of their pockets to provide the membership in the parishes with an income. I say that according to the pyramid model the leaders are far away from the grass roots people and do not suffer together with them. My suggestion is that the leaders should share what the church can offer together with other church workers at local parishes. On the other hand the parishes were the first establishments to supply parishioners with the needed spiritual, physical and social nourishment. The two sacraments (baptism and holy communion) are administered in the parishes. It is from here that all pastoral and lay ministries operate. Mission work, diaconate, evangelization and proclamation of the gospel stand among the important tasks parishes have to carry out.

Economically speaking, the parishes collectively sustain all the other ministries in the church. This is done by contributing one fifth of their annual budgets to the deaneries. Half of the amount mentioned remains in the deaneries while the other half proceeds to the dioceses. The same

parishes pay annual contributions, which are calculated according to the number of parishioners in each parish, to the church treasury. The parishes offer monthly collections for the church, dioceses, deaneries, and various lay ministries in parishes, deaneries, dioceses, the national church and church institutions.

Parishes are the basic units as well as the foundation of the entire church. Parishes sustain and increase church membership. New converts, new members from other churches or faiths, baptized children of Christian families enter the church through the parishes (ELCIN Constitution 1993:12-13). Again, it is the Parish Councils that have the authority to terminate the membership of the parishioners. Future parish pastors as well as church leaders are brought up in parishes. I suggest that the leaders give their utmost attention to parishes so that parish members are provided with effective basic democratic principles.

Decision-making bodies and offices were established for parishes and not parishes for offices. This means that first priority should be accorded to the establishment of parishes and congregations rather than of co-ordinating bodies. Supervising bodies and their offices which were established for co-ordination, supervision, direction and development of the parishes, are turning this responsibility towards themselves and their priorities. Emphasis is no longer put on the supervision of parishes but on offices and their interests. They should notice that they are the roots, the trunk and the branches and not the leaves and flowers.

The Owambo culture of respecting the seniors, of submissiveness and reservedness, is mixed with a misunderstanding of the episcopacy. Parishioners tend to be silent and submissive even if they realise that something has gone wrong. When decisions made by the authorities are referred to them, they do not see a responsibility to argue them further, for the leaders who passed them are not in their midst. It is not easy for the parishioners to challenge these decisions. Traditionally, the rules of the king and the elders were not criticized but accepted and implemented. The same has been made applicable to the decisions of church leaders. Again, the delegates who presented these decisions to parishioners also regard them as regulations, rules or laws to be obeyed.

Hitula says: *Ovakwaneongalo ova itavela omubishofi oye ha wilike onghee omadiladilo itaa kala*

unene a puka [Parishioners believe that these bodies are chaired by the bishop so the decisions cannot be wrong]. Ndiwakalunga echoes what the latter said that *Ovakwaneongalo ova itavela moyuyuki womubishopi...*[parishioners believe in the holiness of a bishop] (Hitula & Ndiwakalunga 1998).

Teopolina Kaulinge puts the advantages of the top-down decision-making process as follow. *Ouwa womulandu ou osheshi eshi tashi holoka po, otashi li kundwa tete kovakulunhu. Nonge nee sha tokohwa, tashi piti mo nee shi ye komaongalo sha kolekwa nale* [The advantage of this policy is that whatever comes to be discussed, is firstly discussed by seniors (church leaders). When agreement is reached on an issue, then the decision is taken, recommended and passed to parishes to put it into effect]. If one analyses her statement closely one hears her saying that seniors are like *omako* [a sieve] that keeps *ehete* [residue] and lets *omalodu* [beer] go through. The advantage is probably that parishioners do not waste their time in thinking (Shiyandja 1998). The disadvantage of accepting things uncritically is referred to as an advantage. The negative aspect here is that seniors think and decide as the sole brain of the parishioners.

All authority regarding decisions concerning the places where church workers are installed, their remuneration, transfers and termination of their services is invested in the Church Council and the Diocesan Council (ELCIN Constitution 1993:80, 87). The church workers referred to here are pastors, lay theologians, evangelists, deacons/deaconesses and missionaries (ELCIN Constitution 1993:53-60, 63-64).

Parish Councils are neither allowed to interview the workers nor are they required to know their potentialities before they are sent. The parishes have no say in these decisions except to receive what the Church Council, through the Diocesan Council, has authorised. Parishioners are left with providing the salaries for workers over whose appointment they have no say whatsoever.

Parishes do not have the authority that they ought to have over church workers who are employed by them. Because of this procedure there are two groups of workers in our parishes. They are the salaried church workers and voluntary parish workers. Parish workers include choir leaders, parish secretaries, cemetery keepers, bell ringers, cleaners and others, depending on the needs of the

parish (ELCIN Constitution 1993:64-67, 73). The workers employed by the church are trained and the parish workers are not. The salaried church workers and voluntary parish workers are paid by the parishes. Currently, because of financial constraints, some of the parishes introduce voluntary bell ringers, cemetery keepers, as well as cleaners. Parishioners take turns to do the mentioned tasks. Church workers are members of the Parish Councils while the parish workers are not. Pastors are chairpersons of both Parochial General Meetings and Parish Councils. As it is now, church workers who are employees of the parishes, behave as if they are the employers of parishes. The parishes must have authority over their workers.

A fairer procedure would be to allow the parishes to call their pastors. A position must be advertised and pastors must apply for the position. Then a selection committee must interview the applicants and choose the most suitable contender. Bishops should then approve their calls and install candidates into parishes and institutions. Together with the Diocesan Bishop the Parish Councils and their commissions should organise the installations of the candidates. The danger is, of course, that small, remote and poor parishes may never get pastors because the latter do not want to work under such circumstances.

Decisions such as annual contributions of parishioners and lists of annual Sunday collections which are fixed in Church Council meetings are sent to parishes and institutions to implement them. What types of collections should be collected each Sunday as well as what each member should contribute annually are pre-determined. Parishes are not trained to work with annual budgets. The Parish Councils are not consulted either by sharing available information with them or by means of researching commissions.

Church Council also passes resolutions, for instance, to pray for rain during droughts, or to make dissolved marriages public. The congregations and parishes should be motivated to initiate prayers for rain during droughts. A culture of self-reliance in all aspects of life should be inculcated in church members. Training the parish members to help themselves should be one of the priorities of the church leaders. They should motivate themselves on a daily basis. Shivute is not right when she proposed that parish members should expect such motivation to come from the top leadership (Shivute 1998). To pass resolutions on dissolved marriages does not make an impact on

termination of marriages today. This practice may have been appropriate when the majority of the people were uneducated. Now the majority of them know that the church does not have the power to contract or terminate marriages. The latter is the role of the state. In the Lutheran theology this is quite clear. The state will also not recognise marriages or divorces which have been executed by the church.

A bishop who has been in the office for a long time may have gathered a lot of wisdom which can be utilised, but in terms of management skills and alertness he is no longer capable of outperforming a young leader who comes with fresh ideas and untapped zeal. Amakutuwa (1998) is of the opinion that a bishop always has to be an elderly person. Peter and John, the disciples of Jesus, he maintains, were seniors until their death (1 Pet.5:1-3). His thinking is that the church leadership of the twentieth century should identify itself with that of the first century. But Jesus, Peter and John were very young when they were first called. Christianity was not founded by old men. That they remained in the office is due to the patriarchal culture of those times. The same culture is prevalent in Owambo and therefore in the ELCIN as well.

Learning from other church bodies is also a good thing. The term of office of the President of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) is six years, no re-election is possible (LWF Constitution 1990: iii). The term of office for the bishop in the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria (L. C. C. N.) is five years with possible re-election (L. C. C. N. Constitution 1988:82). For ELCRN and ELKSA (NT) the term of office for the bishop is six years. The Lutheran Church in America (LCA) has a term of office of five years (LCA Constitution 1984:10-11, 24). ELCSA has the same practice as ELCIN. The cultural backgrounds of ELCSA and ELCIN (ELOC) are similar. ELCRN may be different from the traditional culture because it inherited the Rhenish tradition of the *Praeses* (president) whose term of office was never for life.

The danger with this tradition is that, in the case of a bishop becoming ineffective, it is difficult to remove him/her from power. The life long occupation of such a central position by one person is a blockage of the utilization of other gifts and talents. Young pastors are hampered in utilizing their leadership potential. I do not say that all young theologians are always necessarily mature and perfect. I propose that we look at the potentialities and leadership qualities leaders have whether

they be young or mature. The term of office of the bishop should be limited just like that of others in the church. The term of office of elders and that of leaders of associations at parish, deanery and diocesan levels is three years, that of directors of departments, the General Secretary and that of the deans is five years with possible re-election.

The disadvantages of holding an office until retirement are that there is a tendency among bishops to become corrupt and to practise nepotism, that church leadership development stagnates and that it gives plenty of chances to develop a strong force which is in his/her support and against the progressive forces in the church or diocese. All in all, the holding of an office until retirement makes a leader uncompetitive and not ready to hand over the office to others and especially to those leaders with recognised leadership qualities. The Lutheran bishop cannot be kept in office until retirement for the sake of unity of the church. It is obvious that in his/her capacity as a leader of the church, the bishop does unifying work among his/her church members, but it is wrong to consider him/her as the unity of the church. The church is maintained and unified by the gospel that creates it. Simojoki writes: "According to the Lutheran view, the unity of the church is based neither on tradition, liturgy nor ministry, but on the fact that the gospel is one and the same throughout the church"(1982:78).

Deaneries have neither Deanery Councils nor executive committees. Except for guidance from the church Constitution and its regulations, deans rely on their own wisdom. Deanery Meetings meet once a year but leave all their suggestions and plans in the offices of deans. There are no executive committees to execute suggestions and plans of the deanery Meetings and also to help in day-to-day emergency matters.

The danger here could be that deans were put, by the constitution, in positions of receiving information from the people, selecting what they think is useful for deaneries and leaving out the rest. There is the possibility of favouritism, nepotism, the tendency to despise suggestions from lowly members and uplifting those from favoured ones in such leadership (Mbangula 1998). Who knows if what they leave out is what is more valuable for the deaneries than what they choose?

Deans are organizers, convenors and chairpersons of all leagues in their deaneries. They fix the

agendas and chair over them. Again, there is the danger that deans want to do everything for the people. It happens that, while some deans abide by what the groups decide, for some this is the opportunity to impose their ideas and decisions upon the people. Some have gone even to the extent of controlling the financial resources for the associations (Nakanwe 1998).

Interaction with fellow workers is avoided because job descriptions are understood as stipulated by bylaws. Workers are not encouraged to assist each other by sharing each others' responsibilities (Kuvale 1998). Because of the above understanding every worker is encouraged to know his/her job descriptions and never to go beyond them. Each one should confine himself/herself to matters under his/her jurisdiction. For instance, an evangelist, deacon or deaconess at deanery level should not, even in an emergency situation, minister holy communion to someone who requests it in the absence of the pastor. To minister sacraments is part of the job description of the pastor only. This is against the Lutheran tradition.

As in other bodies, the opportunity is there for the elders to bring forward their suggestions or to support proposals in order that they become resolutions. The constitution says that a suggestion supported by more than half of the participants is accepted as a decision by all participants (ELCIN Constitution 1993:71).

What happens in most cases, however, is that parish council members bring forth and discuss their proposals. But once parish leaders utter theirs, parish council members abandon their own. When reaching the stage of passing a resolution, elders support the proposals put forward by pastors (Shiyandja 1998). The danger here is that, in many cases, useful ideas are thrown out and unimportant ones are supported instead. Most of the decisions passed in some Parish Councils had been the proposals of the pastors.

As higher bodies overrule the council of elders, pastors and elders overrule ordinary parishioners. Teopolina Kaulinge says: *Moyoongaleleongalo oomadiladilofaneko ohaa di movakulunhuongalo nomovakwaneongalo ngaa* [In Parochial General Meetings suggestions come from elders and also sometimes from parishioners] (Kaulinge 1998). The word *ngaa* implies that very few suggestions come from ordinary members. Suggestions are made by parish elders to other members. In

Parochial Meetings suggestions from ordinary members are regarded as additional contributions to the already suggested proposals (Shivute 1998). This means that the contributions from parochial members are presumed not to be important because they were not part of the agendas. What the leaders drew up in their agendas should be treated as more important than other ideas.

Hertha Shiyandja says *Omhito opo i li ovakwaneongalo va tokole, ndele unene eshi sha halika kovakulunhuongalo osho hashi landulwa. Ovakulunhuongalo ova talwa ve dule ovakwaneongalo* [The opportunity is there for the parishioners either to propose or to make decisions. But instead of using the opportunity at their disposal, often they follow what the elders want. Elders are seen as better equipped to take well thought out decisions than other members] (Shiyandja 1998). Each member has the chance to participate fully in decisions. Instead of utilising the opportunity, elders are appeasing their pastors. This is the culture of showing respect to the wisdom and knowledge of leaders.

There are numerous similarities between how suggestions and decisions are reached in Parochial Meetings and in Parish Councils. There are some pastors who make their own decisions which they impose on elders and expect them to abide by them (Shivute 1998). The best way is to compile the agendas together and to decide together. Hitula echoes the latter leadership style when he says that *momaleleongalo amwe ovafita ovawiliki vamwe ova hala ovo va landulwe nomadildilo avo a ha kwatwe moshipala. Vamwe nokuli tava ulike ovo oo pii...* [In some Parish Councils leading pastors insist that their views and decisions always be followed unchallenged. Such pastors feel they are in control and therefore always have the final say in meetings...] (Hitula 1998).

There are circumstances where Parish Councils propose parish council candidates for election in Parochial Meetings. It seems to be a time saving preparation. But if, for instance, parochial members are not happy either with the arrangements or with the candidates tabled, it is difficult for them to reverse the proposals. Some Parish Councils try the suggestions firstly on parish elders in their meetings before tabling them in the Parochial Meetings. So, in these Meetings, elders and pastors stand together as defenders of their resolutions and recommendations (Hitula 1998). But it would be more fair and democratic for everybody to be given a chance of offering suggestions

and proposals, not to condone ready-made decisions.

The solution to this problem is to inculcate the culture of leadership into both parish leaders and parishioners. This would enable both groups not only to offer suggestions in Parochial Meetings and Parish Councils but to stand for them also, despite proposals from pastors.

5.13.2.3 Lay leaders to lead decision-making bodies in the ELCIN Church

Constitutionally, all decision-making bodies in ELCIN from the Parish Council to the Church General Synod are led by pastors. It is as in the past, when kings led kingdoms, chiefs led *oikandyo* [districts], headmen and noblemen led villages, clan fathers led clans, and fathers their homes. With few variations from one community to the other, the above were the only recognised hierarchies in Owambo communities. The Pastorate was a new hierarchy. At the initial stage of the ELCIN Church the necessity for pastors to lead all church proceedings was justifiable for they were the ones who were regarded as educated. It was also one of the primary tasks of the church to develop competent and presentable church leaders. In short, it was a period of developing a new kind of leadership in the church and society. The same office was mandated through education and training to bring church members to the full understanding of responsibility towards their church.

But the initial stage is over now in ELCIN, so clergy and laity must bear equal church responsibilities. Competent lay leaders should share leadership roles with clergy in decision-making bodies. Lay leaders should be appointed to lead the Church General Synod, the Church Council, the Diocesan Synods, the Diocesan Council, the Deanery Meetings, the Deanery Council Parochial General Meetings, Parish Councils, Congregational Meetings and Congregational Councils, replacing the presiding bishop, diocesan bishops, deans and pastors respectively for a determined term of office. If need be, pastors could lead the Church Council, Diocesan Councils and Parish Councils. The reason is that these are day-to-day decision-making bodies. Presently, there may not be competent lay leaders available on a day-to-day basis. As stated before, the objective is to empower and to utilise the gifts vested in lay leaders. I think that if we are serious with the matter, arrangements in this regard can be made. The Synods of ELCRN and that of ELCSA choose their

lay chairpersons for a six year term of office (ELCRN Constitution 1985:15; ELCSA, ED.1984:30). ELCRN's district Councils are led by local pastors, and not by deans (ELCRN Constitution 1985:11).

The temporary chairpersons used now do not have time to familiarize themselves with church leadership problems. They do not know what is going on in the church. Therefore they are not capable of chairing efficiently and effectively. A defined term of office would give them the chance to know the church leadership system, its crises, and how to get beyond these. Knowledgeable lay leaders would be of great importance to the clergy so that they should not pass decisions which are not well scrutinized. To exclude lay leaders from decision-making bodies is to create an impression that lay persons, most of whom are experts in various aspects in life, are subordinates in church affairs. This would lead to the negative perception that the clergy are the only persons able to lead the church.

Lay leaders leading decision-making bodies would bring into the church a degree of separation between the spiritual and administrative offices. This would help the clergy to concentrate more on the spiritual advancement of the of the church and leave administrative matters to lay persons. It would also free them from operating more than one portfolio at a time. Constitutionally, ELCIN's presiding bishop presides over the Synod and Church Council, diocesan bishops over Diocesan Synods and Diocesan Councils, deans over the Deanery Meetings and the pastors over the Parochial General Meetings and Parish Councils. The central issues of discussions in these meetings are the reports and day-to-day activities these leaders have to deliver plus suggestions and recommendations to be made. This means that the persons whose activities are discussed, also chair the discussions. This agrees with an Oshiwambo expression that says *Okwa tya ngaho ame ohandi fanya, ame ohandi nu kombiya* [It is myself that sniffs and smokes from the pipe at the same time]. The expression means that one person does all the work he/she is supposed to share with others. Here the constitution blocks the participatory way of doing things. Normally, both the presenters and their audiences find it difficult to address sensitive issues in the reports. As can be expected presenters, who are also chairpersons at the same time, will not lead their audiences in a direction which is contrary to their thinking. To solve this problem, the spiritual fathers should do the reporting while lay persons chair.

The deans of ELCSA, as in ELCIN, are ex-officio chairpersons of all Deanery Meetings, deanery committees and Parish Councils (ELCSA and ELCIN Constitutions 1984:29; 1993:102). A good lesson can be learnt from ELCRN whose deans are spiritual supervisors over Districts and spiritual advancement trainers (ELCRN Constitution 1985:14).

5.13.2.4 The clergy/lay ratio in decision-making bodies

The clergy/ lay ratio in decision-making bodies is not equal. The Church General Synod has a membership of twenty-two delegates among whom nine are lay persons and thirteen clergy (ELCIN Constitution 1993:15-16). The clergy/lay ratio in this body will affect decisions that are passed. As is normally the case, theologians will do most of the talking and have the upper hand when it comes to voting. Because of the unequal ratio, lay leaders will have little impact on the decisions. A delegation of twenty-two persons, representing 522 329 members of ELCIN, is extremely small. An amendment should be considered. Another impetus could be the co-option of representatives of church institutions and church associations, rectors of the Theological Seminary, executive secretaries and treasurers of dioceses on a basis of non-voting attendance. The reason is to empower them with relevant information.

The Church Council, which has the huge task of passing decisions that affect the whole church on behalf of the Synod, has eight members. Three out of the eight are lay persons and five clergy (ELCIN Constitution 1993:18). The number in the delegation is very small when compared with the 522 329 members it represents. As was said earlier, the disadvantage of few lay leaders in this body also will lead to decisions which are one-sided. I agree with Salmi Shivute when she says: *...omatokolo ohaga ningwa unene kokangundu okashona, ano hagongalo kehe lya kalelwa po melelongeleki. Shika otashi eta aakwanegongalo yaa kuthe nawa ombinga oshoka oya dhiladhilitwa, omatokolo kage shi gawo* [Decisions are passed by a very small group. Every parish is not represented in the Church Council. The participation of parishioners is minimal; decisions are taken by others on their behalf](Shivute 1998). This process in itself discourages the participation of parishioners in the implementation of decisions which are completely foreign to

them.

At the Diocesan Synod level the ratio of clergy to laity is not taken into account. The number of delegates in this body is left open. A vague description is used to describe its members as the diocesan bishop and his/her deputy, all ordained diocesan pastors, one or two parish representatives from each diocesan parish, two Finnish missionaries and one representative of the church associations (ELCIN Constitution 1993:19). It is difficult to know the number of diocesan synod delegates, but there are forty-two parishes in the Eastern Diocese and fifty-six in the Western Diocese (ELCIN Statistics 1996:5-8). Probably the vagueness was due to the expectation that more parishes would be established. But if we calculated on the basis that each diocesan parish sent two delegates, the estimated clergy/lay ratio will be 45 clergy and 86 lay persons in the Eastern Diocese. The estimated clergy/lay ratio in the Western Diocese would be 57 clergy and 114 lay persons. The ratio is strongly in favour of the laity. This estimate takes into account that currently all directors of associations in ELCIN are pastors while Finnish missionaries' representatives are all lay persons. The ratio and the number of members in the General Synod are different from the ratio and the number of the members in the Diocesan Synod. The situation in the Diocesan Synod is preferable over the situation in the General Synod.

The clergy/lay ratio at the Diocesan Council level is accidentally equal. The Diocesan Council delegates are eight in the Eastern Diocese where there are three deaneries led by three deans, with the proportion of four clergy to four lay persons. In the Western Diocese with two deaneries and two deans the proportion is three clergy to three lay persons. In both dioceses the number of the Diocesan Council delegates is very small in comparison with the members they represent. The Eastern Diocese has a total of 234 080 (44.8%) and the Western Diocese 288 249 (55.2%) (ELCIN Statistics 1996:1-2). It is true that the executive body has to be small to be functional, easy to convene, less expensive and manageable in decision making processes. The fact is that the constitution should be more democratic. I suggest that the number of people serving in the Council should be somehow in proportion to the members in the Diocese.

The Deanery Meeting was constructed in such a way as to represent all church workers on the parish level. Therefore its membership includes nurses, teachers, evangelists, deacons/esses, one

worker from each parish, Finnish missionaries, all pastors in the deanery, the dean and the diocesan bishop. The ratio is in favour of the laity. The delegation needs to be updated since nurses and teachers are no longer church workers. The unemployed, housewives, people such as contract workers, councillors, governors, policemen/women, literacy programme trainers and many more who are emerging should be introduced to this body. The aim is not to accommodate all kinds of groups in society but at least to extend the participation of the Deanery Meeting to all responsible leaders in our communities.

All parish communicants of eighteen years and above are members of the Parochial General Meeting. Communicants who are under church discipline attend the Meeting as disenfranchised members. The quorum of the Meeting is one-tenth of the parish communicants. This is a meeting of lay persons under the chairpersonship of their local pastor/s (ELCIN Constitution 1993:69-70). A lay leader should lead their meeting, for the clergy is, at this level only a tiny minority. As said before, he/she should empower the lay leaders by sharing portfolios with them.

At the Parish Council level the clergy/lay ratio is mostly one pastor to six or nine elders and one deacon/ess or evangelist. Lay persons are in the majority. Two changes are needed here. (a) A lay leader has to lead instead of a pastor, for lay leaders also have leadership qualities that need to be utilised. (b) Parish council members should be appointed on a representative basis. This means that the Parish Council should be constructed in a way that associations in the parish are represented. This would be an attempt to include the educated persons whom we desperately need in our Parish Councils. The suggestion is also aimed at encouraging the participation of elders in their meetings. Most of ELCIN's parishes are stretched out, so it would be better if congregations had Congregational Meetings and Congregational Councils.

All in all, the findings reveal that the number of the members in the decision-making bodies of the church is very small. The clergy/lay ratio is unequal at the top but the proportion of lay members increases in relation to clergy at the grass roots level.

5.13.2.5 Parish leadership requires immediate improvements

A well-laid parish leadership is *oluma* [the foundation] upon which the church leadership is built. Past, present and future church leaders were, and will be, brought up from parishes. As in secular bodies, church leadership starts at the grass roots. Because of this the church should lay down a proper leadership foundation at the parish level.

The findings of the study of six Parish Councils presented above were that pastors tended to act like Old Testament priests. They acted as mediators between God and God's people. The tendency of understanding their position as having a monopoly in preaching the word of God by always conducting introductory and concluding devotions was prevalent. I concede that pastors have spiritual tasks and indeed are professionals in their field. The point I am trying to make is that, because of such a belief, some parish leaders were not able to perceive the leadership skills of members of their Parish Councils. In parish council meetings pastors unknowingly performed more than one portfolio, as if they were the only persons who could do all things better than others. Of course they were not the only persons able to do all things, because others also did. Pastors' positions were often ex-officio chairpersons.

Most discussions in Parish Council meetings dealt with spiritual issues instead of keeping the balance between spiritual, social and economic problems. The problems tackled in the meetings ignored the concrete problems of daily life and concentrated on spiritual concerns. This spiritualisation was so emphasised as if the people to whom the service was rendered were not of this world. This is a dualistic kind of theology where the spiritual dimension is emphasised and the physical dimension underestimated. Such spiritualisation hindered the lay leaders from participating fully in issues discussed in meetings, and was therefore authoritarian. Among topics which were repeatedly discussed were baptism, grace, penitents, the girls' initiation problems and marriages. As said before, they could have organised training in home economics, basic income generating projects, farming skills, literacy programmes and the like to improve the life of the people.

Training elders and other lay leaders in parishes was not made a priority. Training in basic parish

leadership skills was neglected. Instead of training members to do things together, pastors were trying to do everything themselves. The result was that development was blocked; diversity was curtailed. The laity was unknowingly pushed aside leaving the parish pastors at the centre of everything. Out of frustration, elders adopted the negative attitude of remaining silent to appease the local leadership; an expression of resentment used in this regard is *efeni ovo ve shii oilonga va longe* [Let those (the pastors) who know the jobs do them] (Kuvale 1998). The other expression is *Nghi shi shii* [I do not know] (Shikeva 1998). Because of this attitude few lay leaders have managed to utilise their skills in church meetings.

The Parish Council leadership role is not clear among some council members. It seems that most elders do not understand that parishes belong to parishioners and not to pastors. They see themselves as assistants to the pastors. Pastors cannot manage to fulfil their tasks adequately for most parishes are too stretched out. So elders are accustomed to help the parish leaders. *Ohatu uya oku kwafa omufita wetu osheshi oku noilonga ihapu, Natanael a tumbula* [We come to help our pastor for he has much work to do, says Natanael] (1999). The Oshaango Parish Council discussed the retired pastor's debts in his absence. None of the elders had the courage to raise the issue in his presence. Elders lacked freedom of expression. (Parish Council resolution 45 of 3 July 1996).

All resolutions of the six parish council meetings examined revealed that there were no people employed by the government or the private sectors present. These skilled people could enrich the discussion of the councils with their diverse experiences. As said before, they no longer participated as from the early 1960s when public institutions were handed over to the former South West African authorities. *Ovanhu ova li tava nyikwa nyikwa kutya kave shii ku lineekelwa ovo ku twala omauyelele kepangelo osho Shikomba a ulika* [People were suspicious about the political trustworthiness of government employed workers, shows Shikomba] (1998). Obviously the skilled workers went with their skills and, as a consequence, many Parish Councils were filled with faithful but illiterate elders who did not have the needed skills to transform parish leadership. However, when the lay elite lost leadership positions in Parish Councils, illiterate people had a good chance also to play their role.

It was a period when some members of the “left out” groups developed an antagonistic attitude towards the decisions of the Councils. They felt unwanted, and that their rights in church matters had been denied. Now, the political situation has changed, we have our own government, the region is developing into townships, so all former excuses such as time, long distances and untrustworthiness lose their validity.

Women’s attendance was very low in Engela and Ongenga Parish Councils and high in Epembe, Oshaango and Oshigambo Parish Councils. The low attendance of women in parish bodies came as a surprise, for they are the backbone of Sunday worship services, Women’s Associations, Christian Education and Diaconate in the parishes (Shuuya 1976:5; Kaulinge 1997:12). Men whose participation in parish matters has decreased, were in the majority in Parish Councils. It seemed that women voters were not fully aware of how significant it is for them to be represented in the Councils. A minority of men seemed to be happy to control the majority. During 1998 I attended the Engela Parochial General Meeting which was electing its diocesan synod representatives. Three candidates, two men and a woman, were put before the voters. The outcome was that one man was leading while the woman candidate got equal votes with the second man. The voting process was repeated, the woman was beaten and the two men became diocesan synodical delegates.

5.14 Conclusion

The quantitative growth of congregation members, both in Owambo and Kavango, the availability of indigenous clergy and the political situation in the former South West Africa led to preparations for ELOC’s self-reliance. The constitution of the Finnish church acted as a model on which the new constitution of ELOC was based. A new constitution was drafted during the 1925 Church General Synod. All its members were Finns. Cautiously and gradually Finns were replaced by indigenous members. The church was declared self-reliant from the FMS in 1954. Its first indigenous bishop was consecrated in 1963 and it was divided into two dioceses as from 1991.

The abrupt adoption of the episcopal office in the ELCIN has caused uncertainties among some members, pastors and deans. For some members he is a person who is closer to God than deans,

pastors and members. For others he is a popular figure, or the top church official with whom one wants to associate. For others he has replaced the traditional king and is thus entitled to receive special privileges, who associates with noblemen/women, and is thus counted among the elites in the society. Some pastors and deans knowingly or unknowingly also follow the fashion of leadership as described above. According to Lutheran theology the episcopal office has the priority of administering the gospel of Jesus Christ and does supervisory work in the church. For ELCIN to remedy its current problems concerning the episcopal office, it should revisit Lutheran principles.

Examples of leadership models from six pastors were investigated. These pastors were Paulus H. Hamutenya of Edundja and Eenhana parishes, Andreas N. Kanhalelo of Eenhana and Omundaungilo parishes, Vilho M. Kaulinge of Ondobe parish, Filippus K. Iimene of Oshitayi and Onyaanya parishes, Titus K. Ngula of Oshitayi parish and Leonard Auala of Oniipa. With the exception of Auala, they courageously managed, with the assistance of their parish members, to build church buildings; to enhance spiritual wellbeing, basic education, health care, water supply and to extend parishes by means of establishing outstations, thus working for basic development of their parishes and surroundings. Auala was appointed to Oniipa parish, which is the cathedral parish of the bishop in the ELCIN; so there was no need to construct a church building there. All of them were committed and hardworking parish leaders; their sincere commitment was based upon the understanding that their parishes were participating in the mission of God; they worked with their own hands to demonstrate this participation.

Differences were that Kanhalelo, Auala, Iimene and Ngula were more approachable than Hamutenya and Kaulinge. In his leadership Kanhalelo used the method of consulting the parishioners first and allowing them to reflect on the issue; Auala had a way of requesting assistance and portraying his shortcomings; Iimene overcame dependency in his parish by keeping close contact with parishioners and by feeding his flock with the word of God; Ngula acknowledged the leadership qualities of the lay leaders by allowing himself to be led by them. Both Hamutenya and Kaulinge, being the pastors and headmen at the same time, adopted the traditional method of persuading their followers to accept their objectives; both imposed their understandings, although each by his own ways, upon their followers.

These leadership characteristics are evident in the ELCIN today. The strengths are: The culture of diligence and humbleness resulted in a situation where all parishes in the church are trying their best to be self-sufficient. Nearly each parish has a clinic, water holes and public schools in its surroundings. At my first parish, Ohaukelo, there was no hut to sleep in when I came there in 1986. With the assistance of a few parishioners I spent at least a year preparing a basic shelter for my family. I did not complain to the dean about the weak arrangements his office had made concerning the new parish. I relied on the understanding that the mission of God involves participation in spiritual and manual labour. As said before, Bishop Kaulinge humbly refused the gift of an ox he was presented with by a financially poor Ekoka parish during his visitation. The weaknesses are that authoritarian characteristics overshadow the above strengths. Participation of lay leaders in decision-making processes are somehow controlled by clergy. Most pastors dominate the discussions in parish council meetings. Instead of empowering the lay leaders through training and daily motivation, they try to do everything by themselves. Teamwork is not motivated because some of these pastors consider their co-workers as subordinates.

Comparisons between decision-making bodies in the ELCIN (ELOC), ELCIN (GELC), ELCSA, ELKSA (NT) and ELCRN churches were made. ELCIN (ELOC) and ELCSA have Congregational Meetings. Congregations are combined in parishes for financial reasons, while in ELKSA (NT) they are self-sufficient entities. The other two churches have no congregations it seems. In ELCIN (ELOC) members have no right to call a Meeting. In ELKSA (NT) the Congregational Meeting has a Congregational Council which is authorised to call a pastor and to form a mission work committee. The Congregational Council has a standing committee in ELCSA while other Congregational Councils have not. The leadership qualities of leaders, the development of the congregations and the impeded flow of information are often the obstacles in Congregational Meetings and their Congregational Councils which are part of the parish.

ELCIN (ELOC), ELKSA (NT) and ELCRN each has a Parish Meeting with a Parish Council which operates on its behalf; each of the others has neither a Parish Meeting nor a Parish Council; in ELCIN (ELOC) and ELCRN the Parish Meeting as well as the Parish Council is chaired by a pastor; lay leaders are not motivated to develop their leadership potential; a pastor is not eligible for election as a chairperson in both meetings in ELKSA (NT); the strengths of this argument is

that the pastor has sufficient time to develop his/her profession and lay leaders have the chance to develop and to utilise their leadership skills.

Except for ELCIN (GELC) each of the churches has a Circuit Meeting. ELCIN (ELOC) has the Circuit Meeting without Circuit Council, each of the other three churches has Circuit Council; the Circuit Meeting in ELCRN meets twice a year, the other three meet once a year. The Circuit Meeting and the Circuit Council in ELKSA (NT) are chaired by a pastor/lay leader. Those of the other three are led by a pastor. The advantages of lay participation in the leadership of the leading body are that they are empowered and provided with new leadership skills. The disadvantage of a Circuit Meeting without Circuit Council is that it can exhort the autocratic and corrupted attitudes among deans.

Only ELCIN (ELOC) and ELCSA have more than one diocese while the others are still one diocese churches. The dioceses in both these churches are led by Diocesan Synods with Diocesan Councils which operate on their behalf. In both cases they are presided over by the diocesan bishops. The Diocesan Synod in the ELCIN (ELOC) elects the deputy of the diocesan bishop. Its Diocesan Council has no Ministerial Council. In ELCSA the Diocesan Synod elects the diocesan bishop and his/her deputy, and its Diocesan Council has a Ministerial Council. The partitioning of the church into dioceses is one step in the decentralization of power from the highest authority towards the grass roots people. However, in this regard none of the leading bodies is led by a lay leader. The result is that both churches have been divided into dioceses but the absolute power and authority remain with the Synod, Church Council and with clergy.

All five churches studied have a Synod as their highest authority which has been invested with the power to make, amend or to terminate the constitution of its particular church. The amendment or termination of the constitution of the ELCIN needs the confirmation of two consecutive Synods which is not the case in other churches. Both the Synod and the Church Council in ELCIN (ELOC) have missionary members which is not the case in other churches. Each Synod appoints the Church Council to lead the church during its recess. In ELCIN (GELC), ELKSA (NT) and ELCRN the Synod is led by a lay president or a pastor, while the same body is chaired by the presiding bishop in ELCIN (ELOC) and ELCSA. In ELCIN (GELC) the Church Council is

chaired either by a pastor or a lay leader, while this body is presided over by a bishop in the other four churches. The increase in the number of the lay members in Synods and Church Councils as well as the chairpersonship of lay presidents put lay leaders in a position that enables them to make meaningful impact on the decisions taken in these bodies. The opposite practice represents authoritarian leadership because the bishop always has to be in charge.

Unlike the other four churches, the ELCRN does not have a pastors' convention. The pastors' convention provides the Synod with motions and recommendations. It is a platform from which pastors and administrators of pastorates nourish each other in many ways. In the ELKSA (NT) the pastors' convention is either chaired by a clergy or lay leader, those of the other three are presided over by a bishop. It is wrong to use this body as a body that is only mandated by the constitution to prepare a Synod or a Church Council.

ELCIN (ELOC) and ELCSA each has an Episcopal Council for each has more than one bishop while the other three churches have not. Both bodies have the duty to maintain the unity of the church. Its membership in the ELCIN (ELOC) is limited to bishops while in the ELCSA it includes pastors. The inclusion of pastors in the Council neutralises the negative notion that a bishop is above pastors whereas the exclusion seems to justify it.

Each of the Church Councils of ELCIN (ELOC), ELKSA (NT) and ELCRN has an Executive Council which discusses matters delegated to it by its Church Council. The Executive Council of the Church Council in ELCRN is presided over by a General Secretary, while each of the others is led by a bishop. The work of the Executive Council promotes efficiency and effectiveness. To make a bishop its chairperson is to hinder the flow of contributions from all sorts of lay leaders. The Ministerial Council, found in ELCSA and ELKSA (NT) is a platform where theological issues can be addressed. To exclude ordinary pastors and lay leaders from this Council is to ignore their experiences.

Each of the five churches has a bishop as its highest minister whose term of office is until retirement in ELCIN (ELOC) and ELCSA and six years in each of the other three churches. He/she is considered to be an administrator rather than a spiritual father in ELCIN (ELOC) and

an administrator and supervisor of theological training in the other four churches. There is nothing wrong in having a teacher and overseer of the gospel. What is wrong is to make the bishop a figure who is elevated above all others.

I analysed the parish council meetings of six Parish Councils with the purpose of examining the participation of lay leaders in council meetings, duties performed and issues discussed in parish council meetings with the following results: More men than women attended the Engela, Ongenga and Ondobe parish council meetings in 1980-1985. Certain groups of people were left out either because they did not have status in the community or for safety reasons. When some groups of people are left out, this reduces the diversity that would benefit the parishes and church. A diversity of leaders would enrich the decision making process and lead to greater progress.

Pastors served in more portfolios and therefore performed more duties than members in Parish Council Meetings during the years under discussion. There are many tasks in a parish which can be distributed among the Parish Council members. If the pastor wants to do everything himself he does not respect council members as co-leaders.

Only spiritual matters were discussed. It has helped the pastors to act as experts. Pastors probably have not deliberately used spiritualisation to assert their authority. Lay leaders were excluded from participating fully in spiritual matters. The experiences of lay leaders were left out. A committed spiritual life should be the foundation of other dimensions in life. The weakness here is that Parish Council Meetings did not tackle concrete issues.

Epembe parish council meetings created opportunities for teamwork that enhanced positive interactions whereas the same meetings turned into a one man/woman show at Oshigambo parish. Parish Council meetings at Oshaango parish showed a slight improvement in the composition of the council meetings while the other aspects remained unchanged. The ratio between male and female representatives in Parish Council meetings in 1992, 1995, 1996 and 1997 was either balanced or slightly off balance. These Parish Council meetings have a long way to go before they transform the authoritarian leadership style prevailing in each parish.

The traditionalist household model that has been applied so far in the church must be done away with. Associations within the church must become responsible bodies led by leaders accountable to their members, who may need advice from church authorities but not their control. As much as other members, leaders depend on the gifts of others. Associations and their directors, just as any other leaders in the church should be allowed to initiate their own plans, and implement their own work programmes.

The participatory model also needs to be applied to the relation between pastors and parishioners and between the pastoral and lay ministries. The notion of centralizing the pastoral ministry at the expense of lay ministries should be replaced with the notion that all ministries are expressions of the one ministry, which Christ entrusted to the church. Both the pastoral and the lay ministries are instituted by Christ. None is more or less significant than the others. They are all meant to serve not the leaders but the people of God. These ministries should be understood in terms of their complementarity. The academic qualifications leaders acquired are means of serving the people better and not ways to elevate them above others. They have all been called by Christ and ordained through baptism to proclaim and live out one and the same gospel.

A paradigm shift should take place in ELCIN's leadership style to assist women and youth, to reach the leadership levels in the church that they should reach. Women should be encouraged to climb the ladder of leadership in the church. If they have proved themselves to be committed leaders, they will also be trustworthy at the top leadership levels. They are among the best worship attendants, social workers, assistants and deaconesses, but there are only a few women who are directors, pastors and the top leaders in the church.

The constitutions of both the Women and Youth Associations need urgent amendments. As they are, they are too authoritarian. The proposed amendments aim at rectifying the imbalance of power between top church authorities and the governing boards of associations. Authority over the associations should be transferred from the hierarchical structures and vested in the office-bearers and members of the associations. The apparent immaturity among the leaders of the associations is caused by the authoritarian leadership style where leaders are expected to carry out their responsibilities and be accountable to the respective higher authorities. The responsibility to take

decisions at any level should be vested in the representative bodies of the associations while the top authority should only confirm these decisions. There should be uniformity of tenure in all offices of all associations. This would promote a situation where more time would be spent on planning and the training of other members than on forwarding suggestions to higher and waiting for responses.

Supervision at all levels in the church needs to be re-considered. The following should be overcome: supervision based on hierarchical status; supervision without education and training of the subordinate leaders; a supervision that loads all major responsibilities upon one leader; supervision that fears to face challenges from competent subordinate leaders and therefore associates itself with uncritical leaders; supervision that does not create a platform for sharing practical problems and planning together so as to benefit all levels of the entire church. At present each level in the church deals separately with its own tasks, and the whole church is a departmentalized organization.

CHAPTER SIX

TOWARDS THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE AUTHORITARIAN LEADERSHIP IN ELCIN

6.1 Introduction

This concluding chapter focuses on the central aim of this thesis, which is to transform the authoritarian leadership style in ELCIN into a participatory leadership model. The Lutheran heritage (chapter two), the Finnish heritage (chapter three), the Owambo traditional leadership patterns (chapter four), and the analysis of patterns of leadership in ELCIN (chapter five) made vital contributions, which culminated in the making of this point. By now we know that the authoritarian leadership model is in contradiction with Lutheran theology, democratic assumptions and practical advantages in terms of the mission of the church. Not only that, the authoritarian concept of leadership is outdated and irrelevant for any organization, the church included. This chapter calls for a development of a more comprehensive participatory leadership, which is informed by Lutheran theology and biblical witness. It also argues that the higher offices should not do the things the lower offices can do for themselves. To be able to do this, the chapter is subdivided into sections. It starts with the application of some of the leadership principles such as inventiveness as a gift from God; sharing of vision and interdependent leadership. Inventiveness is the gift of creativity given to each one of us by God. This gift enables each person to initiate plans and choose certain directions. A brief exploration on vision concludes that the church here on earth, whether universal or denominational, participates in the vision of God. No member is insignificant and no member is more important than others. The chapter also endeavours to explain that Christians as members of one body, the church, depend on one another. Each has a gift and a shortcoming, so each strengthens others and vice versa. It evaluates the authoritarian leadership style that dictates decision-making procedures in ELCIN. Finally, the chapter makes some recommendations that can lead towards the transformation of such leadership style in ELCIN.

6.2 To observe certain leadership principles leads to leadership efficiency in the church.

As in the case of other organizations, the church has to adhere to and uphold certain principles, which in turn uphold Christian norms and values. These principles help the church to visualise its purpose, plans, direction and destination before it implements them.

6.2.1 Inventiveness is a gift from God

To explain that inventiveness is a gift from God, Covey used the term “proactivity” which means the responsibility each person has to take initiatives in his/her own life (1994:71). “It means that as human beings, we are responsible for our own lives. Our behavior is a function of our decisions, not our conditions. We can subordinate feelings to values. We have the initiative and the responsibility to make things happen” (Covey 1994:71). This means that humans have the ability to choose to do something. Each responsible person, whether he/she is the leader of a group of people or an ordinary member, has the power to take initiatives and to lead his/her followers in a certain direction. What applies to the leader applies to the followers also. The pastor, for instance, helps the parish to find its direction. Each responsible member of the parish can also direct a parish in a certain direction. The best way to do this is that the pastor and the parish members plan together so that the leader can only lead in the direction the group wants to go. To humankind and specifically to each leader, God said: “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden...” (Gen 2:17). Here the opportunity to take decisions or initiatives is given to humankind which, is, in this case, leaders and the people who are led. The patriarchal structure in the family must be transformed. Each family member can take decisions or initiatives, therefore, they should all participate in decision-making processes or initiatives. The example provided fits each level of leadership, whether it is the governing board of an association, Parish Council or Diocesan Council, to mention but a few. Covey writes:

... proactivity is based on the unique human endowment of self-awareness. The two additional unique human endowments that enable us to expand our proactivity and to exercise personal leadership in our life are imagination and conscience. Through imagination, we can visualize the uncreated worlds of potential that lie within us. Through conscience, we can come in contact with universal laws or

principles, with our own singular talents and avenues of contribution, and with the personal guidelines with which we can most effectively develop them. Combined with self-awareness, these two endowments empower us to write our own script (Covey 1994:103).

Church associations are perceived to be means established by the church itself to further its various ministries in the church. The main objective of the ELCIN Men's Association, for example, is to teach men the Christian faith which they should share in their houses, neighbourhoods, professions, business, politics, trade unions and in the church (ELCIN Men's Association constitution 1988:1). The Department of Diaconal and Social Work focusses on services to people with disabilities (Department of Diaconal and Social Work constitution 1992:1). Each association remains under the supervision of the Church Council or Diocesan Council. This is so because the framework used is that of a household. The householder commands while every inhabitant listens and adheres to the rules. More than that, association directors are regarded as grown up sons and daughters whose homesteads are situated not very far from their father's homestead. Like a traditional father, who was counted among the elders and therefore had full authority over his grown up children, so are the church leaders at all levels of authority. Pastors are therefore chairpersons of all decision-making bodies in ELCIN. The church structure is too authoritarian. Greenleaf writes:

The key question is how power and authority are handled [in the church]...The major conclusion I have reached after much researching is that we at long last come to grips with the liabilities in the obsolete idea of the single chief atop a pyramidal structure, and that henceforth the ultimate authority should be placed in a balanced team of equals under the leadership of a true servant who serves as a *'primus inter pares'* first among equals (quoted in Bauknight 1996:88)

There is too much power in the hands of the clergy in top leadership positions. Paternalism does not leave sufficient room for freedom to initiate something new. Like the father, the pastor is in charge. What he/she orders must be carried out. A son or a daughter who disobeys the order of the father bears the consequences.

An Oshikwanyama proverb says: *Omukulunhu iha xwange ndjele nokaana* [an elder cannot be

trained how to do things by a youngster]. According to the proverb an elder is always more knowledgeable than a youngster. Like a youngster who does not have authority to argue against an elder, the association director does not have the right to oppose a pastor, dean or bishop. A senior member of the clergy is perceived to have the “right” over his/her subordinates, precisely because of the notion that he/she is the ultimate leader of the parish. Another problematic assumption is that church leaders are regarded as the true representatives of Christ which is not true according to biblical and Lutheran teaching as said before in chapter two. All baptised Christians are representatives of Christ. Church leaders also often see themselves in the image of the patriarchs found in the Scriptures. But the autocratic leadership style is no longer working effectively both in the private sector and the church systems. It has also never been a part of God’s vision for the church. True Christian leadership is not authoritarian (Bauknight 1996:86-87). I agree with Paul that with here that the “pillars” in Jerusalem had a high status (Gal 1-2). As pointed out before in the second chapter, the Catholic church authoritarianism is built into the theological system.

There are innumerable reasons why authoritarian patterns are still a practice at all levels of church leadership. A number of clerics maintain a theological commitment to authoritarian patterns. Lay persons are kept at a distance so that they may not know precisely what is going on in a parish or in the church. Most of the pastors are used to an authoritarian leadership style and do not know other patterns. But even if some of them are introduced to participatory leadership patterns, they are not sure whether they will be successful in dealing with their followers. The result is that they may fear the better trained young theologians and the educated laity. Out of this fear some members of the clergy are hesitant to allow the nomination of more educated leaders to positions where the impact of their leadership would be substantial. Some church leaders seems to fear the challenge of organizing and holding meetings with influential young leaders. The same attitude is evident in some Parish Councils where some of the clergy refuse to appoint effective lay leaders who would be able to critique their inadequacies. Such authoritarian pastors, in order to protect their positions, adopt a legalistic style of leadership. This means that such leaders have too much power and are too concerned with the law. Their leadership strategies are that they order and compel their followers to do the tasks instead guiding them. Such a legalistic style can easily be felt in the pastor’s preaching and his/her interaction with lay leaders. The legalistic leadership style

is often sharpened by statements such as the following: “The pastor as leader must lead! Success in any enterprise, church or otherwise, does not come by chance or consensus, or by simply ‘waiting on the Lord.’ It is the senior minister that provides leadership, dreaming dreams, seeing visions, and crystallizing goals. The senior minister ... must be ‘in front’ in thinking, vision and planning (emphasis his)” (Dehoney quoted in Love 1994:4). The quotation is quite true that really great success in the church and in the world has been achieved by individuals with a great vision, a powerful determination and strong leadership qualities. Missionary Martti Rautanen, who worked for 56 years (1870-1926) (Auala 1977:166) in Owambo mission field, is among such leaders. It is probably true that average persons are fairly relaxed unless they are fired by the enthusiasm of great leaders. If most of the population is careless and self-indulgent, democratic procedures will not lead to great achievements. However, if an authoritarian leader is also a weak leader, the whole body stagnates.

I am not in favour of a “hang loose” style of leadership in the church (Bauknight 1996:88). It is a situation whereby proper supervision and control are not maintained. A hang loose style can lead to chaos. Jesus’ advice, “... do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing ...” (Matt.6:3), refers to secrecy concerning offerings and not to the abolition of leadership. Neither is it the intention to propose a laissez-faire nor an authoritarian leadership style in the church. In the words of Love, a laissez-faire style is no leadership at all. Both the laissez-faire style and the leader that applies it are considered to be poor, for then it is the group that initiates, discusses, and takes all kinds of decisions. It is quite true that this is the idea of democracy, but democracy does not mean that the leader should abandon his/her leading role. The leader should be communicative. He/she should offer opinions, initiative, and perspective (1994:41). The church is a corporate body, thus absolute collegiality is not possible. What we demand, rather, is that leaders should not be allowed to pursue their own interests in a corporate body. “All of us need to be accountable. We may be accountable under the banner of grace; but we are accountable” to Christ through the people who called us into his service (Bauknight 1996:88).

Everything possible should be done in the church to locate the authority at the grass roots level. The people themselves should use this authority to mandate the leaders to act according to their will and in their interest. This means that authority is vested in the people themselves, but since

they are too many to be present every time a decision has to be made they mandate their representatives to act on their behalf. The people have to trust that their opinions and interests will be represented by their representatives. Nürnberger puts it this way: “The people are sovereign. Rulers are servants, not masters of the people” (1991:9). The same author makes the relation between the leaders and the followers clear when he says that

according to the democratic world-view the exercise of authority is legitimate only if those who are in authority have been given a mandate to exercise their authority by those over whom they exercise this authority. Granted, the leaders who agree to take over the burden of leadership can expect to be supported by their subjects. However, if they blunder or abuse their powers the mandate can be withdrawn. This means that in principle those who are at the receiving end of the decision-making process have to agree to subject themselves to the authority of the leaders and are not forced to do so against their will (1991:25).

There should not be too much power invested in the leader. It is the members of the organization who should hold the reins and not the leader. They should take the ultimate decisions and not the leader. Robert Greenleaf teaches us that the effective leader is one who is “first among equals” (1977:9). This is also true for the church in which every believer is recognised as a child of God through Christ. All members are equal before God. An individual who is a leader, is first among equals. “The leader is not invested with final authority nor the absolute power of a veto. Rather, the leader is one who guides persons toward a common goal” (Bauknight 1996:88). He/she offers encouragement along the way and affirms the role of each co-worker. The leader arranges for accountability to the vision agreed upon from time to time. The leader should provide encouragement and visualization in a friendly manner that pleases his/her followers. This is so because a church leader should not pontificate for he/she is not what Jesus called rulers of the nations (Mark 10:45). “The leader is one who understands his or her own spiritual gifts, builds a ministry of inreach and outreach on the basis of the identification of the spiritual gifts in others” (Bauknight 1996:90). “The goal is always to strive for a complete ministry of inreach and outreach under grace. The local pastor of a small country church and the senior minister of a large membership congregation are both servant-leaders. As such, they are stewards of the gifts of God in the Body of Christ” (Bauknight 1996:90).

All the properties of parishes, circuits, dioceses, and institutions in ELCIN belong to the Church.

The members have no ownership and no authority over them.

Because of the centralised system of ownership the Main Office, as a representative of the church, is entitled to collect financial resources from parishes, circuits, dioceses, institutions, departments and associations. This means that it is the Church Council, through its financial office, which prescribes annual collections, contributions, gifts, budgets and salaries. After the financial office has drafted the annual budget, it entrusts the collection of the amount proposed to the governing boards of local Parish, Circuit, Diocesan Councils and associations. The result is that the above-mentioned bodies have no mandate whatsoever to initiate financial plans on their own, but only participate in the collection of stipulated amounts.

As it is, any financial plan at any level of the church must obtain the permission of the Church Council first. The relation between these bodies and the top leadership is not one of consultation and reporting. In case one of these bodies initiated its own plan, the top leadership would not take it seriously. I witnessed an indefinite discontinuation of Engela Parish Institute by the Church Council in 1994. As usual, the institution had its annual budget approved by the Church Council and started its activities at the beginning of the year. In April, the Church Council passed a resolution that compelled the institution to close indefinitely on a specific date. The reasons were that the church needed time to investigate whether it needed the diaconate, domestic science and other programmes offered at the institute. The investigation had to be carried out to satisfy the demand of the Finnish Mission Society, which made the investigation a prerequisite for further financial support to ELCIN. The staff members and students proposed that the Council not close the school but rather do the investigation alone. Among other things, the Council was begged to allow students to bring their own foodstuffs while the body concerned continue with the provision of remuneration of the teaching staff. The intention of asking for this was that students were vulnerable and could lose their second academic year. The Church Council rejected all proposals. To worsen the situation, a Church Council resolution was passed purposely to prevent the staff and students from engaging in fundraising efforts themselves among the parishes and congregations of their respective churches and among their own people (Ndamanomhata 1999:9-10). The church's financial officer was very annoyed when officially notified that the remaining cash was invested in a life insurance for a period of five years as a step in the direction of self-

reliance. The Church Council has too much power. Neither the governing board of the school nor the staff members were consulted in advance. Because of this power the Council did not adhere to the principle of subsidiarity. The institute proved to have the potential to handle such a situation on its own. The Council, because of its authoritarian attitude, did not show any sign of respect to staff members, who were officially authorised by the church to teach there. Their proposals were rejected. However, the church spent a year and half paying salaries of staff members and workers who remained in the institution. The church must develop a more comprehensive concept of distributing sufficient power and authority to all levels of responsibilities.

The advantages of having paternalistic leaders are fewer than the disadvantages when compared with democratic leaders. The bishops treat the directors and the associations like children, thus the directors and the association remain in a state of infancy. On the one hand it seems advantageous to depend on someone's guidance and advice. But on the other hand, what advantage is there if one is not allowed to challenge that advice? An association and its director must always side with the top leadership if it wants to prosper. This is risky. To take sides with somebody against another is risky. It seems good to have someone to share your plans and insights with before executing them. But what advantage does one have if that person has the ultimate power either to approve or disapprove one's plans? In the Oshiwambo traditional set-up the followers felt secure if they had a leader who adhered completely to the rules of the elders. Now the situation has changed. A director who wants to be effective and successful in a participatory leadership style has to know both traditional and modern principles.

The disadvantages of the authoritarian leadership style are many. When the gift to initiate is unused it becomes useless and eventually dies. The person concerned loses direction. His/her conscience as well as the capabilities of visualization and imagination become blunt. The top leadership always makes sure that its impact is felt, thus the chance for the director to initiate new things is very narrow. According to the Oshiwambo proverb, *Omukulunhu iha kana moshipaxu* [an elder is always aware of what he [she] does or says]. An elder is always right. So no young leader can argue against an elder and still expect support from the . An autocratic leadership style is applied here. The top church leaders hide behind the traditional leadership style and young leaders have no chance to challenge them. The elders are very cautious not to lose their positions

of power. According to James Burns : “The crisis of leadership today is the mediocrity or irresponsibility of so many men and women in power. He adds that the fundamental crisis underlying the mediocrity is intellectual. We know too little about leadership...” (Lee 1989:12-13).

6.2.2 Sharing of vision

The universal church, the denominations as well as individual congregations, engages in the vision of God which is manifested in the incarnation of Christ. In Christ humankind is brought back to God and the new community entrusted with the task of making Christ’s followers grow in knowing him more (Love 1994: 24; Eph.4:13; Phil 3:10-12). The task of a Christian is to assist believers and non-believers in his/her given location and time (1994:24; Ps 40:8; Eph.5:17; 1 Thess 5:18). Before his ascension, Jesus told his followers that the resurrection from death, the new heaven and new earth is the new vision for his church on earth. This means that Jesus did not leave his church without vision. The vision is there. Jesus is not only telling his followers about the new vision, he invites them to participate in this vision. The new vision is not a plan to be executed, but a participation in his ministry in the world. Both the leader and the people are led by the Holy Spirit and are in interaction with fellow Christians. All participate in the ministry of Christ. By so doing the vision of the group becomes common.

The significance of a vision is well described in these few sentences: A vision is life and hope. Where there is no vision, there is no life. “ Where there is no prophecy the people cast off restraint ..” (Prov 29:18). “When a people has no visions, it perishes” (Cone 1984:197). Where there is no life, death prevails. Greenleaf writes: “Not much happens without a dream. And for something great to happen, there must be a great dream. Behind every great achievement is a dreamer with great dreams. Much more than a dreamer is required to bring it to reality; but the dream must be there first” (1977:16). Bennis and Nanus have this to say:

When the organization has a clear sense of its purpose, direction, and desired future state and when this image is widely shared, individuals are able to find their roles both in the organization and in the larger society of which they are a part. This empowers individuals and confers status upon them because they can see themselves as part of a worthwhile enterprise. They gain a sense of importance, as they are transformed from robots blindly following instructions to human beings engaged in creative and purposeful venture. When individuals feel that they can make a difference and that they can improve the society in which they are living

through their participation in an organization, then it is much more likely that they will bring vigor and enthusiasm to their tasks and that the results of their work will be mutually reinforcing. Under these conditions, the human energies of the organization are aligned toward a common end, and a major precondition for success has been satisfied (1985:28).

Bennis and Nanus conclude that most leaders are listeners, learners and synthesizers of ideas from others and that the vision of their enterprise is actually a composite (quoted in Lee 1989:134). However, historians are of the opinion that the leaders created their own vision out of some mysterious inner resource (Lee 1989:134). A church leader visualizes the vision of the church by searching the scripture. Some biblical thoughts that could be of help in visualizing are the following: The church is furthering God's vision which is redemption, as mentioned before. It is an objective that restores God's fundamental purpose for humankind and the world. Jesus demonstrated this by not supporting the status quo in his country. It is the Creator's plan to unite humankind in Christ so that all know God, reconcile them with God and with one another (1 Tim 2:4; 2 Cor 6:19). Through the scripture the church is commissioned to do mission in the world (Matt 28:18-20).).

God's vision is one and the same at all levels. What applies to the church leader applies also to the parish and association leaders. But each one has its own uniqueness. Therefore each considers how he/she should respond to the vision and call of God in his/her location. Lee suggests the following as the main points that could help in generating the vision of the congregation: the uniqueness of the features of the congregation, its needs, interests and the longing of its members (1989:137). He is of the opinion that the parish leader should do a community survey, targeting its needs, interests, likes, dreams, the unchurched, and what is it that the parish wants its pastor to do (Lee 1989:137). At national church level a church leader should target big projects such as world mission wherein it is expected to meet the needs and hopes of the converts and the unchurched. Plans should be envisaged so that the church can participate in poverty-alleviation attempts in poverty-stricken regions. In war devastated regions, the church must foster the culture of peace and reconciliation.

Moltmann sheds more light on this when he describes Christians as people who are "forward

looking and forward moving, and therefore revolutionizing and transforming the present” (1967:16). Both leaders and the people who are led should foster change for the better in other people’s lives. Both the leaders and the people should have a vision. The fact that the people who are led have a vision does not exempt the leaders from their roles. The sharing of a vision should not make the leader reticent in bringing forward his/her ideas and vision. Leaders have to lead. Love writes that “the leader’s task is to stimulate, refine, rework, and help implement it” (1994:24). It is also the leader’s priority to protect the vision of the group against those who intentionally or unintentionally plan to disrupt it. Kennon encourages leaders not to hide their gifts when he says “...leaders share their own sense of direction and vision as well as simply enabling others” (1990:41). Patte describes vision sharing as the provision of “a pair of glasses” with “correct lenses” which allow the participants to see things they could not see before (1996:111).

In the ELCIN, a church in the traditional community, the issue is who is visualizing the vision. In a community which values the age of a person rather than what a person visualizes, most people, if not all, will listen to what a senior person says. An elderly person has much experience. The latter is true. But, the weakness with this belief is that all power to visualise what is right or wrong is invested in elders. Elders who have much past experience are the ones who also can predict what the future will be. It is not believed that inexperienced persons can visualise a proper vision. Some examples will clarify the matter. It is still a custom among Ovawambo that if a young married man whose father is still alive, wants to slaughter an ox, he has to inform him. The father has the right to refuse the request if he has reasons to do so. Until the late seventies, if a young man decided to have a life partner, his parents had to decide which girl from which clan he should propose to. In some cases where fathers were friends to each other, they negotiated their children’s engagements and marriages as well. The author has experienced cases where young contract workers requested their parents through letters to look for life partners for them.

Many examples of this attitude are found in the church today. A young pastor who wants his/her visions accepted, depends on the discretion of the senior pastor with whom he/she serves in the same parish. The young pastor has to make sure that the senior pastor understands and sides with him/her. The other members will usually side with the senior pastor. Aron Kanana, a former pastor of Onandjaba parish, used to look for the consent of a retired pastor, Lukas Dama, before he

convened a Parish Meeting. Being products of the authoritarian leadership style, some young pastors are not aware that they have the right to visualize, and believe that visualization is a task only for seniors. This is the reason why most, if not all, members of decision-making bodies at all levels in the church are elderly people. It is quite true that an elderly person can also be competent and a young person can also be incompetent. It is therefore right to pay attention to vision from persons of all ages. The attitude referred to gives the impression that the church members and their leaders are not aware of modern requirements, as spelt out by Gangel: "...as the society becomes more complex and knowledge continues to spread across the culture, demands for intelligent and alert leadership in the church increase, and we simply have not been keeping up with the need" (quoted in Love 1994:4).

The disadvantage here is that young people are not trusted because it is presumed that they are not steady. The visualization capacity decreases if it is neither utilized nor promoted. The existing procedure is time-consuming and the young leader is not expected to change the local customs, norms, practices etc. Wherever change is not allowed, no progress will take place. When the young leader sides with the senior leader it means a loss to his/her members who look forward to having the needed change implemented. However, a negative attitude is also observed among seminarians, who sometimes believe that they have all the answers, that whatever others have done before them in years of dedicated work must be relegated to the dust bin, that the chosen elders are all backward and need to be converted. Young leaders must develop a culture of patience and respect. More than that, they have also to carry their responsibilities in such a way that their colleagues and elderly leaders can trust them.

6.2.3 Interdependent leadership

The church was founded by Christ who gave its members the ability to serve each other. The Apostle Paul uses the body and its parts as an example to demonstrate the interdependence of the gifts of those who build up the Body of Christ. The likelihood is that Paul could have used the phrase, 'interdependence of effective ordained and lay leaders', if the ritual of ordination was known during his ministry. According to Paul and the Deuteropaulines the capacity to serve is put in every member, for every individual member has been given a gift of grace by Christ (1 Cor

12:11; Eph 4:7). The first letter of Peter echoes the latter (1 Pet 4:10). No believer has all the gifts (1 Cor 12:21) and no part of the body is insignificant (1 Cor 12:21; 1 Cor 12:14-25). "... God had so composed the body, giving the greater honour to the inferior part, that there may be no discord in the body, ..." (1 Cor 12:24). God the Spirit is the distributor of the gifts between individuals but "according to the measure of Christ's gift" (1 Cor.12:7-12; cf Eph 4:8). This illustration should remind Christian leadership that aims at effectiveness to take into account the diversity of gifts.

The church and its members are dependent on each other. Each member is given a gift for the purpose of "building up" others. No member, therefore, is able to succeed independently of the other members of the body (Love 1994:20). "Simply put, the church was designed to be dependent and no leader - no matter how gifted he/she may be ... will be able to survive, much less prosper, apart from the portion that 'every supporting ligament' supplies" (Love 1994:20; cf. Eph.4:16). This picture of the interdependence of members and their diverse gifts in the New Testament shows that the clergy and laity need each other in their daily activities.

Apart from the interdependence between its members, the universal church depends on Christ. Love calls it the "Christian subordination to Christ and mutual interdependence upon one another" (1994:20). In Jesus' teaching Christ is pictured as a Shepherd and his followers as the sheep (John 10:1-18,26-29). Both the Shepherd and the sheep depend on one another. "I am the vine, you are the branches" (John 15:4); Christ is the cornerstone, whereas his followers are stones (Eph.2:19-21; 1 Pet 2:5-7; 1 Cor 3:10-11); Christ is the High Priest whereas his believers are a royal priesthood (1 Pet 2:8-10). These texts and many others are proof that there is no biblical leeway for a "solo" Christian life or for "solo" Christian leaders (Love 1994:20). The concept of interdependence in the church of Christ teaches us that God created us to be interdependent.

The significant but sophisticated task facing the leader is how to utilise this diversity of gifts in the parish, association or church. The complication is that a leader, as well as every member, has a gift. Each gift is as important as the other. None of them can be left out, for each is needed. Each member has an empty space that needs to be filled by other gifted individuals. This complimentary process is needed for each one of us, including the leader, to be "whole" (Love 1994:21) Love calls these spaces "the God-given gaps" or "limitations" in the ability of a person (1994:21). The

most talented leaders also have such gaps. Therefore the responsibility of every effective leader is to identify his/her gifts, upon which his/her job description should be based. He/she should also make sure that with this identification his/her gaps are filled by other gifted individuals. In order to overcome any deficiency that might occur, a Christian leader has to be a skilled team builder. Nott refers to this as the “leader’s personal recognition of incompleteness, the acknowledgement of necessity for sharing the diversity of gifts” and calls it “a prerequisite of Christian leadership” (1986:141).

There is a diversity of gifts and a diversity of different leaders in the church: “...he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness” (Rom 12:8). These are examples of ministries which are regarded as insignificant and whose carriers are often forgotten. Neither can the attitude that disdains the “insignificant ministries” change their existence nor the effectiveness of their leaders. The call of apostles, prophets, teachers, miracle performers, healers, helpers, administrators, speakers in various languages are recorded in these texts (1 Cor 12:28; cf Eph.4:11). Paul does not introduce the perception that the more intellectual leaders should be given a longer term of office than those who are gifted in service.

Biblical history and church history provide countless examples of individuals with a broad diversity of gifts, styles, and techniques. With this diversity of gifts they faithfully led the believing community through many ages. Lee summarizes examples as follows: “Such biblical persons as Moses, Joshua, David, Deborah, Peter and Paul did not use the same style of leadership, nor achieve the same results but it is evident that they exercised leadership responsibilities” (1989:13).

It is a fact that any Christian leadership, regardless of its level, has to recognize the diversity of gifts in the church of Christ. The recognition and utilization of the diversity of gifts means a decentralization of power and authority away from authoritarian leaders who do everything for other gifted individuals. These leaders, who for decades were regarded as knowing everything and enjoyed this position of doing everything, will want to continue. They see themselves being threatened and losing their significant place of influence if other people’s gifts are utilized. So they believe that their practices are always good whereas those of others are always bad. Such an

attitude corresponds with a tendency found in the Kwanyama traditional patterns that there is a right way of doing things. Loeb writes that Ovakwanyama

had and still have a strong foundation in the belief that there is a right way of doing things. ... there is a common word for the manner of doing something. If the manner is according to the way of the Ovakuanyama it is good, and called Oshikwanyama; if it is according to the way of their neighbours, it is bad (1962:44).

There is a tendency not to want to use new methods or develop diversity, a tendency of not wanting to learn but to remain with what one already knows. The church should explore all possibilities at its disposal to transform the attitude.

6.2.4 Evaluation

The leadership style of ELCIN can be described as partially democratic and partially authoritarian. It is partially democratic because its constitution is a guideline and not a theological document like the Canon in the Catholic Church. Lay persons are full members of each decision-making body in the church. Pastors are autonomous leaders of their parishes and not representatives of the bishops. Six of the pastors studied, were pro-democracy.

The authoritarianism of the leadership style was observed in the following: The lower decision-making bodies had no influence on the decisions of the higher bodies. The episcopal office was adopted abruptly. Pastors were perceived as the prime authority in their parishes, therefore carried out most of the duties and chaired all Council Meetings. Parish Council Meetings dealt principally with spiritual matters and abandoned social issues. Teamwork was hardly motivated. All ELCIN decision-making bodies were chaired by clerics. The Circuit Meeting had no Circuit Council and ELCIN had no Ministerial Council. Its Episcopal Council was for bishops only. The term of office for the bishop is life long. ELCIN was run on a traditionalist household model basis that stagnated creativity and ability to initiate visions in subordinate bodies. Governing boards of associations had no authority over their decisions. The pastors, the deans and the bishops busied themselves more with administrative work than spiritual responsibilities.

According to the analysis done on ELCIN leadership patterns, its authoritarian leadership style was not derived from the original Lutheran heritage. Luther's own approach as referred to in chapter two, was a participatory leadership style versus the authoritarian Catholic principles. The authoritarian leadership style of ELCIN was originally inherited from both the Finnish heritage in chapter three and Owambo traditional culture in chapter four. It was a combination of the two traditional cultures. The Finnish missionaries were patriarchal, feudal and authoritarian like the Owambo people were, therefore they failed to communicate the original Lutheran heritage as they should have done to Owambo people. The result was that they were unable to transform Owambo traditional culture.

The criteria used for evaluating the current leadership style are Luthern theology, modern democratic assumptions, other principles such as inventiveness, sharing vision, interdependence and practical advantages in terms of the mission of the church.

Aspects of the leadership style which should be changed are as follows: The pastors, the deans and the bishops must be perceived as the first among equals and not prime authorities. I suggest that Lutheran theology concerning the office of the ministry must be taught at seminary and local parish levels. The few highly educated pastors in ELCIN should do whatever possible to sensitize the people concerning the impact of authoritarianism in the church. I suggest that they write books, articles and issue pamphlets so that people can inform themselves. According to Lutheran principles, lay leaders should be considered as co-leaders of the clerics and not their subordinates. My suggestion here is that theological intellectuals should gain access to parishes to educate lay persons and other pastors on vision sharing, creativity, interdependence and other related issues. All ELCIN decision-making bodies should be chaired by lay leaders. I suggest that parishes who have lay leaders who have gained the confidence of their pastors and lay persons and built up a following among them, initiate the process in themselves. The authoritarian rule currently prevailed in Council Meetings must be stopped and replaced by participatory facilitating. I suggest that lay leaders should, for instance, initiate the motion that they are capable of leading church meetings. The church should uphold human rights and democratic principles in its constitution and daily activities. The significance of this is that if the church as an institution does not participate in the new democratic dispensation, members will leave it. My suggestion is that literature in this regard

can be obtained from constitution experts and democratic institutions in the country. The term of bishop for life must be done away with. I suggest that young bishops should initiate the demand for the amendment of the constitution in this regard. Church associations should be autonomous institutions and have governing boards who have authority over them. I suggest that their constitutions be reformulated and amended.

6.3 Recommendations for the transformation of ELCIN’s authoritarian leadership model

6.3.1 From creating further layers of hierarchy to parish centred development

During the last thirty years (1969-1999) the church has busied itself with creating layers of hierarchy at national level. From 1969-1992 it has concentrated its plans to divide itself into two dioceses. The proposal was initiated by the late Bishop Auala in 1969. First, the Church Constitution was edited to accommodate the needed changes. Then came the appointment of the deputy to the Bishop, Pastor Dumeni, who was later elected as the successor of Bishop Auala. To accelerate the process of dividing the church into dioceses, Pastor Amadhila was elected as deputy bishop and requested to draft the new constitution and assist the bishop in his official responsibilities. To provide an easy working environment for the bishop and his deputy, a house for the deputy bishop was built at Oniipa, the head quarters of the church.

There were two proposals at the time, one for two and the other for three dioceses. The two diocese proposal received the majority of votes. The result is one Head Office managed by the General Secretary, and three sectoral secretaries, namely the Finance and Development Secretary, the Administrative Secretary and the Education and Training Secretary (Nambala and Sitari 1996:12-14). There are two dioceses with two bishopric diocesan offices which are managed by diocesan executive secretaries and secretaries for finance, stewardship, diaconal and social work, mission and evangelization, children work, youth work, women’s ministry, men’s ministry and music work (Nambala and Sitari 1996:15). The four circuits were divided into five and are managed by five full time deans and five executive secretaries. The directors of social and diaconal work, mission and evangelization, children work, youth work, women’s ministry, men’s ministry

and music work on a part-time basis. The church has a plan to shift from a system where a dean is an administrator without a parish to a system where he/she is a parish pastor.

The creation of layers of hierarchy itself was not wrong in this regard. No doubt, such a creation multiplied the layers, which has made the Church General Synod and the Church Council remote bodies. Besides that, the strategies of creation neglected the development at parish level. Not only that, it created a tendency among bishops, pastors and church members to emphasise the importance of layers of hierarchy over against the development of parishes. I suggest a paradigm shift from the creation of layers of hierarchy to parish development. For this development to be successful, I suggest that the church should assign university graduates to parishes. It is an encouragement that pastors should be trained at degree level rather than at diploma level. I am well aware of the fact that a higher level of education for the clergy is not necessarily going to change the leadership structure of the church. It is also common that a well educated pastor can still be a dictator, especially when he/she serves among the poorly educated or those with no education at all. The purpose of the suggestion is to have leaders who are capable of bringing the transformation needed at parish level. This is not to say that at seminary students are not capable. They are. Competent pastors are needed to be an answer to the shortage of human resources in parishes and to be in a position to deal effectively with parish matters. Matters such as the training and installing of lay leaders at outstations, the coordination of various ministries, as well as the administration of financial resources in the parish nowadays need to be dealt with by highly qualified leaders because the academic levels of many parishioners are very high. A parish must be financially independent. A leadership transfer from pastor to parishioners is urgently needed. Lay leaders should be appointed to various parish leadership positions while the pastor should play a coordinating role. The eight university graduates who are currently serving parishes are Halolye Nashihanga (M.Th.), Barnabas Haileka (M.Div.), David Lileka (B.Th.), Gotlieb Nairenge (S.T.M.), Eliakim Shaanika (M.Th.), Teofilus Nelumbu (M.Div.), Adolph Hashikutuva (S.T.M) and Andreas Shomagwe (B.Th.) (Nambala 1995: 150, 70, 95, 135, 172, 158, 84, 198). All in all, the church has to develop a more comprehensive concept of the participatory leadership style, which will help to prevent these leaders from sliding back into authoritarianism.

6.3.2 From leadership by ascription to leadership by competence

A change of mind is needed here. Traditionally, Ovawambo prefer an older leader to a young one. That understanding is well expressed in the proverb. *Omukulunhu oye embale la kelelomhepo* [An elder is a basket that keeps the wind away]. The big basket refers to an older person's life experiences and knowledge while the wind represents difficulties in life. An older person's life experiences include droughts, famines, wars, cattle raids and many other disasters that he has undergone and survived. The leadership of such an experienced person is considered to be characterised by steadiness, achievement and success. It is believed that an older leader's advice is worth listening to and following. An older leader should rule and give advice, whereas youngsters must listen and take advice from him. The same attitude is found in ELCIN. Young pastors have few chances of making any significant impact on the church leadership. This means that most of the ideas and decisions taken in the church are initiated by elderly persons. The right attitude should be to utilise leadership qualities of old and young leaders simultaneously.

However, traditionalists do not allow any change to take place. A pastor who became a dean or a bishop never became a pastor again. A bishop was a bishop for life, he never went back to the grass roots; a dean never became a parish pastor, nor did a lecturer or an association director. In the case of a dean, a lecturer or a director, the attitude was that after his/her term of office expired another high office would be established for him/her. The latter is in contradiction with the Apostle Paul when he says: "You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ who, being rich, became poor for us, so that through his poverty we might become rich" (2 Cor. 8:9). I recommend that in the case of the episcopal office, a term of office must be entrenched into the constitution. Deans should comply with the five year term of office in the constitution. Former deans and bishops could serve parishes and enrich parish members with their experiences.

As most post-colonial political leaders displayed a great need for recognition so did most church leaders. They attached themselves alone to international platforms. Their attitude gives an impression that they do not want other influential members in the church to be known abroad. It is something they claim for themselves to boost their personal popularity. The result is that they drive fancy cars while their local pastors walk on foot. They live in nice houses and offices, while

most local pastors live in traditional homesteads. They have their children sent abroad for studies, while the children of the local pastors have no financial assistance to go to a university in the country. They campaign among donors to fund the central administration of the church so that they can receive their monthly remuneration and do their work properly, while some of their pastors stay for many months or even a year without their salaries. Leaders attend even less important meetings either abroad or in the country to which they could delegate some of their young, competent parish pastors.

I know of two reasons that caused such a situation to develop. Once they have ascended, leaders never want to become poor again. They make sure that they remain at the top. There was a case in the Mkoani Arusha Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania where the constitution was modified to accommodate the re-election and the continuation of the diocesan bishop in office. Two terms of office were introduced in the constitution. The first term was six years, after which a vote of confidence was to be taken as to whether the candidate should continue to be in the office. If the candidate succeeded in winning the vote of confidence he would be a bishop for life (Ndelwa 1999). This has not happened in ELCIN as yet. The second reason is that fostering clienteles and nepotism, although at a very small scale, are practised in ELCIN (Hasheela 1994:16). Fostering clienteles in the church means that leaders build an ethnic support base and popularity through, for instance, keeping members from their ethnic groups as permanent representatives in decision-making bodies with the purpose of influencing decisions. There were instances of a diocesan bishop who championed the parish problems in the Diocesan Councils without an agreement being reached between them and the deans of the circuits concerned. Since the church has not properly utilised the democratic principles in its constitution, the rank and file desire 'powerful superiors'. "Weak leaders are not respected, indeed not wanted, by followers under the best of circumstances" (Nürnberg 1999:246). Ondobe parish members felt discriminated against when the deputy bishop was delegated by the bishop to visit their parish on his behalf. In response they sent a complaint to the bishop's office.

Those advocating young leadership development are supported by another Oshikwanyama proverb that says: *Poutumba womhuku opo pouteti wayo* [A mouse is active and capable of performing its duties courageously at its young age]. *Poutumba* means a period in a person's life when he/she

is physically, intellectually, and psychologically healthy and mature. *Oshitumba*, which is a noun, means a young, energetic and lively person; a person in a competing mood and full of ambitions to contribute something new to his/her society. The stage starts with adolescence and ends somewhere before fifty years of age. The logic here is that, should someone fail to establish his/her life during these years, the hope of doing so later is slim. Based on this perspective, electing an older leader means appointing someone who is old and no longer enjoys a hectic and competing life. Should he/she contribute a certain understanding to his/her society, he/she tends to maintain and defend this contribution.

Long life-experience used to be regarded as the only knowledge available. The situation has changed nowadays. Experience in terms of age is still important. However, it is no longer the sole source of knowledge and experience. Today young people are educated and trained in academic institutions to acquire the needed knowledge within a shorter period of time. The education they receive shapes their future in such a way that they can serve their communities at any level of responsibility. After completion of their studies many of them are entrusted to lead groups of people and serve in various leadership capacities. They live and work in the world of higher technology, interdependence and interrelatedness with people of other communities on the globe. The young generation is familiar with new developments in society, economy, the state and so on. For instance, they know how to use a computer, lead a group in a participatory way, while the old generation does not. My suggestion is that young people with leadership qualities should lead while their elders advise. There should be a harmonious interconnectedness between the young people and their elders. Elders and parents should be made aware of the fact that parental guidance and protection have limitations. According to Nürnberger, "functionally a parent is an interim guide and protector of immature persons who cannot as yet take responsibility for their own lives, a role to be fulfilled until those persons can guide themselves" (1991:177).

Despite the shortcomings mentioned above, the contributions the indigenous leaders have made to the church so far are remarkable. It was mentioned before that the indigenous leaders had entered into such positions with low academic qualifications. The transition from missionary to indigenous leadership was fairly sudden, and so they were not well prepared for the positions. They struggled and managed to lead the church through countless difficulties. Although they were

slow to understand the political situation in the country, eventually the church sided with its oppressed people and contributed a lot to the total liberation of the country.

When historical processes are accelerating as fast as they are today, the elderly lack the skills to cope and are left behind. If they cling to their power, the whole church, including the young, is kept back and those capable of leading the church into the future are frustrated. The young educated but frustrated people leave the church because the system has marginalised them. They got stuck where they were first assigned. Their leadership competence is not utilised. Their economic situations worsens. Some leave the church and join secular organizations such as life insurance agencies, which give a more lucrative income than being a pastor. Some of those who remain are in a rebellious mood. I recommend that, firstly, the young pastors must build up a following by gaining the confidence of others. Here, I mean that they should be mature leaders, who should have reasonable vision and direction. They must rid themselves of attitudes such as being too rash, self-assured, judgmental, in love with powerful cars, high salaries and fast life, to mention a few. Secondly, the General Church Synod or the Diocesan Synod should have the courage to appoint such brilliant young pastors as deans and bishops.

6.3.3 From a policy of strengthening top church leadership to employing young but highly qualified pastors around the church.

Traditionally, all physically and intellectually powerful individuals in the kingdom were found in the palace. An example of the physically powerful were the soldiers who guarded the palace. They had sophisticated weaponry that belonged to the palace. The kingdom was regarded as strong because of this power. Subjects were assured that they enjoyed full protection under a mighty king and his palace. Not only that, in the same palace there used to live intelligent persons, fortune tellers, prophets and poetesses from all over the country. They enriched the palace, and ultimately the kingdom, with intelligence, knowledge, wisdom, the spirit of prophecy and poetry. In the palace were found the skills of singing, playing *okashandje nokambulumbumbwa* [musical instruments]; lion and elephant fat; the girdles of a nation; all kinds of noble and royal clothes as worn by nobles and kings; *oudano womouhamba* [a special dance in the palace] and various sacrifices (Shemuvalula 1982:30).

The ELCIN today is an exact copy of the above traditions. Most of the highly educated pastors are employed around the church Head Office. I am aware of the fact that there were only a handful of graduates in ELCIN. They were all utilised at strategic points to help the church leadership to gain respect and not to be marginalised with their gifts. They trained others at seminary or lay training centres, improved church administration, handled overseas delegations and donations. The point is, however, that scarce resources must be used very carefully. Evangelist T. Nakale says that the ELCIN *ota kendabala a kale ongeleki ya kotoka pefina yoo ya nyika oulai koihaindye* [ELCIN as a church tries to be a well-developed and well-organised church at the top level and remains ill-developed and ill-organised at the grass roots level] (Nakale 1999). Such a practice is an attempt to create the impression to the outside world and to its own members that the church has progressed very far. However, on the other side such a practice is depriving parishes and their communities of qualified and capable human resources. Parishes are the foundation of the church. Thus the foundation should be laid by qualified leaders. Members whose foundations were properly laid at the initial stage will prosper excellently in the future. To do it the other way round is counterproductive. I recommend that the church should draw up a more comprehensive plan, which guides it as to how to use scarce resources in such a way that parish and congregational members benefit from them.

The reasons for placing the highly educated at the church office are that sophisticated persons are in a position to represent the objectives of the church locally and abroad. Language wise, they are able to communicate with church visitors and guests who may not know the vernacular spoken in the church and the region. They may also be there indirectly to defend the top leadership of the church, for instance, against a parish leadership which might not be happy with the way the church is governed. One of the reasons might be the control of remuneration in the church. Should the young qualified pastors be employed at parish level, where the monthly remuneration is lower than at the Head Office, hidden tensions might arise. Insubordination might erupt because of the financial discrepancies between salaries at the Head Office and those of local pastors.

One of the aims of keeping the educated closer to the old leadership is to keep them under surveillance. I do not mean police surveillance. What I mean is that the educated are watched closely as individual persons, their ethical principles, doctrine and behaviour. The logic behind this

surveillance is to make sure that the educated are won over to the side of the old leadership. The ultimate outcome may be that these closely watched young leaders tend to serve the interests of their seniors. This is so because any officer tends to look after his/her own interest and any organization supports its most dedicated servants. That is what gives it its stability. There is another factor. A situation looks very different from a position of responsibility than from a subordinate position - whether you are a traditional leader or a young intellectual. In the church and in the state the attitudes of people with very revolutionary ideas often change rapidly once they are in positions of responsibility and have to face the consequences of their policies. Those who manage to toe the line best may be promoted to be future leaders. This surveillance has also to do with the future survival of the old leadership. For instance, the promoted young pastors may be inclined to protect the interests and the dignity of the old leadership.

6.3.4 Doing away with the practice of keeping favoured young individuals in leadership positions beyond the period stipulated by church bylaws.

Sometimes officers are chained in their positions beyond the term stipulated in the bylaws. An example is the appointment of a pastor as a member of the Church Council for five consecutive terms, a secretary of the Church Council for a period of twenty years, or a director of an association for a period of more than ten years. This should neither happen with the deans nor with the parish council members. The late Bishop Auala, for instance, before he was elected bishop of ELCIN, occupied the position of secretary of the Church Council for sixteen consecutive years (1944-1960) (Auala 1977:161-162). Intentionally or unintentionally the tradition favours those it keeps in the position for such a long period of time. It creates access to leadership resources, popularity among voters, and the possibility of winning elections for the officers concerned although they may not be most the competent. I do not mean that these leaders are automatically incompetent. I mean there is danger in a tradition of favouritism. Opportunities for other members are blocked. It is a copy of the Owambo tradition where a successor of the previous headman, for instance, was someone who had an association with the ruling clan. This practice could lead to situations where unwanted but competent candidates become a threat to favoured candidates and are sent to remote rural areas or places with a low voter turnout. In a nutshell, this tradition creates position possibilities for some leaders and prevents the appointment and promotion of

others.

The exchange between diverse leadership gifts is neither believed in nor implemented. Justice is not allowed to take its course. There is a fear of being led by someone whose leadership talents differ from those of the old leadership and their associates. By doing so the system ignores democratic principles. As a church we should not fear, but have confidence in our own people. Electing weak leaders with the intention of defending our interests means weakening the church leadership, ourselves and the community to which we belong.

6.3.5 Developing a leadership policy that aims at bringing back former church officials to grass roots levels.

At present, pastors who climb up the hierarchical leadership ladder never come back to parishes. The intention of the policy we suggest is not to demote such former officials, but rather to offer them an opportunity to invest what they have gained in the communities which nurtured them. Surely, these people should have gained a lot of information, ideas, knowledge and experience about the church by visiting various churches the world over. They need to share and apply this expertise somewhere. The right place is the parish. It will be a mistake to leave these resources unutilised. For someone who had dealt with many people, it would be fascinating to concentrate on a few, for instance in one parish. On the other hand our policy tries to develop an awareness among grass roots people that experienced pastors are also good local pastors. There is a need to dismantle the notion that once one climbs up the hierarchical ladder, one is too dignified to turn back. Returning back is an investment and not a demotion. The hierarchical ladder should purposely be ascended for a limited period of time in order to serve the larger community, which is the church. Going back to the grass roots is returning to where we and our service belong most of our time on earth. The pastors should not be seen as superiors, figures who should not serve at local level. The policy I suggest is an attempt to help the leaders concerned not to see themselves as permanent upper class church workers.

6.3.6 Developing a theological approach that stresses the unity of Christians in one baptism and one holy communion.

I suggest that we do away with the current attitude that stresses ordination rather than baptism. Baptism is the ritual through which the baptized have been integrated into the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:13). Each baptized member was taken from his/her estranged state and given forgiveness, acceptance and genuine fellowship with God unconditionally (Nürnberger 1997:8-21). It is God who "calls us into his fellowship, condemns our sin, forgives us, accepts us, liberates us, involves us, and opens up his future for us" (Nürnberger 1997:9-21). Baptism connects the baptized with God who is the source of life and salvation, thus offers a state of peace with God and with one another. The significance of baptism is that it is the unchangeable foundation of the relation of Christians to God. Our acceptance by God in baptism is once and for all acceptance. The acceptance of the prodigal son by his father explains this state very well (Lk 15). It is through baptism that Christians receive the sign of the cross, a symbol of the death of Christ on the cross. Not only that, the cross is the symbol of the antagonism that might await Christians in their daily lives. The water used in baptism is the sign of washing away the sins of the believer. It stands for forgiveness and our inability to wash ourselves and to forgive ourselves. God alone is able to forgive. He forgives through those God has commissioned to forgive on His behalf (Nürnberger 1997:21) It is in this sacrament that the sinner is forgiven, accepted and declared a child of God through Christ. Again it is in this sacrament that the accepted and declared son or daughter of God is ordained to proclaim the will of his/her Father, who is God. For God it is not impossible to accept and to ordain the accepted at the same time. So every baptised Christian is an ordained believer. The sacrament of holy communion is a consolidation of the first one. It is strengthening and keeping awake the already baptised, but struggling Christian. Baptism is the entrance to church ministry and not ordination.

What happens in baptism can be compared with what was presumed to have happened in *olufi* and circumcision rituals among the Kwanyama traditionalists. The *olufi* is a ritual purification of the widower or widow to protect himself/herself from falling again into the state of widowhood after being remarried (Estermann 1966:80). The difference between the *olufi* and baptism is that baptism is a final foundation valid even beyond death while the *olufi* was valid as long as the

second marriage existed.

Circumcision was considered to be rebirth (Lebzelter quoted in Loeb 1962:238). On the circumcision day each boy was given a strip of a sheep skin to wear as a belt. When they returned to their homesteads, parents burned their old clothing and gave them the new clothing of youths. What happened in circumcision, was echoed by what took place in the initiation of girls, although they were two different rituals. The similarities between circumcision and baptism are that in circumcision a boy who survived through the process became a young man. In baptism, the new creation takes place between drowning and rising from the water. Both processes are final.

The ordination of pastors is a ritual agreed upon by the church which pastoral students have to undergo before taking up the ministerial office. The difference between ministers and lay people is that in ordination ministers have been entrusted with a function which they perform on behalf of the parish. In the Lutheran church ordination is neither a sacrament nor a means for the revitalization of ministers. Therefore it is not comparable with baptism. Lay persons should be given responsibilities to serve their fellow Christians either through diaconal work or by offering assistance to their leaders one way or another. Ordination should not be understood as a sharp demarcation between lay persons and ministers. The prime aim of introducing ordination was, is and should be to have individuals trained to proclaim the Gospel and administer the sacrament in a more proficient way. The new office does not overshadow completely the office of all baptised Christians.

6.3.7 Creating equal gender representation in the decision-making bodies of the church.

The purpose of creating equal gender representation in the decision-making bodies of the church is not to divide people into two gender camps. It is rather to unpack the fact that men and women are created to be together and to complement each other. Both are integral parts of the whole. They are equal in humanity but united in diversity. To be practical, men are normally physically stronger than women, thus most of them like to use force in order to reach their objectives, They do not want to waste time with what they consider to be insignificant details. Most women are

compassionate, like to enter into seemingly unimportant details in discussions with people, therefore often engage in the social and diaconal activities in the community. These two different characteristics are needed in daily life and institutional bodies whose decisions affect the lives of people. When the different characteristics of men and women are put together, balanced decisions as well as balanced procedures for making decisions can be the result. This unity is a gift from God who wants it to be utilised and respected.

The traditional notions that men are better executives or that women are passive by nature are not valid. The negative notion that, for the sake of recognition, women are forcing down their objectives on every programme is not true. Other questions such as, where were the women at the beginning of the church? Why introduce the change now? Why do women not respect the traditional culture?, and many others, are no longer relevant. What is relevant is the fact that women are in the majority at grass roots level, but very few are in decision-making positions, especially in the top leadership bodies (Hasheela 1994:14; Roger quoted in Scott 1990:52). Currently, there are two women diocesan members in each of the two Diocesan Councils, but there is no woman member in the Church Council (Eastern Diocesan Council resolutions July 1999 Par: 1; Western diocesan Council resolutions May 1999 Par: 1; Church Council resolutions July 1999 Par: 1). According to Pastor Haiping, few women are in the top leadership positions because men are preferred. Women are not granted opportunities for further studies like men are (Haiping 1999). This attitude should be transformed by electing and installing representatives from all generations and both genders in top governing bodies. Women should be allowed to further their academic qualifications.

At grass roots level women mostly engage themselves in educating other women and children. They do diaconal work among the poor, hungry, neglected and disabled people. Men have lost their place in education. The women have replaced them. This also means that women have become representatives of the people they serve. Therefore they should be at the centre of the decisions that affect their people. This is also a crucial moment for the women to prove their leadership capabilities, which most cultures in history, if not all, have disputed so far. But, although remarkable progress has been made concerning women issues, the local women are still exercising their power in the name of men. They do their work as described above while men are

in control. Therefore the situation of women in the ELCIN Church tallies with Susan Roger's conclusion that "the power of women in the village is 'more effective' but, at the same time, covert and informal. Men, she argues, accept this fact so long as there is no public challenge to their authority and so long as they are still given 'credit' for running things" (quoted in Scott 1990:52). "To exercise power in the name of another party is always to run the risk that the formal titleholder will attempt to reclaim its substance as well as its form" (Scott 1994:52).

6.3.8 Creating an environment that allows church lecturers and various other educators to continue educating parishioners.

Creating an environment that allows church lecturers and various other educators to continue educating parishioners addresses the literacy imbalance between theologians and parishioners. My suggestion is that parishes should work in close relationship with the theological seminary. By close relationship I mean that pastors whose parishes are situated in the vicinity of the seminary, should exchange pulpits with lecturers, and lecturers be allowed to lecture to parishioners. More remote parishes can be targeted and visited during vacations. Deans and bishops can delegate important topics and current issues to lecturers either in their parish visitations or in Circuit, Diocesan, and Church General Synods. On top of that, all church institutions of learning must be represented in all top decision-making bodies. This will help to develop a positive understanding of the church and its business activities.

Pastors have four years of theological training, evangelists or deaconesses three, other church workers are attending seminars and workshops. But the majority of the members are either semi-literate or illiterate. One reason for this situation is the indirect denial of access of black people to better education by the former apartheid education system. This happened in many ways, among them the separation of people according to their races and ethnic groups, with educated whites as superiors and black as subordinates, lack of schools, facilities, qualified educators, educational morals, competition among ethnic groups etc. The situation was different in white schools. The other reason, I suggest, is that most Owambo parents did not realise that the traditional cattle rearing business was gradually being replaced by industries for which one needs modern education. Because of the last mentioned fact many parents were slow in making the right choices.

The point to be made here is that it would be of great help if parishioners learnt from different resource persons. At the moment they rely heavily on local pastors, deans, and bishops. These are representatives of the hierarchical structure. They are people of authority. What they convey to parishioners is always in compliance with authority. This produces Christians who are authority oriented, one-sided and biased in their understanding and decision-making. The other side of the matter is that parishioners should have the opportunity to learn from different resource persons, for it gives them a good chance to balance the information. If not, the danger is that they develop an attitude of accepting only things that emanate from church authorities and not from other valuable sources. This would make leaders too authoritarian in their control of education and training opportunities and blocks the access of other experts into the system.

Theological lecturers should go and teach the rank and file in the congregations in order to prevent this from happen.

When theological intellectuals enter into parish life this will be an eye opener for most Christians. It will upgrade their knowledge, allow for new ways of utilising their own resources, and prevent obstruction of development in parishes. On the other side, theological intellectuals will have the golden opportunity not only to relate their theological perceptions to parishes, but to listen to parishioners and understand them better than before. On top of that, the opportunity will create better understanding, interdependence and co-operation between the church leaders and theological intellectuals.

6.3.9 Differentiating between the job descriptions of the parish, circuit and diocesan spiritual fathers and that of the church administrators

The spiritual fathers referred to here are the parish pastors, deans and bishops. The church administrators are the parish, circuit, diocesan and national church secretaries together with their deputies. According to the current constitution, the daily activities of the spiritual fathers put more emphasis on administrative work (ELCIN Constitution 1993:90-92; 102-103). This prevents their concentration on spiritual growth at all levels. At the same time, it slows down the administrative work, for the workload is too high for one person. The ultimate outcome is that neither spiritual nor administrative work is satisfactorily performed. The secretaries are there but without the

authority to do most of the things they are there for.

The central aim of the call of the pastor is to deal with the problems of the people, to reawaken and uplift them spiritually. This includes counselling, preaching, home visitation, children's and youth work, comforting, offering prayers, assisting co-workers and more. The deans and bishops should be the pastors of pastors, evangelists, deacons and other church workers at the circuit, diocese and national church levels.

What is taking place now is counterproductive. Pastors invest a lot of energy and resources into administrative work at the expense of spiritual growth. They are both spiritual fathers and executives at the same time. In the parish, for example, minor things such as preparing agendas for meetings, banking and withdrawing money, and many others which should be carried out by either a parish secretary or treasurer, are conducted by the pastor. This weakens rather than improves the performance of co-workers. In circuits, a dean convenes and chairs all board council meetings (ELCIN Constitution 1993:102). Both examples demonstrate how lay persons are hampered in developing their leadership skills. In a nutshell, the name and power of the pastor, dean or bishop is enhanced but at the expense of progress.

My suggestion is that the two offices be differentiated so that pastors deal with the spiritual side and administrators deal with the administrative side. Proper coordination between the pastors and administrators is highly encouraged.

6.3.10 Formulating an agenda for pastoral supervision in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia.

Pastors in parishes are under the jurisdiction of a dean, but they do not submit their work reports to his office. These reports are sent to the General Secretary of the whole church. However, except in the case of parish visitations, the office of the General Secretary does not deal directly with parishes. This means that the dean does not deal officially with the growth of parishes in a full sense. The dean should formulate a vision for the circuit together with his pastors at a pastoral conference. The pastors should then try to implement the common vision and send quarterly

reports on their progress. During visitations the dean should help the pastors to improve their performance. In most cases the circuit offices have no long term visions and are not sharing them with their parishes. This is something that leaves many parishes in the air. Apart from circuit pastoral conferences or individual advice, there is no platform in the circuit from which pastors can be properly supervised. The pastoral circuit conference is there to hear the dean's annual report and conduct theological discussions. It does not inform the dean of what is taking place in the parishes. The diocesan bishop, as well as the presiding bishop, also follows the patterns described above.

My suggestion is that each church leader should share his annual plans and objectives with the leaders under his/her supervision. This will help the lay leaders, pastors, and deans to draw up their plans in line with those of their supervisors. The dean should supervise his/her circuit parishes on a four term basis. This would mean that pastors will submit four reports to their deans annually about how the parishes progress. These reports should be submitted to the circuit office and not to the General Secretary of the church.

6.3.11 Doing away with the term of a bishop for life and adopting a five year term of office.

The present system is undemocratic and authoritarian. Its undemocratic nature lies in having no opportunity to elect new leaders for a long period of time. The church keeps someone it knows and never allows other qualified leaders to compete for the position. The result is that the gifts of many leaders remain unused. This system offers no alternative to the traditional Owambo leadership style where a king remains a king for life. But the truth of the matter is that good governance is not assured by the longer period of time a leader occupies a certain position. Good governance depends on the implementation of democratic principles in one's leadership roles.

The author suggests a five year term for the episcopal office with the possibility of one re-election, if the voters so wish. A period of five years in the office is enough for a leader to implement his/her plans and to avoid burnout and repetition.

6. 3.12 An Association should itself appoint its director.

The current practice whereby a director is appointed by the hierarchical authority at any level robs the association of the opportunity to choose its own leaders. The authority of the group to replace the leader through periodic elections is also taken from them by the system. One cannot replace someone else's appointee. The act of assigning a leader to people makes that leader loyal and accountable to the body that appointed him/her. A leader, whose primary loyalty is to the authority above the group of people he/she leads, is not easy to co-operate with.

In democratic governance the people have the opportunity to appoint their own leaders. An association should call its own director. Subordinates themselves must appoint their own leaders. The meeting can appoint a commission to advertise the post, interview the candidates who have applied, select the most competent candidate and install him/her into the office. The authority above should be informed.

6.3.13 From full time service only to full time service together with the tent-making ministry

Financially, the ELCIN is a poor institution. It should therefore introduce the tent-making ministry in the church. In earlier times parishioners used to bring foodstuff, financial assistance and other kinds of gifts to the parsonages. Pastors had meagre remuneration, but they had enough to eat. The subsistence economy in the region did not improve and is, therefore, no longer capable of coping with extra demands and needs. While expenses such as hospital and school fees, as well as water and electricity bills increase, monthly incomes do not keep pace. Although extended families, clans and traditional communities were sources of support in earlier times, it has now become difficult to maintain them. Everyone of us finds himself/herself in need of cash.

Before and during the liberation war in the country, the church was regarded as the safest working place, where one could work with peace of mind. Many people, politicians included, joined the work force of the church. Things began to change with the establishment of the national government in the country. Some competent pastors, including the former deputy bishop,

Amadhila, have left the church and have been employed in the government, in non-governmental organizations and other secular institutions. Some have left the church because of financial constraints in their parishes, whereas others did so because of disagreements between them and the top leadership (Eastern Diocesan resolutions 07 July 1999 Par: 96). This constitutes a brain drain for the church. Some of the pastors who left indicated their honest wish to continue serving the church on a part-time basis (Western Diocesan resolutions 26 March 1999 Par: 80). Constitutionally, there is no such provision made. But the church has allowed some of them, especially the seniors, to keep their clerical gowns.

Lots of money has been invested in the theological education of these and other pastors. ELCIN as a church has suffered financially because it has not yet authorised theological students to study theology at their own expenses. The assumption is that they pay back what was spent on their education by serving the church. The system does not accommodate lay theologians who want to study theology and serve outstations or parishes on a part-time basis. Therefore if the tent-making ministry is not accepted in the church, and pastors leave the ministry the money used has been wasted and people in the parishes suffer because of the shortage of ministerial leadership in their parishes. The Apostle Paul worked on a tent-making basis, while other apostles were full time church workers in Jerusalem. He did not burden his fellow Christians (2 Cor 12:14-21). Because of the meagre remunerations associated with full time service in the church, each full time pastor in ELCIN "has a small piece of arable land and cattle, which yield his yearly food" (Pentti quoted in Löytty 1971:42). This means, in fact, that the full time pastors are participating in the tent-making ministry anyway. It should also be kept in mind that full time pastors are not necessarily more responsible and disciplined (Nürnberg 1997:43).

Pastors who left the church on their own account and were neither involved in insubordination, embezzlement of funds nor in sexual immorality cannot be prevented by church authority to preach the gospel besides their work if they ask to do so. The ministry belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ and not to us. Who are we to prevent those who wish to serve the Lord from doing so? The Bible is full of exhortations in this regard. God kept his covenant with King David even after his affair with Bathsheba. He allowed him to rule Israel after his confession (2 Sam 11). At the last supper Jesus knew that his disciples would forsake him; Judas would betray him; Peter would deny him

(Mat 26:17-35). He told them what would happen, but allowed them the opportunity to serve him even though they were weak. The Apostle Paul, who was a persecutor of Christians, was turned into a chosen instrument of Christ to carry his name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel (Acts 9). The Reformers supported the idea of lay persons taking employment in secular institutions. Luther's understanding in this regard is that "the Christian must live in both kingdoms, and he is a citizen of the secular kingdom as well as of the spiritual one" (Althaus 1972:61). Besides the latter, the Christians who serve in secular institutions are to a certain extent "reformers" of those work places. One idea is that, if lay leaders also want to serve the church, they should be given some training and the opportunity to do so. The other idea is that, if somebody wants to undergo full theological training on his/her own steam and then serve the church in a tent-making capacity, he/she should be fully ordained and given the chance to serve as a pastor though on a part time basis (Nürnberg 1997:43).

6.3.14 Make parishes basic training institutions.

Geographically, most parishes in ELCIN are big. The number of people in one parish is very high. According to the ELCIN statistics of 1996, the highest number of parishioners in a parish was 11642 while the lowest number was 513 (ELCIN Statistics 1996: 5). The parish with the highest number of people is still served by one pastor, one deacon and one parish secretary. Besides the latter the parishes are expanding; townships and towns are established; parishes have no means of transportation; more workers are needed; many parishioners at outstations spend months and even years without seeing their pastors and are thus not participating in the sacraments; many graves are not consecrated; contributions in the form of millet are not transported to the parish offices and many other activities are neglected.

My suggestion here is to confer the full ministry to lay leaders in the parishes. Lay leaders should be authorised to administer both sacraments and pastoral care through a formal induction at outstations and in congregations. They should be allowed to wear gowns designed for that task. They should be licenced for a particular place and time not ordained. The licence should lapse, his/her term should come to an end when the appointee leaves such a place, or when he/she is no longer qualified to carry out the responsibility. Before granted with the licence the appointee

should agree “to undergo ongoing on-the-job training programme” (Nürnberger 1997:42). This suggestion is similar to the strategy ELCIN adopted when it inducted evangelists in former compounds, towns and cities in the industrial parts of Namibia. There evangelists who have been under the supervision of one ordained minister have been given the full ministry. The difference is only that the evangelists have been given the full ministry on condition that they have not to undergo ongoing on-the-job training programme because they already had formal training. Another difference is, presumably, that the evangelists were paid salaries. The strategy has only been applicable outside traditional parishes. We want to apply it to parishes now. When I was a pastor of Ohaukelo parish, which has eight outstations, I entrusted each outstation to an elder. My plan worked satisfactorily, therefore I have confidence that the above suggestion would be successful.

The sacrament should not be treated as something more holy than the sermon, which implies that whoever preaches could also administer the sacraments and that the preaching and the distribution of sacraments needs proper training. The adoption of this suggestion will neutralise the impression “that the power to wear a gown and administer sacraments constitutes the essence of the ordained ministry” (Nürnberger 1997:41). This contradicts Protestant theology because according to the latter the Word of God is more important than anything else. If the suggestion was adopted in ELCIN, the pastor would act as a trainer of the lay leaders and empower them in all aspects of the ministry, for instance once a month. This would give the pastor the opportunity to utilize his/her theological training and professional career. Competent lay leaders could be exhorted to take up theological courses at college and seminaries. The ordained minister would be understood as the trainer rather than the administrator of sacraments.

Lay leaders would be motivated to take their work seriously. They would receive theological training and authority, the two important aspects they miss in their present status. The parishioners would be taken seriously and be provided with a continuous service. This would lead to the enhancement of growth, quality, steadiness and financial support for the parish workers.

6.3.15 From authoritarian forms of worship services to community-centred forms

As it is now, all our church buildings and their pews have been built in such a way that the participants have to face the minister who is in front of them. All important activities, such as welcoming, liturgy, prayers, readings, sermon, sacraments, and marriages are performed in front. The contribution of the parishioners from the pews is restricted to their presence to listen and to sing hymns prepared for the occasion. Until today, it is a tradition in most of our parishes that the pastor pushes the wafers into the mouths of the participants and holds the chalice when they drink from it. I witnessed a case where a pastor made participants drink from the smaller chalices. The latter may no longer be relevant for mature Christians, who can take and eat for themselves.

I suggest that we sit in a circle when we attend worship services. Fortunately the circle form is used in all types of gatherings in Africa. The authoritarian forms of worship service have come with Christianity. It is not necessary to build new church buildings. We have to rearrange the pews so that they form a circle in the church buildings. We can either follow Nürnberger's suggestion that "the minister should stand behind the altar to close the circle" (1997:38) or build an altar at the centre of the circle. But the Oshiwambo tradition where a person of higher authority has to sit at a higher place than his/her subordinates is not applicable here. The hymns can be selected by the music director or a parish choir leader. The choir leader or any gifted person can chant the liturgy. We should say the creed with open eyes because it is an oath. The confession of our sins should be said when standing because kneeling reminds the elderly people of the homage paid to kings. Two or more parish members can be requested to say the formal prayers or be guided to prepare the prayers themselves. There should be free space for informal prayers. Either lay leaders hand the wafers and the chalice to the other members, or each member hands them to the next person after having taken.

The circle form has many advantages. It expresses the close relationship between the people gathered. People are taken seriously as adults and not children who have to be silent in front of their teacher. Sitting in a circle signifies that they are participants who have to contribute to the discussions. I have observed that contract workers led by evangelists had free space for informal activities in their worship services. This was one of the things that encouraged them to attend

worship services. The leader of the worship service would also not need to speak loudly because the audience is close to him/her. In public school classrooms, learners sit in circles. The same happens in the meetings of business leaders and their subordinates. There is no theological principle that prevents us from changing from the authoritarian form to the circle.

6.3.16 Participatory sermon

Since the word of God has been commissioned to us all (Mat 28:18-20), therefore all of us have to participate in its proclamation. The current situation in our parishes is that a pastor prepares his/her sermon alone and delivers it to the parishioners. Only in rare cases does a pastor involve other people in sermon preparations. Nobody is allowed to ask for clarification or something he/she does not understand during the sermon. It is also not permitted to express an opinion or to make a contribution. The passivity of the members is based on their understanding of the Bible as the word that must not be critiqued. My personal observation is that members often thank their pastors for “excellent sermons delivered” instead of challenging them to improve.

The following summarises a practical suggestion Nürnberger offers on how to involve groups of people in sermon preparations. At least once a month the pastor convenes a group of five to eight people from different backgrounds, each time a different group. They brain-storm first the meaning of the text before the pastor offers some important historical and theological insights. Together they formulate the message of the text and reflect on how this message impacts each member’s daily problems at his/her own place of work. From there all relevant parts of the sermon are put together before being entrusted to the pastor to combine them into a proper sermon. During sermon delivery, members of the group “take turns to preach sections dealing with particular aspects within the same sermon”. The sermon is followed by an open floor for questions and contributions from the congregants (1997:40).

Besides the latter example, the pastor can prepare a sermon alone, but allow members to participate in it by discussing it by sharing comments, insights and problems. It is helpful and educative if members have to question and to respond to each other. The pastor does not have to respond to each question and should not take constructive criticism personally. The aim is to

motivate the participation of members, to help improve the performance of the parish leader, and to encourage the congregants to share their scriptural insights among themselves and with a pastor who is not a super-Christian. Molebatsi offers two alternatives. Every Sunday he discusses with a group of people what they will preach next week. Someone in the congregation who has the gift in the area suggested will collect and study the material. The second method is to announce the text for the next week's sermon on a Sunday worship service. On that Sunday, the attendants divide themselves into groups. One of the groups will be asked to draft the introduction. To work comfortably, two or three people could be requested beforehand to prepare the introduction. The rest of the text will be divided among the groups. They discuss "what is the Lord saying in this particular text?" In the plenary each group brings its points while the pastor coordinates (1991:577).

Both the pastor and the other Christians are adults who have insights to share. Because of his theological training the pastor is able to offer the historical and theological meaning of the text while the members have the experiential tools that enable them to know which current issues the word has to challenge in their communities. It is a fact that more time is needed in coordinating many insights, but it increases the theological expertise of the pastor. His/her quality of preaching will improve and his/her parish members will remember him/her in their subconscious wherever they are during the week. Because the participatory sermon is made of sections that address different aspects of lives, people will want to participate and find answers for the problems they might encounter in the future. Participatory sermons place the proclamation of the word of God on many shoulders. They contribute to the spirit of a different worship service where all members participate and not only the pastor who has to do everything for them. The pastor will be considered to be a leader who helps others to help themselves. In Molebatsi's practices, the parish members have the right to suggest the texts which they think relevant to the current situation of the parish. This practice does away with the right of the Church Council or the pastor to pre-determine the pericopes and transfers it to the members. However, I would assume that most Lutherans prefer pre-determined pericopes because they give the presenters more time to prepare themselves and make it easier to maintain order.

6.4 Conclusion

A leader is 'first among equals'. It is not the leader that lies at the centre of decision-making, but the body itself. The members and not the leader are to be served by these decisions. A leader leads together with the people and does not lead while others implement his/her ideas. The leader is a member of the leading body among others. Each member is entrusted with a gift by Christ whom he/she represents. The participatory model places leadership responsibilities on clerics and lay leaders. All participate in the creation of the vision and encourage members to transform the society. By doing so, they identify their gifts; they build each other up; they fill each other's empty space and transform the authoritarian model into participatory leadership.

Recommendations are that ELCIN should desist from creating more hierarchical layers and instead develop parishes. More graduates should be assigned to parishes to act as trainers of others and facilitators of the new developments. The church should do away with leadership ascription to avoid corruption, nepotism, clienteles and others. Young and old competent leaders should be appointed. The highly trained people, who are in a small number in ELCIN today, must be carefully utilised at strategic points and act as supervisors of the local pastors. The church should do away with a tradition which promotes favouritism among church workers. The practice weakens the church leadership. A leadership policy that aims at bringing former church officials to local parishes is recommended. The implementation of such a practice would enrich these communities. The church should develop a theological approach that stresses unity in one baptism and one holy communion. Both baptism and ordination of all the baptised are offered in one sacrament. Baptism stands for forgiveness of sin. The creation of equal gender representation in the decision-making bodies of the church is needed to ensure that men's and women's characteristics are utilised in these bodies. It helps the bodies concerned to pass balanced decisions and procedures of decision-making. The church is fostered to create an environment that allows theological intellectuals to continue educating parishioners through the exchange of pulpits between them and pastors and lecturing during visitations and church meetings. The parish pastors, the deans and the bishops are encouraged to execute spiritual, supervision and oversight tasks and leave administrative work for administrators. Such an approach would promote spiritual growth. ELCIN should formulate a pastoral supervision that allows the bishops to formulate the

vision of the church with their deans and deans with their pastors. Efficiency and proper communication would be guaranteed. The church should do away with the term of a bishop for life and adopt a five year term of office that avoids burnout and repetition on the side of the leaders and provides the opportunities to elect new leaders. ELCIN is exhorted to introduce the tent-making ministry in its constitution because remunerations of pastors are very small. This would give the church the opportunity to confer full ministry to lay leaders who are undergoing continuous theological training. ELCIN should refrain from authoritarian forms of worship services to a community-centred form, in which lay persons are encouraged to participate fully in worship activities. Participatory sermons in which the pastor offers historical and theological tools, while parishioners offer experiential tools is recommended. This practice would improve the performance of pastors and that of members.

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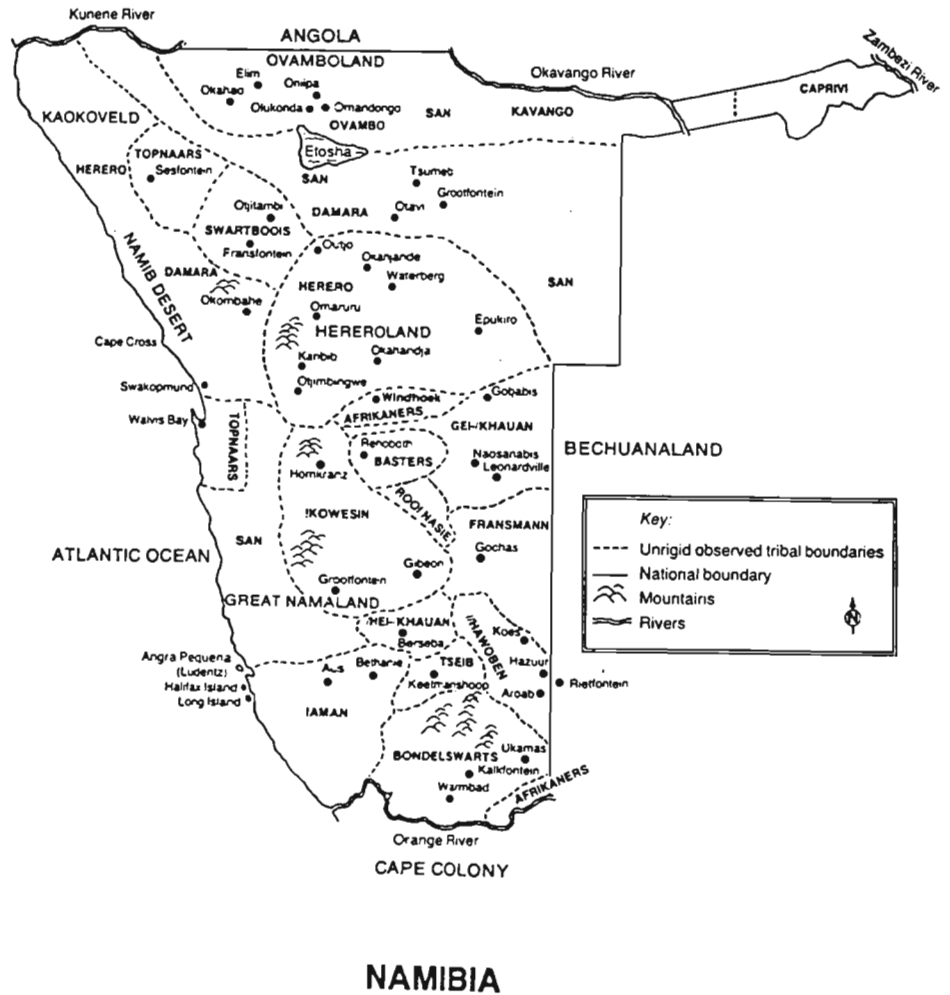
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TRADITIONAL LAWS AND SOCIAL NORMS OF OWAMBO KINGDOMS

A. Traditional Laws⁶

1. *Murder*: No one was allowed to take the life of another person. If such a case occurred, the offender was expected to pay the following to the deceased's clan:
 - (i) *Ten oxen*: The two clans, that of the offender and that of the victim, were summoned to a certain place, where an ox would be slaughtered with a spear. The blood spilled was a sign of the deceased's blood. This ox was never skinned; it was just cut and roasted with its skin in open flames. Another ox was given to the King, and the rest to the deceased's clan.
 - (ii) A well-processed *string of pearls made from ostrich eggshells*: as a sign of the deceased's intestines.
 - (iii) A *ball of tobacco*: symbolized the deceased's head.
 - (iv) A *loaf of salt*: symbolized the deceased's brain.
 - (v) A *pipe* which would be smoked in turns between the offender's and the deceased's clans: the pipe was aimed at binding the two clans together, hence as a sign of peace and forgiveness.
2. No one was to put out another person's eye.
3. Rape or adultery were serious offences.
4. No grown-up girl was allowed to leave the kingdom. And no pregnancy was allowed before the girl passed through the initiation rite, or she was exiled or punished by death.
5. All contracted debts must be paid; in case of death, then the clan will be responsible for paying or claiming the deceased's debts or credit respectively.
6. Pyromaniacs were to be punished with death.
7. Witchcraft and magic were prohibited.
8. No bull were allowed to leave the kingdom.
9. No one was allowed to harvest sorghum before the king have send people to fetch ontsakala.
10. No one is allowed to fetch salt from the pans before such a period is formerly inaugurated and before all the grain is harvested.
11. No one is allowed to be armed while on a salt-fetching trip; only a knob-kierie is allowed to be carried.

12. Cattle must not be let into the field to eat stalks before the salt-pan excursion had returned.
13. No one was allowed to build a granary during the salt-pan excursion or before its return.
14. The drum must not be beaten during the rainy season

B. Social Norms⁷

1. The King is untouchable: no commoner is allowed to beat or kill a member of the royal clan.
2. No one was allowed to enter sacred places with sandals on his/her feet.
3. No one was allowed to touch sacred things: for example, the country stone, etc.
4. The King must not eat pig's meat.
5. A blind prince/princess must be killed.
6. A left-handed prince/princess, or one with an eye cataract were not become a King or a queen.
7. If the King's wife gives birth to twins, then he should give her to become the wife of one of his subjects.
8. Two mature members of the royal clan cannot live close to each other, and their cattle are not supposed to graze on the same field.
9. Royal persons were not allowed to marry each other.
10. No thief must take away the sacred fire, and it must never be extinguished while the King is alive.
11. No salt must be fetched between the seeding and harvesting periods.

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Appendix III

King Mandume's new laws

1. Since the nobility could be bribed easily, only petty legal cases might be heard in their courts. Important cases were to be brought before Mandume himself.
2. Peace should be kept with all the tribes to the south; it was forbidden to raid their cattle or to exact tribute from them. The traders who entered Kuanyama Land were not to be molested.
3. The custom of exacting tribute within the country (okasava) was abolished.
4. No noble should rob another of his cattle or engage in civil strife.
5. In a case of assault where blood was drawn, a fine must be paid, whether or not the plaintiff died from his wounds.
6. No person should be killed because he was accused of witchcraft.
7. If a girl became pregnant before her efundula (puberty and symbolic group-marriage ceremony), she should not be allowed to commit abortion^①

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