

**THE MISSION AND THE ROLE OF THE WOMEN'S MANYANO
MOVEMENT IN THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTHERN
AFRICA**

BY

**REV FANNIE SOLOMON MKHWANAZI
(9609054)**

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Supervisor: Prof. I A Phiri

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a study of the mission of the Women's Manyano in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, beginning from 1907 to 1997. It focuses on the barriers and successes this organisation has experienced during the years of its mission. It also examines the history of the formation and objectives of the organisation especially within the structures of the church. It attempts to analyse the reaction of the hierarchy of the church in order to understand why the organisation had no representation at executive meetings at the national level for a very long time.

It will compare similarities and differences between the organisations that are within the church and the influence that it has on other organisations inside and outside the church. The organisation did not agree when the church called for the unification of all the churchwomen's organisations. Manyano saw this as a call to its downfall because they had no real similarities with other women's organisations within the church.

Although the Women's Manyano is the largest in the church, her representation at national conferences was still minima. At the same time the church proclaim a message of Priesthood of all believers. Women's Manyano is the backbone of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. Without such an organisation the church could not have grown very fast.

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Ownership of the faults in the dissertation.

Thanks to all the people who agreed to be interviewed. It is not possible to mention all of them by name.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

M.C.S.A.	-	Methodist Church of Southern African
M.C.O.	-	Methodist Connexial Office
W.A.	-	Women's Auxillary
W.M.	-	Women's Manyano
B/W	-	Biblewomen
Y.M.G.	-	Young Men's Guild
Y.W.M.	-	Young Women's Manyano
L.P.	-	Local Preachers

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INTRODUCTION

1. Aim of this study

The central aim of this study is to examine the role and mission of the Women's Manyano in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. This organisation came into being in 1907 and is still operational. In this study attention has been given to its role and mission during the time of apartheid as well as how the Manyano succeeded in such a male dominated church for so many years without representation at conference level.

1. Motivation for the study

The inspiration of writing about the Women's Manyano comes from the deep desire to understand and love the organisation. Many people who are now members of the Methodist Church in Southern Africa say that they were converted and healed through the prayers of the Manyano which were offered in different homes, churches and in different services. I know how my own parents brought me up in prayer because of Manyano. I have met the Manyano at various levels and have felt their impact. At society level I have seen how they worked for the development of the church. At circuit level, they have uplifted the living condition of our poor black ministers from the oppression of white dominated churches, which are more powerful financially. The district and the connexional gathering are the climax of the whole mission of Manyano.

Whenever two or more members of the Manyano meet for prayer, the whole surrounding knows about their presence because of their contribution in empowering the church and the community at large. Thursday is their day of prayer and one can see throughout Southern Africa, red blouses and black skirts flocking to different churches, bereaved families, schools, hospitals and prisons. This organisation really inspired me because of the clear understanding of the work of God.

Manyano members are determined people of God. One can see them in prayer constantly, especially in times of faction fights, misunderstandings in churches and in the war zones. Manyano organisation is always speaking for the poor and comforting bereaved families. They are unlike other organisations in the same Methodist Church of Southern Africa, like the Young Men's Guild and Women's Auxiliary as it will be shown in this study.

A certain old lady, who was a member of Manyano, used to visit us at home dressed in her uniform. She taught us the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments. Class and status did not matter to her. She just held us together and taught us from her Bible. She was one of the people who showed me what leadership is all about. Her visits were not weekly, but the day she visited us the whole family was blessed. My grandmother and the old woman were best friends. She used to tell us how Manyano lead and preached the gospel to the unknown.

I was shocked in the late eighties to learn that at church conference level, men represented Manyano. I did not understand why the women did not come by themselves to report to the church conference about their activities. I also noticed that when a man represented the Manyano organisation, it was not effective because they left out most of the good things that the organisation was doing in the church and in the society.

In the early nineties the church wanted to do away with the Manyano but they spoke the language of the church by saying that all the women's organisations in the church should form one organisation as a way of getting rid of their differences. I observed that white church leaders were using black ministers to destroy the women's Manyano, by electing them as spokespersons of the Manyano.¹

Fortunately, there was very strong opposition from the women's Manyano at the conference of the Methodist Church who wanted to make decisions for the organisation e.g. how the women's Manyano should work and with whom. The women questioned as to why the women's Manyano became a target of the church? They felt that the church does not seem to appreciate the work that the Manyano have rendered up to the present.

¹ See Minutes of Conference 1990, page 252

3. Statement of the problem

This thesis is an interpretation of the mission of the Women's Manyano from 1907 to 1998 in a male dominated church. Most mainline churches in Southern Africa are male dominated including the Methodist Church. After all these years the Manyano in their mission have devoted their precious time and work of mission in the church, which has not been recognised by the very same church. It is clear that, without the Manyano, the Methodist Church would have died long ago. It puts to the fore how the women's Manyano started her mission and how she involved herself in an apartheid church to pay stipends and travelling allowances for ministers. It is a reflection of how the women's Manyano have kept the mission of the church going during the apartheid regime of South Africa.

4. Methodology

This study is a missiological approach to Women's Manyano Organisation. Mrs. C. Thema says: "The women's Manyano is ours, and nobody is going to tell us where to go from here. We as Women's Manyano, know where we are going." These words were said out of anger and despair. To me, mission is empowering the oppressed and marginalising the salvation of all humankind. Women's Manyano have done their mission in the church. God used this organisation in many respects. Many people have been healed and families have been restored, especially those who broke down by separation. Their prayers have worked, to restore harmony in many respects.

This is the first study of the Manyano. There are no written records of the organisation. In order to do research for such an organisation, one needed to conduct many interviews with many staunch members of the organisation, General Presidents, Presidents of Districts and Conventions of the Manyano organisation. I collected booklets and pamphlets as well as Minutes of the Methodist Conferences from 1907 to 1998 and I also had to make a critical analysis of her mission. I have also studied many booklets from different Consultations and Triennial Conferences. This included Minutes of Women's Manyano Triennial and Biennial Conferences, Convention minutes and reading many books on Women's organisations in the church.

5. Outline of Study

In the first chapter of this dissertation I will give a brief background to the birth of the Methodist Church of South Africa. I will also discuss Methodist methods of evangelism and the spread of the gospel by the indigenous people.

In the second chapter, I will discuss the formation of the Women's Auxiliary, which was the first women organisation in the Methodist Church of South Africa. I will examine their ways and methods of attracting African women to become members of the Women's Auxiliary and why the African women refused.

In chapter three I will discuss the formation of Women's Manyano. I will look at the origin of the organisation, their constitution, the early uniform, and the attitude of the

hierarchy of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa to the Women's Manyano.

Chapter four I will discuss the structure of the Women's Manyano with the intention of showing the importance of unity in the mission of the Manyano. I will examine the relationship between the Women's Manyano and other organisations within the Methodist Church and other denominations in South Africa.

In chapter five, I will study the growth of the Women's Manyano from its inception to the present. It will show how the Methodist Church in Southern Africa's schism from 1921 to 1998 affected the growth of the Women's Manyano. It will present tables to indicate the number of branches and membership of the Women's Manyano from 1907 to 1998.

Chapter six examines in detail the mission of the Women's Manyano as it spread in Natal, Transvaal and Transkei. It will emphasise the different personalities who held leadership positions and motivated the spread of the Gospel.

Chapter seven deals with the problems encountered by the Women's Manyano as they spread the gospel in Southern Africa.

Chapter eight is the conclusion of the study. It examines again the mission of the Women's Manyano and proposes the need for the organisation to go beyond Southern Africa in its mission.

CHAPTER 1

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

1.1 Introduction

This chapter details the beginnings of the Methodist Church in the eighteenth century England. There were many emerging changes in the industrial revolution that had a bad impact on the poor, and this led to their immigration from the countryside in search of labour in the nearly developing industrial areas. The issue of social concern was taken up by John Wesley, and it led to a religious revival. His ministry as a missionary to the American Colony of Georgia and his Association with the Moravians paved the way for his evangelical conversion at Aldersgate in 1738. Methodist zeal for evangelism led to the formation of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society in 1813 to monitor the missionary activity. In 1795 the Methodists separated themselves from the church of England, and it was the year that some British troops, among whom were a few Methodists arrived in the Cape. Methodism was introduced into South Africa in 1806, in the Cape Colony by George Middlemiss, and Sergeant Kendrick in 1812 established the Methodist Missionary work of Southern Africa.¹ Thus in 1812 Sergeant Kendrick sent an urgent request for a minister to the London Missionary Society. Mention is made of the role played by the missionaries and Revd. Barnabas Shaw in Namaqualand. Revd. William Shaw arrived in Delagoa Bay in 1820 with settlers and the chain of mission stations that he established.

¹ W. Gordon Mears : Methodism in the Cape : An outline Cape Town Methodist publishing House, 1973, p6

1.2 The Spread of Methodism in South Africa

Some Methodists were among the British troops that were stationed at the Cape in 1795. They hired a little room for prayers and had their meetings once a week for two hours. This little room became known as the chapel of the Methodist church.² These informal prayer meetings continued until they were transferred with their regiment to East Indies. Among the soldiers in the 72nd Regiment that occupied the Cape in 1806 was George Middlemiss who, as a Methodist layman, openly shared his faith. In 1812 Sergeant Kendrick, one of the non-commissioned officers of the 21 Light Dragoons, a British regiment, arrived at the Cape. Kendrick was a Methodist and had been converted under the ministry of Revd. George Meley. Being a class leader and a local preacher, Kendrick began

Methodist services solely for the benefit of the members of his regiment and within relatively short time 120 soldiers became devout Christians.

In 1812, Kendrick wrote to the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, on behalf of the members of the Cape Society saying:

“in the name of the Methodist Society at the Cape of Good Hope, I request that my letter may be laid before Dr. Coke ... that a preacher may be sent to be stationed at the Cape, if he conceives that is practicable, and that it will tend to the Glory of God!”³

² Hewson, L.A. : An Introduction to South African Methodists, 1950
The Standard Press, Cape Town, Pass 1

³ Hewson, L.A. : 1950, p36

In response the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (hereafter WMMS) sent the Revd. John McKenny in 1814 with instruction to preach to the soldiers, the white inhabitants and the large indigenous population. For McKenny to exercise a ministry at the Cape, permission had to be obtained from the Governor. The Governor at the time was Lord Charles Somerset who refused. McKenny waited several months in hope that permission would be granted. When it was continually refused, McKenny left for Ceylon.⁴

The soldiers at the Cape were greatly disappointed at McKenny's departure and made a second request to the WMMS. On the 14th April 1816 the Revd. Barnabus Shaw landed in Cape Town. Like his predecessor Shaw⁵ sought permission from Lord Charles Somerset and resolved that:

“Having been refused the sanction of the Governor on the following Sunday I commenced without it. The congregation was at first chiefly composed of pioneers and soldiers and it was in a room hired by them that I preached Christ crucified in South Africa.”

The persistent opposition from the authorities discouraged Shaw. He began to turn to the “heathen” for whose conversion he maintained “he had been chiefly sent out.” Shaw left the Cape in 1816 to commence the Methodist mission to the people of Namaqualand. By June 1811 the first two converts from among the Namaquas were baptised – one of whom was Jacob Links - two marriages were performed and the Lord's Supper celebrated.⁶

⁴ Hewson, L.A. : 1950, p36

⁵ Hewson, L.A. : 1950, p37

⁶ Hewson, L.A. : 1950, p 45

In 1826 Shaw was requested to return to Cape Town and the Methodist Missionary work in Namaqualand was left to Revd. E. Edwards with Jacob Links as his assistant.

The arrival of the 1820 settlers in the Eastern Cape launched Methodist Missionary work in that area. Among the 1820 settlers was a young Methodist Minister, the Revd. William Shaw, who came as a Chaplain to the Sephton party.⁷ These immigrants arrived in Algoa Bay and settled at Salem. Shortly after Shaw's arrival at Salem he wrote:-

“This station will be the key to Kaffirland. While steadily pursuing the work of the day my eye is constantly fixed on Kaffraria as a great field for future missions. I thought about it, talked about it, read every scrap of intelligence I could obtain concerning it and often prayed and engaged others to pray with me that a wide and effectual door might in due course be opened before us into the region beyond.”⁸

1.3 Places of Evangelism

Revd. William Shaw left Grahamstown in 1823 to look for more mission stations amongst the indigenous tribes.⁹ The first stations was formed amongst the Gонуquabi, the second at Mount Coke with Ndlambe people and the third at Butterworth with Hintsa, who was killed in a war in 1834.

⁷ Hewson, L.A. : 1950, p95

⁸ Garret, A.E.F. : South African Methodism – Her Missionary Witness
n.d., Methodist Publishing House, Cape Town, p 6-7

⁹ W. Gordon, Means : 1973, p15

The liberation of the Fingos led to the establishment of another station among the Depa's clan by Revd. J. Ayliff. The sixth station was at Buntingville among the Faku's people and this created a chain of stations towards the Natal border. The church grew amongst the indigenous to such an extent that there were sixty-six thousand full members, twenty-nine thousand on trial and twenty-three thousand junior classes by 1834. The Revd. H.H. Dagmore, W.J. Davis and B. Warner translated the first Zulu New Testament in 1859, assisted by the German missionaries. Mount Coke had a mission station where this was printed.¹⁰ Many schools were built by the missionaries and under the name of Methodist Church assisted by the Government of the day and several industrial departments that imparted instruction in carpentry, blacksmithing, shoemaking and agriculture for that matter. Healdtown was also built around about that time. It was the largest built Wesley Training College for indigenous teachers.

In the Northern Free State the First Methodist Church was at Thaba Nchu, which is situated on the border of Lesotho – a mountainous area that is familiar to students of the Boer war. The Barolong settled there in 1833 under the Revd. J. Edward after they were driven out from the Vaal River. In 1873 the Trinity Church was built, the foundation stone was laid by Sir John Brand, the then President of the Orange Free State. Slowly the Methodists extended their operations to Fauresmith and from there to Kroonstad. The war of 1899 –1902 disorganised the work of the church around the area at Kimberley, many inhabitants were escorted to Kroonstad and the area of the mission was deserted. Bethlehem was destroyed by the war. At Frankfort the Church was completely destroyed. Heilbrom Church was converted into a hospital. In 1842 British troops were

¹⁰ Garret, A.E.F. : p8-9

ordered to march to Port Natal to protect indigenous and few English residents from the aggressions of the Dutch emigrants farmers and the Revd. J. Archbell and family accompanied them. He was the first Wesley minister to settle in Natal. His first task was the erection of a church which Whites described as a walled building, with a verandah all round, a thatched roof without any ceiling and an earthen floor.

When the first group of indentured Indians arrived in 1860, Methodism was firmly with a number of church building erected and worship services were held at Durban, Verulam, Pietermaritzburg, York, Greytown, Riet Vlei, Mooi River, Ladysmith and Newcastle. In 1847 Revd. James Allison accompanied a party of refugees from Swaziland and settled in Natal. Labouring chiefly among the Black population he was instrumental in establishing a mission station at Indaleni and later on, invited to Edendale. Methodism flooded the whole of Natal with the gospel.

Pietermaritzburg has the honour of being the first Methodist Circuit to adopt the weekly offering. It was resolved that every Sabbath, both morning and evening services, a collection would be made and the practice is now observed in every Methodist Church, throughout South Africa.

In 1862 the Revd. Ralph Scott born in the village of Woodale in Northdale, Yorkshire, England on November 15th 1801, commenced a mission amongst the people. The success of the mission was small when judged by numerical returns. Zululand, Ingwavuma and Kosi Bay was invaded by Eshowe. The war that took place between the Dutch fell heavily on Natal, especially at Dundee and Newcastle resulting in

abandonment. The Wesleyan Church was used as a hospital and services were held in the parsonage garden.

1.4 Spread of the Gospel by Indigenous people

The Methodist Church was first introduced in the Transvaal by David Magatta, an African from Magaliesberg. He first heard the gospel preached by the American missionaries in 1836 in Masega. There was an attack by the Dutch Boers and he fled to Thaba Nchu where he became a sincere Christian. It was here that he received a "note" from Revd. William Shaw to preach. Returning to Magaliesberg he learnt of so-called Coloureds and Black people settling in Potchefstroom. Mzilikazi and his warriors attacked the Tswana tribe in 1830 and he was taken as a slave to Mosega. When Voortrekker commands attacked Mzilikazi in 1838, Magatta was compelled to flee to Thaba Nchu. While in Potchefstroom, the Boers were offended that a black man was preaching their religion and had Magatta whipped and banished.¹¹

In 1873 David Magatta was joined by George Blen and George Weavid to build on the pioneering of the Boers, which almost brought the Methodist Missionary work in the Transvaal to an end. The Barolong, formerly the object of the labours of the apostolic Broadcast, once more offered the opportunity for evangelism with the chief asking for a missionary.

Revd. O. Watkins arrived in Swaziland. Msimang, who had been Allison's interpreter for forty years, came forward once more to share the same Christian message of love. There was a missionary revolution all over the Transvaal, missionaries attacking and

¹¹ Balia, D.M. : Black Methodists and White Supremacy in South Africa, 199', Madiba Publishers, Durban, p 16-17

filtering the whole land with the good news of Jesus Christ. Indigenous people all around South Africa wasted no time in adopting the gospel on their own. For example, the Western services (as they were then called) in Natal and the Cape Colony operated for years without the assistance of European Teachers.

In order to meet the great demand for teachers and evangelists, an African training institution was established first at Potchefstroom and later in Kilnerton, near Pretoria. This was developed into training for African evangelists and a normal school for boys. Johannesburg developed into a town of considerably more than a hundred thousand inhabitants with phenomenal rapidity.

Development was from east to west with good reports of Robert Mashaba. He belonged to the Ronga tribe. Mashaba and his uncle sought work in Durban where his education began leading him to Port Elizabeth. Here he met Peny Pickasana who introduced him to Methodism. He was also influenced by Revd. James Dwane who urged him to return to his own people and evangelise them. By 1885, Mashaba had started a school in Lourenco Marques. Writing to the Imvo newspaper at King Williams Town he stated that he had 200 converts awaiting baptism and that unless the Methodist Church came to his help, he would be compelled to give these converts to the Anglicans. The Methodist Church responded by sending Revd. William Mthembu. He baptised the converts and thus, the first Methodist Church in Delagoa Bay came into being.¹²

In 1896, the first church was built at Bulawayo, the cornerstone being laid by Cecil Rhodes. Revd. J. White joined the mission and in time translated the New Testament into

¹² Belia, D.M.: 1991, p 18-19

Shona. He had also written many hymns in the same language and the mission was carried out quickly due to the Shona people understanding all they were taught. Across the Zambezi were the African tribes, where Methodism had yet to be introduced to the other churches. These tribes excited the hopes of the Methodist Church.

1.5 Conclusion

When the first missionaries came into South Africa they encountered inhabitants who already had their own understanding of God. They called Him “Thixo”, “Umvelinqangi”, “Modimo”, “Shikwembu”, etc. it is unfair for anyone to think that the Methodist Missionaries were the first people to come in and teach the indigenous people about God. It is true that the fields are ripe for the Gospel.

“Do you not say, that there are yet four months, then comes the harvests. I tell you lift up your eyes, and see the fields are already white for harvest. He who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life so that the sower and the reaper may rejoice together. For there the saying holds true. One sows and one reaps, I sent you to reap that for which you did not labour: others have laboured and you entered into their labour.”¹³

The way the fire of the gospel moved showed that the labourers were reaping what they had not laboured for previously. Their faith gave them hope for victory, to spread the gospel to the borders of South Africa. This spreading of the gospel had positive results, especially in tribal faction fights. It also changed the attitudes of the inhabitants, taking them from their own traditional comfort zones and challenging them to approach even

¹³ R.S.V. Bible : John 4:35-37

their worst enemies of their tribes. The Methodist people were known for their hymns of joy and for allowing the “Priesthood of all believers to take the gospel everywhere.”

It is my understanding of Methodist that, it was not ministers who first came to South Africa but ordinary “Laities”, who had the zeal and inspiration of the gospel, who first made a move to the African people.

Many ministers during their coming into South Africa had many problems, especially with wars, and that hindered their mission. It was not only the Methodist but also other churches that first came to South Africa. A good attempt made by the London Missionary Society, to send in our labourers from a very large spectrum contributed to a massive understanding of Missio Dei among the African people. The other point of missionary work by the Methodist people was that many workers were sent to South Africa to keep the fires burning. Disciplining of new members was also very vital for the mission of the Methodist as it did not leave the community without somebody to continue.

It is not true that White ministers were working alone for the propagation of the gospel, there were African people who had zeal as well. They were used as interpreters for the White ministers and made it possible for the gospel to continue.¹⁴ After the ministers left the area, the lay people continued with the gospel and taught us that mission is always conducted in unity – if it is not, then there will be no mission at all.

¹⁴ Balia, D.M. : 1991, p 16-17

CHAPTER 2

THE WORK OF THE WOMEN'S AUXILIARY DURING 1907 TO 1999

2.1 Introduction

There were two streams in the origin of the Methodist Women's Auxiliary in South Africa, one in the Transvaal, which was then a Missionary District of British Methodism, and the other the rest of South Africa which had its own autonomous Conference. Women's groups were meeting for a variety of purposes, such as sewing, prayer, Bible study, missionary support and for a cup of tea.¹ The forerunner of the Women's Auxiliary was Revd. William M. Allcock who established a group in Johannesburg. The Revd. A.J. Johnstone also followed this example in Pretoria in 1907.

The main aim was to bring about a means that would enable women to take their place in the greater task of the church. The name "Auxiliary" expresses the intention from the beginning, to help and support the mission of the church in a more significant way than was possible in small isolated groups and to be recognised in so doing as an effective body. The tide of new awareness on the part of women played an important part. However, the overriding motive in forming the organisation was first and foremost a deep commitment to God. A strong spiritual foundation would be the ground of all their

¹ Attwell Peggy: *Take our hands, the Methodist Women's Auxiliary of Southern Africa 1916 – 1996*, Cape Town, Methodist Church of Southern Africa, 1997, p4

endeavours. Their records reflect the prime importance given to the spiritual nurturing of the organisation's members. This was not the end of their duties.

In 1916 the vision of the organisation was spelt out – 'the objective of the Women's Auxiliary shall be to organise and vitalizes the work of the women in the congregations of our various churches for united effort in the extension of the Kingdom of Christ, to revive and foster the missionary Spirit and to actively aid the local needs and responsibilities of the church.'² This was then followed by the duties of the local branches – which were earnest prayer and effort for the deepening of spiritual life, family religion and careful observance of the Sabbath, as well as the visiting of families, worshipping in the church, absent members and the welcoming of new members, to raise funds for the use of the local church and to work with native and coloured women in the church.

The spiritual life of the Women's Auxiliary goes beyond the confines of the organisation. Calls to prayer have been readily responded to over the years, especially in times of national crises and need. For example, in the early 1940, in the darkest hour of World War II, many services of intercession were held. In the church at large, throughout the Apartheid era prayer focused on the socio-political situation at all times, and vigils became part of life. From time to time the Methodist Church in South Africa has engaged in campaigns and large convocations and important milestones have been celebrated.³ The 'Year of Evangelism' in 1975 was entered into with enthusiasm. 'Obedience 81' was a watershed event with far-reaching effects within the Methodist

² Attwell, Peggy : Take our hands, the Methodist Women's Auxiliary of Southern Africa 1916-1996, Cape Town, Methodist Church of Southern Africa, 1997 : p5

³ Attwell, Peggy, : Take our hands, the Methodist Women's Auxiliary of Southern Africa 1916-1996, Cape Town, 1997 : p38

Churches. With women of other denominations the Women's Auxiliary supported the Women's World Day of Prayer on the first Friday in March each year, the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity each May and the National Day of Prayer in August. The membership of the Women's Auxiliary was opened to all – no conditions attached or qualification needed. Others joined because they were seeking spiritual direction and wished to draw nearer to God. Some were brought by friends. No pressure was brought to bear on anyone, no questions asked.⁴ But the reason for the existence of the Women's Auxiliary is clear, that is, to 'know Christ and to make Him known.'⁵

In keeping with the Methodist Church, generally the Women's Auxiliary is a closely co-ordinated body with inbuilt links of communication and accountability from one tier of responsibility to the next. Each component of the Women's Auxiliary structure as it now operated was put in place for practical reasons, guided by experience. Basic principles laid down by the founders are substantially apparent as the early minute books make clear. Its departments cover the work of the Women's Auxiliary, with a secretary for each one.

There are other activities, of a general nature, for which the Auxiliary is available, and these are very varied indeed. All members make most decisions in the open meeting.

The departments are:

- Christian Citizenship, which covers all aspects of social concern.
- Country and Postal Members, that minister by post to women living in isolated circumstances.

⁴ Methodist Church of Southern Africa Minutes 1974, p146

⁵ Attwell, Peggy : Take our hands, the Methodist Women's Auxiliary of Southern Africa 1916-1996, Cape Town, 1997: p82

- Church Unity, that is at Connexional level only. The Women's Auxiliary representative serves on the Women's Church Unity Commission.
- United Fellowship across denominational lines is included in Women's Auxiliary activities at local level.
- Fundraising.
- General availability and activities, that is, social events, support in various ways for Church and Women's Auxiliary projects and occasions.⁶

Time is given to devotions at every meeting and business can take up a considerable portion of the agenda. A range of subjects is also included, from information about church related bodies to work done by various organisations to meet special needs in the community and topics of general interest. Themes for the year are sometimes followed, such as the roles that women of different cultures fill in their communities, which is explained by women from those cultures, or a course to focus on different aspects of the spiritual experience. Magazine programmes are popular when members contribute short items of their choice. There are field visits, for example to a training centre, a children's or a senior's home, shelters for the destitute or squatter camps. Visits often result in giving support in one way or another.

2.2 Focusing on Mission

The missionary work of the Women's Auxiliary had so impressed the church that the representative from the Women's Auxiliary was placed on the Connexional Missionary Committee Meeting.⁷ Subsequently an approach was made to the Women's Auxiliary by

⁶ Peggy, Attwell : Take our hands, the Methodist Women's Auxiliary of Southern Africa, 1916-1996
Cape Town, 1997 : p 102

⁷ Peggy, Attwell : Take our hands, the Methodist Women's Auxiliary of Southern Africa 1916-1996,
Cape Town, Methodist Church of Southern Africa, 1997 : p92

the church to form what we call a separate Missionary Department.⁸ They preferred to concentrate their commitment to the support of Bible women. Yet their support of missionary work was never diminished. Among their earliest endeavours was the sending of letters, gifts and comforts to the wives of missionary ministers who lived far from civilisation. This led to a growing interest in the surroundings of and work being done by the missionary couples and soon collections of medicine bottles, tins, bandages, and many things that were in need. The supply seems to have been endless but so was the source of need.

2.3 Medical Missions

In the Eastern Cape the Mount Coke Mission Hospital received many donations from all over South Africa in the form of a steady flow of clothing, blankets, furnishings and other necessities. Semonkong Hospital in Lesotho was the recipient of money raised by the Women's Organisation including the Auxiliary. Women not only knitted many blankets but also answered an appeal for knitting needles and wool. They made shirts for patients and had the pleasure of visiting the mission and being shown over the Moroka Hospital and Nurses' Home. Mahamba Hospital in Swaziland received money towards the building of the clinic there. The Women's Auxiliary has continued to help in some of the hospitals where the needs of the people have not changed after all the hospitals were taken up by the government.⁹

⁸ Methodist Church of Southern Africa, Methodist Minutes 1992 : p273

⁹ Peggy, Attwell : Take our hands, the Methodist Women's Auxiliary of Southern Africa 1916-1996
p5

2.4 Indian Mission

Not so well known outside Natal is the Indian Mission with which the Natal branches have been closely associated. An ardent supporter of this work was Mrs Emma Little who in 1919 became a founding member of the Women's Auxiliary and later served the Natal District as Secretary. In 1944 with the District President, Mrs R. Albertyn, she helped in establishing the Lorne Street Branch of the Auxiliary.¹⁰

In 1970 there were nine Indian Branches of the Women's Auxiliary and such was their commitment to helping others that when they were moved from their homes to new areas the women continued to hold and attend their meetings.

2.5 Community Projects

Help has been given to causes outside the Methodist Church such as feeding schemes, homes for abused women and the street children. The Women's Auxiliary has always been connected with the Bible Society of South Africa, and, in some instances sending representatives to their monthly meetings to support the society. There was also a collection of used stamps that were sold to support a mission plane. The Transvaal branch committed its members to the financial support of an aircraft technician serving with the Missionary Aviation Fellowship. In Mozambique the Women's Auxiliary was helping to pay the salaries of an Evangelist and a Bible woman as well sending blankets to the mission.

¹⁰ Peggy, Attwell : Take our hands, the Methodist Women's Auxiliary of Southern Africa 1916-1996
p64

2.6 Bible Women in South Africa

Boyce Mama of Emfundisweni, Pondoland is mentioned by the Methodist Women's Auxiliary in South Africa as the first Bible woman supported by the Auxiliary.

Malla Moe of the Evangelical Alliance Mission in Swaziland began in the late nineteenth century to work closely with Bible women and an Indian Bible woman, Mrs Grace Martin, was appointed to the Methodist Indian Mission in Durban. She died soon after her retirement. She holds an honoured place in the annals of the Women's Auxiliary and was known and loved over a large area of the (so-called) native territories.

No direct contact with Bible women in other lands appears in subsequent Women's Auxiliary records that might account for this misconception as time went on. Initially the Bible women worked on mission stations. Mrs Ester Mqoboli worked in District 6. From then the Bible women worked in both rural and urban town environments. They shared many hardships with the people whom they served, such as drought with the resultant hunger and sickness. Drunkenness was a major and constant problem among the people, especially in the cities. The 1926 report comments:

'These faithful women do a work it would be impossible for anyone else to do, we thank God for such faithful service.'¹¹

¹¹ Peggy, Attwell : Take our hands, The Methodist Women's Auxiliary of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa 1916-1996, p3

The constant requests for more Bible women were recommendation enough. In 1929 the Missionary at Clarkbury appealed to the Women's Auxiliary to reach out in friendship to the people of the reserve and this was undertaken as an on going commitment.

2.7 Conclusion

It is clear that the organisation was there before all other Women's organisation. The time frame is not the same and how it started in South Africa nobody really knows. This organisation was a backbone of the church in helping the local society. Bible women in the church were paid by the Auxiliary tried to cross the bridge that was between Black and White.

It is imperative that we should be clear that the church in these years was working under a stressful situation and to understand that the coming together of Black and White in any given time was a shame to the ruling party. Even if the Auxiliary had an opportunity to work with the Manyanos, that would have given them a lot of extra duties. South Africa was in a terrible state of affairs, where Black people were so oppressed that they could not cope with all the demands of the Women's Auxiliary. It is clear that then the organisation also was not aware that it should harness the relationship between Black and White so that they could include Black women in the organisation. This was the grace of God that Black women were not part and parcel of the Women's Auxiliary for the sake of mission.

The Women's Auxiliary in not a racist organisation but it has never allowed Black women to be part and parcel of the organisation. What I mean here is that, yes they have never refused anyone, but did they ever try to convince anyone to come and be a member

of the organisation other than White people? I do not think that the organisation today follows what it is supposed to be doing now, its mission is supposed to be an outreach to the people. In many areas people are dying of hunger and need – some help and only a small percentage of the Women’s Auxiliary is willing to go into the field.

Help from such an organisation is not to be in a racial division but the organisation was supposed to work with the missions programme of both White and Black ministries. The aim was to aid the Women’s Auxiliary’s understanding of the difference between those who do not have and those who have. Yes, the Women’s Auxiliary did help the Mission of the church and keep it going but now it should look at the suffering of Black women working at their houses. Maybe one of the reasons that prompted Black women not to join this organisation was the treatment that they endured under their sisters and this brings us to the issue of a slave and a master.

The Women’s Auxiliary, as one of the organisation that was composed of the well-privileged society members, never voiced its deep concern on the enslavement of Black women by their sisters. In fact, it must be put in black and white that many members of this organisation were the ‘bosses’ of Black women and when the time come for church services they would leave them behind so that when they came back from church they would have food ready for them. Some of the ‘servants’ did not even have the opportunity to go to church.

My expectation of such a church organization,¹² which is one and undivided, is that it should have more members of different colours or race group than it has today. There are many races that are not included in this mission of the organization which has spanned so many decades without including Indian women in the organisation, which, is also part and parcel of their mission approach. I do not see any paradigm shift here because all the subsidiary organisations that were funded by the organisation no longer receive funding – what next? Hospitals were taken over by the government and Bible women are no longer supported by the organisation and where the organisation does provide funding, it is on a very small scale. What then is the duty of the organisation now?

¹² Peggy, Attwell: Take our hand, The Methodist Women's Auxiliary of Southern Africa, 1916-1996, Cape Town, Methodist Publishing Houses 1997, p146

CHAPTER 3

THE FORMATION OF THE MANYANO MOVEMENT (NYAMEZELO)

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I discussed the formation and the mission of the Women's Auxiliary in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. In this chapter I am going to discuss the formation of the Manyano Movement, origin of the Movement, the reason for the formation of the Manyano, the early Woman's Manyano Uniform, Leadership in the movement, how are they electing the leadership and the Manyano Members. This will show the difference between the two organisations of women in terms of their approach to mission. This will provide me with a yardstick to study the mission of the Manyano in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. (The desire to articulate this research of the Manyano comes from the circuit that I have served where there are few men but occupy most positions in the church and where there are women the church do not think of putting a woman in the highest positions.)

This chapter will show the situation where leadership in this organisation is sometimes given to people who are not really trained for such a position. They are only given such positions because they happen to be a minister's wife.

This is going to give me some insight of man in control of the whole organisation through his wife, and this is what I call clericalism.

3.2 Origins of Manyano

The Black Women of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa initiated the Manyano Movement. Initially, there was one organisation in the Church and that was the Women's Auxiliary.¹ The Women's Manyano was formed because the auxiliary could not meet with the Manyano regularly because of "boss and maids" relationship.

Women's Manyano was formed on 7th December 1907 at the place called Verdriet at Dundee. It is important to mention that there were four circuits representing the church that is Dundee, Driefontein, Newcastle and Nyanyadu. Few ministers were also welcomed to represent the Manyano at Synod and from there to conferences of the Methodist Church. They were Revds. J. G. H. Xaba, S. Msimang and E Msimang.

It was in that convention that the first name for Nyamezelo was suggested. This name means perseverance, to be strong in Prayer, to be consistent, to be faithful and optimistic about the future. All people who were present accepted it. They were chosen because they realised that there is a need for Methodist Women to unite so that they can also help Black Circuits from the well to do White Circuits.

The first President Mrs. Martha Mthembu and her committee agreed to bring all women of the Methodist Church in unity for a common goal. Many groups of Women praying in the Methodist Church were mushrooming all over South Africa. The idea of forming this organisation was an exciting one.

¹ Peggy Attwell, Take our hands, The Methodist Women's Auxiliary of Southern Africa 1916-1996
Methodist Church, Women's Auxiliary, Cape Town 1997, p4

The first committee of the organisation, which was elected in the very same year of 1907, consisted of Mrs. Martha Mthembu - President, Mrs. Mirriam Mthimkhulu – Vice-President, Mrs. Talita Mngoma – Secretary, Mrs. Sanna Cele – Assistant Secretary and Mrs. Joanna Malinga as treasurer.²

In this meeting it was agreed that a minister's wife should be President of this organisation and no lay-woman will occupy this position up to today.³ Therefore, the President and her Vice were ministers' wives. This is the tradition of the Women's Manyano when electing their President for the organisation.

² Minutes of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa 1937,233

³ J.B. Myembezi Umlando wo Manyano, A book in Zulu on the history of the Manyano, Kwa-Zulu Booksellers Plessis laer 1988,23

Picture of the President and her Secretary



Mrs. T. Mngaoma and Mrs. M. Mthembu

All ministers' wives who have an understanding of the Manyano and just want to lead are elected to this position. There is no criteria that is used for their election. As long as their President is a full member of the Manyano then she can stand for election:

3.2.1 The Constitution of the Manyano

They have agreed to call it Unyamezelo, which is a Xhosa word for perseverance, steadfast, be strong and faithful.⁴ Later on it was then called “Manyano”, “Kopana” which means unity.⁵

It was agreed that an Annual Convention would be based on a rotation plan so as to give all circuit the chance to host Manyano events. There would be a Triennial Conference for all the districts where all matters concerning the Manyano and the church laws will be discussed. Each member will pay a certain amount for membership. Thursdays will be their day of prayer for all the Manyano members and discuss their affairs.⁶ Committee members would be elected annually.⁷ All their members should wear full uniform and attend all prayer meetings.⁸

This constitution was very good in its initial stages and for the people of that time. I really appreciate and respect those who founded this organisation and strive for it. The Manyano have grown and it has many educated and learned people. Mission and business was said to be separated so as to put the vision clear to the people. There was

⁴ J.B. Nyembezi Umlando wo Manyano, a book in Zulu on the history of the Manyano Kwa-Zulu Booksellers Plessis laer 1988,⁵

⁵ Minutes of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa Conference 1937,233

⁶ Minutes of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa Conference 1937,234

⁷ Minutes of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa Conference 1937,234

⁸ Minutes of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa Conference 1937,235

mission but no strategy that still work in that way. The Manyano then becomes confusion in the midst of other secular organisations. Women of the Methodist Church have come together for a purpose and they have dreamt about this organisation. This needs a lot of time and strength to succeed in the future.

I agree according to African culture and discipline that this is the way other people might say that only a minister's wife can guide them. But what about the minister's wife who had no leadership skills at all? Is she going to be put in place even if she does not take this organisation anywhere? I wonder whether this is not an influence of missionaries that they occupied all the positions in the church and their wives too. Is this not another way of giving men who are ministers more control of their women who have been put in such positions and sometimes make the Manyano not to grow as it is supposed to be?

I am convinced that Manyano was built on the basis of theological and missiological foundation, which is prayer.⁹ Fellowship with God and Missio Dei. God movement and the people also moves. As Christ has said to His disciple "Abide in me and I in you, so that you will bear much fruits."¹⁰ (John 15:5)

The transformation of mission and the mission of transformation is needed in this constitution. Mostly to me it was centrifugal rather than centripetal or both. The annual election of committee members gives me a sense of no move at all - better keep it as it

⁹ J.B. Nyembezi Umlando wo Manyano, A book in Zulu of the history of the Manyano, Kwa-Zulu Booksellers Plessislaer 1988,6

¹⁰ Revised Standard Version of the Bible

was before, and get out somebody will do something after one another. This is what I call maintenance at its essence.

3.3 The Early Women's Manyano Uniform

(This is the first uniform of the Manyano)



The uniform was in this fashion because it symbolises the work of a nurse. Initially, the Manyano called themselves as nurses of the community.¹¹ Their work was to visit elderly people, clean their houses and cook for them. Besides offering prayer for all the people, their specific work was to comfort them and heal the sick. During the end of 1908 Queen Victoria visited South Africa. Women were so excited about the queen's soldiers' uniform. In 1908, the convention was at Edendale.

¹¹ J.B. Nyembezi Umlando wo Manyano, A book in Zulu of the history of the Manyano Kwa Zulu Bookseller, Plessislaer 1988,60

The Manyano introduced the uniform of Queen Victoria's soldiers to the convention. It was a white hat, red jacket and black trousers. This was welcomed and the new uniform for the Manyano was a white hat, white bib, a black skirt and a badge with the words "Manyano Women's Prayer and Service Union"¹² written on it. When they had their meetings their uniforms were checked. Anyone found not in full uniform, was either expelled or suspended for a few months. This only happened to those who were full members of the organisation.

Only a minister's wife is mandated to discipline all the members. Those who are still on trial wear a black hat, white shirt and a black skirt. All on trial undergo a period of six months discipline. Only full members of the Methodist Church of Southern African can be members of the organisation.¹³ They were working at the maturing of women in their faith. Each and every circuit has its own central committee and which consists of a President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary. The societies have small committees that work hand in hand with the central committee. We have thirteen districts in the connection.¹⁴ The central committee also works with the district committee and the district committee work hand in glove with the connexional committee that represents the Manyano in a wider community.

3.4 Reasons for the formation of the Manyano

The prayer meetings were taking place all over the Methodist Churches. In different parishes women would come together and pray for specific situations. Many African

¹² Minutes and Laws and Discipline of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa 1937,234

¹³ Laws and Discipline of the Methodist Church 1937,235

¹⁴ Minutes of the Methodist Conference 1999,293

men worked in mines that were dangerous with many of these men dying.¹⁵ Women would pray for such situations that their men were working on. South Africa was also clouded with many tribal wars that needed prayers. Not only tribal wars but also many faction fights.¹⁶

It was as if participating in sending God's message. Their mission had no life of its own only by the hands of God could it be called a mission. Mostly, women were left outside the mission of the church as people who cannot participate in the mission.

Manyano believed that the new image of the mission was not primarily an activity of the church, but an attribute of God. God is a missionary God. This made the organisation grow all the time because God was always upfront, leading them. It is not the Manyano that has a mission of salvation to fulfil in the world – it is the mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit through the Father. Therefore, the mission according to this organisation was a movement from God to the world. Thus for the Manyano to participate in the mission is to participate in the movement of God.

Manyano was irreversible that the age of mission had dawned. They could not wait for the Women's Auxiliary to come and share the goodness of Jesus. But they took it upon themselves to practice goodness to the people. Manyano witnessed the fullness of the ongoing struggle between this reign and the powers of darkness and the evil.

¹⁵ J.B. Nyembezi Umlando wo Manyano, a Book in Zulu on the history of the Manyano Kwa Zulu Bookseller Plessislaer 1988,2

¹⁶ J.B. Nyembezi Umlando wo Manyano, a Book in Zulu on the history of the Manyano Kwa Zulu Bookseller Plessislaer 1988,7

They strongly believed that the mission was God turning to the world in respect of creation, are, redemption and consummation.¹⁷ For women this always took place in an ordinary human history, not exclusively in and through the Manyano and other mission-orientated organisations like the Auxiliary. It is very clear that God's own mission was larger than the mission of this organisation. The *Missio Dei* is God's activity in which He embraces all His people in the world and in which the Manyano may be privileged to participate.

Women's Manyano also understood very clearly that the history of the world is not a history of evil, but also of love.¹⁸ Thus, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life" John 3:16.

In her missionary activity, the Manyano encountered humanity and a world in which God's Salvation had already been secretly operative through the Holy Spirit.¹⁹ This Spirit of God, who with wondrous providence, directs the course of time and renews the faith of the earth.

The approach of the missionary structure of the Manyano was that the *Missio Dei* was being served in the world and always pointed to God at work in world history and name it in there. *Missio Dei* means that God articulates himself, without any need of assistance

¹⁷ Orlando, E. Costas, *The integrity of Mission, the inner life and outreach of the Church*, Hopper and Row, New York 1979,29

¹⁸ Revised standard Version of the Bible

¹⁹ Orlando, E. Costas, *The integrity of Mission, the inner life and outreach of the Church*, Hopper and Row, New York 1979,29

through missionary efforts in this respect. In other words the mission is primarily and ultimately the work of the Truine God-Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier for the sake of the world.

Unequivocally, Manyano was inspired by the Spirit of God Almighty to make missionaries out of the people in the church. Manyano believed there must be unity in mission and mission in diversity. Not only did the Manyano work with other organisations in the church but it also extended a hand to world organisations, so that they could all be moved by God the Father the Son, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit together.

3.5 The Women's Manyano and the Methodist Church of Southern Africa

When the Manyano was formed, Black women were barred from taking any leadership positions in the church. The aim of this section is to show that “to many a faithful Women “Manyano” is a form of self-expression, an opportunity to do something, listening to God’s voice as a woman, to find oneself, but even more to be somebody.” It is the time of sharing difficulties as African women. To be heard and relieved from depression. A fellowship of coming together and to find God’s love in Jesus Christ.²⁰ In many ways it also provide scope for leadership talent to develop among African women in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa.

²⁰ J. Sheperd, *The Question of Women*, The collected writings of Charlotte Von Kirschbaum, Michigan Grand Rapids, 1996, 112

It is clear that initially the Methodist Church of Southern Africa leadership regarded the Women Manyano with suspicion. That it should be rigidly controlled for fear that it might turn out to be a “church within a church” as it is in the minutes of the Manyano that the organisation cannot represent herself at Synod and at conference level. This is why Revd. P. Yeni was elected during their second convention in 1908 to represent them in Synod and the conference of the church. Nevertheless, the Manyano has grown from strength to strength in its membership and activity in the church.

The relationship between the Manyano and the church leadership was so difficult that nobody thought that this organisation would be alive today. Every year the Manyano sent a report to Synod of their monies and how it has been spent. They were badly treated as if they were a branch of another church. For them to continue existing they must uphold unity which is there between the Auxiliary and the church. In many instances, other branches’ doors were closed to Manyano and the women were told to go and look after their won children. Some church leaders also complained that they were not being respected by the Manyano who did not want them to have a say in any of their programmes. At times the Manyano were forced to be united with other women’s organisations and have a representative at Synod and at conferences. The problem here is not of unity because of colour but that Manyano have different missionary paradigm shift compared to other women’s organisations in the church. In 1990 Revd. Dr. Mgojo was sent to consult the Manyano in Bloemfontein to persuade them to be one with other women in the church.²¹ Revd. Mbangula and other ministers were elected as delegates to

²¹ Minutes of the Methodist Conference 1989,227

represent the Manyano in their affairs.²² The Manyano protested against such arrogant approach of the church.

It was only after forty years that the Manyano had their representation at the highest level of the church. However, even then, they were not allowed to vote during business meetings. The church has tightened its grip for Manyano. These measures were taken to ensure that the Manyano do not have any power. This is because women have realised that "Unity is emphasised as expressed in a proverb" which says it is easy to break one stick but not a bundle of sticks. Manyano believed that there is power in united efforts. Yes, the Manyano does exist in the church but it has also suffered from clericalism. This means that the Manyano can decide and make proposals for their mission. However, if the minister in charge is not happy with the decision then everything is void. Superintendents are overseers of all organisations in the circuit and the Manyano is one of them. The worst part of all is that his wife only can be President of that circuit and nobody else, even if there is somebody who is more suitable for such a position. The reasoning behind this is to educate the Manyano to be witnesses to the world and to be committed Christians.

The point here is that the minister becomes a manager and not a pastor. Ministers are overworked and it develops to be a sweet word of maintenance. We have quantity in Manyano women and not quality. The Methodist Church has been worried about the Women's Manyano funds of how it should be spent as well as being monitored. I think the idea behind this is to try as much as they can, to control the whole organisation. The

²² Minutes of the Methodist Conference 1989,227

Methodist Connexial office always makes suggestions and proposals to the Manyano to invest their monies to their head office. Manyano is not only threatening the church but also their counterparts because of the collections they raise every year. They also support white churches and black ministers in time of need. Some branches have paid stipends and travelling expenses for their ministers as well as bought groceries for them.²³

3.6 Conclusion

The words “Nyamezelo” or Manyano, Kopano were appropriate words for this organisation. From 1907 up to this date Manyano fought for recognition in the church and for an end to oppression of women. They have recognised that the authority to spread the gospel comes from God. They have spread the gospel of Jesus Christ to the communities and brought them the message of salvation. Wherever they went, they have given people the consciousness of Jesus so that they should follow Him. What is good about the Manyano is that they have also taught their members how to preach. In the same church we have society stewards who are members of the Manyano. Nine out of ten members are women. Six out of ten local preachers in the Methodist Church are on full plan or trial.

Women’s Manyano have shown women that their faith and Christian living in the home does not depend on their husbands. Many children and grandchildren are being baptised by members who are Manyano. They have a responsibility of teaching children the word of God. As an organisation started by prayer so it is their duty to lead the whole family and the home into worship. The organisation of their meeting has shown that they are a

²³ Interviewing Mrs. V. Gwambe, of Richmond about their commitment

driving force of mission for the future generation. All their members are respected in uniform during their funerals. This does not happen to a Manyano member only, but all members of other organisations.

Manyano has now grown tremendously. There is a sense of looking at real missionary paradigm shifts. There are things that were initiated by the founders that I strongly believe should be changed. Training of their leaders for leadership skills is very important. Training of all their members is also equally important.

CHAPTER 4

UNITY AND MISSION OF THE MANYANO

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I discussed at length the formation of the Women's Manyano Movement (Nyamezelo) as it was known at the initial stage; its missionary paradigm and relationship with the connexial office of the Methodist Church. In this chapter I shall discuss further the Missionary paradigm, the strategy, convention and the trivial conferences, retreats and mutuality with other organisations in the church.

I shall deal with the mission of the Manyano in order to establish whether there was any mission focus and vision for the growth of the organisation. Is growth and the way of looking at the mission going to be of help in the future or not, and also what about strategy? It will be argued that convention and triennial conferences are the only strategy of making this organisation grow. We will look at other ways of dealing with mission such as the issue of retreats in order to find out if they uplift the spirituality of those who attend. It will be suggested to redress and redirect this wagon in a way that would be acceptable to all. We will identify issues in the retreat that are important for the Manyano. Coming to the mutuality with other organisations in the church, those that are mission orientated. How does the Manyano look at such organisations? Is the Manyano a threat to these organisations or are they just partners in mission? Is the Manyano effective in uplifting those organisations to be as powerful as she is in mission.

4.2 Branch Level

The Manyano introduced a strategy of meeting with all the branch of the Women's Manyano at a circuit level. Small committees consisting of a convenor, the secretary and the treasurer who met and planned prayer schedules. This committee is responsible for the whole work of the Manyano at branch level. The committee trains new members of the Manyano. They also make recommendations to the circuit executive about the development and the good work of the Manyano branches. This also includes problems emerging from the branches. The said committee reports members of the Manyano branches who do not attend regularly to the authorities. The committee collects fees for the Manyano and membership fees from every member of the branches. They arrange meetings every quarter to report all matters concerning the branch to the circuit committee. I think the branch level of Manyano works very well.

Looking at the expansion of this organisation the branch had to make plans of mission for the growth of Manyano. The branch committee visits the sick, the hospitalised, the poor, the bereaved and the hungry. All their duties are reported to the triennial conference.

4.2.1 Circuit

The circuit acts as a catalyst in the circuit for the Manyano. All reports and work of the Manyano are reported to the Circuit Executive. It is this committee that evaluates the work of the Manyano and make recommendation to convention in a Provincial or District Level. This executive is composed of all branch committees, the circuit President, Vice-President, Secretary and the Treasurer. The circuit executive reports to the quarterly

circuit meeting all work and problems that have been encountered during the year and this report is presented to the District Committee. The quarterly circuit meeting is a body that makes decisions for the whole organisation as well as recommendations and suggestions.

The quarterly circuit meeting consists of the circuit irrespective of whether they are members of the Manyano. The chairperson is not the President of the Manyano, but a local minister or superintendent of the circuit. Members who have been called for higher service, who have moved in or out and suspensions are reported in the quarterly circuit meeting.

It is at the level of a circuit when all members are trained to preach, pray and read the Bible in a constructive or contextual way. Here, members give testimonies of how God revealed Himself to different individuals. All monies and fees that are collected at branch level go to a circuit committee and a final decision is made in the assessment of the District. Monies are located to different duties. The committee also decides what to do with the Manyano fees.

4.2.2 District Level

The circuit draws up reports to the district level. Two or more circuits form what we call the district. The District consists of the President who is a minister's wife, a Secretary who may be a lay person or a minister's wife, and a Treasurer. This forms a District executive committee. They accept and reject proposals from circuit and make recommendations to National Level or Triennial Conference. All membership fees are

reported to the connexional level. At District level laws are set for all the circuits which are reported to the Triennial Conference. It is the duty of the District to see that all proposals and laws of the Triennial Conference are properly executed without any watering down of the work of God. At District level, presidents are elected every three years by the circuits. Only ministers' wives are elected and no laity since the inception of this organisation. The increase and decrease of membership of the Manyano is reported to the District level.

There is an annual District convention that moves from one circuit to another for evangelistic campaigns. This results in a business convention, where circuits reports and laws of the church are dealt with, requests for financial assistance for buildings and bursary funds for students whose parents are Methodist and cannot educate them. Many of these young people have benefited from these bursaries. During droughts and disasters Districts supported circuits that experienced difficulties.

4.2.3 Connexional Level or Triennial Conference

Two or more Districts that are formed is known as Connexional Level. In the Methodist Church the Connexion is made out of twelve districts:

- Mozambique
- Botswana
- Namibia
- Limpopo Central
- Highveld and Swaziland

- Kimberly and Bloemfontein
- Free State
- Natal West
- Natal Coastal
- Cape of Good Hope
- Queenstown
- Grahamstown

A Triennial Conference is not the same as the annual district convention. A Triennial Conference consists of a Triennial President, a Secretary and a Treasurer, whereas the Executive is a district president with the committee. The Triennial Conference is a body that stipulates laws for all the districts and makes sure that they are adhered to.

There is a Triennial Conference of the Manyano organisation and a Triennial Conference of the Methodist Church of South Africa. The Women's Manyano Conference accepts and rejects the laws of the church or make recommendations. It is a body that redirects the Women's Manyano Mission. The committee has mandate to raise funds and make contacts with other world bodies like the World Methodist Women's Conference, and other Women organisations. This committee has been accepted as a member of the Triennial conference of the church in 1982. Before this they had to elect two ministers to represent the organisation at conferences of the church. Even though the Manyano is the largest organisation in the church they still have limited influence in the male dominated church.

4.3 Unity in Mission

Because the Manyano is for all women who want to join the church and become members of the organisation it cannot, therefore cease to call, invite and draw everyone to Jesus Christ. The Manyano belong to highways and byways of a messenger carrying a special invitation. The Manyano is a complete open fellowship. She cannot diminish her By exclusiveness, be it social, economic, racial, sexual, cultural or national. The Women's Manyano adopted the Young Women's Manyano since the beginning of its inception. The Young Women's Manyano is an organisation for young and unmarried women. Women's Manyano administers all its affairs and funds of the Young Women's Manyano. The Young Women's Manyano has always been another arm of the Manyano.

After the formulation of the Women's Manyano, mothers decided to teach their young daughters and prepare them for the future. Their aim was to help young girls to have good characters and maintain their virginity.

Since most fathers were working away from their families, it was the duty of the mothers to bring up their daughters in a correct way. It is not clear when their organisation was formed but it is clear that the Young Women's Manyano is as old as the Women's Manyano. The organisation, today has grown and many of her members have become members of the Women's Manyano.

4.3.1 The Young Men's Guild

This organisation of Young African Men formed in 1924. It was formed after the Women's Manyano's. It is not clear who formed this organisation. However, it can be safely suggested that it was formed by some ministers who saw the Manyano growing in great strength and decided to organise one for men. This was not an opposition organisation but it was well embraced by the Manyano. In most areas the two organisations shared the same goal and vision for mission.

One cannot separate the two organisations in evangelistic campaigns, revival services or mission of the church. The Manyano is working hand in hand with this organisation. At branch level, circuit level, district level and Triennial Conference the two are one except when there is business. But even though in terms of strategic development and laws of the church the organisations are always in constant contact, for clarification.

When the "Amadodana" as the Young Men's Guild is usually called, have their revival services, Manyano are often invited to take an active role.

4.3.2 Women's Auxiliary

I have discussed this organisation in detail at the beginning of this document. The Manyano also visit the auxiliary during their gathering. The Women's Auxiliary has a different approach of mission compared to Manyano and the Amadodana. This is because of their cultural diversity and their tradition. Women's Auxiliary consists predominantly of White women coming together to share a cup of tea. White women are

welcome to become members of Manyano provided they follow the rules and regulations of the Women's Manyano.

4.3.3 Wesley Guild

This is another organisation that includes the youth of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. Only members of ... can be accepted by the Wesley Guild. The Manyano has supported the organisation materially and spiritually. It is true that women can give to the work of God than men. As always the Manyano is the leader in finance compare to other black organisations. Wesley Guild is an organisation of young people of whom some are still at school. The Manyano assists this organisation. Any function of the Wesley Guild without the Manyano is unsuccessful. Today the Wesley Guild – formed in 1936 – has grown into a powerful force of young people in the church.

4.3.4 Local Preachers

John Wesley formed the department of local preachers in 1789 during his revolutionary of the gospel. Manyano's relationship is shown by the fact that members of Women's Manyano register with local preachers' organisation in order to improve their knowledge of the Bible. In so doing the Women's Manyano members become good local preachers. Today in the church we have more women preachers than men. Some of them are society steward and circuit steward. We also have Women Ministers and Bishops.

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4.4.4 With other local Denominations

This miracle of friendliness does not happen in the walls of the Methodist Church but it is imperative to say that an effective mission is always centripetal. If it is centrifugal then it is not a mission but maintenance in disguise. Therefore, the Manyano have crossed the frontiers to other denominations and become members of 'Inkonzo zamabandla ahlangene' as it is called 'a member of United Churches.' To be a member of the United Churches means that, the Manyano are not restricted to be Methodist organisation but praying together with the community of saints, the elect of God, People called by his name.

In times of crisis United Churches met to discuss ways and means of their mission. How to react to certain events that happened in the locality. They also participated in different projects in the United Churches. It must be clear that it is the Women's Manyano in the whole church that have taken such initiative to create a mutual understanding with other denominations in all the organisations of the Church.

Therefore, the organisation is the missionary – sent to all people, particularly the Head of the Mission Dei. Now that they have received universal faith they strive to achieve it in the world. The organisation has been introduced to the church so that it can increase universally. As the Manyano becomes more and more universal, they grow as the missionary organisation within the church. Since I have studied the missionary nature of this organisation, I have been confronted with a vision of the Manyano in mission – that is the Communion of faith, commit myself to participate in God's mission in the world. I

strongly believe that the Manyano has tremendous work to do in the local branches and also at all levels of the organisation. In my opinion the church will continue to be active even if men are no longer active members of the church. Even if men decide to leave the church because of the geographic Circuits, women will become Bishops and Superintendents of the mission of God and his work will continue.

4.4 Conclusion

In so far as I have discussed unity in mission of the Women's Manyano, it is therefore clear to me that unity and mission is non-negotiable. This does not simply derive from the New World situation or from changed circumstances, but from God's gift of unity in the Body of Christ. God's people are one; Christ's body is one. The understanding of the Manyano as a missionary organisation must embrace other organisations and be the "light and salt" of this world. The Manyano would not have achieved anything by being a separate entity. Mission of the Manyano is fundamentally linked with other organisations that share common goals and vision. Manyano have seen other organisations as supplementary to their missionary paradigm as well as the togetherness and oneness of the people of God.

Truly speaking whether the Manyano take their mission seriously an inner tension cannot be disregarded i.e. respect to various human communities which stand in conflict of a doctrinal, social or cultural nature brought about different life situations and experiences. This tension calls us to repentance, Mission in unity and unity in Mission is impossible without a self-critical attitude, particularly where Christians meet with other fellow-believers who by human standards should be their enemies.

In my opinion the Manyano addresses the deepest conflicts of the world by confronting both sides. There is the forgiveness, the transformation of power into the community with a new hope and a new calling. United churches are only possible when people accept each other's differences. Here God is not a fellowship exempted from conflict, but one that is characterised by unity in a reconciled diversity. In the midst of all diversity, however, there is a centre that is Jesus Christ. It is this common foundation, which is the point of service and united witness in the world. Unity in mission is not lost as long as the Bible is opened, read and proclaimed by all Christian churches. Therefore, listening to God's word as well as to each other brings togetherness provided we are willing to do both. A united church in mission is essential in the light of the fact that the Manyano's mission will never cease to exist. Our churches can no longer be subdivided into sending and receiving organisations between the church's walls and the community. God is everywhere and so is the mission. A new age of discovery must continue with the Manyano fighting abuse, oppression, poverty and clericalism - not the exploration of sophisticated ideas. Mission in unity means an end to the distinction between organisations like Women's Manyano that bear the fruit of missionary labor. They should not be the possession of mission churches.

If the Women's Manyano mission is to be christological and pneumatological, it also has to be in relationship with other organisations in the sense of being the one mission in unity.

Ultimately, unity in mission of the Women's Manyano and mission in unity do not merely serve the organisation but stand in the service of human kind and to seek manifestation in Christ. Organisations in the church, like the Manyano must be reminded that the church is the sign of the coming unity of mankind. The church is called again to be a prophetic sign and foretaste of the unity and renewal of the human family as envisioned in God's promised reign. The reign of God is not only the church's final fulfillment but also the world's future. This is the unity of God's mission that must be exercised by the Manyano's organisation.

Unity of the Women's Manyano in this chapter in its fullest sense implies her holiness, catholicity and apostolicity. It is centred in Jesus Christ Himself. It is the Christian community in faith confession that Jesus Christ is Lord, and the unity which is established extends together to hold many Christian groups. The appropriate titles of the church are the "body of Christ." Christ is the Head of the body and therefore, the source of unity. The Manyano emerges into the wider community of faith, and eventually into the whole divine work of creation, reconciliation and consummation.

It is important to remember that in the great prayer of "Jesus" for His disciples, Christ asked "that they may be one", and immediately went on to indicate that this unity should be like the unity of the Father and the Son. The ultimate model for the Manyano is therefore, the unity of the triune God, a unity engraving the richest diversity and thus one in which there is neither stifling absorption nor damaging division.

The obvious visible sign of the Women's Manyano's unity is the Bible. If, indeed the cluster of this organisation's unity is Jesus Christ as the Head of the body, then the Bible is the embodiment of that unity because it is the written word in the flesh. The Bible is also the most widely spread visible sign of the unity of faith that belongs to the whole body of Christians. It stretches out as far as what I call the "indefinite" borders of the church. More than this, however, the Bible links the Women's Manyano with the wider community of faith for it contains not only distinctively Christians' New Testament but also the Hebrews' Scriptures. Because of its universal acceptance among Christians, the Bible constitutes a remarkable foundation for unity. Any ecumenical theology must be firmly sought in the Bible. God's instrument in churches, organisations and all over the world is a united church where all organisations and Christians are actively engaged in sharing God's love as a way of life. Members work together in harmony in proclaiming the gospel.

The three thousand believers that were united in fellowships are a result of their unity to their Lord. Those who were being saved increased this number daily.

When Peter and John were threatened with imprisonment and persecution they had a united praying church to return to for encouragement. It is unfortunate that even though the Manyano tried this endeavour, unity and mission became separate goals for many churches, organisations and Christians. It is my conviction that the best way to maintain a proper balance between unity and mission is to do what our Lord commanded us to do "to go and make disciples of all nations." This involves at least two things:

- (a) Bringing new Christians into maturity in Christ – helping them to become disciples. The place to start is to appreciate unity in small discipleship classes. Such small groups provide an atmosphere in which trust can be developed and questions can be asked. Heart-to-heart sharing can take place and collective actions are worked out. Above all, love can grow. Christians that are involved in such groups grow up to appreciate unity because they see it in action in these small groups. The Methodist calls them class meetings. Churches, organisations and Christians will not be able to realise the full potential of this unity until its members learn to share their lives with each other.
- (b) Sharing our faith is a way of life. In Matthew 28:19 our Lord said “go” before He commanded us to make “disciples” of fallen nations. A converted Christian is God’s material for a disciple. That is why we need to be involved in mission as well as sharing God’s love with unbelievers. A unified Christian fellowship will not be insensitive to the needs of the dying world. United churches, organisations and Christians act like a magnet to the non-Christian world increasing their numbers by those who are being saved. This is the unity and mission of the Women’s Manyano through the Methodist Church of Southern Africa.

CHAPTER 5

THE GROWTH OF MANYANO AND THE EFFECT OF SCHISM FROM 1921 –1998

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I have discussed the unity of the Manyano and how they have succeeded in mission. They have done that because of their togetherness and this triggered growth in the organisation. In this chapter I want to focus on the numerical members from the beginning in 1907 up to 1998.

I will be looking at what stimulated the increase and the causes of the decrease in membership. Tables will show the growth of the organisation at the initial stage, membership, branches and number of women on trial. They will show also the decrease of membership especially during the schism in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. The effect of the liberation struggle in South Africa during 1980 and 1990, when the political situations intensified in the country.

An evaluation of the work done by the Manyano for almost a century will be looked at. There will also be a close look at the paradigm shifts of mission transformation and the transformation of mission.

Table 1 : Illustrates the growth of the Manyano between 1921-1969

YEAR	NO. OF BRANCHES	NO. OF MEMBERS
1921 ⁴	4,134	21,650
1922-1961 ⁵	4,023	93,315
1962 ⁶	4,122	94,142
1963 ⁷	4,219	96,215
1964 ⁸	4,226	96,355
1965 ⁹	4,212	97,085
1966 ¹⁰	4,236	98,691
1967 ¹¹	4,262	99,743
1968 ¹²	4,279	98,907
1969 ¹³	4,324	99,482

The figures for the period between 1907 to 1921 were not available at the time of this research. Table 1 shows that in 1921 there were 4134 branches and 21,650 members and that by 1969 there were 4,324 branches and 99,482 members..

This shows a growth of 190 branches and 77,332 members. This means that over a

⁴ Women's Manyano Journal - Page

⁵ Minutes of Conference 1961 – Page 256

⁶ Minutes of Conference 1962 – Page 230

⁷ Minutes of Conference 1963 – Page 294

⁸ Minutes of Conference 1964 – Page 262

⁹ Minutes of Conference 1965 – Page 262

¹⁰ Minutes of Conference 1966 - Page

¹¹ Minutes of Conference 1967 – Page 143

¹² Minutes of Conference 1968 – Page 148

¹³ Minutes of Conference 1969 – Page 150

period of 48 years Manyano was involved in outreach programmes that led to its growth despite the establishment of the apartheid regime in 1944.

5.2 The growth of the Manyano 1921 – 1978

Women's Manyano experienced tremendous growth from her beginning up to 1977. Even then they had their own internal problems but they made sure that they were solved peacefully. This organisation was started from scratch without any understanding of mission but in scores of five the organisation has reached a total number of 106263 members as shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2: This table illustrates the growth of the Women's Manyano (1970 and 1977)

YEAR	NO. OF BRANCHES	NO. OF MEMBERS
1970 ¹⁴	4292	98506
1971 ¹⁵	4381	101138
1972 ¹⁶	4381	101517
1973 ¹⁷	4340	103336
1974 ¹⁸	4331	101453
1975 ¹⁹	4464	103147
1976 ²⁰	4423	103626
1977 ²¹	4515	106263

¹⁴ Minutes of Conference 1970 – Page 153

¹⁵ Minutes of Conference 1971 – Page 157

¹⁶ Minutes of Conference 1972 – Page 161

¹⁷ Minutes of Conference 1973 – Page 157

¹⁸ Minutes of Conference 1974 – Page 148

¹⁹ Minutes of Conference 1975 – Page 285

²⁰ Minutes of Conference 1976 – Page 296

²¹ Minutes of Conference 1977 – Page 313

Table 2 covers a period of seven years from 1970 to 1977. During this period the membership of Manyano grew by 7,757 members and the branches increased by 223. In comparison with a similar period from 1963 to 1969 the branches increased by 105 and membership by 3,267 once can argue that the Manyano grew rapidly in the seventies than in the sixties. However, this growth in the seventies was interrupted or affected negatively by the schism of 1977.

Table 3 shows how the membership of Manyano was affected by the schism. The figures of 1978 to 1980 as well as 1986 were not available at the time of this research. The real effect of the schism was felt from between 1977 and 1981. Manyano lost 31,077 members and 1,122 branches. The reunion happens in 1987.

By 1989, there was definite increase in the numbers of members and branches of Manyano. For example, according to Table 3, from 1981 – 1989, union is a period of eight years, the Manyano branches increased again by 1,032 and members by 30,202. This growth was not sustained in the 1990's.

According to Table 4 there was a decline of Manyano branches and membership. 1990 shows the lowest figures of 2060 branches and 62,791 members. This may be explained in terms of change of emphasis in Manyano itself. More emphasis was placed in business of Manyano in the 1990's than in mission. Secondly, the political changes were not conducive to mission. It seems like when there was political freedom, the urge for

mission declined. After the 1994 political elections, the Manyano resumed its mission programme. This is indicated by the growth in membership and branches in 1995. Between 1990 and 1995, the membership of Manyano increased by 13,655 and the branches by 1,498. The minutes of Manyano have no figures for 1997 to 1998. It is so difficult to specify one place of recruiting of membership, but it is recorded in convention and in minutes of conferences, how many members have been accepted so far as full members of the church. Table 1 shows how growth have increased from the year 1921 to 1978.

Bishop G. Bromley, Oxnam, in his message as a President of the Council of Bishop, in the Book God's Good News "suggest that it is proper to have a layman head the movement of the Council of Bishops" because in the church work hard for the benefit of the whole church. it is in that sense that I strongly believe that Manyano can do a lot in South Africa. The growth that they (Manyano) have achieved was recorded in each and every gathering, which happened once a year. It did happen because many women needed somebody who will listen to them when they lost their husbands and the Manyano were the people to trust. Mission in those days used to be done by missionaries and there was enormous distrust between black and white at the time. There was also a strong sense of division in South Africa, because of Apartheid.

The Women's Manyano has grown even during the time when many white political parties voted for the oppression of Blacks. This also includes the Anglo-Boer War, the first and second World War.

5.3 The schism of the church and its impact on the Manyano 1978 – 1987

The schism of the Methodist Church in Southern Africa happened around 1978. It did occur because some Black ministers felt uncomfortable in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. I must also indicate that, the other reason for such a move was the policy of separate development, which was escalated by the Apartheid Regime. At the time Transkei was under the leadership of Chief Kaizer Matanzima. The Black Ministers found it easier to be under him rather than under a hierarchy of the church which was dominated by White Ministers. Chief Kaizer Matanzima claimed the authority of the church and no minister coming from South Africa was allowed to minister in his territory. All church properties were confiscated and the church lost even their own buildings.

Methodist people were divided and a great multitude and especially Xhosa speaking people left the Methodist Church to join the new church. The name of the new church was the Methodist Church of Transkei. Not only the church but the organisation like Amadodana, Wesley Guild, Manyano and youth were greatly damaged. Most member of the Manyano were taken over and Table 3 shows how this whole move affected the organisation.

Table 3: This table shows the growth of the Women's Manyano (1980 –1989)

YEAR	NO. OF BRANCHES	NO. OF MEMBERS
1980 ²²		
1981 ²³	3393	75186
1982 ²⁴	3103	73871
1983 ²⁵	2903	69541
1984 ²⁶	3183	75307
1985 ²⁷	3530	76473
1986 ²⁸		
1987 ²⁹	3157	75545
1988 ³⁰	3207	77693
1989 ³¹	4425	105388

²² Minutes of Conference 1980 – Page 157

²³ Minutes of Conference 1981 – Page 160

²⁴ Minutes of Conference 1982 – Page 181

²⁵ Minutes of Conference 1983 – Page 204

²⁶ Minutes of Conference 1984 – Page 206

²⁷ Minutes of Conference 1985 – Page 208

²⁸ Minutes of Conference 1986 – Page 211

²⁹ Minutes of Conference 1987 – Page 228

³⁰ Minutes of Conference 1988 – Page 577

³¹ Minutes of Conference 1989 – Page 227

5.4 The reunion of the church and its effect

It was in 1987 when Dr. K. Mgojo was a President of conference who initiated the return of some members. This was a bad time for Kaizer Matanzima because he was overthrown by Stella Sigcawu, now, Minister of Rural development. Stella Sigcawu did very good work by unbanning the Methodist Church of Southern Africa in Transkei. She accepted the Methodist people and reversed everything. At this time South Africa was beginning to see a positive change in politics and the release of some political prisoners. It was also time for Methodist people to organise their houses and put it in order.

During the Reunion not all Methodists returned. There were those who decided to stay with a new church which were also divided into two churches. The reunion brought new hopes for the church, for organisations and especially for the Manyano. Truly speaking, the schism divided the church and totally destroyed the unity. There was a rapid growth of membership and branches. To be honest the Methodist people will never be the same as before the schism. (Table 3 and 4 shows this growth again).

The other reason for reunion was mal-administration of the new church. Most people were beginning to see that they were not working for God but the church was becoming a state church. Funds were not used properly. Most ministers who were trained in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa were going back to their mother church and only few were left especially those who were under the discipline of the church. The church

was not affected by the reunion, although there were many things that were sorted out, like the pension fund for the returning ministers. Grassroots level was a problem in such that membes were not welcomed properly and in Christian spirit.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has shown that in 1977 the membership of Manyano was 106 263. The Manyano were really conquering South Africa with the gospel. It was not just a few members joining the Manyano but a great cloud of believers. The figures translated in Manyano's involvement in projects, which included mission. This was the development of their communities, bursary funds, assisting in renovation of Methodist Schools, Colleges and even supporting theological students.

After the schism, there was always hope of the remnant that those who are gone will very soon return. It was clear for those who remained that people were forced to join the new church. In the case of the members of the Manyano who worked in Johannesburg, during holidays they joined the new church. Since there are more women in the church than men, the Manyano suffered a big blow during this time. After the reunion the remnant did not accept the returns fully without suspicion – this is clear. Some of them left their mother church with certain positions and on their return, they expected to be in those positions and that was not easy. Ministers returning also suffered a lot of segregation

because of distrust. Even on the side of the Manyano, they were very cautious about reunions. Funds that were generated by the returns were very little and that also raised some eyebrows to the organisation. The schism is over and the reunion is the reality. It is true the Manyano is now looking forward for the better future of the organisation.

Table 4: This Table illustrates the growth of the Women’s Manyano (1990 – 1998)

YEAR	NO. OF BRANCHES	NO. OF MEMBERS
1990 ³²	2060	62791
1991 ³³	2060	65078
1992 ³⁴	2072	65078
1993 ³⁵		
1994 ³⁶	2521	61829
1995 ³⁷	3558	76446
1996 ³⁸		
1997 ³⁹		
1998 ⁴⁰		

³² Minutes of Conference 1990 – Page 224

³³ Minutes of Conference 1991 – Page 252

³⁴ Minutes of Conference 1992 – Page 275

³⁵ Minutes of Conference 1993 – Page 212

³⁶ Minutes of Conference 1994 – Page 234

³⁷ Minutes of Conference 1995 – Page 194

³⁸ Minutes of Conference 1996 – Page 152

³⁹ Minutes of Conference 1997 – Page 162

⁴⁰ Minutes of Conference 1998 – Page 152

At the 1929 Deyi Circuit convention, the Manyano faced an attack from the break-away group called "*Impi yase Chibini*". After strong prayers by the Manyano, the break-away group surrendered themselves to the organisation. Some of them were welcome into the church as members of the Methodist Church. In the 1934 Edendale convention many

people were healed and converted to Christianity. In 1945 during the World War II, many South African soldiers were captured and sent to Italy. The Manyano who were at Harrismith prayed for their release. Money was also sent to the government of the day to mourn for those families that lost husbands and fathers in the war. Mrs. V. Gwambe faced charges when she spoke about the Manyano. She felt time was wasted when the Manyano worked hard. The Manyano had to also look at the progress of their own children at school. Educational institutions like Indaleni Teachers Training was also supported by the Manyano. They contributed funds for the building of one block of classes in the church. Bursaries were provided for needy students in different communities. Informal education was conducted to teach young women how to handle their new marriages and the upbringing of the young one. Interviewing members of Women Manyano at the Newcastle convention discussed the role of mothers and their young,. This was rewarding for the Women Manyano, which they felt, made life good for them.

CHAPTER 6

A GREAT CLOUD OF WITNESSES

6.1 Introduction

In Chapter 5 I dealt with the unity of the Women's Manyano in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. Their understanding of mission according to John's gospel (Chapter 17), where Jesus Christ prayed that His disciples should be one as He and the Father is one. I also looked at how the Manyano have worked together to embrace other organisations that were also missionary orientated in the church.

This chapter will deal with the mission of the Manyano. Beginning from Verdict to all corners of the South,¹ including the Natal province which was the mission's next target. I will also deal with different personalities and the pioneers of the Women's Manyano. What material contribution did the Manyano give to the church that was growing in numbers? What was the aim and objectives of the Manyano to support the different institutions?

¹ J.B. Nyembezi, *Umlando wo Manyano*, a book in Zulu on the history of Manyano, Kwa-Zulu Bookseller Plessislaer 1988,23

6.2 The mission of the Manyano in Natal

Thursday is Manyano day, and on Thursdays the domestic service women are off. Early in the morning the women begin to gather in all corners of South Africa. Some go to churches, hospitals and prisons to bereaved families and even to families in small mud houses. Gone are the caps and aprons of White servitude instead there are red blouses, white hats, white collars with black skirts. Any member of the Manyano without a Manyano pin is fined a certain amount.² The pin is engraved with the letters: M.W.P.S.U. that means Manyano Women's Prayer and Service Union.³

At first Manyano was formed for the purpose of praying together as men or their husbands were away from home. But the demand was more after it was formed. The Women's Manyano participated in fundraising for African ministers in the Methodist Church. They were paid travelling allowances to oversee that the servants of God were well fed and ready to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. Manyano was called to pray in times of natural disasters and droughts. Many were used to build churches and mission houses for ministers. Not only building but also purchasing furniture and kitchen equipment for the **manse**. Up to now the Manyano are still the engineers of **manse** maintenance in the Methodist Church. Circuit Stewards keep inventory of the church when ministers move in or out.

² J.B. Nyembezi, *Umlando w Manyano*, a book in Zulu on history of the Manyano, Kwa-Zulu Booksellers Plessislaer 1988,23

³ Interviews – Mrs Busisiwe Mncube of Newcastle 29.06.1977

At the 1929 Deyi Circuit convention, the Manyano faced an attack from the break-away group called "*Impi yase Chibini*"⁴ After strong prayers by the Manyano, the break-away group surrendered themselves to the organisation. Some of them were welcome into the church as members of the Methodist Church. In the 1934 Edendale convention many people were healed and converted to Christianity. In 1945 during the World War II, many South African soldiers were captured and sent to Italy. The Manyano who were at Harrismith prayed for their release. Money was also sent to the government of the day to mourn for those families that lost husbands and fathers in the war. Mrs. V. Gwambe faced charges when she spoke about the Manyano. She felt time was wasted when the Manyano worked hard.⁵ The Manyano had to also look at the progress of their own children at school. Educational institutions like Indaleni Teachers Training was also supported by the Manyano. They contributed funds for the building of one block of classes in the church. Bursaries were opened for needy students in different communities. Informal education was conducted to teach young women how to handle their new marriages and the upbringing of the young ones. Interviewing members of women Manyano at the Newcastle convention discussed the role of mothers and their young. This was rewarding for the Women Manyano, which they felt, made life good for them.

⁴ J.B. Nyembezi p22

⁵ Interview, Mrs. V. Gwambe, 19.08.1988

6.3 Manyano spread to the Transvaal, Mozambique and Zimbabwe

In 1907 Mrs. S. Gqosho, the wife of the late Revd. D. Gqosho, stationed in Potchefstroom, received an invitation from the Manyano in Natal to visit them during the 1908 Newcastle convention. This was a moment of great inspiration for Mrs. Gqosho. She was to start a similar organisation in the Transvaal where a small group of women met and spent a few hours praying. They would arise early in the morning and stay awake late into the evening to spend time in prayer.⁶

The death toll in the mines was causing great concern, especially in the Diamond mine and Johannesburg gold mines. It was the duty of these women to pray for the avoidance of such terrifying occurrences. They would pray faithfully that God would hold the mine pillars, so that they do not collapse on their men, husbands and children. They also prayed for protection from evil spirits and witchcraft.

Mrs. Gqosho organised fellowship services to introduce some of the ideas that she learnt in Natal. Again, women from Natal were invited to such fellowships. However, the chairman of this district who was at the time in the United States of America was upset

⁶ Interviews, Mrs Chicha, 2.02.1988

and angry with Mrs. Gqosho when she heard about the fellowship services in Transvaal in her absence. Despite this unfortunate incident the organisation gained momentum.

In the Transvaal the Manyano contributed towards various health and educational institutions. Thus, the Wilberforce and Kilnerton Institutions were founded. Funds were donated to a wing in a mission hospital in Mahambo. Swaziland supported a Lesotho hospital until violence erupted in this country.

Manyano have sick-committees. Visits are arranged when cases of illnesses are reported. This is a sacrifice because there are expenses involved in transport costs as well as purchasing presents such as flowers for hospital visits. Sick-visiting becomes a social outing in which a great number of women partake. One sees a group of marching uniformed women going from patient to patient which is apparently true according to statements often heard that whatever African women do in groups it becomes a social issue.

By 1920 the Manyano had spread to all parts of the Transvaal and consisted of many circuits. It was in Transvaal that the first white minister's wife became the President of the Manyano. She was Mrs. Alcock who worked tirelessly for the Manyano until she and her husband moved to the Mahamba circuit. During a service, a naked woman who was mentally deranged entered the church. Mrs. Mapumulo, President of the Transvaal Women's Manyano at the time immediately called the convention to order and they prayed for this woman. They also made a collection for her to buy clothes. After a few

months news broke that prayer which was due to the wonderful work of God healed the woman.

The fire of mission was burning brightly in Transvaal that they were beginning to cross boundaries like the Manyano in Natal. Here the Manyano attended the Nkosana convention, in Mozambique East Africa. This was not enjoyed to its fullest potential due to difficulties in transport, language and other human barriers. Those present were: President Swartland, Siloti, Tshabalala, Makapela, Duiker and two other lay members. Mrs. Techicha would say "*Mfundisi omama bethu basebenza kule cawe yamaWeseli*"⁷ (Our mothers have worked in this church and we must also work hard for the salvation of all people of God).

Another remarkable adventure was a visit to Zimbabwe by the President of Manyano, President Maaga, Duiker and Maceke. Phokompe, Swartland, Weyi, Ngubeni, Dhludhlu, Ramasia and Khumalo also visited the Ruwadzano (part of Manyano) Rhodesian District Methodist Church. They addressed the convention and conducted missions. They returned inspired by what they learnt from Ruwadzano. While in Rhodesia, they were able to visit the Waddilove Missionary Institution, a counterpart of the Kilnerton Institution that was affiliated to a hospital and a Nurses' Training Centre. This district is also connected to the World Federation Methodist where women discuss their togetherness in the mission of the church. The Transvaal district first suggested the idea of a triennial convention. Mrs. Mlotwa was the founder of this conference. When the Methodist Church wanted to amalgamate all women organisations, Mrs. Tema was one of those members who fought until the church reversed its decision.

6.4 Mission of the Manyano in Transkei

Many people from the Transkei were mineworkers and it was frequent for the families back home to hear that their men were crushed in the mines. Women saw that there was a need to pray for the people of God and for their loved ones. The Manyano started in Transkei out of agony, pain and depression. People turned to God for the salvation of their generation with trust and faith.

It is not entirely clear whether this Manyano started mushrooming in Transkei or in Natal. The initial kick-off was at Dundee, a place called Verdriet. Transkei was a place of Mission and the Manyano was, and is still powerful there. In places like Mqhekezweni Mission near Dalindwebo, which was a great place. Church buildings were used for their meetings and if there were no church buildings the trees sheltered them.

The pioneers of mission in Transkei were: May Majozi, Ngobazana, Ann-Ganj, Liza Mahlathi and Jessie Ndzamela. Elizabeth Soldaath, Mary-Jane Sikutshwa, Jemina Manciya, Dina Tswane and Mary Mantame later joined them. These members of the Manyano worked tirelessly for the salvation of God's people. The numbers increased rapidly and the mighty army of Manyano known as "Umqokozo Obomvu" filled the streets of Transkei, marching and singing:

"Onward Christian soldiers marching as towards the war"

Some of the painful experiences that the Manyano encountered under the leadership of missionaries in Transkei who was the chairman of the districts:

⁷ Interviews, Mrs. Tchicha of Soweto 2.02.1988

- they were not allowed to use the church buildings erected by the missionaries
- Sometimes they were told to pray to their God to show them guidance on how to look after their husbands
- In some cases they were told to take care of their children and bathe them.

The effectiveness of this organisation was realised when her members became full preachers of the Methodist Church to propagate the gospel of Jesus Christ. The first African ministers who were converted during the missions of the Manyano, viz: Revd. Percy Edmund Ndzamela, the sons of Jessie Ndzamela, George Mahlathi, Kumsha, Jojozi, Gabela and Gwiliza, to mention but a few. All of these men were converted under the Milkwood tree, which was where the Manyano gathered to worship God. Wives of chiefs were targeted for mission. Chief Mangangelizwe's wife was converted to the Christian faith.⁸

This is the mission that was propagated by Manyano who believed in a peaceful settlement between all tribes in Transkei. It was a superb message for the African leaders as they were always in conflict with each other. These women (chief's wives) were not joining the Manyano and taking a back seat, they were participating in the real mission. Mangangelizwe's wife was even given a cart, drawn by horses, to make the spreading of the gospel easier. Ox-wagons were also used to travel long distances, which in some cases took women away from home for a period of two or three weeks.

The mission of God was their priority, and they were always up-front. New ministers were appointed places of conversion, thus enabling the propagation of the gospel to be easier to future generation.

⁸ Minutes of Conventions and Triennial Conferences

Mrs. Faku would say:

“Really the Manyano have done wonderful work in the Methodist Church and if, it was not for the Manyano, the Methodist Church would not have been here today.”⁹

6.5 Conclusion

This is how the cloud of the Women’s Manyano covered the whole of South Africa with the gospel of Jesus Christ. They united in prayer and amongst them were grandmothers of illegitimate babies, mothers of delinquent sons, wives of irresponsible men and single parent mothers. They were faced with many problems and also new dynamics of life. Nation building required the Manyano to share in the creation of calculated compromises designed to provide partial and tentative solutions to the most vexing problems of the day. Manyano was always requested to say an unqualified “No” to injustice. It is Karl Marx who reminded us that people make their history not under circumstances chosen by themselves but under circumstances directly encountered, given or transmitted from the part.¹⁰ It is important to know that the Manyano worked according to three areas of mission in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, and that is, Spirituality, Morality and Dignity.

- (i) **Spirituality:** This was a foundation for Manyano because without prayer it would not have spoken about Manyano. Their members were taught meditation,

⁹ Interviews with Mrs. Faku, Minister’s wife, 5.08.1988

¹⁰ J.David, Bosch : Transforming Mission, Paradigm shifts in Theology of Mission, New York, Maryknoll Orbis, 1991, p 494

preaching, Bible study and meditation. All people belonging to this organisation were encouraged to grow spiritually. There was not a time when Manyano lacked spirituality and growth. Thus, their work was so easy and well understood by many people who were converted and accepted as members of the Manyano.

- (ii) **Morality:** From the beginning the Manyano did not waste time introducing a code of conduct. It was called "*I Khadi liManyano*. Without discipline and self-control of the organisation, the mission of the Manyano would not have prospered up to this point. Good behaviour and teaching by examples was encouraged. An organisation without obedience would have died if it did not look forward to Christ's calling.
- (iii) **Dignity:** Manyano promoted self-esteem among her members. They always have confidence in whatever they are doing and their contribution in the mission of the church. Any organisation or any people propagating the good news of Jesus Christ without love and peace in mind cannot be a tool for mission. They would visit their members in hospitals, in prisons and bereaved families in groups and one can see the love they share in visitations.

Grand convention occasions which women without scruples, looked forward to, meant leaving their husbands and family for several days. Big tents are erected at a specific place for gatherings, singing, worshipping and praying which is the main core of such fellowship.

The Manyano have tried to conquer all corners of Southern Africa with Gospel. They have also suffered in many respects but never gave up. Their church is unequivocal.

Many of them would use oxen, wagons and bicycles for distant places to have and attend their gatherings.

Chapter 7

MISSIOLOGICAL PARADIGM OF THE MANYANO

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I have discussed the mission of the Manyano from its first convention to spreading the word throughout South Africa. I also discussed pioneers of the Manyano and how they responded to a call of unity as African Women in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa.

Therefore, in this chapter I will be dealing with some of the problems that were encountered by the Manyano during their mission. I will examine what encouraged the Manyano among other things to continue spreading the word of God to all South Africans. The other issue that is at stake here is that the Manyano worked during the apartheid era in South Africa, and what triggered her success in such times of distress and hopelessness. Why did the organisation revolt against the decision of the Methodist Church to unite all women's organisations into the Methodist Church of Southern Africa under one leader. I will discuss the mission of the Manyano in the years to come.

7.2 The road to reality

It is of vital importance to look at the Missiological paradigm of the Manyano as an "*emerging*" reality that is built up in the church, becomes what it is in faith. By grasping and internalising their mission, they became highly contextual, radically transformed, and powerful in exercise with eternity in view. Their viewpoint involves a process whereby

the Manyano is a driving force. This acts as a fully formed community, a living sacrament, and a sign before God for her members and those who belong to other organisations. To say more, Manyano has never remained the same during any two days because it is constantly becoming, developing and emerging. David Bosch says: *“Christian missions in particular are today confronted with issues they have never even dreamt of and which are crying out for responses that are both relevant to the times and in harmony with the essence of the Christian faith.”*

The Manyano is saying to us that as a church (Methodist Church) the most important key to remember in a life of following Jesus Christ is continuous repentance when we fall short. Keep a short account with God and His grace is sufficient to all. Those who stay at home and take it easy will not know the struggle of fighting the enemy. As they launch out by faith to take up the armour of God, they plunge into the very heat of the battle. They are now in the enemy’s camp and cannot turn back.

It is not true to say that the Manyano in the Methodist Church work independently. All the proposals of the Manyano have to be endorsed by the Triennial Conference of the Methodist and in most cases these proposals do not go through easily.¹ It is true that the Methodist Church makes sure that the Manyano have no ground at all. Whether we like it or not the Manyano have enemies in the church. These enemies look at the progress of the church and find that the Manyano is the core contributors. It is a reality that Women’s Manyano is oppressed in one way or another. The problem here is that

¹ Minutes of Conference of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa

Manyano is the main contributor in the African Circuit and this keeps the Circuit viable.² Black ministers from the Methodist Church try to work hand in hand with Manyano to support the circuit. The oppressed ministers therefore, oppress the same people who are trying to free them. According to this an oppressor needs to be liberated in order to see his or her contribution to others.

This is an organisation that has made us proud to see the church growing even when the future was sometimes bleak for black ministers. Manyano did not understand theology, but they have laboured like theologians. Their contribution to the church is valuable that it is very well recommended. They believe in a great God. The violence, the resistance to change and the things that are presently happening cannot stop the inevitable.

7.3 The spirit of hope

In this section I would like to discuss the spirit of hope for the Manyano because there is always hope. This hope is fundamental to the message of the Kingdom of God. The gospel holds out the promise of eternal life to believers, a life that death itself cannot destroy. It is the sure and certain hope of resurrection to eternal life. The gospel proclaims that God's will, will eventually be done on earth as it is in heaven. It promises a new heaven and a new earth. A message of personal and social hope is inextricably and mysteriously bound together in the promise of the final coming of the Messianic Kingdom for which the whole creation is in travail. The promise is the promise of Shalom God's peace – in which His justice and righteousness rule supreme, in which human pain and suffering are no more, in which all things, people and nations have found

² Interview with Mrs. Chitcha in Johannesburg 1997.08.23

their fulfillment. *"This gospel" wrote J. Verkuyl, "contains much more than the promise of earthly shalom. The message of the Kingdom is concerned with victory over demons with eternal life with a new world."*³

The Manyano must be an organisation for all the people of the land. It has to rediscover her unity in Christ. Manyano cannot do this through haphazard reconciliation or superficial **ecumenism**. It must be realised that the "middle wall of partition" has been torn down in Jesus Christ. This means that Christ has destroyed the barriers between Black and White, Englishman and Afrikaner, and rich and poor.

The tremendous significance of this act of reconciliation has yet to be realised within the Methodist Church. The Manyano tells us that the most important key to remember in such a life of following Jesus Christ is continuous repentance when we fall.

While the struggle of the Manyano for justice, peace, security, maintaining human rights and reconciliation for the Kingdom of God is vital to their mission. Some of their members are totally inadequate for the task of bearing witness. God requires obedient discipleship. Thus, the struggle of the Manyano requires a servanthood attitude and spirituality that is more demanding. Charles Villa-Vicencio in his book *The Spirit of Hope* says *"the essence of the gospel is for me the call to become engaged in the mission of God, which is build a society of justice on earth within which those whom the Bible*

³ J. Verkyl: Mission in all four continents

calls, the least, the poor, the marginalised and the oppressed are given their rightful place.”⁴

Therefore, even Manyano’s planning of mission to their people is marginalised. There is a major demand for education. Mrs. Sikhakhane shared many ideas of enhancing the Manyano at the Empangeni Convention in March 1993. She also mentioned the connections she has made with other organisations abroad. This brings the Spirit of Hope to the Manyano that there are people in the organisation who have light. David Bosch, in his book, *Transforming Mission*, says “*The missionary movement made a prime constitution to the abolition of slavery; spread better methods of agriculture, established and maintained unnumbered schools; gave medical care to millions; elevated the status of women; created bonds between people of different countries, which war could not sever trained a significant segment of the leadership of the nations now newly independent.*”⁵

7.4 Manyano and the Poor

The essential power of the Manyano is not found in riches and hierarchical structure, but in the latent and actual resources of those identified in Matthew 25 – that is the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and those in prison. This is an organisation that seeks to rediscover a Gospel identity, reactivating the dangerous memory of its revolutionary beginnings. It is an organisation within the church and an organisation beyond the church which carries within its resources which are capable of transforming the dominant structures not only of the church but also of society.

⁴ Charles, Villa-Vicencio : *The Spirit of Hope, Conversations on Religion, Politics and Values*, Skotaville Publishing, Johannesburg, South Africa, p69

Where Christ is, there the church as the body of Christ is required to be. To the Manyano, this is a relocation which unequivocally locates the church on the side of the poor, making her message of salvation concrete in terms of the agenda of the poor and offering liberation and redemption from personal and structural forces of domination and sinfulness which destroy their life and identity. As these forces involve both spiritual, structural warfare and conflict any attempt to distinguish between faith, spiritual and secular would be fruitless.

The Manyano of today is different from the one trapped in apartheid. Yet it can neither be ignored nor dismissed by the dominant church. It covers themes of suffering and powerlessness as well as those aspects of struggle, conversion, radical transformation and serious social revolution, which are part of and the tradition of Christian believers. Always, the Manyano are looking at the yard-stick of the church as it moves forward and revisits the underlying problems that she ignores in her mission.

If the Manyano is a missionary organisation within the Methodist Church and have many ways of initiating other organisations in the church and have such influence, then I do not understand why the Manyano is not crossing frontiers for the *Missio Dei*. God is now calling the Manyano to cross the river Jordan. A real Christian “conversion” is required in order to see persons united, it will not suffice for them just to be together. It is a matter of fleshing out God’s own project in the quality of the relationship demanded by the

⁵ David, Bosch : *Transforming Mission, Paradigm shifts in the theology of Mission*, MaryKnoll New York, Orbis, 1991, p294

Gospel. The Gospel of Jesus is gratuity and universality, meaning that human relationships should be gratuitous because the call to life is gratuitous.

Life is something received like one's race and one's country. The call to enter into brotherhood with Jesus Christ is gratuitous as well. *"You did not choose me, no. I chose you; and commissioned you to go out and to bear fruit, fruit that will last"* (Jn.15:16).⁶

Hence the disciples of Jesus Christ cannot boast that they are the initiators of the inter-human relationships by which they live. They cannot love only because they are loved themselves. They themselves have received the love to which they wish to be witnesses.

Inter-human relationships should be universal. The inter-human relationships propounded by the Gospel are no longer based on blood or social condition, and hence should be available to all, without any conditions or limits. No one is excluded. On the contrary, the disciples of Jesus Christ ought to give priority to marginalised relationships for those who have no one or to their own devices.

Every human being, especially the human being in need, is our neighbour, is the brother or sister whom we are to love and help. We are to love even those who do us harm, who are our enemies. Finally, the love we bear for the "other" should enable that other, in his or her own turn to, "go and do likewise". No one may be permitted to break the chain of love that is meant to extend to all humanity. Each and every person is to be a link to all the others in the bond of charity. It is in the Spirit of Adonai and of our God of mission

⁶ Revised Standard Version "The Holy Bible" – John 15:16

that we should go to all the people irrespective of colour, race or creed and to preach to every creature. Sometimes it is absurd to see our churches growing racially as if God has called us to preach the universal Gospel of Jesus Christ. Whether I like it or not, I am accountable for the suffering of those whom I did not preach to. In other words, the Manyano must review their mission focus so that it will not become a centri-fugal approach but a mission, which is centra-petal, meaning that it looks from the inside to the outside.⁷

This does not mean that the Manyano has closed its doors to the other races in South Africa, especially in the Methodist Church, but I think they can initiate a rediscovering of sisterhood with the White community, especially the women. I know that it is very demanding because of the few White women who have joined the Manyano, some of them joined because their husbands were in leading positions in the church and once their husbands were outvoted, it signified the end of their membership to the Manyano. This, especially to Manyano, indicated that they became members of the organisation for the sake of their husbands' positions. It is very scary for the organisation, concerning this matter, that maybe the Manyano may die in this sense.

The Manyano is an organisation of the poor, it is the church outside the gate. The Manyano is composed of those who have been oppressed, repressed and marginalised rejected as unworthy of high office and is without influence in the highest courts of the Methodist Church. Theologically, such an organisation can be called a "Body of

⁷ J.J. Kritzinger, P.G.J. Meiring, W.A.I Saayman: On being witness, what is the goal and content of Mission, who is responsible for Mission, The Context of Mission, The method of Mission, Halfway House, Johannesburg, 1994, p122

Christ”,⁸ and individual Christians as “God’s temple”. In ecclesiology it is necessary to understand in relation to the triune God who made known in Jesus Christ. Looking at the Manyano, it is required to be a part of the dynamic and outreaching love of God. This is traditionally witnessed to as the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit.

It is important for the Manyano to understand and participate in God’s encounter with creation, as in this the mystery of God’s passion is revealed more deeply to the world. This is because the Manyano, as an organisation within the church, is called to share in God’s encounter with the creation and to be the body of Christ and to be the instrument of God’s word in the world. The organisation cannot keep on promoting Blackness inside her membership without the inclusion of White ladies.

7.5 Conclusion

At the initial stage, the organisation grew and had many missions to be accomplished. The organisation is not growing as it was in the beginning. The Manyano seems to be losing a little more of her sense of purpose every day. The Manyano has little or no force as she is losing her focus. There is too much outgoing business – the Manyano is more centrifugal than centripetal. Even in a conversation, it will not be heard how many people in the area of activity have offered and committed themselves to Christ. I see the zeal is not the same.

⁸ Antony, J. Gittins : Bread for the journey, the Mission of Transformation and the Transformation of

For the organisation to successfully work for mission it must look for an alternative approach to leadership. The people who are leading the wagon must be committed to the church, the mission and God, and not to activities outside the church. They must have a clear vision of where they want to take the organisation. I would love to see the Manyano growing into a powerful organisation in Africa, but it cannot do so if leadership is decided by a discriminatory process, e.g. the leader of the organisation must be a minister's wife.

In other words, the organisation needs extensive transformation to re-establish itself as a missionary organisation in the twenty-first century. As it is now showing signs of being in the early stages of disintegration, the hope that I have for the Manyano will occur if there is a complete metamorphosis.

CHAPTER 8

TRANSFORMING MISSION OF THE MANYANO

8.1 Introduction

It is important in this chapter to look back at the whole project and try to look at the missiological point of view of the Manyano. It is also important to realise that the Manyano involvement, as an organisation in mission, in the *missio Dei* and is a response to the miracle of God's graceful love. Our being Christian means being witnesses. There is, therefore, no need to take a decision first to be obedient to the great commission. Therefore, this chapter will enhance the missionary paradigm shift for the Manyano. I will look at

- (1) Rediscovering the Mission by the whole people of God.
- (2) Missionary methods of the Manyano.
- (3) Reach the unreached people of God
- (4) Conclude and make a summary.

The aim of this response is to initiate a discussion for this organisation and make recommendations for effective participation in mission. The point of departure is God's commission to go into all the world and make disciples (Matthew 28:19). So, if the Manyano does not grow, the first question has to be; what is it doing? With God's grace can a corrected methodology lead to growth? What should be the target people for Manyano's mission?

8.2 Rediscovering Mission by the whole people of God

It is of vital importance to look at the initial stage of the Manyano Mission. At the same time the Manyano must not be hindered in their mission of the future by adopting all strategies of the past and try to implement it in the future. Charles Van Engen says.

“A new missiological paradigm in ecclesiology is needed so that we might see the missionary church as an “emerging” reality which, as it is built up in the world, become in fact what it is in faith. By grasping and internalizing this new paradigm we will find our thinking about the church and its mission becoming highly contextual, radically transformational, and powerfully hopeful, exercised with eternity in views¹⁷”.

Hence rediscovering mission of the whole Manyano is outgrowing the ingrown church. I am convinced that Manyano must be stimulated so as to be transformed. The point here is that we are all commissioned by Jesus Christ. Manyano must involve herself and all the people of God in mission. This mission must cross the frontiers and build bridges.

Kuthless Todd says, “Women discuss the present situation of the country- imperialism multinational corporations which look after their children.” These words of encouragement for Women’s Manyano to continue suffering and at the end they will conquer the Christian faith which is not like other philosophies that need the participation of all people. Mrs. Nkolongwane argued, that the Women’s Manyano has not been given time to prove its worth.

8.3 Missionary Method

In this section I will be dealing with the methods of mission which were used by the Women's Manyano that have kept them going up to now and cannot take them again into the next century. The context of mission does not agree with the time. Roland Allen, in his book of Missionary Methods, "argued, that, it would be extremely dangerous if people who had not learnt to walk were allowed to run."² For this organisation to grow, it is time for them to train their leaders in leadership skills, introduce the Bible and take a course that will enhance her for the mission. I believe that it is time for the Manyano to elect a person in leadership because of capability, not according to seniority, which kills the organisation. Sometimes I feel that there are people who are running before they can walk hence the growth of the Manyano.

It is clear that God wants everyone to know and honour Him, therefore, the body incorporating all the disciples of Jesus, is to grow in knowledge, in faith, in love and in numbers. Any missionary methods should be geared towards this end. Growth is the prime measure to determine the worth of a missionary method. If a missionary method, be it a traditional one or a new one, does not lead to growth, it should be discarded and another option tested. Manyano should be missionary-orientated, because God wants His

¹ Charles, Van Engen: God's missionary People, Rethinking the Purpose of the local Church, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1991, P. 41

² Roland, Allen: Missionary Methods, World Dominion, London, 1960, p.166

people to reach out to the ends of the earth with the good news of Jesus Christ. Nothing should keep the Manyano from this primary calling, not the demands of the church itself, or the demands of the already evangelised people. Manyano is structured for mission.

8.4 Reaching the unreached

It is the church of God, which has a mission; it is the God of Mission who has a church. God is sending God. He is in this sense a missionary God. God is sending Himself into the world. As mission lies within the heart of God so we are called to be missionary people. The church exists by mission as a fire exists by burning. Padrong Flanagan writes in his book called "a New Missionary Era", as our experience grows in sharing in the life and ministry of the church, bringing the message of the gospel to other men and women, we come to understand better the gifts we share, the values we need to share, if the Word of God is to be heard and acted upon in today's world.³

The claim that the gospel of Jesus Christ is the religion for all human beings is present in the witness of the church from the very beginning. Luke puts it dramatically for us in his story of what happened on the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came down upon the waiting disciples. Jerusalem was crowded with pilgrims from many parts of the world and from many countries. It is in that sense that the Manyano must know exactly their point of departure in a new dispensation. Anthony Gittuis, states that:

“Mission, then leads us to encounters on the margins and not at the centres, in unhabituated place rather than by familiar landmarks. It is where our personal

³ Anthony, J. Gittuis: Bread for the journey, The Mission of Transformation and the Transformation of mission, Orbis, New York, 1993 p.11

space or territory turf is opened up to others and where others invite us into their own world. For Jesus, it happened at the water's edge, in graveyards, in deserted places, by a well, at the bedside or a tomb, up a mountain, in a dark garden, on a cross; it is manifest in the breaking of bread, at a marriage feast, and in myriad spontaneous and surprising encounters.”⁴

It is true that Manyano is not looking at mission as a priority. Manyano have contributed a lot in the past but now, the organisation is wandering at the sea. It is no more fulfilling the call of God and to be obedient. Again Anthony J. Gittuis says, “that whenever and wherever the church lost sight of or lost commitment to its centrifugal thrust – its outreach – then sooner or later it withered and died.”⁵ This is what I do not want to see happening to the Manyano. Mission has a centrifugal momentum calling Christians to true availability to others and genuine readiness to comprise our comfort and to modify our manner of life and calling all Christian to transformation. Transformation is needed for the Manyano to be really engaged in mission.

8.5 Conclusion

To conclude the issue of reaching the unreached for the sake of mission by the Manyano, Paul, in I Cor said:

“I have made myself a slave to all, that I might win the more. To the Jews I became a Jew, in order to win Jew, in the more. To the Jews; to those under the law I became as one under the law, though not being myself under the law, that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one

⁴ Holy Bible: Acts 1:10

⁵ Anthony J. Gittius : Bread of the journey, Transformation of mission and the mission of Transformation, Orbis, N.Y. 1993, p. 9

outside the law – that I might win those outside the law. To the weak, I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men and women, that I might by all means save some. I do it for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessing.”⁶ (9:19-23).

The time has come for transforming the Manyano and to look at the paradigm shift for their mission. It is also time for this organisation to open a window and hear what other people who are not members of the organisation. Not in a negative way but positively and constructively. The idea that I share comes from a deep love and appreciation of the contribution done by this organisation in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa.

⁶ David, J. Bosch: *Transforming Mission, Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, Orbis, Mary Knoll N.Y., 1992, p. 136

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