

**The role of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN) as a pioneer  
of social development through Education in Ovamboland (1870-1970): A  
Church Historical Study**

**Eino M. Nangula**

**Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of  
Theology in Church History in the Faculty of Theology**

**University of Stellenbosch**

**Supervisor: Prof. R.R. Vosloo**



**December 2013**

## **Declaration**

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the authorship owner thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

Date: .....

Copyright © 201 Stellenbosch University  
All rights reserved

## **Abstract**

This study is a historical investigation of the role of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN) regarding social development with special attention to education as an agency of social change. ELCIN is the largest Lutheran church in Namibia, which was born out of the Finnish missionary activities after their arrival in the former Ovamboland in 1870. The Finnish missionaries became the first missionaries to do mission work in Ovamboland. This qualifies them to be regarded as pioneers of social development and of the transformation of society through education among the Ovambo people.

ELCIN's humble beginnings started as a mission field and developed into mission congregations; thereafter as a mission church and finally as independent church in 1954. The study shows that since its inception ELCIN has been committed to serve her members holistically (spiritually and socially). The focus of this study is to contribute to the understanding of the role ELCIN played to bring about development through education. The study therefore attempts to answer questions regarding the role the Finnish missionaries played in education and should be understood within the broader context of the history of ELCIN, for example, what arrangements were made and what developments took place during the indigenization process. Further, the study points out the educational challenges ELCIN encountered during the time of social development through education. In answering these questions, the study demonstrates how ELCIN played a decisive role in social development in Ovamboland, especially by way of education and training. The study refers to both informal (Christian) and formal (general or inclusive secular) education and the role each of these forms of education played in social change. The study also reflects on the engagement between ELCIN and the context resulting from the South African mandate in Namibia (then South West Africa). Finally, it is recommended that, in light of the positive contribution made by ELCIN to the social development of its members and communities by way of education in the past, it should continue this role in an independent Namibia. This could be done by way of intensifying Christian education among its members in order to educate and inspire people to remain faithful to their Christian values. In this way, ELCIN will continue to play a meaningful role in the life of communities and their members.

## **Abstrak**

Hierdie navorsingstudie is 'n historiese ondersoek na die rol van die Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN) ten opsigte van sosiale ontwikkeling met spesiale verwysing na opvoeding as 'n agent vir sosiale verandering. ELCIN is een van die grootste Lutherse kerke in Namibië, wat ontstaan het uit die aktiwiteite van die Finse sendelinge na hulle aankoms in die eertydse Ovamboland in 1870. Die Finse sendelinge was die eerste sendelinge wat sendingwerk in Ovamboland onderneem het. As gevolg hiervan word hulle beskou as pioniers van sosiale ontwikkeling en transformasie in die gemeenskap deur die opvoeding van die mense van Ovamboland.

ELCIN het sy nederige ontstaan gehad as 'n sendingveld en het ontwikkel tot sendinggemeentes; daarna tot 'n sendingkerk en uiteindelik in 1954 tot 'n onafhanklike kerk. Die studie dui aan dat ELCIN sedert sy ontstaan toegewyd was aan die taak om sy lede op 'n holistiese vlak (geestelik en sosiaal) te ontwikkel. Die fokus van hierdie studie is om 'n bydrae te lewer tot 'n dieper begrip van die rol wat ELCIN gespeel het ten opsigte van hierdie ontwikkeling. Die studie het dus gepoog om vrae te beantwoord oor die rol wat die Finse sendelinge in opvoeding gespeel het en behoort verstaan te word binne die breër konteks van die geskiedenis van ELCIN. Watter reëlins is getref en watter ontwikkelings het plaasgevind gedurende die inheemswordingsproses? Die studie dui verder op die opvoedkundige uitdagings wat ELCIN gedurende die tyd van sosiale ontwikkeling deur opvoeding ondervind het.

Ter beantwoording van hierdie vrae word deur die studie aangedui hoe ELCIN 'n deurslaggewende rol in die sosiale ontwikkeling van Ovamboland gespeel het, veral deur middel van opvoeding en opleiding. Die studie verwys na beide informele (Christelike) en formele (algemene of inklusiewe) opvoeding en na die rol wat elk van hierdie vorms van opvoeding gespeel het ten opsigte van sosiale verandering. Die studie kyk ook eers na die verhouding tussen ELCIN en die Suid-Afrikaanse regering gedurende Namibië (die destydse Suidwes-Afrika) se jare as mandaatgebied en daarna word aanbevelings gemaak. In die lig van die positiewe bydrae wat ELCIN in die verlede gemaak het tot sosiale ontwikkeling, word aanbeveel dat hierdie bydrae in 'n onafhanklike Namibië voortgesit word. Dit behoort te geskied deur 'n intensifisering van Christelike onderwys onder lede ten einde die mense op te voed en te inspireer om getrou te bly aan hulle Christelike waardes. Op hierdie wyse

sal ELCIN voortgaan om 'n betekensvolle rol in die lewe van die gemeenskappe en hul lede te speel.

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this thesis to my mother, Johanna Simon, and my father-in-law, Johannes Ndimuedi, who both passed away while I was busy with this study.

## **Acknowledgements**

Firstly, my gratitude goes to God our Father and Creator, who made it possible for me to finish my study and my research. I believe and confess that without God's guidance, wisdom and grace this thesis would have been impossible.

A special word of thanks goes to my supervisor, Prof. R.R. Vosloo, for the valuable advice and professional encouragement. It was an honour to be under the guidance of a person with so much knowledge and experience. I enjoyed the good working climate, which resulted in fruitful discussions. This dissertation is evidence of hard work that resulted from on-going support and encouragement from a dedicated mentor. In the same breath, my sincere gratitude to Dr L Hansen for his support and professional work I got from him. Further, it is a great honour and privilege for me to extend gratitude and thanks to the editor, Ms Nan Muir, who proofread and edited my work. Her dedication and professionalism is much appreciated. I further owe sincere thanks to both libraries' staffs at the University of Stellenbosch, the Theological and the JS Gericke, for their support and readiness to help. God bless you.

My thanks also go to the leadership of my church, The Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Namibia (ELCIN), for giving me an opportunity for a study leave to pursue this study. Similarly, I want to thank the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (FELM) for financial support in the form of a scholarship and the University of Stellenbosch for supporting me during my time of study.

I would like to express my gratitude to my two colleagues and fellow students, Rev Johannes Haufiku and Rev Gideon Niitenge, for their moral support and willingness to help me through my study. I would also like to thank the parishes, church members, individual friends and family members who supported me in many different ways during my study.

Finally and most importantly, I am deeply indebted to my family for all their support. I therefore would like to thank my beloved wife Hilka-Mukwaudimbe, who provided much needed support, prayers and endless encouragement, which made it possible to complete this huge task. Further, for looking after our children and taking care of the household while

I was away. To my lovely kids, Johanna Hilka, Festus, Eino, Musika and Nande, thank you for your understanding, patience, support and prayers, you kept me going! I love you all.



## **Acronyms**

CCN - Council of Churches in Namibia  
ELCIN - Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia  
ELCRN - Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia  
ELOC - Evangelical Lutheran Ovambo-Kavango Church  
FELM - Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission  
FMS - Finnish Missionary Society  
GELK (ELCIN) - German Evangelical Lutheran Church  
ICJ - International Court of Justice  
LMS - London Missionary Society  
LUCSA - Lutheran Communion in Southern Africa  
LWF - Lutheran World Federation  
OPO - Ovambo People Organization  
RMS - Rhenish Missionary Society  
SA - South Africa  
SWANU - South West Africa National Union  
SWAPO - South West Africa People's Organization  
WCC - World Council of Churches  
WW II- World War II  
TEF - Theological Education Fund  
ULTS - United Lutheran Theological Seminary





## Contents

Declaration.....	II
Abstract.....	III
Abstrak.....	IV
Dedication.....	VI
Acknowledgements.....	VII
Acronyms.....	IX
Namibian Map.....	IX
ELCIN Map.....	X
Contents.....	X
<b>Chapter 1. Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background to and motivation for the study.....	1
1.2 Research focus and research question.....	5
1.3 Methodology.....	6
1.4 The structure of the research thesis.....	8
<b>Chapter 2. Christianity in Namibia: A general introduction and overview.....</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1 Introduction.....	11
2.2 Namibia: The country and its people.....	11
2.3 The first explorers and settlers in Namibia.....	15
2.3.1 The Portuguese.....	15
2.3.2 The Dutch.....	16
2.4 Political development.....	18
2.5 Missionary work in Namibia.....	24
2.5.1 Introduction.....	24
2.5.2 The London Missionary Society.....	25
2.5.3 The Wesleyan Mission Society.....	27

2.5.4 The Rhenish Missionary Society .....	29
2.5.5 The Finnish Missionary Society.....	32
2.6 Conclusion .....	37
<b>Chapter 3. The establishment, growth and ecclesial life of ELCIN .....</b>	<b>38</b>
3.1 Introduction.....	38
3.2 The birth and growth of ELCIN .....	39
3.2.1 The arrival, challenges and missionaries’ work in Ovamboland .....	39
3.2.2 The early years in Ovamboland: The slow pace of conversions .....	44
3.3 The baptism of a king and the growth in its wake .....	46
3.4 Milestones en route from ELOC to ELCIN .....	47
3.5 The characteristics of the ecclesial life of ELCIN:.....	50
3.5.1 The ELCIN structure and leadership .....	50
3.5.2 The struggle for financial independence.....	55
3.5.3 The property of ELCIN .....	58
3.5.4 Worship in ELCIN .....	59
3.5.5 Indigenization of worship in ELCIN.....	62
3.6 Other challenges and landmarks of ELCIN .....	64
3.6.1 Registration of church with the government .....	64
3.6.2 Marriage .....	65
3.6.3 Church in relation to state policy .....	67
3.6.4 ELCIN and Social Development.....	68
3.7 Conclusion.....	70
<b>Chapter 4: Finnish Mission education in Ovamboland: Informal education .....</b>	<b>72</b>
4.1 Introduction.....	72
4.2 Traditional education in Ovamboland .....	72
4.3 Mission (informal) education .....	74

4.3.1 Introduction .....	74
4.3.2 Early mission education.....	74
4.3.3 Translation and publications .....	78
4.3.4 Early teaching methodology.....	81
4.3.5 The first indigenous assistant teachers .....	82
4.3.6 Challenges of teachers' allowances and salaries.....	86
4.4 The role of ELCIN in Christian education .....	91
4.5 Conclusion .....	92
<b>Chapter 5: Social Development and Education: Formal Finnish Mission education .....</b>	<b>94</b>
5.1 Introduction.....	94
5.2 Teachers' training.....	95
5.3 Theological seminaries and the further training of pastors.....	100
5.3.1 Theological seminaries .....	100
5.4 Church and state relations regarding education .....	106
5.4.1 Church and education under the South Africa Mandatory.....	106
5.4.2 Church and Bantu Education .....	112
5.5 Conclusion .....	116
<b>Chapter 6: Summary and concluding remarks .....</b>	<b>117</b>
6.1 Summary .....	117
6.2 Concluding remarks.....	124
<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>128</b>

## **Chapter 1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Background to and motivation for the study**

This church historical study focuses on the role of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN), as pioneer in social development through education. ELCIN was born out of the activities of Finnish missionaries shortly after their arrival in Ovamboland in 1870. The aim of this research project is to explore the role of ELCIN in social development from 1870 to 1970, keeping in mind three major stages: the Finnish mission field, the Mission Church in Ovamboland (ELOC), and the Independent Church (ELCIN). At the outset, one may ask why study the history of the ELCIN, and specifically why study its role as social and developmental pioneer in terms of education?

However, before continuing with this question, it is vital to indicate that most scholars agree that there is a link between education and social developments. Missionaries and mission organisations in the global context are viewed as agents of social change. Agarwal, for instance, in her essay on the role of education in society, outlined some significant functions of education to complete the socialization process, transmit the central heritage, form social personality, and reform attitudes (Agarwal et al. 2011: 253-291). Similarly, Fransic and Hezel, in their paper on the relationship between education and development, also confirm that no development can take place in a society until people are trained or educated in the basic skills needed (Fransic and Hezel et al. 1975:71).

This does not mean that education was the only means the church used for social development. Generally, ELCIN used three pillars to address social issues and help a person in totality, in other words holistically. These pillars are evangelization, education and medical services. However, because these are vast areas, this study will not address all three. Therefore, the focal point of the study is placed on one of the three pillars, education, to prove and support the claim. The study will examine the impact of both forms of education, that is, informal and formal education. Details about these forms of education will surface later.

To go back to the question asked earlier. Firstly, it is a very important project for me as a researcher and as ordained minister in ELCIN and furthermore, to know and understand the history of my church better. Secondly, there is a need to promote an understanding of the role played by the churches in Namibia in general, and ELCIN in this case in particular, regarding its involvement in social and developmental aspects through education. This study is important because social development remains not only a challenge for the church, but also the responsibility of the church. Thirdly, faithful and humble Christians who have contributed much to the establishment of Christianity in Namibia motivated me, especially by way of the valuable books on the history of the church in Namibia, and on ELCIN in particular. In this regard the works of Nambala (1994), Buys and Nambala (2003), Lehtonen (2001), Peltola (2002), Shejavali (1977), to name a few, immediately come to mind. Fourthly, this study will help to contribute to a more extensive understanding of the public role of ELCIN in the field of education as a process of development and transformation. As August, in his book, *The quest for being public church*, explains, the public role of the church can impact on the state, economy, community, civil society or on public opinion (August 2009: 28). Among these spheres of influence, education surely has a place as well. Finally, Gonzalez correctly notes that no matter whether we know it or not, no matter whether we confess it or not, history illuminates our present and announces our future. In this way, this research hopes to help ELCIN to envision and determine its future with regard to Christian education (Gonzalez 2002: 148).

The history of ELCIN is indeed also a voice from the past that speaks to the present and needs to be heard. Namibian historians Buys and Nambala rightly state, "The role of the churches dare not be ignored in any secular, political, economic or cultural history of Namibia. Without historical records, the role of the church, ELCIN might be overlooked" (2003: xiv). Thus, this study aims to create a platform not only to listen to the past, but also for the past to speak to the present.

Writing history is of course not a new practice. According to Gonzalez (2002: 84-98), it is a well-known fact that history writing started a long way back. About 2500 BCE there were already writings telling the history of Egypt from its early beginnings. Gonzalez gives quite a number of reasons for the importance of history. The people of Israel, for example, wrote down their history, amongst others, in order for coming generations to know how they



served God. The Egyptians wrote down their history in order to confirm the good character of their rulers and to bring about a better understanding of obedience among themselves (Gonzalez 2002: 87-88).

In the Bible, the Book of Judges was written to teach the Israelites to do good, and if people did what was not good in the eyes of the Lord, that the Lord would punish them by delivering them into captivity (cf. Judges 7). Moreover, there are also biblical commands that required us to learn from the past. According to Paul (1 Cor. 10: 11), some of the events in the history of Israel were written as warnings or lessons for the generations to learn from. According to Hebrews 11: 4, for instance, Abel is still speaking to us from the past.

Heath puts the need for history, especially with reference to the church, as follows:

Each generation stands on the shoulders of its predecessors like acrobats in a human pyramid. Knowing the church's history is like knowing your family tree. And, just like there is an intangible sense of belonging when you know where your church, denomination and faith have come from over the past 2000 years (Heath 2008: 19-21).

To study either church history or other histories is to have an opportunity to learn and pay attention to the voices of the past. The history of ELCIN is a history that is incorporated into a "Universal History". The latter, according to Gonzalez, means, there are only one creation, one purpose, and one history. Therefore whatever histories we tell, be it a history of the church, of a nation and of our own lives, from a theological perspective, they are small portions of the "Great History" (Gonzalez 2002: 91).

The history of ELCIN is a history of the church's service to the community, in order to improve the livelihood of the people. The education system that missionaries introduced and which is the focus of this study, testified to that. The church in this regard played a significant public role to transform the community from illiterate to literate people. Based on this reason, we can say the church is a public institution that addresses socio-economic and political issues.

The practices of the church include baptism, the breaking of the bread, and confession of faith. This also shows that the church is not a private, closed institution. In his evaluation of the church as public institution, August concludes that the church is a public church because

it is a worshipping community, ecumenical body and local congregation. Therefore, within these configurations, the church as public church demonstrates its nature publicly through public responsibilities like preaching, fellowship, liturgy, teaching, educating and service (August 2009: 23).

However, without historical writings and studies, the public role of the church might be overlooked and forgotten in society. It is therefore important to uncover and reaffirm the role of ELCIN in the life of people in Namibia. In this way, it will not only help to pass historical facts and information from one generation to the next, but will consequently keep the church alive in the people's imaginations. A study such as this that focuses on the role that the church had played in the past, especially in education in this context, may help the church to understand its present responsibilities and the challenges it faces. Further, it would help the church to continue exercising its calling and upholding its integrity in an independent Namibia.

After the independence of Namibia in 1990, there has been a general feeling among Namibians that the public role of the churches in general and of ELCIN in particular is on the decrease. Prof. P. Isaak, a pastor of one of the Lutheran churches, for instance, writes:

Many Namibians feel that, during the first ten years of independence, religious communities, Council of Churches (CCN) members and the various other churches have neglected their role of being the barometer of the conscience of the people (Isaac 2000: 112-113).

In the eyes of many, the church was only actively involved in social activities before the independence of Namibia. According to some ELCIN members, things only went well during the time ELCIN was under the leadership of missionaries – especially during the time when it was getting financial support from the Finnish Missionary Society (FMS). However, the fact is that after Namibia received independence in 1990, Finnish missionaries slowly started limiting the financial support to ELCIN. The reasons for this were that ELCIN is an independent church and Namibia is free, so it was now time for self-support. At the same time, ELCIN was not financially ready to take over the financial obligation in terms of self-support.

According to Isaak (2000: 113), contemporary Namibians individually, need to examine their consciences and the churches need some thorough self-scrutiny. In the same breath, Kaulinge, one of ELCIN's bishops, in his address on the role of the church, describes the situation by saying that:

Today many former donors and supporters of ELCIN are no longer giving money to ELCIN for church activities, but for projects only. Many Church workers including pastors are leaving church services and joining civil services for better salaries. Shortage of pastors and unavailability of capable candidates for theological studies became a challenge to the role of ELCIN (Kaulinge 1992: 18-19).

Kaulinge pleaded with the Finnish sister church to continue supporting ELCIN financially, especially in the area of stewardship, diaconal work that includes counselling, rehabilitation, mission and education.

Against this background, the church's active role in society became weak. This resulted in a situation where it became almost impossible or difficult for the church to uphold all its activities as it had during the time of missionaries' support. As a result, the public role and visibility of the church is weakening.

## **1.2 Research focus and research question**

There is a general feeling and understanding among most Christians in Namibia that the role of the church in education in general and of ELCIN in particular is neither observable nor relevant. According to this view, things were going well during the time ELCIN was under the control of Finnish missionaries, both in terms of leadership and in terms of resources. Today the church has difficulty in upholding her educational activities as they were in the time of the missionaries. As a result, many regard ELCIN's social role as becoming less significant.

This is a church historical study of the public role of ELCIN as social and developmental pioneer. Social development is a process that results in the transformation of social structures to improve the capacity of a society in order to fulfil its objective. Further, development can be described as a process designed to promote better living for the whole community, with the active participation of the community members (August 2010: 6-7) ELCIN's social role was based on three important pillars, namely, the preaching of the gospel, education, and health care. Within these broad themes, however, the focus of this

study will be in particular to investigate ELCIN's role in education in the northern part of Namibia, formally called Ovamboland (North). Since education is power, as is often heard, it will be asked whether ELCIN used education as a driving force to bring about social change in the lives of people. Therefore, the following research questions will be addressed:

1. What role did missionaries play in terms of education and how could one understand the role of education in the broader history of ELCIN?
2. What arrangements were made and what developments took place during the indigenization process to prepare the church (ELCIN) to take over the leadership, management, and the entire programme of activities of the former mission church?
3. What are the challenges ELCIN faced in the process of social development through education?
4. What limitations did ELCIN experience during the process of indigenization?
5. Given its history, what could be learned more, to enhance ELCIN's role in terms of social transformation, peace and justice in an independent Namibia?

The involvement of Christian churches in community development in Namibia has a long history, going back to the time of the missionaries who came to Namibia to plant Christianity. However, the focus of this research is on the role of Finnish missionaries in Ovamboland, with the special attention placed on education and training as a tool they (the Finnish missionaries) used to bring about social development, a process in which ELCIN played a great role as a pioneer. History has it on record that ELCIN through missionaries' activities of education emerged to be a social and developmental pioneer in Ovamboland (Miettinen 2005: 90-92). Therefore, this study aims to prove that, in order to help people who happened not to know or understand this fact. For that reason, this research will study and bring forth some historical evidence to support the claim. Further, the study seeks to contribute to the already existing understanding regarding the public role of ELCIN in the lives of the Ovambo people.

### **1.3 Methodology**

In their book *Church History: an introduction to research, reference works and methods*, Bradley and Muller rightly says that historical study consists in the examination and

evaluation of sources and the sources themselves are interesting. These sources can be divided in primary and secondary sources. Primary sources remain the main focus of historical interest and the last court of appeal for historical judgment. They further argue that history at its best is the careful analysis of sources that allow them to convey their message and reveal their significance to the present (1995:39).

In light of the above-mentioned, this study is a non-empirical study of literary sources. Relevant primary sources were used as far as possible, which include numerous church documents in the ELCIN and Namibian National Archives. For example, minutes of the meetings of different synods, minutes of the mission board and some official documents such as constitutions, agreements, council meetings' resolutions and other sources such as the church newsletter (*Omukwetu*) were used. However, it is important to mention that most of the early original documents and material on historical events, correspondence, meetings, resolutions and reports were written in Finnish and Afrikaans. Nevertheless, English and Oshiwambo started to be used at a later stage.

The researcher is not proficient in either Finnish or Afrikaans, and for that reason, the sources used in this study are limited to the English and Oshiwambo historical records and books. However, the study is not a first study on the history of the church in Namibia. Other scholars have written about it from their different contexts, and the researcher has consulted the relevant important sources.

Most importantly, this study will predominantly cover the period from 1870 until 1970. The reasons for choosing this period are as follows. Firstly, it is because in 1870 the Finnish missionaries arrived in Ovamboland. From then on all the major social and developmental aspects of both informal and formal education programmes started to take their course. Secondly, ELCIN had been under the support and leadership of a mother church until the time of her independence in 1954. Thirdly, 1970 is chosen because the role of ELCIN especially in national education officially came to an end. This happened when the process of government that was started in the 1960s to take over the national education from the church was completed. This means, at the end of that year (1970), all the ELCIN (mission) schools in Ovamboland and Kavango except Oshigambo and Nkurekuru high schools were under state control. For that reason, the role of ELCIN in formal education did not cease

completely. On the other hand, the ELCIN continue to play a significant role not only in Christian education as its primary focus, but also in the liberation struggle for Namibia's independent. Although this study did not cover the time beyond 1970, it is important to note that much had happened since then, and that this period also warrants further research.

However, since then ELCIN continued with her role on Christian education as one of its priorities. For that reason, ELCIN needs in an independent Namibia to find new strategies to strengthen her in terms of Christian principles by fostering moral standards, Christian values, human dignity, reconciliation, peace and justice for all through Christian education.

To establish a broader basis for the study, secondary sources were consulted, particularly historical writings on the activities of Finnish missionaries and ELCIN. Historical books on Namibia in general were also used as secondary sources.

For the purposes of the methodology for this church historical study on education in ELCIN, Gordon L. Heath's, *Doing church history*, Justo L. Gonzalez's *The changing shape of Church history*, and *Church history: an introduction to research, reference works and methods* by James E. Bradley and Richard Muller were primarily drawn upon.

#### **1.4 The structure of the research thesis**

The first chapter introduces and outlines the purpose for the study. It also gives an overview of the motivation for the research topic, indicating the reasons for choosing and writing about this specific topic. Attention is also given to aspects such as research questions, methodology and the structure of the thesis.

The second chapter focuses on the historical background of the missionaries' activities in Namibia. The goal is to give a brief discussion of the origins and activities of different missionary societies in order to make clear the broader context in which Finnish missionaries, the founders of the later ELCIN, began their missionary and educational work.

The third chapter gives the background to the establishment and growth of ELCIN and highlights some aspects of the ecclesial life. The aim of this chapter is to look at the process of indigenization and development within the church. In the process the mission activities in Ovamboland, the ecclesial life of ELCIN as well as its structure and leadership development

are reflected upon. The chapter further looks at ELCIN's financial situation and property status as well as at milestone achievements and challenges the church encountered in the process of indigenization. All this contributes to understanding the ecclesial identity of ELCIN and the possible place for social development and education within its activities.

The fourth chapter forms the centre of the study. The focal point concerns the role of the missionaries in education in Ovamboland. According to the well-known saying, knowledge is power and education is a key to empowerment, this chapter specifically addresses the process of indigenous empowerment through missionary education. Education in this study emerges into two stages: the first stage is the early stage of informal education (Christian or religious education) and the second stage will be the later stage of formal education (inclusive or secular education). The latter (formal education) will be discussed in chapter five.

The fourth chapter deals with early mission education toward Christianization, training of assistant teachers, translations and publications as well as teaching methodologies. The aim of missionaries was to teach the indigenous people basic knowledge, to enable them to take up the responsibility of helping the missionaries. The chapter concludes by looking at some challenges regarding the allowances and salaries of teachers and the status of Christian education in ELCIN.

Chapter five is a continuation of chapter four. These two chapters can be viewed as intertwining, because one cannot speak of one stage without mentioning the other. This chapter, however, concentrates more on formal education, especially the beginning and development of an educational system as well as the establishment of various theological and educational institutions. Furthermore, this chapter explores the relationship between ELCIN and the government of South West Africa. The aim is to help in understanding the role of the church and its significance in society through education.

The last chapter will then draw conclusions from the findings and information in relation to the research problem. In other words, the aim is to see how the church may continue to shape, educate, and promote moral values among members through its means of Christian education. It may help also in understanding the role and position of the church in society.

In this way to realize the challenges the church faces in terms of development, poverty, injustice, diseases, unemployment, and corruption, just to mention a few.



## **Chapter 2. Christianity in Namibia: A general introduction and overview**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Where should one start when writing the history of ELCIN? The most likely stage to begin is when the first steps were taken that eventually led to the establishment of ELCIN. Therefore, in the researcher's opinion, in order to reflect on the history of ELCIN the study will take us back to the start in 1867 when first contact between the Rhenish Mission Society (RMS) and the Finnish Mission Society (FMS) was made. This communication between the two mission societies led to the arrival of Finnish missionaries in 1869 in Namibia, and specifically in Ovamboland in 1870. On their arrival in Ovamboland, they established mission stations that were also education centres.

As a beginning of this chapter as well as an introduction to the whole of the study, it is helpful to start with some brief historical information about Namibia. This will help in understanding the general situation of Namibia, in which the missionary activity of church planting took place. For that reason, the following will be discussed: A brief historical account of Namibia including references to its geography, climate, economy, people and political atmosphere. Further, the chapter relates the story of the first European explorers and settlers in Namibia, which forms the background to the arrival of various pioneer Missionary Societies in Namibia. The chapter ends by focusing on the historical background of the FMS and their journey from Finland to Otjimbingwe in Namibia. The aim of this chapter is, therefore, more specifically to understand the process of the establishment of Christianity in Namibia, particularly through the efforts of the FMS, the founding Missionary Society of ELCIN.

### **2.2 Namibia: The country and its people**

Namibia is located on the south-western coast of the African continent. It is a large country; it covers an area of 824 269 square kilometres (330 000 miles), which exceeds the combined areas of England, Austria, Sweden, Denmark, Hungary, Portugal and the Netherlands (Levinson 1961: 16). The magnitude of the country makes it the fifteenth leading country in terms of size on the African continent. Topographically, Namibia is a diverse country consisting of three different structural features: the Namib Desert that stretches along its

western coast, a mountainous plateau in the central part of the country and the arid grasslands of the Kalahari Desert forming the eastern part of the country. The distance of Namibia from north to south is about 1 200 kilometres, while from the east to the west is about 800 kilometres. Namibia shares borders with Angola in the north, Zambia in the northeast, Botswana in the east, South Africa in the south and southeast, whilst the Atlantic Ocean forms its western border (Levinson 1961: 16; cf. Mbuende 1986: 19).

The west coast of Namibia is lined with the Namib Desert – the oldest desert in the world, which also gave its name to the country (Namibia). The desert is a stretch of land about 50 to 70 kilometres wide extending along the Atlantic coast from the mouth of the Orange River on the South African-Namibian border in the south to the Kunene River between Namibia and Angola in the north (Nambala 1994: 8). The position of the Namib Desert protected the Namibian interior from access by the European seafarers for centuries. The arid and sandy northern and north-eastern sides of the country for long discouraged settlement by Europeans, as did the southern and south-western hot, dry, rocky and mountainous countryside. Central Namibia lies about 1 200 metres above sea level, with seasonal rain mostly during November until about March (Tuupainen 1970: 16).

Various names were used to describe and refer to the territory before it became known first as South West Africa and then as Namibia in 1968 (Buys & Nambala 2003: xxii). Early in the 19th century, it was called “Transgariep”, which was the old Hottentot name for the Orange River (the Gariep) that separated it from the Republic of South Africa. The early explorers further called its southern region Great Namaqualand (as opposed to Little Namaqualand to the south of the Orange River in South Africa), its central part Damaraland or Herero-land and its northern part Ovamboland. The first Swedish explorer in the area, Charles J. Anderson, was the first to give the territory the name South West Africa (Levinson 1961: 15). This name was slightly changed during the German colonial era when it was called German South West Africa (SWA). In 1915, when South Africa’s military forces under General Botha occupied SWA, the name was changed back to South West Africa. The United Nations General Assembly officially approved the name Namibia in 1968 after South Africa’s mandate was terminated in 1966 (Harlech-Jones 1997: 12).

Namibia is rich in mineral resources like uranium, diamonds, copper, lead, zinc, tin, vanadium and silver. Mining and agriculture (mainly cattle farming) form the economic backbone of the country. Therefore, about ninety percent of the people in Namibia depend on agriculture (Nambala 1994: 8).

The climate of Namibia is generally hot and very dry with the rainy season occurring in summer. The climate of Namibia is sub-tropical with its annual average temperature ranging from 16 degrees Celsius at the coast, and between 30 and 40 degrees in the interior (Tuupainen 1970: 16). The average annual rainfall varies – between less than fifty millimetres in the coastal and desert region, to more than five hundred millimetres in the Caprivi Strip in the far northeast. Namibia's permanent border rivers like Kunene, Kavango, Kwando, Zambezi in the north and the Orange River in the south branch from neighbouring countries, which have higher rainfall levels than Namibia (Buys & Nambala 2003: xxii). Most of the time, all the internal rivers of Namibia are dried up riverbeds with only the occasional flash floods in the rare times of heavy rains.

Namibian diversity not only refers to the countryside itself, but also to its population, which is comprised of ninety percent blacks and ten percent whites. According to the census result of 2011, the Namibian population stands at 2.1 million. Historians suggested that the Bushmen were the first inhabitants of Namibia although they are a minority group today (Levinson 1961: 41). Besides white, coloured and basters (persons of mixed heritage) people, the majority of Namibians are blacks. The main ethnic groups in Namibia are:

- Caprivians 4%
- Damara 7%
- Herero 7%
- San 3%
- Tswana 0,5%
- Whites 6%
- Kavango 9%
- Nama 5%
- Ovambos 50% (these percentages are based on census results of 2011)
- Coloured 7% and Basters of Rehoboth 2%

The Ovambo, Kavango, Himba, a part of the Herero population, and the Caprivians lived in the rural regions of the north and northeast of Namibia. The rest of the other groups reside in other parts of the country, like the south, west, and central Namibia (Mbuende 1986: 39). This is no longer the same because after independence, the Constitution of the country gives freedom to all people to settle and reside wherever they want to in the Namibian interior. English is regarded as an official language in the country, although most of the people find it difficult to speak and understand it. Afrikaans is one of the popular vernacular languages and widely used by most adult people. This was because of its historical usefulness as *lingua franca* (a shared language of communication used between people whose main languages are different), especially in the south, central and western parts of the country. The major indigenous language groups are Damara-Nama, Herero, Okavango, Ovambo, Lozi, San, Tswana, Afrikaans, and German. These language groups again subdivided into several related languages and dialects. The Ovambo group of languages includes eight different dialects (Nambala 1994: 2).

The history of Namibia under the South Africa colonial era is linked to the colonial history of blacks in South Africa. The apartheid government that ruled South Africa for a period of 46 years (1948-1994) also ruled Namibia for 42 years until 1990. This apartheid system was supported through the introduction of "*Apartheid theology*" by theologians of the Dutch Reformed Church, a systematic approach aimed to justify racial segregation between black and white from a biblical perspective (De Gruchy & Villa-Vicencio 1983: 146).

Due to Namibia's colonial history, black people were forced to own only ten percent of the land where most of them then also lived. This meant that less than ten percent of the people who formed the white minority occupied ninety percent of the productive and commercial land in Namibia. The land where the black majority lived was further subdivided into what was called "homelands" (which means people were divided according to their tribe as a system of divide and rule) by the South African authorities. This was done so that they would be able to restrict the movements of Namibians in order to isolate and control them (Nambala 1994: 44).

“One Namibia – one Nation” has been the Namibian government motto since independence. Today a great feeling of solidarity is found amongst most Namibians despite the fact that each of the eleven tribal groups has its own history, language and culture.

## **2.3 The first explorers and settlers in Namibia**

### **2.3.1 The Portuguese**

This section of the study will first give a brief overview of how European navigators, explorers and settlers came to Namibia. Part of this history is the coming of the first pioneer European Missionary Societies to Namibia, which will be briefly dealt with in the latter part of this chapter.

The country that started exploration on African soil was Portugal, in the 1420s during the reign of King Henry the Navigator (1394-1460). Henry was an important figure in the early days of the Portuguese Empire and the Age of Discoveries. According to Nambala (1994: 45), King Henry sent out a small expedition to Lagos in West Africa in the 1420s. Part of the aim was to explore the west coast of Africa in order to validate the information of the Greek historian Herodotus, who had recorded that in about 600 BC the Egyptian Pharaoh had sent a number of ships that took years to circumnavigate the southern tip of Africa. In his book, *The ageless land*, Levinson describes the Portuguese explorers' journey that took place in the 15th century. During that journey, on their return the explorers' ships brought an unspecified number of slaves from Africa. Some of these slaves were Christianized and were taught the Portuguese language. Clearly, some African were Christianized long before European missionaries came to southern Africa (Levinson 1961: 19).

The death of Henry the Navigator in 1460 caused the pace of African exploration to slacken. The desire for exploration started ten year later in the 1470s when an explorer, Fernando, reached Niger. Thereafter the exploration continued, especially in 1481 when Prince John II became the king of Portugal (Nambala 1994: 45-46). John was a competent geographer and always willing to make new discoveries. For this reason, he pursued African coastal exploration. One of John's captains, Diogo Cão (Diego Cam), led explorations further down the coast of Africa. On their way, the explorers erected several limestone pillars (*padrão*) along the west coast of Africa. These limestones served as landmarks claiming Portuguese authority, while at the same time serving as symbols of Christianity (Nambala 1994: 46).

Diogo Cão was a Portuguese explorer and one of the most notable navigators of the Age of Discovery (1450-1486), and made two voyages sailing along the west coast of Africa to Namibia in the 1480s. He was the first explorer to take the abovementioned pillars with him on his journey and erected one near the mouth of the Congo in 1482. During his second trip in 1484, he erected a second pillar near Swakopmund with the following statement engraved in Latin and Portuguese on it:

Since the creation of the world 6 684 years have passed and since the birth of Christ 1 484 years and so the illustrious Don Johannes [King John] has ordered this pillar to be erected here by Jacobus Canus [Diego Cam], his knight (Levinson 1961: 20).

Another Portuguese navigator, Vasco da Gama, who was a commander-in-chief of four Portuguese vessels, was the first to explore from the mouth of the Fish River in South Africa to Mozambique. His first visit to Sofala, Mozambique and Kilwa in 1502 paved the way for establishing the Portuguese forts in 1507, which as a result, was a first European settlement in southern Africa (Nambala 1994: 47).

Another important figure in the history of exploration was Bartholomew Diaz (1450-1500), who also led an expedition to southern Africa. Diaz left Lisbon early in 1487 and reached the area of Walvis Bay and Angra Pequena (Luderitz) in December of the same year. In 1488, Diaz reached the “Cape of Good Hope” in anticipation of the coming discovery of the route to the Orient (Levinson 1961: 21).

However, despite the “discovery” of the Namibian coastal side by the Portuguese, they did not manage to penetrate the interior of Namibia because of the Namib Desert. It was only two hundred years later that those other explorers found their way into the Namibian interior. They entered from the south across the Orange River, from the east through contemporary Botswana and from the north via Angola (Nambala 1994: 48).

### **2.3.2 The Dutch**

The history of a Reformed Christian presence in both Namibia and South Africa began with the arrival of the Dutch in South Africa. On 6 April 1652 Jan van Riebeeck together with about 120 of his staff members, all employees by the Dutch East India Company, arrived at the Cape of Good Hope (Hofmeyr, Millard & Froneman 1991: 6). Their aim was to establish a

refreshment station where fresh fruit and vegetables could be grown and supplied to visiting merchant ships. Furthermore, they were also to trade meat and other goods with the local inhabitants (Levinson 1961: 21).

As mentioned above, the actual exploration of Namibia was only fully realized after the settlement of whites in South Africa, two hundred years after the Portuguese landed off the Namibian coast. In 1679, the number of white inhabitants of the Cape had increased to about six hundred. After only four years, the number increased to nearly one thousand. Another ten years later, the number of whites in Cape Town had increased spontaneously and doubled. This number included settlers of German, French, Dutch, Swedish, Danish and Walloon descent. It was within this group that the goal of exploring the Namibian interior was set and that was to be carried out both overland and by sea (Nambala 1994: 49). The 1760s rumours about rich copper deposits in the north motivated Simon van der Stel, a Cape Governor, to make a journey to the Copper Mountains of Namaqualand, which were then known as the Gariiep River (Levinson 1961: 24).

A small exploration vessel, the *Grundel*, was dispatched from the Cape in order to explore the coast of Namibia in 1670. It went up to Luderitz Bay and seven years later, the second ship arrived. This was then regarded as the first real communication between explorers and the Namibian indigenous people (Namas) at Luderitz – although there had been some misunderstanding and suspicion among the Namibian people, especially when the explorers wanted to exchange goods for cattle (Nambala 1994: 49).

In the following century, traders such as William van Wyk and many others attempted a secret overland expedition to Namibia in 1738 – again with the aim to establish trade relationships with the Namibians (Nambala 1994: 49). These explorations of Namibia did not cover the whole country. The families of Dixon and Morris travelled together by ox-wagon from the Cape to Walvis Bay in 1844, their wives became the first European woman to live in Walvis Bay. Until the mid-nineteenth century, the northern part of Namibia remained unexplored. The exploration of this part of Namibia began in 1850, when an English explorer, Francis Galton and his cousin Charles J. Anderson, landed at Walvis Bay. From there they proceeded to Ovamboland (Levinson 1961: 30). According to Levinson, six explorers and hunters also visited Ovamboland in 1864. Some of them proceeded to Kunene

to conduct business with the Portuguese in Angola. The rest of the group, including a certain Mrs. Green, stayed behind in Ovamboland with King Shikongo shaKalulu of the Ondonga tribe. In 1865, Mrs. Green gave birth to a baby girl, Mary, the first white child to be born in Ovamboland (Levinson 1961: 30, 32 & Nambala 1994: 52). These explorers never settled in Ovamboland permanently, they were only interested in exploration, hunting and trade with the indigenous people.

## **2.4 Political development**

The history of Namibia until 1990 can be divided into different major periods: pre-history until 1484, a time with no recorded history; the period of explorers, traders and missionaries (1484-1884); the time of colonialism under Germany (1884-1915); the South African military administration (1915-1920); the Mandate and South African colonialism (1920-1966); the illegal occupation of the country by South Africa and the liberation struggle against South African occupation between 1966-1990, which led to its independence on 21 March 1990.

It is not the aim of this study to describe each of these periods in detail. Moreover, it is not the aim of this chapter to give a historical analysis of political developments in Namibia. However, a short overview of this subject will give the necessary background information for understanding the context in which missionary work and church planting took place. Earlier in the chapter it was shown how Europeans entered Namibia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century from both the north via Angola and the south through South Africa (cf. 2.3.1). Similarly, missionaries also found their way into Namibia, mostly from Cape Town across the southern border of contemporary Namibia (Nambala 1994: 6).

As from its pre-history until about the time of the German occupation in April 1884, Namibia had been a country under the reign and control of kings and chiefs. In the northern parts of the country, among the Ovambo (Aawambo) and Kavango (Aakavango) people, existed a system of kingship (Aakwaniilwa), while among the Herero, Nama and other groups there were the traditional leaders (Mbuende 1986: 24-25; cf. Nambala 1994: 30, 35-38).<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> This system of kings and chiefs still exists among different tribes and was recognized by the government of Namibia after independence.



Namibia became a Germany colony in 1884, when a Germany trader, Adolf Luderitz from Bremen bought Angra Pequena (today Luderitz) from Chief Joseph Frederick of Bethany on 1 May 1883 (Mbuende 1986: 48).<sup>2</sup> According to Mbuende, J. Bam, a Rhenish missionary, (as will be explained later how they came to Namibia cf. 2.5.4), attended the process of a trade agreement and Heinrich Vogelsang acted as an agent and mediator of Luderitz in this matter. This demonstrated and confirmed that the Rhenish missionaries have played an active role in collaboration with fellow Germans in facilitating these treaties. This can also be regarded as an early stage of German colonization in Namibia. On 24 April 1884 the German Consul in Cape Town officially notified the South African authorities that the Angra Pequena area was now under German protection and on 7 August, the same year, Namibia officially became a German colony and was to stay its colony until 1915 (Mbuende 1986: 48). At the same time, Germany claimed four other African territories as its colonies as from 1883-1885, namely contemporary Tanzania, Togo, Cameroon, and Burundi (Neil 1966: 390).

The German authorities soon began signing “Protection Treaties” with tribal Chiefs. Lukas de Vries, a pastor of ELCRN and then a lecturer at the United Theological Seminary, notes in his book, *Mission and colonialism in Namibia*, that a defence and friendship treaty between the German government and the Chief of Bethany, Joseph Frederiks, was concluded on 28 October 1884. In the agreement, the right of Adolf Luderitz was acknowledged and he was given the sole right for road construction and mining exploration in the area of Luderitz (1978: 16). Those treaties also allowed German nationals to settle and conduct business in Namibia. When traders started selling goods to the Herero on credit and demanded repayment at short notice and at high rates of interest, it resulted in confiscation of Herero cattle and their land due to non-payment (Mbuende 1986: 57).

The situation changed from bad to worse, because of the Protection Treaties. Chief Daniel Kariko described the situation as follows: “Our people were being robbed and deceived right and left by German traders, their cattle were taken by force; they were flogged and ill-treated and got no rights.....One man’s cattle were taken to pay other people’s debts” (quoted in Mbuende 1986: 57). A letter dated 19 August 1901, written by Herero headmen

---

<sup>2</sup> The European governments had divided Africa among themselves at the Berlin Conference in 1884. The process has often been described as “the scramble for Africa”. According to historical account, this partition has taken place in two ways. Firstly, the partition on paper, which was signed during these years 1879-1891, and second, the partition of the land itself started from 1891 to 1901 (Oliver & Atmore 1981:103).

at the White Nossob River to the Governor of German South West Africa, confirmed this practice. The letter was written with the assistance of the missionary Lang (Mbuende 1986: 58).

The exploitation and maltreatment of indigenous people and forceful confiscation of their land caused much hostility between the German authorities and the Nama and Herero people. This eventually resulted in war from 1903-1907 between the Herero under Chief Maharero and the Nama under Chief Hendrik Witbooi, and their German colonial masters. This war caused unforgettable hardship to the Herero and Nama. The number of Herero people reduced from 80 000 to 20 000 during the war, while the Nama were reduced from 20 000 to 9 700 by German forces under the command of the German military specialist General Lothar von Trotha (Nambala 1994: 123).

During World War I, in 1914 and 1915, South Africa entered Namibia by force under British government orders (Harlech-Jones 1997: 9). German soldiers admitted defeat to the South African forces under General Louis Botha. The "Peace of Khorab", signed on the farm situated a few kilometres south-west of Otavi was signed on 9 July 1915 (Nambala 1994: 124). This political change also negatively impacted on the missionary activities, especially the Rhenish Missionaries in Namibia. They felt vulnerable and less protected because of the defeat of German soldiers by the South African soldiers.

English-speaking South Africans started to settle in Namibia from 1916-1919 working as military authorities (Harlech-Jones 1997: 9), government officials, and railway officers and brought with them their own Anglican priests as army chaplains (Nambala 1994: 100).

A mandate was given to South Africa in Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, which was part of the peace conference of Versailles on 28 June 1919 (Harlech-Jones 1997: 11). This mandate assigned the former German colony to the Union of South Africa for administration as a class C mandate of the League of Nations. This meant that South Africa was bound to develop Namibia toward self-governance (Tuupainen 1970: 11). The aim was to advance Namibian people materially and morally, their welfare and social progress. South Africa was also required to present an annual progress report to the League of Nation and to the so-called Permanent Mandate Commission (Buys & Nambala 2003: 109).

New regulations on South West Africa were introduced soon after the establishment of the United Nations Organization that replaced the League of Nations in 1945 (Tuupainen 1970: 11). These regulations dealt with issues that affected nations and Namibia was one of those countries. Because of South Africa's policy of separate development, the U.N. revoked the mandate which it had given to South Africa and ordered it to grant Namibia independence. For that reason, in 1971, the International Court of Justice declared the continued existence of South Africa in Namibia illegal (Harlech-Jones 1997: 12). This eventually resulted in the adoption of Resolution 435 by the United Nations Security Council on 29 September 1978. The resolution reiterated that the Security Council's objective was the withdrawal of South Africa's illegal administration and the transfer of power to the Namibian people (Harlech-Jones 1997: 9).

From then on, an armed struggle for the liberation of Namibia from South African occupation ensued and was openly supported by the international community. For example, in 1966, the UN General Assembly terminated the mandate of South Africa over Namibia and the name Namibia was officially ratified in 1968. In the same year the Security Council demanded the withdrawal of South Africa from Namibia, and further calling member states to suspend diplomatic, consular, and economic ties with South Africa (Harlech-Jones 1997: 12). This struggle was also supported by mostly black dominated mainline churches in Namibia. The two Lutheran churches that existed at the time jointly and publicly stated their position to support the International Court of Justice (ICJ) decision for the independence of Namibia. The reason for the struggle against illegal occupation was also about the burning issue of apartheid, which was maintained by Draconian laws not only in South Africa, but in Namibia as well, and which was even defended with reference to the Bible with so-called "apartheid theology" (Harlech-Jones 1997: 14). The content of this theology of apartheid taught "three gods", namely, race, colour, and language, with the help of the bible and all in the name of Christianity (Mujoro 1989: 98).

"Apartheid" is an Afrikaans word which means "apartness" or "separateness". From the 1930s onwards the idea of apartheid became more widespread in South Africa and later in Namibia under the system of "separate development" or "divide and rule". The main aim of the system was to enforce the separation of races, a system that kept black people in separate homelands and separate education structures, often in the most dry and

peripheral areas in Namibia. It also deprived all black people of the right to political and economic participation (Johnson 2012: online; cf. Nambala 1994: 127).

In fact, the spirit of resistance did not originate with SWAPO's armed struggle in 1966, but long before that, in the time of Kutako, Witbooi, Mandume, Nehale and Maharero. The spirit of resistance was also evident in 1947, when Rev Scott, a British priest, acted on behalf of Chief Kutako and other black leaders to petition the United Nations for the independence of Namibia from South Africa. At the same time, South Africa also made a request for the incorporation of the mandated province of Namibia into South Africa (Harlech-Jones 1997: 13).

The inequities of apartheid prompted the Africans in general and Namibians in this context in particular to start resistance against colonial rule. This action first emerged among the migrant workers in the police Zone<sup>3</sup>, by organizing several strikes at the mines and industrial plants in 1940s and 1950s. This resistance developed to be organized in the form of a political movement. The intensive political struggle for independence of Namibia became more focused after the establishment of political parties in Namibia, namely South West Africa National Union (SWANU), Ovambo People Organization (OPO) (1959), and South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) (1960). The first SWAPO executive members included prominent Namibians such as Dr Sam Nujoma, Dr Toivo Ya Toivo, Eliaser Kahumba and Nathanael Maxwilili. In 1967 South Africa arrested and brought before the court 37 Namibians for supporting terrorism, including Herman Toivo Ya Toivo, who was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment. In 1966, the SWAPO military wing started resistance at Omugulugwombahe when the first shot was fired. In the same year, SWAPO's military wing under the leadership and commander of Otto Nankudhu set up the first training camp in Namibia at Omugulugwombahe (Miettinen 2005: 117 cf Harlech-Jones 1997: 14).

---

<sup>3</sup> Police Zone, southern two-thirds of South West Africa (now Namibia) in which the German and later South African colonial administrations were able to establish effective European-style police control beginning in the early 20th century. The South Africans adopted the name of the area and its original boundary in 1919. They adopted it from a 1911 German map of the territory on which the area was marked *Polizei-Zone*. Spanning the north-central sector of what became the mandated territory of South West Africa, the Police Zone's boundary often called the Red Line because it was printed on maps in red ink (Mckenna 2011: 55).

The churches in Namibia have been speaking out prophetically to the South African regime since the early 1960s. Rev Mize, an Anglican priest, was the earliest church leader who, with the help of Namibian chiefs, opposed the apartheid system to both the United Nations and the South Africa government. Mize expressed the opinion that the apartheid homeland policy as envisaged in the report of the Odendaal Commission of Enquiry of 1962/63 was in direct opposition to the religious doctrines of Christianity. The mandate of this commission was to make a feasibility study regarding the establishment of territories in Namibia. Those territories were then dedicated to the “separate development and Bantustan system” of the different ethnic groups in South West Africa, similar to that already in South Africa. In the letter sent in 1968 to the South African government, Mize wrote, “the doctrine of the finality of racial identity is a denial of the central statement of the Gospel and opposed to the Christian understanding of the nature of man and community” (Mashuna 2012: 10).

The Namibian churches’ involvement and response to the apartheid system became more public, focused and sharpened in 1971. Schrottenboer, a General Secretary of the Reformed mission, in his report confirms the involvement of the churches in Namibia by saying, the largest Christian presence in Namibia is the Lutheran church. Therefore, leaders of the two largest churches, the Evangelical Lutheran Church and Ovambo-Kavango church, have taken steps publicly and called on the government of South Africa to recognize the human rights of the people and further, to refrain from imposing the policy of separate development (Schrottenboer 1977: 75).

This year marked the beginning of the churches’ struggle for independence when they issued an “Open Letter” on 30 June 1971 addressed to the South African government that challenged apartheid and apartheid theology (Katjavivi, Frostin & Mbuende 1989: 135). The end of the first letter reads as follows:

The Church board’s urgent wish is that, in terms of the declaration of the World Court and in co-operation with UNO (United Nation Organization), of which South Africa is a member, your government will seek a peaceful solution to the problem of our land and will see to it that Human Rights be put into operation and that South West Africa may become a self-sufficient and independent state (Open letter, 1971).

In these letters, the churches demanded independence from South Africa, respect for human dignity and freedom of movement for all people in Namibia. In this spirit of resistance, contextual theology and liberation theology were used to challenge and oppose the apartheid theology. In connection with this, Mujoro, one of the first female Lutheran pastors, says, Liberation theology was created in the midst of years of suffering and humiliation. In the light of its content and nature, liberation theology first considers the victims of oppression and injustice as the context or *Sitz-im-leben* of its theologising (1989: 96, 104). For that reason too, the churches in Namibia started to identify even more openly with the liberation struggle of SWAPO as a liberation movement.

The road to independence was not an easy one. Many people have sacrificed not only their lives but also their belongings for the freedom of Namibia. Churches in Namibia also suffered together with the victims, and fought alongside the oppressed. It took 30 years since SWAPO's inception to gain independence. As a result, Namibia achieved independence on 21 March 1990. The history of Namibia since 1990 is not unproblematic when it comes to human rights and social issues, but attention to the more recent history falls beyond the scope of this study.

Today Namibia is a democratic country, governed by the Rule of Law, in other words by the Constitution. It holds democratic elections every five years to elect local, regional, and national leaders (Namibian Constitution 1990: 102). The country is currently divided into thirteen political regions under the leadership of governors appointed by the president.

## **2.5 Missionary work in Namibia**

### **2.5.1 Introduction**

The aim of this section is to provide a very brief historical overview of Christianity in Namibia, specifically with reference to missionary activities. As was pointed out earlier in this chapter, missionaries and Christianity came to Namibia on the heels of explorers, traders and colonizers. According to historical records, missionaries who brought Christianity to Namibia also had other interests for exploring the interior of the country (Buys & Nambala 2003: xxxvi). "The ideal of evangelizing to the indigenous people developed after the European discovery of a trading route from Europe to the east via South

Africa and the establishment of Portuguese colonial settlements along the coast of Africa” (Nambala 1994: 60).

Another reason that led to the advance of the church in Namibia was the Dutch settlement at the Cape of Good Hope in 1652. As a result, the colonial development and European troops in South Africa and Southern Africa increased. These people came with their own spiritual leaders and settled at places like Stellenbosch and Paarl. Although there was no prearranged mission programme, they started with mission work, which resulted in three indigenous women receiving baptism. The first trained missionary who came to South Africa (SA) was a Moravian, George Schmidt, who arrived in 1737. The second group of missionaries arrived in 1799. They were under the supervision of a Dutch missionary, Van der Kemp, who was sponsored by the London Missionary Society (LMS) (Nambala 1994: 60).

Missionary Societies may be regarded as pioneers in Namibia. This study will not go into the full details of each mission society’s involvement in Namibia, but will only paint the picture regarding these with broad strokes. However, this overview gives necessary background to the similar missionary undertakings and activities of the Finnish missionaries whose work eventually resulted in the founding of ELCIN.

This section will mention briefly the historical activities of different missionary societies that have played an important role in Namibia since the 19th century. Historically, the LMS and the English Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society were the first to enter Namibia. The RMS that arrived in 1840 and started their work in Namaland followed them. Thereafter, the FMS came in 1870 and worked predominantly among the Ovambo and Kavango people. However, the main emphasis of this section is placed on the FMS and their early years in Namibia. The reason is that the FMS is the Society that planted Christianity among the Ovambo people. One should take note of this in order to understand the role they have played in planting Christianity through education in Ovamboland.

### **2.5.2 The London Missionary Society**

The LMS was formed in 1795 in London. The aim for its establishment was to preach and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the world. The society was not interested in promoting any particular form of church, government or denominationalism (Buys &

Nambala 2003: 9). The second reason was that of voluntarism, meaning that the Society would not accept state support. However, it would be dependent on the voluntary donations and gifts of its members (Hofmeyr & Pillay 1994:43). An interdenominational organization, its members included Episcopalians, Methodists, Presbyterians and Congregationalists. However, later these churches also established their own missionary societies. The main supporter of the LMS in Namibia then was the Congregationalist Church of England (Buys & Nambala 2003: 9).

The LMS sent its first missionaries to SA in 1799 to spread the good news of salvation. These missionaries were J.J. Kicherer, Johannes van de Kemp, John Edmonds and William Edwards. It was made clear to all missionaries that they would encounter difficult situations and dangers in the mission field (Hofmeyr, Millard & Froneman 1991: 103). When they arrived in SA, the Moravian Brethren of Germany had already been established missionaries in SA since 1737. After it settled in SA, the work of the LMS was extended to Namibia a few years later (August 2009: 45).

The LMS was the first missionary Society to enter Namibia. The two missionary brothers, Abraham and Christian Albrecht, arrived in Namibia in January 1806. They came to Namibia at the place called “Blydenverwagting”. This was the place where Chief Jager Afrikaner and his Orlams (Nama) had been living since 1793. On their arrival, they established the first Christian mission in Namibian history in the south at a place called Warmbad in 1806, and also at Bethany in 1814 (Levinson 1961: 26, cf. Mbuende 1986: 36).

During a severe drought, the London missionary, Johann Heinrich Schmelen, who stayed at a mission station namely Pella, in Little Namaqualand on the Cape side of the river. He took some 150 Orlams (Orlam is a Nama tribe) with him and settled to the north of Orange River at a place called Bethanie (in Great Namaqualand) in 1814. The LMS then built its first building, which today is the oldest existing Western-built structure in Namibia. Schmelen was the first European to learn the Nama language and he also translated the four Gospels which were printed in that language in 1831 (Levinson 1961: 27). Ebner, a London missionary, was sent to do mission work among the Afrikaner (Nama) at the village of Khouchanas in 1815. The leader of the Nama tribe, Jager Afrikaner, welcomed him and on



23 July 1816, Jager Afrikaner and his family members were baptized (Buys & Nambala 2003: 12-13, cf. Levinson 1961: 26).

In 1840, the LMS decided to transfer all its mission stations to the RMS. The reason was that there was only one missionary responsible for the work and as he was getting old requested some help. Therefore, Rev F.H. Kleinschmidt was sent to assist him. They stayed together at Komaggas in the South of Namibia (see map). On 26 July 1848, the hardworking Schmelen died at Komaggas at the age of 71. In this way, the LMS in Namibia laid the foundation for the more permanent work of the Wesleyan and Rhenish missionaries in Namibia (Buys & Nambala 2003: 14).

### **2.5.3 The Wesleyan Mission Society**

The Wesleyan Missionary Society came to Namibia from SA. It was the second oldest missionary society working in Namibia. Heinrich Schmelen of the LMS was instrumental in inviting the Methodist Missionary Society to the country. The Wesleyan Missionary Society first came to South Africa to do mission work among the Khoi Khoi, and thereafter to work in Great Namaqualand (Southern Namibia today) (Buys & Nambala 2003: 14). In 1806 the British soldiers in SA managed to organize themselves to request the Wesleyan Missionary Society in England to send a pastor to South Africa. They realized that there was a need for an army chaplain to serve the soldiers as well as to develop mission work in South Africa (Nambala 1994: 65).

The first missionary sent to Cape Town in 1813 was Rev John McKenny. However, the authorities in Cape Town (the Governor) turned down the plan to preach either to the soldiers or to the indigenous people. The second attempt was made in 1816 when missionary Barnabas Shaw and his wife were sent to South Africa. Shaw was also refused permission to preach to the soldiers. However, Shaw decided to take matters into his own hands and started to preach to the indigenous people without permission.

However, during this time the missionary Schmelen of the LMS visited the Cape from Namibia, where he had been working as a missionary since 1814. He convinced Shaw that there was a field ready for mission work in Namaqualand, although his interest was in Great Namaqualand (Namibia). Consequently, they decided to go together to the north. They

established the first mission station at Leliefontein on the Kamies Mountains south of the Orange River (Nambala 1994: 65- 66).

In 1825 three Wesleyan missionaries, Threlfall, Jager and Link, decided to travel from Leliefontein to Warmbad in Namibia. On their way, they met with chief Oubib-mob Tjaribib of the Bondelswarts tribe. The chief then warned them not to proceed further toward the San community in the north of Warmbad. They were warned that it was a dangerous undertaking to enter other people's land without their permission (Buys & Nambala 2003: 14, cf. Nambala 1994: 66). Despite the warning from the chief, they showed their strong conviction and willingness and decided to proceed on their journey. This effort of the Wesleyan missionaries to establish the mission station in Namibia came to a tragic end, when all three emissaries were killed on 10 August 1825 at the place called Naugab. This incident was regarded as the first bloodshed for the Gospel in Namibia (Buys & Nambala 2003: 14).

Threlfall, one of the missionaries, made sure that the chief who advised them not to continue with their journey to Namibia (Great Namaqualand), would not be held responsible for anything which might happen to them on their way to the north by issuing a strongly worded letter as follows:

To Whom It May Concern: We, William Threlfall, Jacob Link and Johannes Jagger, do by this writing make it known, that, if we never return from the Fish River, or the nations and tribes to the north of it, that no unpleasant reflections ought to be cast on the captain and the people called Bondle Zwaarts. Because they have permitted us to pass through their country, into the dangers before us from which, they say, we shall never escape with our lives. They have faithfully warned us; but being disposed to proceed, in what we all think our duty to God and fellow men, should we never return, we acquit them from all guilt in our misfortune (Nambala 1994: 67).

The killing of missionaries made further attempts to establish mission stations in Namibia difficult. Thus, it was not until 1834 when a missionary, Edward Cook of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, arrived in Namibia and established a permanent station at Warmbad in 1832, that another attempt was made (Nambala 1994: 67). Three important missionary stations were established over the next decade in the following places, Nisebett Bath Circuit (Warmbad) in 1834, Naosanabis (Wesley Vale, Leonardville) in 1842, and Concordia Ville

(Windhoek) in 1844. Other stations were founded at Nossob District-Leonardville and Gobabis under Tindall from 1842, among the people of Amraal Lamberts (a sub tribe of the Orlam Namas), and at Windhoek under Haddy from 1844 among the Afrikaners' tribe (Nambala 1994: 67).

During this time, the RMS started mission activities after their arrival in 1842. Therefore, both missionary societies, namely the Wesleyan and the Rhenish, were engaged in mission activities in Namibia. Missionaries of these societies arrived in Windhoek around 1842 and 1843 respectively and worked among the Orlam tribe under the leader Jonker Afrikaner. The lack of communication and cooperation among the missionaries of the two missionary Societies (Rhenish and Wesleyan) forced the Rhenish missionaries to leave Elberfeld in favour of the Wesleyan mission and established Otjikango and Otjimbingwe. Therefore, the situation made it very difficult for the Rhenish mission to establish a mission station in Windhoek. In the first two years, the mission work under Haddy continued to grow. In 1844 the church in Windhoek had up to 30 members, which increased rapidly (Buys & Nambala 2003: 15-16).

Buys and Nambala observe that Haddy could not manage to sustain a successful mission in Windhoek. He lost control of the situation, and the nature of his relationship with Chief Jonker became hostile in 1850; hence, Haddy departed from Windhoek on 9 July 1850. Therefore, in 1867 the Wesleyan Society asked the sister Society, the RMS, to take over the responsibilities of mission work (Buys & Nambala 2003: 16). One can now conclude that the Wesleyan Society paved the way and laid the foundation for the mission work not only in those areas mentioned, but also in the surrounding areas.

#### **2.5.4 The Rhenish Missionary Society**

The RMS was a Lutheran Society founded on 12 May 1828 from the merging of two small German mission societies, the Barmen and the Elberfeld Missionary Societies. It was therefore a united RMS (Hofmeyr, Millard & Froneman 1991: 110). The Society's principles were based on the Lutheran and Reformed tradition to train and send out missionaries to non-Christian nations. Soon after the establishment of the Society, the exploration of possibilities for their own mission field started (Buys & Nambala 2003: 17).

As indicated earlier, the LMS was the first to come to both South Africa and Namibia. Dr Philip, who was a superintendent of the LMS in South Africa, made an appeal through a Berlin magazine for more missionaries to South Africa. Because of this, the first four missionaries of the RMS arrived in Cape Town in 1829. Two of the missionaries were assigned to work among the slaves in Stellenbosch and Tulbagh in South Africa. Two of them went to the north to work among the Nama people. There they established two mission stations, one at Wupperthal in 1830 and one at Ebenhaeser in 1832 (Nambala 1994: 69).

The RMS missionaries started working among the community, and people were happy to have missionaries among them after Schmelen's death. Schmelen worked as a missionary of the LMS among the Nama tribe and advanced the missionary activities by translating the New Testament in 1831 (Buys & Nambala 2003: 13). The RMS missionaries worked hard and managed to establish as many stations as possible. Some of the stations established were: Bethanie (1842), Windhoek (1842), Otjikango (1844), Otjimbinque (1849), Berseba (1850), Gibeon (1863), Omaruru (1870), Okombahe (1871), Waterberg (1873), Rietfontein (1885), Gaub (1885), Karibib (1902), Swakopmund (1905), Luderitz (1905). One can conclude that all these stations were in principles regarded as mission educational centres. In October 1844, the Rhenish Missionaries decided to leave Windhoek to establish a mission station at Otjikango in the Herero area to the north of Windhoek (Nambala 1994: 73).

Many regarded one of the first Rhenish missionaries, Carl Hugo Hahn, as the chief of the Otjikango, especially the Herero people. Otjikango was one of the Rhenish Mission stations in Namibia, which later was renamed Barmen. Hahn acted as both legislator and judge in the community. According to Lukas de Vries (1978: 135), the missionaries had to play the role of headmen because headmen were no longer capable of offering protection. The war between the Nama and the Herero resulted in the Herero searching for protection at the mission stations. At the same time Carl Hahn took responsibility for the buildings, projects and agriculture as well as everything else accompanying the missionary effort (Buys & Nambala 2003: 23).

The mission work under the Rhenish Society continued to grow among the Herero and the Nama in Windhoek, especially during the ten years between 1870 and 1880. By 1880, the

mission among the Herero had produced 1 417 baptized members through education at seven mission stations due to the efforts of eleven missionaries (Buys & Nambala 2003: 25).

The missionary work of the RMS was not restricted only to the southern and central part of the country, but in time also reached other parts of Namibia. In 1891, the Rhenish missionaries started missionary activities in Ovamboland among the Kwanyama people who lived on both sides of the Angola/Namibia border. After five years of service (educating), on 21 July 1895, the first baptism took place at Omupanda in the Uukwanyama area (Nambala 1994: 73).

The missionary Carl Hugo Hahn was the director of Rhenish mission work especially in the south and central party of Namibia (Nambala 1994: 73). However, in the meantime, Finnish missionaries were also active in Ovamboland since they had arrived in the area in 1870 (see 2.5.5 below). They were not in favour of the idea of Rhenish Mission work in the Ovambo area.

Six Rhenish missionaries were sent to Ovamboland and they established mission stations at Ondjiva (1892), Omupanda (1892), Namakunde (1900), and Omatemba. All these places were part of Ovamboland, but later after the First World War (WWI), they became part of Angola and still are today. They left the Uukwanyama area during WWI, which also marked the end of mission efforts in 1914. When the Portuguese authorities in Angola expelled them in 1916, there were about 1 400 baptized people (Buys & Nambala 2003: 25, 91). Rhenish missionaries also translated the New Testament into the Oshikwanyama dialect. It is clear from this perspective that Rhenish Missionaries were working hard in Ovamboland. The first indigenous church elders were Simson Shituwa and Wilhelm Kafita. They were responsible for taking spiritual care of the Christians who were left behind by the Rhenish missionaries. Finally, all the mission stations in the Uukwanyama area were officially handed over to the FMS in 1920 (Nambala 1994: 73).

The most important point to be noted is that two Lutheran churches were born in Namibia from the hard work of the two Lutheran Missionary Societies, the Rhenish and the Finnish Missionary Societies. The RMS was to be the mother of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia (ELCRN), whereas the FMS founded ELCIN.

## **2.5.5 The Finnish Missionary Society**

### ***2.5.5.1 The establishment of the Finnish Mission Society***

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland founded this Mission Society. Before turning to the role this Society played in Namibia, some historical background needs to be given about the origin of the society itself.

Finland accepted Christianity in 1157. It was the last of the Nordic nations to be converted to Christianity. According to Munyika (2004: 263), this happened after a crusade by King Eric the Holy of Sweden, during the tenure of Henrik, Bishop of Uppsala, in 1157. It took Finland two centuries from Christianization to develop an interest in mission work (Munyika 2004: 263). The spirit of mission work in Finland was awakened mainly due to a meeting between Nyberg, a carpenter, with Moravian missionaries in Copenhagen. Nyberg was sent to be a missionary to Surinam under Moravians until his death (Munyika 2004: 264).

According to Loytty (2005: 47), during the 18th century and increasingly in the 19th century, Finland was influenced by the European, mainly Swedish, German and English, missionary movements and activities. The whole 19th century was later called “the golden century of mission”. The spirit of awakening in Finland influenced different denominations and spiritual movements inside the Lutheran Church of Finland. For example, the foundation of the Swedish Missionary Society in 1835 created enthusiasm among the Finns to establish a missionary organization in Finland.

In 1857, Finland celebrated seven hundred years of Christianity in the country. It was on this occasion that the FMS was founded (Nambala 1994: 79). It officially started operating in 1859. The first director was F.L. Schauman, a professor in Practical Theology, and the military chaplain, Rev K.J.G. Serelius, its first secretary. The main aim of this society was to support mission work in the heathen countries. This was done with the help of the Swedish Missionary Society that functioned as a mother society to the FMS and from whom it learned strategies to start their own mission society in Finland (Munyika 2004: 265).

At the annual meeting of the FMS in June 1862 it was decided to establish a preparatory mission school (Peltola 2002: 20). The responsibility for implementation of this undertaking was given to the Mission Board of the Finnish Lutheran Church. In August 1862, the opening of the mission school in Helsinki was announced in the local mission magazine.

Admittance to the school was restricted to young men, aged between 15 and 25 years. According to Peltola (2002: 20), the main subjects taught were the Bible, German, manual work and wagonmaking, tailoring, and music (which was then a very important subject). The school started with five young men – Bjorklund, Kurvinen, Tolonen, Rautanen and Weikkolin – enrolled for five years' training to become missionaries (Peltola 2002: 20-22). According to Loytty (2005: 53) musicology and mission history formed part of the studies in the mission school from the early years of the training. The missionaries who had returned from the field, especially from Ovamboland, such as Pettinen and Savolaand, taught the Oshindonga language (a dialect spoken in the area of Ovamboland) at the beginning of 1900 (Loytty 2005: 53).

The Mission Society also established a Mission Training School for single women in 1906. Lydia Kivivaara was appointed as the first director of the school and applicants were to be between 21 and 28 years old (Loytty 2005: 52). After the first five male students finished their five-year training they were ordained during the mission celebration on 9-11 June 1868 in the St Nicholas church (now the cathedral of Helsinki) (Munyika 2004: 268). They were also the first group of missionaries sent out by the FMS. The group spent some time in Germany where they studied German with the assistance of the RMS (Peltola 2002: 31-33).

The same group of Finnish missionaries would become the first Finnish missionaries in Ovamboland. The good relationship between the RMS and FMS helped to inspire the eagerness among Finnish Christians to come to Africa for mission works (Shejvali 1970: 22). The whole process of Finnish missionaries going to Ovamboland was started when Carl Hugo Hahn of the Rhenish mission visited Ovamboland, especially during his second visit, in 1866 (Miettinen 2005: 88-89). Two kings, one of Ondonga (Shikongo shaKalulu) and the other of Uukwanyama (Mweshipandeka Shaningika), both asked him to send missionaries to Ovamboland; and Hahn promised that missionaries would be sent to Ovamboland in two years' time (Buys & Nambala 2003: 25-26).

The relationship of the two mission societies was strengthened when Hahn reported to the FMS about his second journey to Ovamboland. The door to Ovamboland was thus at least half-open for mission activities. However, there was a problem, because the RMS did not have enough resources to start work in Ovamboland. Hahn made an appeal in the form of a

letter inviting the FMS to take up the call. “Come over and help” were the exact words used by Hahn to convince the FMS (Shejavali 1970:25). When the Finnish Mission Board in Finland received this invitation, the idea of choosing Ovamboland to be their mission field soon matured. On 18 September 1867, the official decision was taken by FMS to send its first missionaries to Ovamboland (Peltola 2002: 25).

#### **2.5.5.2 The Finnish missionaries’ journey to Namibia**

The group of five newly ordained missionaries, Jurvelin (who had been trained as a missionary in Germany) and three artisans started their journey from Helsinki, first to Germany and then to Ovamboland on 24 June 1868 (Munyika 2004: 268). They travelled under the leadership of Sirelius, who was the principal of the training school at Barmen, the headquarters of the Rhenish Mission in Germany. The aim was to get basic information about the mission field and to advance the German language. Juho Nissinen, one of the missionary artisans, went only as far as Germany before he went back to Finland. There was no clear reason given for why he returned, but one can conclude that the strange environment forced his return (Munyika 2004: 268).

The first group of Finnish missionaries arrived in Cape Town on 31 December 1868 (Nambala 1994: 80). According to Munyika, they arrived in Cape Town on 1 January 1869 and five of them were ordained, namely Bjorklund, Kurvinen, Tolonen, Weikkolin and Rautanen (the latter would later be referred to by the Aawambo, as kuku Nakambalekanene, meaning “Uncle Nakambale”) (Munyika 2004: 268). At Cape Town, an old Rhenish missionary, P.D. Lúckhoff, welcomed them and on the same day they proceeded to Stellenbosch to meet the Director of the Rhenish Society in South Africa (Munyika 2004: 268). The missionaries returned to Cape Town from Stellenbosch after a month and met the Anglican Bishop, Grey, who welcomed and briefed them about mission work in the southern African context (Peltola 2002: 34-35).

Hereafter a Finnish missionary, Malmstrom, who was in Cape Town and who had been trained in 1866 in Germany, also joined them. According to Munyika (2004: 268), Malmstrom was already serving as a missionary in South Africa, under the Hermannsburg Missionary Society. He was sent to serve there in South Africa in collaboration with the Herrmanburg Missionary Society and the FMS was responsible for supporting this



missionary, and to receive reports of progress via the RMS. On 4 February 1869, the first group of missionaries departed from Cape Town by boat for Walvis Bay. After ten days, at sea they arrived at Walvis Bay on 14 February and stayed for three weeks in Walvis Bay, waiting for Hahn to escort them to Otjimbingwe. Otjimbingwe is one of the RMS's stations in the south of Namibia. On 5 March, Hahn arrived from Otjimbingwe with eight ox-wagons (Nambala 1993:82).

The group of Finnish missionaries left Walvis Bay in early March 1869 while the second group left Walvis Bay a month later and arrived at Otjimbingwe on 23 April 1869 (Peltola 2002: 37). The second group of missionaries from Finland arrived at Otjimbingwe (a Rhenish mission station in the central part of Namibia in January 1871. They stayed in Otjimbingwe the whole year before proceeding to Ovamboland. The aim was to stay there for a year to be prepared to take up the challenge. On the other hand, it was also difficult to travel during the rainy season; they therefore had to wait for the rain to stop (Peltola 2002: 42). During the time in Otjimbingwe with the help of Hugo Carl Hahn they learned new codes of conduct and behaviour, as well as how missionary work was conducted in Africa. In addition, they were also skilled in the Herero local language, which later was useful to them when they started their mission work in Ovamboland (Nambala 1994:81). Herero and Oshiwambo are closely related languages and some chiefs in the north were even able to speak Herero. They also made some effort to study Afrikaans on their own, using a helpful Afrikaans grammar book Hahn had compiled earlier. Hahn was responsible for teaching them the vernacular.

Normally under isolated circumstances like that of the mission field, human relations become strained early on. This happened at Otjimbingwe among the Finnish missionaries. Poor communication due to a lack of knowledge of both German and Herero made it difficult to communicate and work with German artisans who were responsible for fixing ox-wagons at Otjimbingwe. This kind of behaviour resulted in one of the Finnish artisans, Erkki Juntunen, being sent back to Finland in 1869, never to reach Ovamboland (Peltola 2002: 42).

While they were at Otjimbingwe, the missionaries met the family of Heinrich Kleinschmidt, one of the first Rhenish missionaries who arrived in Namibia in 1842. This family had three daughters, Elizabeth, Katherine (Kitty) and Freiderike (Frieda), whom two of the

missionaries, Rautanen and Bjorklund, later married (Nambala 1994:81). At Otjimbingwe, the missionaries worked hard to make their own ox-wagons. Finally, after having made six ox-wagons, they were ready to make the journey to Ovamboland. In the meantime, Tolonen (one of the members) who was an assistant to Hahn remained at Otjimbingwe when the rest left for Ovamboland (Munyika 2004: 269).

On Friday 27 May 1870 the journey of Finnish missionaries started from Otjimbingwe under the leadership of Hugo Hahn who decided to accompany them because he knew the way to Ovamboland, and wanted to introduce them to the Kings in Ovamboland and help them get a good start for their mission activities (Peltola 2002: 46). The first group consisted of six ordained missionaries, their two assistants and a trader, Green, who accompanied them to give directions. On the way to Omaruru, Hahn received the news that peace-making efforts were about to begin between Maharero, chief of the Herero and Jan Jonker, the chief of Nama. He viewed the process of peace-making between the two tribes as important for their mission works. Peace would help to create a peaceful environment for their work among both tribes to continue unhindered. Therefore, Hahn wanted to play a reconciling role in order to prevent war which was about to start between the two parties (Peltola 2002: 46-47). For this reason, Hahn had to return to Otjimbingwe from Omaruru to prepare himself for the peace process. However, the missionaries needed someone to travel with them to show them the way. For this reason, Hahn asked a hunter and a trader, Fredirick Green, to lead and guide the Finnish missionary's convoy to Ovamboland. It took them a month and thirteen days to reach Ovamboland (Nambala 1994: 81). From Omaruru the convoy consisted of seven ox-wagons, five belonged to the Finns and two to Green, who was accompanied by his family, brother-in-law and sister-in-law. The Finns also had more than ten Herero as wagon men and herders (Peltola 2002: 47).

On the evening of 9 July 1870 they arrived at Omandongo, a place near King Shikongo shaKalulu's palace (Peltola 2002: 48). Omandongo is a place in the Ondonga area, where they started their missionary effort among the Ovambo people. Omandongo is also the place where the missionaries established the first mission station. Moreover, the first effort to establish some sort of education system among others started here. More about this will be discussed in the next chapter.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

This chapter gave an overview of Namibia as a country and of its people. The location, size, length and the resources of Namibia were briefly stated. An overview was also given of the political atmosphere in the time of the first missionaries and later in the history of the country as well as a short historical overview of specific missionary societies' involvement in Namibia, with special reference to that of the Finnish missionaries. From the historical overview of the Finnish arrival in Namibia, the chapter showed the close relationship between Finnish and Rhenish Missionary Societies in the country. It was with the help of the latter that Finnish missionaries managed to fulfil their dream of doing mission work in Ovamboland. In addition, the chapter highlighted the role played by the RMS, especially via Hugo Hahn in facilitating the arrival and settlement of Finnish missionaries to Namibia.

It further identified some of the initial challenges they encountered in Namibia. As the chapter ends with their arrival in Ovamboland, the next chapter will follow the work of the Finnish missionaries in Ovamboland with particular reference to social and developmental activities and later ELCIN, which grew out of their work. Moreover, how even before its official establishment, ELCIN demonstrated commitment through its engagement in social and spiritual transformation as a public church.

## **Chapter 3. The establishment, growth and ecclesial life of ELCIN**

### **3.1 Introduction**

ELCIN was born out of the work of the Finnish missionaries in Namibia that started in 1870. Chapter 2 of this study already explained how various Mission Societies in Namibia, including the FMS, played a pioneer role in planting the church in Namibia in general. This chapter will focus on the involvement of Finnish missionaries in the lives of the Ovambo people since their arrival in Ovamboland.<sup>4</sup> Chapter 1 of this study also mentioned that the history of ELCIN is inseparable from the history of mission activities in Ovamboland. Therefore, the establishment, growth and ecclesial life of ELCIN will be viewed in light of missionary activities.

In light of the above, the following will be discussed in this chapter. Firstly, the chapter will look at the birth and growth of ELCIN. This will include the arrival of missionaries and early mission work that led to the first baptism in Ovamboland. In addition, an account will be given of the characteristics of ecclesial life of ELCIN, specifically regarding its structure, leadership and worship. This is important, as it will help to understand the challenges ELCIN faced regarding the process of indigenization through education and training. Thirdly, this chapter will look at the financial status and property of the church. These two points are important because the growth of ELCIN toward independence through educational programmes needed both finance and property. Finally, in order to understand the role ELCIN played in social development, the chapter will relate some historical achievements as well as challenges the church met, specifically with regard to the process of indigenization.

Although it will not be discussed as one continuing story with reference to different stages, the missionary activities in Ovamboland can indeed be roughly divided into three different stages. The first stage is when missionaries started their mission activities; the second stage when a Mission Church was established and when the missionaries organized the mission congregations to become one church, ELOC (Evangelical Lutheran Ovambo-Kavango

---

<sup>4</sup> Ovamboland, Owambo, or Ovambo is the name of the area where the Aawambo or Ovawambo live, and their collective name is Aawambo or Ovawambo, sometimes they are called Ovambo or Ovambos. The language they use is called Oshiwambo that includes different dialects.

Church); and the third stage when an independent church with its own constitution, leadership and structures (ELCIN) was established.

### **3.2 The birth and growth of ELCIN**

#### **3.2.1 The arrival, challenges and missionaries' work in Ovamboland**

The arrival of the first Finnish missionaries in Ovamboland marked the beginning of a new era of Christianity in Ovamboland. As mentioned in chapter 2 (2.5.5.2), the first group of Finnish missionaries arrived at Omandongo on 9 July 1870. Omandongo is situated near the former King Shikongo shaKalulu of the Ondonga tribe's palace. The missionaries received a warm welcome from the king and his people (Nambala 1993: 86).

Near the palace of King Shikongo was a small building that belonged to another missionary, Hugo Hahn, of the RMS. Hahn received this building from a Swedish trader Anderson as a gift to use for mission activities. This building became the first house for the Finnish missionaries. In 1870-1871, they were able to commence mission work in Ondonga, Uukwambi, Uukwanyama and Ongandjela (Peltola 2002: 48-49). This work was expanded to the Kavango area, when the first missionary, Otto Emil Narhi, arrived to do mission work in 1926. However, this study will only focus on the mission activities in Ovamboland.

In the Oshiwambo dialect there is a proverb that says "hambelela nyokokulu ando nyoko ina valwa", ("give tribute to grandparents for giving birth to your parents" – my translation, EN). In the missionary history in Ovamboland, this proverb may be applied to the contribution made first by the FMS as a case in this study and secondly by the Rhenish missionary, Hugo Hahn, who played a significant role and contributed much to the coming of the Finnish missionaries to Ovamboland. This included formal assistance, such as communication with kings and the FMS, as well as practical assistance such as training the new missionaries in the ways of the Ovambo and providing necessary assistance and materials to fix the ox-wagons (Nambala 1994: 81). Ox-wagons were the means of transport used by missionaries when travelling from one place to the other to preach. Hence, it was important for Finnish missionaries to fix their ox-wagons before they left for Ovamboland.

The early days of the Finnish missionaries' presence in Ovamboland were sometimes characterized by maltreatment at the hands of indigenous kings and chiefs on the one hand,

because they did not get what they expected from missionaries. According to Miettinen (2005: 89), the aim of kings was to invite missionaries, because they wanted helpers with western skills, smiths to repair their guns and wizards in order to win wars, just in case.

One example of the abovementioned maltreatment was the fact that at the time, European traders from southern Namibia and neighbouring Angola were exporting large quantities of alcohol, horses and rifles to and for trade in Ovamboland. These goods were traded for cattle and slaves. Auala, the first Bishop of ELCIN, in his book *Onakuziwa ya ELOC*, even describes that whenever kings wanted what was known as “*olambika nowalende*” (a kind of traditional alcoholic drink obtained from the Portuguese via Angola), they (the kings) exchanged their own people for it (*olambika nowalende*). According to Auala (2009: 29), one gun cost about 60 head of cattle, or was exchanged for ten slaves, while one horse sometimes cost 140 head of cattle. Most of the time, kings confiscated these cattle from the poor families to satisfy their own egos.

The missionaries were, of course, not happy with such practices, especially with the issue of slave trade. They approached the Ovambo traditional leaders to persuade and discourage them from participating in this trade (Auala 2009: 29). On the other hand, the traders were not happy with the missionaries’ interference and attitude toward their lucrative business practices. To create tension and hostility between the missionaries and the kings, the traders alleged that missionaries had a hidden agenda to dethrone the kings and rule the country themselves (Peltola 2002: 70). The situation became bad, especially when King Shikongo of Ondonga decided to prohibit his people from helping the missionaries in setting up the mission stations. Some kings even prohibited the selling of *mahangu* (millet) or cattle to the missionaries. In addition, missionaries were also not allowed to run the mission schools to teach catechism in order to prepare local people for baptism. Of course, this resulted in serious setbacks not only in terms of the missionaries’ education efforts but in terms of preaching the Gospel as well (Nambala 1993: 12-13).

The above events, namely the missionaries’ opposition to certain commercial activities, are ironic, since the original reason behind the Ovambo kings’ request for missionaries to be sent to them was not primarily for the purpose of introducing the Gospel in the area. The purpose was rather mostly for political and economic reasons. The main interest of the kings

was to obtain rifle smiths for protecting themselves, as mentioned before in this section (Buys & Nambala 2003: 26). The situation changed for the worse when the expectations of the kings did not materialize - most missionaries had no knowledge of being artisans, least of all being rifle smiths, because they were trained as missionaries (Peltola 2002: 59-60).

Another specific challenge that hampered the missionary activities of the Finnish missionaries concerned was the power struggle for succession after the death of King Iitana who ruled Ondonga for a short period of time (1883-1884). Two brothers, Kambonde and Nehale IyaMpingana both wished to succeed him. As a result, the kingdom of Ondonga was split into two. King Kambonde took the west (Onamayongo) from 1884-1909, while his brother Nehale took the east (*Oshitambi*) from 1885-1908. Nehale in particular made the work of the missionaries difficult. He even destroyed the Omulonga and Omandongo mission stations in the east of Ondonga because he had no faith in what the missionaries were doing. This resulted in all education activities coming to an end, since these two stations in the east of Ondonga were the main centres for Christian education (Nambala 1994: 36, 83).

However, at the beginning of December 1877, missionaries in Ovamboland held a special meeting to discuss the situation. The main point on the agenda was to see whether they could continue or stop working in the midst of such a terrible relationship with the kings (Auala 2009: 30). The decision was made to continue with work on condition that the kings should stop persecuting the missionaries. Rautanen (also known as Nakambale<sup>5</sup>), one of the missionaries, was given the task of raising the matter with the kings. Further, they proposed, although it never materialized, to build 2.5m high boundary walls around the remaining mission stations to protect themselves from unfriendly indigenous people (Auala 2009: 30-31).

This situation affected all missionaries in all other tribal areas such as Uukwambi and Ongandjera and it became difficult for them to do their work, including their education ministry. In fact, at one stage, all missionaries were expelled from all other Ovambo tribal lands, except from Ondonga. As from 1873, for the next 30 years, the Finnish Mission

---

<sup>5</sup> Nakambale is a nickname given to one of the famous missionaries, Martin Rautanen, who was a well-respected missionary who worked among the Ovambo people for more than 50 years, until his death in 1926. Nakambale played an important role in translating the Bible into Oshivambo.

activities were limited to the Ondonga region of Ovamboland (Buys & Nambala 2003: 26). Not surprisingly, some of missionaries like Malmstrom, Jurvelin, Kurvinen and Tolonen lost heart and returned to Finland, never to return again. Those who remained continued their work, albeit on a much more limited scale (Nambala 1994: 82).

In 1878, the Herero Chief Maharero and W.C. Palgrave, a British emissary, intervened by sending a letter addressed to King Kambonde urging the king to stop mistreating missionaries. At the time missionaries under Rautanen at Olukonda, one of the mission stations, also threatened to return to Finland should the situation and relationship not improve (Peltola 2002: 81).

The intervention of Maharero, Palgrave and Rautanen resulted, especially, in King Kambonde's change of attitude toward the missionaries. As from then, the king did not cause further problems for the missionaries, unlike his brother Nehale. Therefore, missionaries had to move from the east to the west of Ondonga for protection (Buys & Nambala 2003: 28). This move of reacting to the missionaries' suffering improved the situation of missionaries and since then, they started not only to move easily but also to do their mission activities in the whole of Ondonga area without hindrances. The good relationship and peaceful situation prevailed and opened the door for other kings to emulate the good example of King Kambonde in Ondonga; they accepted missionaries in their area to start educational work.

From then on, mission work started to grow and expanded to various areas of Ovamboland. The Finnish missionaries' determination to persevere with their work of education resulted in the first baptism in 1883, and in the erection of the first church, at Olukonda, in 1888 (Nambala 1994: 82). Apart from performing baptisms, missionaries also continued to establish mission stations in Ondonga and later from 1908, they moved to other areas like Uukwambi, Ongandjela, Elim, Uukwanyama and Okavango, to mention a few. These mission stations were used as multi-purpose centres.



The table below reflects the establishment of some of the mission stations and education centres established in Ovamboland 1870-1977.

Information from (Nambala 1994: 84, 85 & Nambala 1993: Book 3)		
1	Omandongo	1870
2	Rehoboth-Okahao	1871
3	Elim	1908
4	Onashiku	1908
5	Oshigambo	1908
6	Tsandi	1908
7	Olukonda	1871
8	Oniipa	1872
9	Ondjumba	1873
10	Omulonga	1874
11	Oshitayi	1922
12	Ontanga	1900
13	Onayena	1902
14	Nakeke	1903
15	Engela	1921
16	Nakayale	1920
17	Nkurenkuru	1929
18	Rupara and Mupini	1930
19	Mpungu	1963
20	Rundu	1972
21	Nepara	1977

**Table 1: Names and year of establishment of Finnish mission stations in Ovamboland**

These centres were established in different areas not near each other with the aim, amongst others, of bringing Christian education closer to the people.

Over time, ELCIN has grown from strength to strength and various institutions were established to cater not only for education but also for other aspects of social development, such as hospitals, clinics and rehabilitation centres. The following table contains names of

some of the health and education institutions of ELCIN, all of which were established by Finnish missionaries.

Information from Nambala (1994: 84, 85, 87)	
Name of institutions and places	Year of establishment
Teachers training seminary for men at Oniipa	1913
Technical school opened at Ongwediva 1927	1927
Engela Parish Institute for training	1952
Theological seminary at Oniipa and then Elim	1922,1947
Oshigambo secondary school	1952
Teachers training seminary for women at Okahao	1947
Girls' school	1921
United Lutheran Theological Seminary	1962
Onandjokwe Hospital	1911
Engela Hospital	1922
Nakayale Hospital	1936
Okongo and Eenhana Hospitals	1933
Elim Hospital	1947

**Table 2: Names of institutions and year of establishment**

The aim of all these health and education institutions was to address the pressing needs within the Ovambo communities. The missionaries also used these places for training local people to become not only church workers, but to also improve the life of the communities as well. The role of some of these centres, especially for theological training as well as seminaries for education, will be discussed in chapter 4 of this study.

### **3.2.2 The early years in Ovamboland: The slow pace of conversions**

In the first years and indeed decades, the missionaries did not only face challenges from the leaders of the Ovambo, but were also faced with the slow pace of conversions. Finnish missionaries had worked among the Ovambo people for a period of more than ten years without baptizing any local people. Historical records stated that people came forth to attend classes for education, but none of them came out publicly to be baptized. The reason

was that people were sceptical, suspicious, and antagonistic about what the real aim of the missionaries was, especially because Christianity and baptism was new to them (Nambala 1994: 82). The other reason was the populace's fear of the kings, because at that time the kings were not in favour of the missionary work due to reasons given earlier in this chapter (3.2.1). The kings were also the ones to give final orders for people to be baptized.

The first baptism in the history of ELCIN was of an Ovambo woman, who was a servant to the missionary Kurvinen and at the same time a learner at one of the mission schools. Although she attended the school in Ovamboland, her baptism was conducted in Finland, Helsinki on 9 June 1876 and her Christian name was Eva Maria. This was because she travelled with the Kurvinen's family to Finland.

According to Peltola (2002: 97-98), two young men from Ondonga who were servants to the missionaries and attended school at mission stations, also wanted baptism at the end of the 1870s. However, King Kambonde kaNankwaya who reigned in Ondonga from 1874-1883 intervened to force one of them who was married to take a second wife because the king has power to give orders concerning the private life of his people. The refusal of the young man incurred the king's anger. Missionaries sent these two men to Omaruru in the south where they attended further catechumens in the Rhenish mission school together with others and were baptized in 1881 by a Rhenish missionary, G. Viehe, on behalf of Finnish missionaries. Four Ovambo men were baptized and their Christian names were William, Martin, Gustav and Gabriel. According to Munyika, "the reason for them to be baptized [Omaruru] was the fear of Finnish missionaries to provoke the king in Ovamboland by conducting such a laughable and strange rite as that of pouring water on adults in public" (Munyika 2004: 271). However, missionaries were also hesitating to baptise quickly for fear of the authority of kings, despite the fact that there were some who demanded it.

The remarkable breakthrough of the first public baptism in Ovamboland was conducted at Omulonga mission station, about 20 km in the west of Omandongo station in Ondonga area on 6 January 1883. Nambala reports that baptism took place in 1883, while according to Peltola it occurred a year earlier, in 1882 (Peltola 2002: 97, 98). The reason for the difference in opinion is probably that the event took place at the end and beginning of the year around Christmas and New Year. Six men who attended the school for Catechumens

came forward for Holy Baptism, which was conducted by Tobias Reijonen, one of the Finnish missionaries. The names of these men were Moses Limene, Elia Nangolo, Abraham Shikongo, Jacob Angula, Tobias Negonya and Johannes Nangombe and a small child of Eva Maria (Munyika 2004: 272).

Both Nambala and Munyika put it very clearly that this baptism was not the first among the Ovambo; two baptisms took place before this, as pointed out earlier. However, the first and second baptisms did not take place in public nor were they celebrated in Ovamboland (Munyika 2004: 271; cf. Nambala 1994: 82). The third baptism is therefore regarded by ELCIN as the first, as it was the first public baptism in Ovamboland. This marked the beginning of ELCIN in Ovamboland. It might have felt to the missionaries like a very long time for their work to bear spiritual fruit, Munyika argues, because of the fact that teaching and preaching continued for 13 years without baptism. This should not be viewed as if the Ovambo people were too deeply sinful with hardened hearts, but rather that it is natural for any human being to be doubtful until such a time when one can feel convinced in one's heart (2004: 272).

### **3.3 The baptism of a king and the growth in its wake**

After the first baptism at Omulonga (as mentioned earlier in this section) as well as through other mission activities limited to Ondonga, the situation started to change for the better, especially during the reign of King Martin Elifas (Nambala yaKadhikwa) who succeeded King Kambonde (from 1912-1942).

The king's positive attitude toward missionaries influenced most of his people to come forward for education at mission schools. Moreover, the whole atmosphere at Ondonga had changed for the better when King Kambonde was baptized in 1912, which was also one of the great achievements of the missionaries. Kambonde was the first king to receive baptism, albeit on his deathbed (Munyika 2004: 273). A missionary, Rautanen, was responsible for teaching King Martin Elifas, a brother and successor of Kambonde kaNgula. Another milestone was reached, on 1 December of the same year, when the king was baptized together with the group of 56 people at Olukonda (Nambala 1994: 84).

The last two baptisms were indeed milestones, as from then on the number of baptized members of ELCIN increased every year. The same is also true for the number of mission stations, congregations, schools, hospitals, and training centres (see the table in section 3.2.1 of this chapter).

The next table shows the number of members of ELCIN and reflects in an indirect way the steady increase in baptisms performed:

Year	Number of Christians
1. 1883	11
2. 1890	489
3. 1900	900
4. 1910	2 018
5. 1920	7 695
6. 1930	23 126
7. 1940	33 732
8. 1950	63 451
9. 1960	118 316
10. 1970	194 884

(Nambala 1994: 84, Loytty 2012: 53)

Seven years after the last date in the table above, the 1977 annual report of ELCIN indicated that the church had grown to a large extent. The numbers of indigenous workers who were serving the church in different capacities at that time were as follows: Pastors (104), female theologians (4), evangelists (242), deacons (41), mission workers (346) and other payable workers (723). The report further gave information of church members who volunteered to serve in the church as Sunday school teachers (1 067) and elders (476) (Dumeni 1978:11). According to 2010 statistics, ELCIN now has a total number of 126 parishes with the membership of 703 893 (ELCIN statistic 2010).

### **3.4 Milestones en route from ELOC to ELCIN**

Despite setbacks as described above, the educational element of the Finnish mission work in Ovamboland grew slowly but surely during the early years of missionary activities. Because of the growth of the missionary activities and with it the number of converts, a “church order” was needed to help both missionaries and local church workers in running mission

activities. This section will give a brief account of some historical milestones on the way to the independence of ELCIN.

One of the milestones in the process of growth toward the independence of ELCIN started with, what Buys and Nambala (2003: 162) describe as a prototype “church order”. However, before the Church Order was introduced, first the so-called “Regulations and Provisions” for the mission work in Namibia was considered to guide both missionaries and local church workers in their church activities. According to Ndamonhata (2001: 263) missionaries started to hold meetings, in which they shared information with Ovambo parishioners on issues related to church development. One of the issues discussed in their meetings was the regulations and provisions that had to be drawn up in 1906 and endorsed by FMS in 1908.

Ten years later, the drafting of the Church Order was started and implemented for a trial period in Ovamboland in 1920. By 1925, this Church Order consisted of 96 articles, which were approved by the Mission’s executive and was soon thereafter introduced in the Mission Church. The first article in the Constitution and regulation of ELCIN reads, “The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Ovambo-Kavango is the daughter of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland and has its own confession” as it appears in both the current ELCIN’s Constitution (2001) as well as the VII synod resolution (1954, 14-15) as quoted in Buys and Nambala (162).

The Constitutional development of ELCIN developed in a healthy and smooth way. From the beginning, Finnish missionaries showed a willingness to encourage and promote indigenous leadership through training and participation. This trend steered the growth of the church towards independence. In the process, the practical role of missionaries started to decrease, but continued to provide assistance and advances to the local leadership. The idea of “PRA=Participatory Rural Appraisal” expressed by Chambers in his book: *Whose reality counts?* started to take its effect. Missionaries slowly started to learn, listen, facilitate, and share methods, which local people can use for social development (Chambers 2003: 103).

The year 1925 is an important year in the history of ELCIN for other reasons as well. Firstly, for the first time in Ovamboland the ordination of the first indigenous pastors took place on 27 September 1925. Secondly, the first synod in the history of the mission church in Ovamboland took place on 25-26 September 1925. Thirdly, the new Church Order was

approved by this synod and the synod itself was run according to that Church Order as well (Auala 2009: 33).

Further, the same synod decided to appoint two indigenous pastors to serve as Church executive members. The appointment of local pastors was done on condition that the mission church could pay half of the salaries of its pastors and evangelists. The aim of this move was to stimulate the sense of responsibility and ownership of the indigenous members in the church.

From 1929 until 1938, the Church Order was reviewed, expanded, translated and printed. This was done so that pastors, church workers and each member of the church could access and use it. From the first synod, Finnish missionaries as well as local pastors were hard at work organizing the mission congregations to become one church. It was with this in mind that the church council met in April 1954 at Rupara in Kavango area and decided on an official name for the church, namely the “Evangelical Lutheran Ovambo-Kavango Church” (ELOC), since it included members of two ethnic groups namely, the Ovambo and the Kavango. Later the name ELOC was changed to ELCIN, since it was based between the two ethnic groups, namely, the Ovambo and the Kavango. Further, the same synod of 1954 decided on and declared the independence of ELOC from the FMS (Synod resolution 1954 cf. Buys & Nambala 2003: 162-163).

The reasons to change to the new name were firstly, that ELOC was an ethnically based name and secondly, due to hope for possible future merges with other Lutheran Churches in the country. Thirdly, it was to create the sense of nationhood. This decision resulted in three Lutheran Churches in Namibia with the same or almost the same names, namely ELCIN, Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia (ELCRN) and German Evangelical Lutheran Church (GELK) (Nambala 1994: 90).

The same synod furthermore discussed the Church’s new Constitution and regulations. Although ELOC had a Church Order as a guide for mission work, it was not of the status of a constitution because it was merely a guide (Auala 2009: 34). According to Shejavali, in his book *Eholokepo Iongerki mOwamboKavango* (The Ovambo-Kavango Church), the

Constitution was discussed and some amendments were made and approved in the Synod of Engela in 1957 (1970: 113).

The full realization of the indigenization process of ELOC in terms of leadership was achieved in 1960 when Rev Leonard Auala was elected as moderator. Further information will be discussed in the next section of this chapter.

It is worth mentioning that ELOC was the first church in Namibia to introduce a pastoral training course as mentioned earlier and this too is one of the milestones reached. This pastoral training was already introduced at Oniipa in 1922. The first Ovambo pastors who trained at Oniipa were ordained in 1925 (Buys & Nambala 2003: 212). More information on theological training will be discussed in chapter 5, which will deal with the beginning of formal education and the training of pastors and teachers in ELCIN.

### **3.5 The characteristics of the ecclesial life of ELCIN**

#### **3.5.1 The ELCIN structure and leadership**

At the beginning of this chapter the coming of the Finnish missionaries to Ovamboland as well as the beginning of their mission work in the north were discussed. It was related how they established the mission stations where activities of both spiritual and social development like preaching and teaching took place. These mission stations developed gradually and later became either parishes or church centres and training seminaries.

No institution or organization can survive without structure and leadership, and the same is true of ELCIN. In conjunction with what was said above, this section focuses on the development of ELCIN's structure and leadership in different stages. From the beginning, missionaries used to choose their leaders among themselves. These leaders were responsible for supervising the conduct and activities of the missionaries. This section of the chapter will look in more detail at what was referred to in passing above, namely how leadership in ELCIN was groomed as from the beginning until its independence in 1954 and beyond. In addition, it will give an understanding of how these structures influenced the process of empowering the indigenous members and not only the leaders of ELCIN.

From the beginning, when missionaries arrived in Ovamboland, they had their leaders who came with them from Europe. It was showed in chapter 2 that the first leader of the Finnish



missionaries was Botolf Bjirklund. After a few years, Rautanen (Nakambale) succeeded him and was to become one of the most successful leaders of the mission activities in Ovamboland. He dedicated his entire life to the service of the church and most of the achievements in social development were done under his leadership. Later he was regarded not only by his fellow missionaries but also by church members as a Bishop of the Mission Church. Missionaries followed their own way of conducting meetings, which was not done according to a set of rules, but according to the needs of the time. In other words, there was no agenda whatsoever, until such a time when the process of drafting the Church Order as well as the Constitution started to set in.

The leadership development in ELCIN started to bear fruit mostly from 1925 onwards, after the first ordination of the local pastors and the adoption of the Church Order as discussed in the section above (see 3.3). More information about training of local pastors will be discussed in chapter 5 of this study. These two events marked the beginning of a new era, in which indigenous people started participating in the leadership structure. Because of this development, they became part of the decision-making body. Even the election of the executive members, the *Epangelongerki*, meaning, “church governance”, was conducted according to the stipulations in the new Church Order. In *Ondjokonona yOngerki*, Nambala writes the following: “*Konyala okuza omumvo 1925, miigongi yaatumwa naakuluntu yomagongalo omwa kala oonkundathana dhelongekidho lyeithikameno nenge lyeipangelo lyongeleki*” [“as from 1925, in the meetings of missionaries and parish elders, there have been deliberations of preparation about the independence of the church” (my translation-EN)] (Nambala 1993: 81). Indeed, these meetings can be viewed as the beginning of the process that led to an independence of ELCIN’s leadership and structures.

Below is a list of the names of the missionaries who led the mission work from its beginning until the establishment of an independent ELOC:

1. Botolf Bjirklund	1870-1885
2. Martti Rautanen	1885-1920
3. Kaarlo Petaja	1922-1923
4. Viktor Alho	1920-1922, 1925-1935, 1937- 1952
5. Walde Kurvinen	1935-1937
6. Birger Eriksson	1952-1958

(Nambala 1993: 94-95)

At the beginning, the leadership of ELCIN (or, as it was known at the beginning, ELOC) functioned squarely under the auspices and guidance of the FMS. In most cases, whenever decisions related to mission work were made by the missionaries in Ovamboland, they reported to and sought the approval of the mission director in Finland.

Although the process of the constitutional development and the growth of the Church towards independence in ELOC started in 1925, it was only fully realized in 1954 when ELOC was declared an independent church. Since the beginning and up to that stage, ELCIN did not have the status of Episcopal power. Therefore, they used the term “superintendent” or “moderator” instead of bishop (Auala 2009: 81-82). All the official meetings were conducted under the supervision of missionaries. One example is that the synod of ELCIN that took place in 1954 was conducted under the leadership of Birger Eriksson who was the mission superintendent then. Interestingly, in this particular case, the Bishop (Simojoki) and mission director (Vapaavouri) from Finland were also present in that historic synod to witness its proceedings (Nambala 1993: 87).

Despite the fact that there were trained indigenous pastors and the church was independent, they were not yet ready to take up leadership positions in the church. The reasons given were that there was no indigenous pastor qualified to take up the leadership position. The other reason was the government could not listen to the indigenous leaders (Auala 2009: 66). For that reason, the same synod of 1954, elected a missionary, Birger Eriksson, to be a moderator of ELCIN in accordance with a new Constitution as prescribed in

Article XVI of the amended constitution (2001: 22-23). From then on, all the elections in ELCIN took place according to the Constitution. Alpo was the last missionary to lead ELCIN from 1958 when he was elected to replace Eriksson who returned to Finland so that his children could attend school there. He served in this capacity for a period of three years before Leonard Auala took over leadership (Auala 2009: 92-93).

Rev Leonard Auala was the first indigenous pastor to hold such a position. He served the church as a moderator for three years from the synod of 1960 to 1963. The synod of 1963 finally elected him as the first bishop of ELCIN. He was consecrated at Oniipa by Bishop Gulin of Finland, thereby completing the extensive process of growth towards independent authority and structures in ELCIN (Buys & Nambala 2003: 212-214). As from then, the leadership of ELCIN has been under the leadership of indigenous pastors.

The list below shows the succession of leaders as from 1954 (when ELCIN became independent) until 1990 (when Namibia became independent).

<b>Year</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>
1.1954-1957	Birger Eriksson	Moderator
2.1958-1960	Alpo Hukka	Moderator
3.1960-1963	Leonard Auala	Moderator
4.1963-1978	Leonard Auala	First Bishop
5.1979-1990	Kleopas Dumeni	Second Bishop

(Nambala 1993: 95)

The Constitution of ELCIN is the supreme guiding principle, which stipulates the entire process of governing the church from head office to the level of the parishes. According to the ELCIN Constitution (Section XII), the Synod is the highest decision-making body. Its responsibilities are well defined in Section IX, in the same Constitution. Among other things, its functions are to elect the bishops, amend the Constitution and regulations and elect the Church Council that acts on its behalf. In addition, all the different departments at all levels of ELCIN have their regulations in line with the Constitution that stipulate the responsibilities of each, including the term of office.

The presiding bishop is the chairperson of the Church Council, while the General Secretary is the Chief Administrator appointed by and working under the Church Council (ELCIN Constitution 2001: 115-118). The headquarters of ELCIN are situated at Oniipa in the Oshikoto region near the Onandjokwe Lutheran Hospital.

Currently ELCIN is divided into two dioceses, the Eastern and the Western Diocese, as per its Constitution. The Eastern Diocese's headquarters are situated at Oniipa while the latter's headquarters are located at Nakayale in the west. Each diocese has its own bishop, executive secretary, treasurer and an independent governing body called the Diocesan Council "*eleloshikandjongerki*" elected by the Diocesan Synod and that meets once every two to three years (ELCIN Constitution 2001: 126-130).

The Constitution indicated that the dioceses are further sub-divided into deaneries consisting of not less than three or more than six parishes. The Diocesan Council elects the Dean who is at the same time a pastor in one of the parishes within the deanery. The Dean acts in the capacity of diocesan officer responsible for overseeing the activities of the parishes within his/her deanery (2001: 153-158).

A pastor or deacon (in case there is no pastor) is the leader of the parish together with the Elders Council. At the parish level, the Parochial General Meeting "*oshigongigongalo*" is the highest decision-making body and meets at least once each year. One of its responsibilities among others is to elect the Elders Council members to spearhead the work of the parish and help the pastor to fulfil his/her designated duties (ELCIN Constitution 2001: 103-115).

The Constitution is also clear about what needs to be done in terms of procedures, responsibilities, administration, elections, education, mission, finance and property, policymaking, employment and discharges, just to mention a few. Currently, the responsibilities in ELCIN are divided into departments such as Christian education and finance, with some full-time officers. At the diocesan level, most of the departments or leagues such as women, men, youth, Sunday school and others are run on a voluntary basis.

### 3.5.2 The struggle for financial independence

Although ELCIN was independent from the FMS in 1954, had its own leadership and ran its own programmes, it was not yet financially independent. The financial difficulties led to meagre salaries for church workers, especially for the indigenous pastors.

As a point of concern that needed urgent attention, in 1963 ELCIN appointed Rev E. Angula who was the dean of Ondonga then, to work as church evangelizer of ELCIN. The aim was to help in a spiritual awakening for the people to support the church. Because of the evangelization and stewardship programmes of educating the church members to sustain their parishes, a significant financial improvement in the congregations was visible (Auala 2009: 146).

Auala further describes the campaign for improving the finances in ELCIN as a great help to the parishes. Because of that, some parishes started to build church buildings without any assistance from outside. This does not mean they had enough money, but they tried with the little they had (2009: 146). Because the accounting system of ELCIN was at a low level, the only way to manage funds effectively for different departments was to keep the accounts separate. For that reason according to the report presented in the Synod of Engela in 1966, the church had four accounts for different departments as shown below:

1. Main fund of the church
2. Mission fund
3. Education fund
4. Transport fund

(Auala 2009: 147)

Most of the money that flowed into the abovementioned funds was not necessarily from within the church. These funds were either received from donors, mother-church and/or sister Lutheran churches in the world as well as other world ecumenical institutions like LWF, and WCC, to mention a few bodies that had been supporting ELCIN, especially for education programmes (Auala 2009: 141).

The financial report of 1968 in the Synod of Ongwediva indicates some improvement in terms of financial growth as the income for 1968 stood at R69 597. The same Synod discussed strategies of how to further improve the income and resources of the church. Discussions concluded that the importance of evangelization and education were reaffirmed as the key to success. The second point referred to leading by example, meaning that church leaders should give to the church so that other members may learn from this example (Auala 2009: 146-147).

The continued efforts resulted in the financial reports of 1973, 1974, and 1975 as shown below, indicating a visible and clear improvement in terms of income but it was still too little to meet the financial obligation of ELCIN:

1973	R142 786.74
1974	R139 832.63
1975	R285 489.10

(Auala 2009:147)

Dumeni, a local pastor who later became a second bishop of ELCIN, described the financial situation saying, “As from the beginning until the time of self-governance, the church used to receive financial help from the mother church in Finland through FMS” (1978: 13). Nambala shares a similar sentiment when he says that for the church to be fully indigenous the three concepts of self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating church need to be fully exercised. Therefore, lack of finance means lack of an indigenization process. In ELCIN, it went well with the church as self-governing and self-propagating church, but the church was not yet a self-supporting body (1994: 145).

In order to address financial challenges, the Church has appointed one of its pastors, Rev M. Nghipandulwa, to work in the capacity as a church treasurer as well as the stewardship officer with the emphasis placed on education. The aim was to spearhead, mobilize, and to educate the church members and monitor the implementation of those efforts (Auala 2009: 146). In addition, he had to train, explain and conduct meetings with parishioners to let them know what God expects regarding stewardship.

Nghipandulwa, in his annual report of 1978, indicated that statistically, ELCIN's members numbered 268 579 (1978: 77). One should think that these members were enough to support the church financially. However, the problem was that most of the members were unemployed and lived in abject poverty. For this reason, they were unable to contribute to the church. This situation of lack of resources still persists and hinders the social responsibility of ELCIN today.

The first effort was to introduce an offering or collection during the church service. Although slow for the people to become used to, it later became one of the main sources of income in the church – even if it was not enough to cater for all the needs of the congregation/church. The second effort was to introduce membership fees (*iigandjwa*) and gifts (*omagano*). Article XIX A and B of the Constitution of ELCIN authorize the congregation to receive gifts, membership fees, offerings and other related payments (ELCIN Constitution 2001).

The financial report of 1978 indicated a further improvement of the church's financial flow and growth compared to the previous years. A total amount of R404 687 was received in 1978. However, the breakdown of the report indicates that eighty percent of the financial income of the year still came from donors, sister churches and church bodies with LWF and FMS as the main contributors (Hekandjo 1978: 81). Only ten percent of the income of the church was generated within the parishes of ELOC. This meant that ELCIN's social work, including its educational activities, was still heavily dependent on donor support from abroad. On the other hand, the campaign to stimulate and strengthen financial independence through education at the parish level improved significantly.

At present, all the parishes in ELCIN are financially self-supporting in terms of salaries of their workers and other activities at parish level and to some extent support the headquarters (ELCIN's financial report 2010). The report further indicates that ELCIN's head office and other major operations still depend on foreign aid, such as from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), Finnish Church Aid (FCA), and Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (FELM). According to the financial report, beneficiaries of these donations are as follows: pastors' theological training, ELCIN High Schools, Music department in ELCIN, ELCIN Early Childhood Development, ELCIN AIDS Action, Student Ministry and ELCIN Family Ministry (report 2010). Furthermore, in order to do all of the above activities, ELCIN needs

movable and immovable property, namely, land and buildings. Therefore, the next point of discussion is the church's property.

### **3.5.3 The property of ELCIN**

As an independent church rooted in the community, it needed to have property of its own. This is important because without it the church would have not managed to fulfil its dream. This section will not discuss property of ELCIN in general but it will briefly focus on land and its challenge. The Constitution of ELCIN clearly states how the property of the church should be managed and dealt with in different departments of the church. According to Section XXII of the Constitution, ELCIN as a church is entitled to own property which is movable and immovable (Constitution 2001: 27). This means all the buildings including school buildings as well as the land remain the property of ELCIN.

However, the situation in Ovamboland was different, because all the land belongs to the state. Therefore, according to the report presented in the Synod at Engela in 1954, when a mission or church cannot be given permission to own the land, the state may lease the land for utilization on condition that the church is honest and uses it in a just way (Auala 2009: 55 & Synod resolution 1954: Sect 5 cf. Auala 2009: 55).

In other words, the church had been leasing government land without any right to own the land in the rural area almost until the independence of Namibia. According to Auala (2009: 55), the lease agreement was in fact originally between the state and FMS because ELCIN was not yet established as an independent church in Ovamboland. The lease agreement was transferred from the FMS to ELCIN after its official registration with the government as an independent church. Furthermore, according to the South West African Land Proclamation Act 30 of 1932, any person or society desiring to occupy any site for church, school or mission purposes on any native land (such as Ovamboland), had to first obtain written permission from the Administrator of South West Africa. The permission to occupy the land shall also in no way entitle the holder to any compensation for improvement except as indicated further on.

This act implied that no church or individual living in the rural areas had any legal right to the land. There was not even a guarantee of compensation for its development. Historically,



ELCIN has been a rural church working in the rural area and this act affected the economy and property of ELCIN. Most, if not all, of the contemporary towns in the northern part of Namibia were initially founded, developed and have been the centres of either ELCIN or of other churches. Moreover, most missions and rural centres that ELCIN established either are in the process of becoming towns or have already been declared towns and the churches in those towns are forced by the state to buy, lease or hand back the land to the state. Even today, according to the ELCIN statistics of 2010, the majority of ELCIN members live on the rural communal land – 90 percent of its members belong to the parishes in the rural areas and most of her properties are located in communal areas. As such, it became very difficult in such a situation for the church to make progress, as it should have done (ELCIN statistics 2010).

#### **3.5.4 Worship in ELCIN**

A good place to start in order to understand the concept of worship in ELCIN is with the concept of God among Ovambo people before the arrival of the missionaries. However, before that it is important to get the general definition of worship. A Greek word “latreia” for worship combined the ideas of “falling down before,” “paying homage to” and “serving”. Based on these definitions, it is obvious that worship involves recognition of worth in God. It is also about offering of our honour, praise and adoration to the One who is altogether worthy (Cutter et al 1986). This will help us to picture the practical ways of worship in Ovamboland. Long before Christianity came to Ovamboland, people had known and worshipped God, whom they called *Kalunga*. The Ovambo people believed in one Supreme Being (Munyika 2004: 157). According to Loytty (2005: 34), traditional Ovambo religion was a monotheist religion with the belief that *Kalunga* created the world. They believed that “life is from God and it is he who sustains it” (Buys & Nambala 2003: 3). Therefore, Munyika (2004: 159) said, the whole life of the Ovambo people and their culture lies in the understanding of a significance of philosophy of *Kalunga*, as known by other names: *Pamba*, *Nampongo*, *Mbangu*, *Muthithi*, *Muhona* and *Pamba iishita*. According to Loytty (2005: 34), *Kalunga* was not worshipped with personal devotion in the sense that terms like love or respect were not involved in any religious practices.

According to Buys and Nambala, *Kalunga* was also understood to be personified, as well as omnipresent and omniscient (2003: 3). *Kalunga* was believed to live either in the air

(*pombanda*) or in heaven (*megulu*), but could also come down to earth. He could also emerge in nature and reveal himself to believers in special places (Loytty 2005: 34). The name *Mbangu* was particularly used for instance during a thunderstorm, which was believed to be a sign of humbling before god for mercy (Buys & Nambala 2003: 3). God, furthermore, was a divine spirit who could only be approached indirectly via representative diviners, like *eenganga* or ancestors. In addition, according to cultural customs the elders could also mediate between the people and *Kalunga* (Munyika 2004: 146-149).

The traditional Ovambo religious system comprised not only beliefs, but also ceremonies, rituals and rites. According to Loytty (2005: 35), these systems formed the sphere of the people's existence and were present in practices of everyday life. Religious practices included prayers before hunting, travelling, in connection with seasonal celebrations, for rain, moving house and wedding ceremonies. Good luck and blessing from *Kalunga*, the Supreme Being, were prayed for.

The issue of worshipping God in the way Western people understand it is more complicated. According to Buys and Nambala (2003: 238), it was easy for the missionaries to persuade local inhabitants to join in Christian worship since they already had a variety of worship forms in their cultures. God, (*Kalunga*) was not approached directly by people, but rather through ancestral spirits. Prayers were made to God; God was feared and was believed to be the almighty creator of all.

In view of this, it was argued that the Ovambo people knew and worshipped God before the arrival of Christianity. Therefore, Loytty concluded that Christianity only brought more and new information about God. In pre-Christian times, *Kalunga* was not revealed in biblical forms (Loytty 2005: 35). Therefore, Munyika indicates that *Kalunga* communicated with Ovambo people by proxy and such communications were not committed to writing because the art of writing was unknown in the Ovambo culture. However, according to Munyika, this does not disqualify God from being the same Triune God, who was then unknown to Ovambo people in that way (Munyika 2004: 424).

The worship of God among the Ovambo people was also associated mostly with all spheres of life. There was no distinction between worship and tradition. People celebrated their

traditional feasts like agricultural festivities, ritual and rites while at the same time worshipping God (Loytty 2005: 35). According to Buys and Nambala (2003: 5), God was not restricted to any artificial or natural religious objects, such as trees, shrines and/or a certain religious places for worship. In other words, there was no time or a day such as every Sunday or a common place (church) where people felt obliged to meet regularly at the designated time throughout the year. They conducted their worship of God in their homes as families. Next, we will see the introduction of a new way of worshiping God.

Buys and Nambala define Christian worship as a regular worship service of God the Father, through Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit. Further, it is a weekly worship service, which is organized for every Sunday throughout the year with the aim to pray, glorify, praise and adore God. Christian worship is a total life activity, a view of life and mostly called a Christian worldview. Christians used this word to refer to their “service” of worship to their God. In other words, it implies a “work of the people” for God’s sake. Therefore, liturgy means the public official service of the church, for that reason it is called worship service. It is a way of daily living that glorifies God throughout one’s life (2003: 237; cf. Patte 2010: 735)). The Christian worship service is, according to this definition, a central element of Christian life. Hence, as it is a religious phenomenon, one of the missionaries’ main responsibilities was to make sure that the Sunday worship services would become part of the new converts’ lives. At the same time the worship service was seen as very important, not only for the community of believers, but also for the individual members of the church and it was hoped that it would translate into a way of life, with members of the church worshipping at their homes throughout the week as well (Buys & Nambala 2003: 237). According to Loytty (2005: 100), “liturgy in its broader concept comprises a combination of ecclesiastical symbolism of the clothes and interior decoration, gestures, prayers, reading and preaching the word of God, as well as music in the form of hymns and other melodies or instrumental intercessions.

The influence of Luther’s teaching of justification by faith through grace, the forgiveness of sin, the Ten Commandments, the great commandment of love, life after death and songs take centre stage in ELCIN’s worship services and Christian teaching.

### 3.5.5 Indigenization of worship in ELCIN

Right from the beginning worship was, therefore, part of the Finnish presence in Ovamboland. The day after the first group of missionaries arrived in Omandongo, Ondonga, on Saturday 9 July 1870 as stated earlier in this chapter (cf. 3.2.1), with permission from King Shikongo, they organized a thanksgiving service that was attended by the missionaries themselves and their servants. After conversions, the worship service remained an important part and popular religious ceremony in the life of the church members in Ovamboland in which education played a big role through preaching and Bible studies (Peltola 2002: 48). In the word of Barret, in his book; *Dehism and Renewal in Africa* describes worship as a “liturgical theology”. He further said, without this liturgical theology our understanding of the church’s faith and doctrine is bound to be incomplete. Based on this idea, worship turned to be primary and fundamental rather than secondary and peripheral (Barret 1968: 159-161).

Initially the liturgy that was introduced by the missionaries reflected those practiced in their home church in Finnish (Buys & Nambala 2003: 239). On the other hand, they wanted the Ovambo church to join the international Lutheran communion. For that reason, they established a form of liturgy that borrowed from the mother church in Finland (Loytty 2005: 100). The Western culture, in this case Finnish culture, was associated with Christianity, while most of the Ovambo cultures and their traditions were associated with paganism. Therefore, the Ovambo people were forced to abandon their ancestral heritages and surrendered themselves to the new norms of life. It was regarded as sin to wear traditional clothes or necklaces, but there was nothing wrong with using whatsoever of the Western tradition in the worship service.

However, later things started to change for the better. Gradually, the process of developing the forms of worship in the Ovambo language progressed well. The translation of the Bible into Oshiwambo in 1923 made it possible for the indigenous to participate fully. This helped them to use the Bible in Oshiwambo language for Scripture reading and preaching (the process of translation will be discussed in the next chapter). Many members of the church started to conduct prayers at home in their own language (Buys & Nambala 2003: 239). In the process of developing the church service, especially after independence of ELCIN, more especially after the independence of Namibia in 1990, members started to introduce some

of the cultural practices like dancing and the use of drums during the service. The singing and other practices strictly adhered to the Protestant reformation traditional singing. Therefore, to revive and integrate some traditional practices in worshipping was necessary (Buys & Nambala 2003: 239). The worship service in ELCIN became one of the important aspects of social change that inspired people spiritually. A lot has been achieved through worship services.

Article 2 of the Constitution of ELCIN clearly defines and stipulates the foundation of ELCIN as follows: "ELCIN as a church of Christ based on the Holy Bible, the Word of God that is infallible." In addition, its teaching is founded on biblical principles and teaching of Lutherans of justification by faith through grace. The worship service in ELCIN is in a structured form of liturgy, formed in accordance with the Lutheran Book of Worship, which is used by all Lutherans worldwide, but in a fitting manner (Lutheran Book of Worship 1993). The conduct of the worship service is stipulated in Articles III and IV of the same Constitution of ELCIN (ELCIN Constitution 2001: 11-12). Section 3 in the Constitution of ELCIN prescribes the books that should be used in the worship services. These books include the Bible, hymnbook, Book of Worship and announcement book. Worship services were conducted every Sunday in accordance with the forms of worship as given in the Book of Worship (ELCIN Constitution 2001: 34).

The ELCIN worship manual *Okambokelongelokalunga* (Altar Book 1993) contains all the formulas of the liturgy for worship services. This includes the Holy Communion services, evening services, services for children and young people, baptism, confirmation, marriage, burial of the dead, dedications of church buildings, ordination of ministers, blessing of deacons, consecration of Bishop, and blessing of a house and the installation of a new pastor, to mention a few.

As in other Lutheran churches not only in Namibia but also in the whole world, ELCIN also believes and confesses the Trinitarian nature of God by way of the Nicene, Constantinian, Athanasian as well as Augsburg Creeds. These creeds are the basic doctrine and principle of Christian confessions, worship and teachings in ELCIN. Still the Holy Bible is a supreme source of all faith, teaching and truth (ELCIN Constitution 2001: 11).

### **3.6 Other challenges and landmarks of ELCIN**

#### **3.6.1 Registration of church with the government**

For ELCIN to be a legitimate institution in South West Africa then it was required that it be registered as such with the government. The issue of legislation was discussed during the synod held at Engela in 1954. The fact that ELCIN was not a registered institution became known when it applied for some of its pastors to become marriage officers. Therefore, leaders of the church had to register it (Auala 2009: 187). For this to happen, the following legal requirements stipulate that the church:

- Must have had no dispute with the government for the past ten years
- Must have at least six established congregations
- Must have a personal development programme for the pastors to perform their duties as required
- Must have well-trained pastors who can do their work properly
- Must have a constitution as its foundation to confirm that it is operating on sound principles
- Must have schools which are progressing well
- Must have pastors authorized as marriage officers
- Must have sound financial policy and properties like land and buildings
- Must have leaders, pastors and church members who show a high moral standard

(Synod resolution 1954; see also Auala 2009: 53-56)

The most challenging requirement in the above list for ELCIN concerned its Constitution. At the time drafting the Constitution was still in progress (Auala 2009: 33). The finalization of the Constitution paved the way for ELCIN to apply to the government for registration. This finally happened and the application was submitted on 4 October 1956 (Application letter for registration 1956). After seven months, the High Commissioner of Native Affairs in Windhoek notified the church in a letter dated 9 May 1957 that ELCIN's application had been successful and that it was now registered with the government of South Africa to operate in South West Africa as an independent church (Nambala 1993: 91).

### 3.6.2 Marriage

ELCIN played a crucial role in introducing Christian marriage as part of social change from the old pattern of customary marriage to a modern marriage (Western marriage) among the Ovambo people. It is important to mention this point because for the people to understand it, they needed education for social change, for that reason it is relevant to this study. From the onset of the missionaries' endeavour, they slowly taught indigenous (Christian) people about Christian marriage to form Christian families. Christian marriage has been a church matter since its introduction during the time of missionaries before any government administration in Ovamboland. Churches, such as ELCIN, the Anglican and the Catholic Church, were the only institutions responsible for conducting marriages among the Ovambo people. Although the law in Ovamboland provided for civil marriage, it was only applicable to the few European citizens who lived there. Discussions about civil marriage were started for the first time in the Synod of 1925. According to Tuupainen (1970: 108), the first church marriage regulation and vow in ELCIN was already discussed and approved for use in 1906. Later it became part of the Constitution as defined in sections 51-60 of the Church's Constitution.

The aim was to ask the government to allow Christians to enter civil marriage (Auala 2009: 76). According to Tuupainen (1970: 119), until 1952, there was not one legally acknowledged or civil Ovambo marriage in the whole of Ovamboland recorded by the state as even the marriages that the churches officiated were regarded as invalid. In fact, the administration waited for the indigenous people to come forth to ask for the granting of a civil marriage law instead of giving them information regarding the possibility of civil marriage.

The two challenging and disturbing issues that forced ELCIN and even some individual members to pursue the issue of the acknowledgement of the legal validity of church marriage were, firstly mutual inheritance between spouses, as well as the fact that the right of children born out of that union to inherit was jeopardized. Secondly, to allow some of the local pastors to conduct and solemnize church marriage as marriage officers. Therefore, in 1930, some ELCIN pastors and some church members from the Uukwanyama area inquired from the administration at Oshikango about the possibility of the solemnization of civil marriage (Auala 2009:76). This issue of civil marriage also took centre stage at the pastors'

conference in 1947 at Ontananga. The meeting resolved that a delegation would be sent to the then administrative centre of Ovamboland at Ondangwa for inquiry (Tuupainen 1970: 119). This problem was also discussed extensively in the ELCIN Synod in 1950. In order for the church to find a lasting solution to civil marriage, a delegation of 23 people was appointed to discuss it further with the Native Commissioner at Ondangwa (Synod 1950).

However, the Native Administration responded by introducing the Marriage Law of 1940. This piece of legislation included the following formulation of a mutual will between spouses; the first dying appoints the survivor as sole heir and executor. This Marriage Act was then a legal document that the spouses and their witnesses had to sign as their last will and testament as part of the marriage proceedings in order to ensure the rights to inherit of the surviving spouse.

In 1952 the situation became even more complex as the order was given from government that the ELCIN pastors in particular were not allowed to conduct marriages in Ovamboland before a civil ceremony (Auala 2009: 79). For this reason, the Church Council passed the resolution in line with the government policy that all pastors who wanted to be marriage officers should first apply to the government for authorization. The same council put on hold the church marriage practice until such a time that the government permitted them to do so (Church Council, 1953).

In 1954, the government issued a formula for the marriage ceremony to be followed by all pastors when officiating at marriages (Tuupainen 1970: 120-121). For this reason, the marriage sections in the Constitution of ELOC had to be amended to be brought in line with the new government requirements. Therefore, a church council meeting took place on the 14-15 July 1954, which resolved as follows: the church council resolved that the new Marriage Act of community of property be duly regarded as a Christian marriage in accordance with God's Word (Church Council resolution, 1954; cf. ELCIN Constitution 2001: 65).

It was a challenging time because the church was still under the leadership of the missionaries. At the same time, it was in the process of applying to the state for registration. Thus, the leadership of ELCIN was very careful not to enter into a dispute with the state, as



this was one of the requirements for registration. A dispute would thus have amounted to disqualification for registration.

### **3.6.3 Church in relation to state policy**

The introduction of apartheid in Namibia by South Africa forced the churches, ELCIN included, to stand firm in speaking out against the way people were treated socially, economically and politically. In Namibia, apartheid reforms were instigated by the “Odendaal plan”, which was implemented in Namibia in 1964. According to Auala (2009: 155), the policy was aimed at dividing people of colour in Namibia into homelands with the slogan of divide and rule. The churches in Namibia – Roman Catholic, Anglican and Lutheran – shared with the majority of Namibians their disapproval at the actions taken by the South African government. Therefore, in 1964 and later again in 1967, the Lutheran churches in Namibia issued two warning letters to the South African government. They called those letters “Memorandum letters” and in them requested the South African government to revise the policy. As might have been expected, the requests were rejected by the state (Auala 2009: 158).

Something unusual happened in 1968, when the Native Government/Administration in Ovamboland decided to expel all Finnish missionaries from the area. In another move, and something even more directly relevant for the topic of this research, the State decided to close the Oshigambo High School, which was a church school. The reason for the decision was that it was felt that the Oshiwambo would not listen to the administrators if missionaries were still there. In response to these decisions, ELCIN issued a letter dated 23 January 1969. In it, the church requested the government:

- to let the missionaries stay on as workers of the church
- [that it (government) should] to continue issuing passports to people whom the church was sending for further study elsewhere
- to allow the church to continue running Oshigambo High School, so that the church could train its own people
- to permit the church to send chaplains to Ongwediva Teacher’s Training College for youth ministry

- for efficient communication whenever the government makes decisions related to ELCIN

(Letter in Auala 1969)

In 1970, in response to the injustice of the political system, the two Lutheran Churches (ELCIN and ELCRN) met in Windhoek under the leadership of Bishop Auala and Moderator, Rev Gowaseb of the respective churches. At that meeting, it was decided to write an “open letter” to the Prime Minister of South Africa, to make their wishes known to the world. This letter was dated 30 June 1971 (Mbuende 1989: 134). In fact, ever since the 1970s, ELCIN together with other churches continued to issue statements that were critical of the South African government policy and occupation of Namibia. According to Mbuende (1989: 133), in these statements the churches together continued to call upon the Pretoria regime to withdraw from the country, and continued supporting the United Nations resolutions on Namibia as well as the liberation movement until Namibia gained its independence in 1990. ELCIN has been the church that cares for the people in a holistic way; spiritually by preaching to them the word of God, socially through education and training as machinery toward social change and physically by addressing the issue of health and physical wellbeing. In all that it did or said ELCIN demonstrated its position as a public church. At the same time it is the church that identified itself with the sufferers and vulnerable. It did not choose silence in times of trials.

#### **3.6.4 ELCIN and social development**

ELCIN continues to play a significance role in social responsibility as stipulated in Article IV of the Constitution of ELCIN, among others, through preaching the Word of God, through Christian education and social work, by promoting peace, and through mission work (ELCIN Constitution 2001: 12).

When the first missionaries arrived in Ovamboland and embarked on their mission work, teaching and preaching were their major responsibilities. In the process, social development was also achieved, especially through their education efforts. For the missionaries to address the issue of social change they introduced education programmes in all sectors of the church and of their work. Missionaries, for example, introduced medical services to the local people and education formed part of them as they educated the indigenous people about health related issues and their physical wellbeing.

Although the medical experience of the missionaries was limited, their reputation as healers spread far because of the non-existence of any other medical services. This element of social development received a welcome impetus when a medical doctor, Selma Rainio, arrived from Finland in 1908. Soon after her arrival, the Onandjokwe Finnish Medical Hospital was erected near Oniipa and was officially opened at the end of January 1911. During the annual mission feast, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of July (1911), the first hospital in Ovamboland was consecrated. As part of the missionaries' social development efforts, Dr Rainio was instrumental in establishing a training school for local auxiliary nurses at Onandjokwe in 1930 (Kyronseppa 1970: 12-13).

Another element in the Finnish missionaries' early social development work concerned the business sector. As early as, in 1885 Finnish missionaries in Ovambo decided to start a weaving project to cater the local needs. A local woman, Elizabeth lithono, one of the missionaries' servants, became the first assistant in this project. The aim was to help other participants and supervise the work. She was later sent to Finland for further training as part of that specific project. From 1899-1901 a Finnish woman missionary, Hilja, joined the weaving project among Ovambo women (Seppala 1977: 30). This project was developed to the extent that it later became one of the business branches of the church (ELCIN) where, amongst others, all clerical vestments were made, something that continues until today. The business not only trained and educated local people to become self-supportive, but also created employment for the community.

In 1952, the Engela Parish Institute was established with the specific purpose of addressing issues of social concern. From its establishment, this pastoral institute has been offering a broad selection of church and community development programmes. These included a vocational training programme in 1969, to provide various skills in different area, a school and a rehabilitation programme for the blind. Further, a wide variety of courses on aspects of church life for Bible study leaders, Sunday school teachers, preachers and elders, to mention only a few had been and continue to be offered (Buys & Nambala 2003: 223). More on this will be discussed in the next chapter.

### 3.7 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter as stated in the introduction was to study the beginning, growth and impact of missionaries' activities in the Ovambo area. The early mission activities, which resulted in the birth of ELOC and thereafter ELCIN, marked a beginning of the planting of Christianity among the Ovambo people. It gave us the picture of how difficult it was to work in the strange environment. The relationship between missionaries, people and kings helps to appreciate the determination and hard work of missionaries.

Most of the mission stations, as mentioned in this chapter, were developed gradually and became important centres of the church. Some of these are still in existence as parishes, museums, schools and hospitals.

The chapter further reflected on the progress made by missionaries to lead the mission activities into mission congregations. Thereafter, those congregations developed to the mission church in Ovamboland. Of course, there would have been no congregations without members, which was the first achievement of the mission work. In this sense, the first baptism, which took place in 1883, may be seen as the beginning of the establishment of the church of Christ in Ovamboland. In addition, it was noted that the year 1925 was an important one in the history of ELCIN as it was in that year that the first ordination of the first indigenous pastors took place. Similarly, the first Synod of the Mission Church took place in which the Church Order – another milestone, which served as a guiding document for the missionaries and the young church – was also approved.

The chapter also showed how the new name of the church "ELOC" came about and later ELCIN, and some characteristics of it, especially the way enculturation was brought about, for example with regard to worship in the church. This, it was shown, was also related to efforts toward the transition of power from missionaries to indigenous pastors culminating in Rev Leonard Auala's election first as moderator (1960) and later as First Bishop of ELCIN (1963). To understand this better, the structure and leadership of ELCIN was discussed.

The chapter ends with references to some of the particular challenges (social, economic and political) ELCIN faced in its history before giving a brief overview of some of the social development activities started by them and some continuing today.

This chapter is important because it gave the general picture of the missionaries' activities as well as the impact they made that changed not only the life of individuals, but also for the community at large. To understand better how education played a crucial role in the process of social development, the next chapter will give more details on ELCIN's educational efforts, starting with the early mission education and mission schools.

## **Chapter 4: Finnish Mission education in Ovamboland: Informal education**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter will give an account of the Finnish mission education in the Ovamboland area from 1870. The focus of this part of the study is based on the early development of Christian education (informal education) to convert Ovambo people into Christianity. This informal education is different although related to the education that will be discussed in the next chapter. As part of the introduction, it is apt to give a brief description of traditional education in the Ovambo culture. Similarly, this chapter will explore the practical methods of traditional education of the Ovambo people. This will give a picture of the type of education Ovambo people had before Christianity.

This will further help to differentiate the aims and values of Ovambo traditional education from the aims and objectives of the Western education as introduced by the Finnish mission. Finally, this chapter will then also pay attention to the early missionary work regarding education. This includes the publication of books, teaching methodology, the training and appointment of indigenous assistant teachers, and challenges faced by the missionaries, such as the payment of salaries to indigenous assistants.

### **4.2 Traditional education in Ovamboland**

As indicated in the introduction of this chapter, it is important to give a brief description of traditional education in the Ovambo culture. Therefore, the aim of this section is to give an overview of the kind of education practised before missionary education. This in fact will not only help in understanding some of its background, but also to observe its role in society as well. Before the arrival of Western missionaries, “traditional education in Namibia was well established by the Namibian people, but had an informal approach. It was part of the holistic African world view-part of the socio-economic fibre of traditional communities” (Buys & Nambala 2003: 260). Parents and guardians played a crucial role in teaching skills to younger members of society. This was a practical way of passing on knowledge and skills from one generation to the next. Elders taught their children the social norms and life views. Of course, the way Namibians practiced and applied this informal traditional education was

different from the formal education of the Western tradition, but through these informal methods, children developed a sense of history and identity (Ellis 1984: 13).

There was not only one single, national way of social formation of traditional education in pre-colonial Namibia. Each tribe or ethnic group had its own tradition for keeping life together. This was the same with the Ovambo people. Traditional education grows out of that particular environment. This has been because the learning process is always related to the pattern of works/activities in a particular community. According to Amukugo (1993: 35), the social formation of the Ovambo culture consisted of small units of different clans within the Ovambo people. Amukugo further explains that the traditional education system among Ovambo people meant that individuals were brought up in such a way as to know his/her role and rights as well as those of others. In addition, there was also a range of mutual responsibilities. The roles and skills of adults were internalized through storytelling, riddles, poetry, memory tests, songs, dances and games (Buys & Nambala 2003: 260). According to Munyika (2004: 301), education also aimed at the cultivation of vocational skills such as trading and crafts such as carving, basket weaving, building, drumming, hair plaiting, beadwork, and pottery.

Munyika (2004: 301) quoted Seppala as follows:

During the early time of children, female adults played a greater gender role to educate both boys and girls. Further, at about the age of six, male adults took over the role of shaping the boys into manhood, while their female counterparts took care of the girls.

He further observes that during those days of “paganism”, meaning before Christianity, females were trained and skilled to be good and exemplary women in society and at home (2004: 301). The mothers and grandmothers passed on skills of how to be a married woman and keep the family in a healthy manner. These skills included working in the field, pounding millet (*mahangu*), cooking, basket weaving, norms and traditions, riddles, and traditional beliefs. On the other hand, men were responsible for training young boys in preparing them for their manhood responsibility such as looking after cattle as well as how to make their own houses (Munyika 2004: 301).

All of the above means that the existence of each individual was viewed as valuable and meaningful in the context of his or her community (Amukugo 1993: 36). Therefore, too, the

education of the individual rested on the community as a whole. Education in Ovambo tradition was meant to safeguard and pass on the people's cultural customs, beliefs, behaviour patterns, emotional dispositions, skills and traditional tools from one generation to another (Unam 1993: 7). It was also expected of all young people and children to participate in traditional education in a correct and respectful way under the supervision of the adults (Munyika 2004: 301).

It was the responsibility of all adults not only to educate, but also to correct and even to discipline children. All this aimed at shaping them into a disciplined adulthood with strong moral codes – such as virtues of solidarity, co-operation, and respect for the elders. The aim of the traditional education was to help the individuals as well as the community to be able to live a commendable life. In the end, they were proficient to manage their affairs. However, although this type of education is differs from formal education (Western education), because they do not give certificates to prove the qualification, but the way of living, conduct, behaviour and performance show the kind of skills the person attained in the process of traditional education.

### **4.3 Mission (informal) education**

#### **4.3.1 Introduction**

The focus of this section will be on early Finnish mission education. Firstly, to determine the kind of education missionaries have introduced, to find out who were the beneficiaries of the early education programme and to understand the progress and the impact made on the people participating in the programme as learners.

Secondly, this chapter will give a brief overview of how missionaries started developing and translating teaching materials. Thirdly, the chapter will look at teaching methodology and assistant teachers. Finally, this chapter will present an overall picture about the challenge of teachers' allowances and salaries.

#### **4.3.2 Early mission education**

The FMS's main concern in the area of non-formal education has always been related to catechism. Catechism here refers to the booklet of the church in which Christian principles and doctrines of the church are explained in brief. This education programme was a



religious education, and everything they taught was based on Christian principles and doctrine.

Before missionaries came to Namibia, many people, if not all, were not exposed to modernity. Literacy itself was not a problem because the Ovambo culture was an oral one: no one could, knew of, or if they did, really saw the need to read and write. The missionaries' work was based on three pillars: the preaching of the Gospel, education and, as was briefly referred to above, health care (Kaulinge 1992). This study focuses on the second pillar of education.

The Finnish missionaries planted Christianity through Christian education among the Ovambo people and later in the Kavango region. The informal education that Finnish missionaries introduced among Ovambo people was based on catechism. This education carried the power that transforms the society from illiteracy to literacy, from paganism to Christianity. It was required that the person had to know how to read and write to qualify for baptism and other Christian services. Therefore, literacy in this case became a provision. The main aim of this provision was that people got the basic knowledge of writing, reading, understanding of modernity (Western culture) and knowledge of the Bible (Buys & Nambala 2003: 261).

According to Munyika (2004: 302), "mission education at first was mostly focused on elementary schooling as a prerequisite to evangelization, to teach converts literacy in order to read their catechism and the Bible" (Munyika 2004: 302). The specific aim of catechism is to develop, advance and to nourish day by day the Christian life of young and old. It is customary to think that catechism is for the children and teenagers about to receive the sacrament of confirmation, but the truth is, it is relevant and necessary for all ELCIN members at all stages.

Tjitendero in UNAM (1993: 9) also supported this claim, when he states, "education serves as a means of reading the Bible, catechism and was good breeding ground for Christianity where learners could be properly monitored and be selected for appropriate training for church responsibility". This resulted in most of the workers desiring to do well with their learning and later they became valuable helpers of the missionaries.

Wherever a mission station was established in the 19th century, the first building project was that for the church, which at the same time served as a school during the week. Preaching in the church on Sunday was always combined with educational activities during the week, like classes in reading, writing and catechism for adults as well as for the children (Buys & Nambala 2003: 261).

The mission work of the education system was shaped by missionaries' religious motivation. This motivation according to Amukugo (1993:43) was to convert the Ovambo people to Christianity.

Finnish missionaries did not differentiate between their own Western culture or civilization and Christianity. The general perception was that European cultures were seen as "Christian culture, while the Ovambo culture was regarded as 'heathen culture'" (Buys & Nambala 2003: 310). Therefore, according to the missionaries, it was not possible to practice Ovambo culture among the Christian community. In this way, local people who wanted to become Christian or participate were forced to disregard most of their traditional practices and/or to choose between culture and baptism.

Neither Finnish missionaries nor the indigenous people recognized traditional Ovambo education as "school" in the formal sense of the word. Traditional education was viewed as a cultural activity (Buys & Nambala 2003: 261). Therefore, preaching in the church on Sundays was constantly combined with educational activities during the week.

The approach missionaries used to implement their mission programmes was a holistic one. They wanted to help the person in totality, meaning spiritually, physically and mentally. Two major things took place during this process of mission work, as a driving force to an effective education. These two things were as follows: firstly, it was the transforming of Oshiwambo as a spoken language into a written language (Peltola 2002: 131-132). The second was to write an elementary school book of alphabetical letters (ABD) in vernacular (Oshiwambo). Apart from that, they also made an effort to learn a local language namely Oshiwambo, which they later adopted as a medium of instruction. Reijonen, one of the missionaries, was determined to learn Oshindonga and was progressing well. In 1876, he was able to write his sermons in Oshindonga. Further, in 1881 the Mission Director in Finland wrote a letter in

1881 encouraging missionaries to come up with more education materials (Tirronen 1978: 3-8).

Missionaries had many challenges to face in the process of education. Some of the challenges were, firstly, to learn the language of the people, as they only knew Herero and German, which they had learned at Otjimbingwe (Peltola 2002: 53). Secondly, to know, to understand and to learn the behaviour and the way the Ovambo people did things. Thirdly, they had to make bricks, set up and build their own houses. Fourthly, they had to find way to source and get their own food and clean drinking water for themselves. Lastly, in 1880, there was a severe famine in Ovamboland. Therefore, the number of students dropped gradually until the whole school was closed, because there was a lack of food in the entire Ovamboland. The situation became so severe that even missionaries had to travel 800 km to and from Omaruru or Walvis Bay to buy their necessities (Lehtonen 2001: 4, 12-13).

According to the annual mission report (1876, 15-17), Karl Tolonen started a school at Omandongo in Ondonga area in the 1870s, while Kurvinen and Weikkolin proceeded to the Uukwambi area where they started to educate young people. While in Uukwambi, they mostly taught young people and Sundays during the worship service was a good time for missionaries to teach them. She further said the situation in Uukwambi changed because of the hostility from the King of Uukwambi and they had to move from Elim (Uukwambi) back to Ondonga, as discussed in chapter 3 (cf. 3.2.1). Lehtonen goes on to say that, Oniipa then was allocated to them and they established a centre for education in 1872, where they continued with their educational activities.

Under Kurvinen, a school at Oniipa was progressing well. One of his learners was Nangulohi, their servant. She learned fast and in two years, she knew how to read and baptism was considered for her. As was mentioned in chapter 3, she was also the first Ovambo woman to be baptized. However, some indigenous people were also of great help to the missionaries as their interpreters and teachers of the local language and culture (Buys & Nambala 2003: 168). In this same way, missionaries benefited more by learning the Oshiwambo language better from the trainees.

Mission work was and still is to evangelize and teach people the Word of God. Therefore, the work of the Finnish Missionaries also centred on teaching and preaching. In the beginning, people who attended the worship services as well as schools were mostly young people, especially those who were the helpers of the missionaries. According to the report, the helpers were responsible for looking after the oxen or cattle of missionaries (Annual mission report 1876, 12). Slowly but surely, the number of pupils increased, in 1899 missionaries had some 450 learners in their mission schools. During that time, the basic structure of these emerged: elementary schools, which gave basic instruction to children and those preparing to be baptized, then there were confirmation classes for further instruction on religion to catechumens and candidates for confirmation (Miettinen 2005: 91).

These indigenous people became a great help for the missionaries as interpreters and assistant teachers. In this same way, it was a win-win practice because both sides benefited. Logically the missionaries also benefited in terms of learning the Oshiwambo language better from their trainees. The missionaries' homes were used as places of training (Buys & Nambala 2003: 168).

#### **4.3.3 Translation and publications**

At the start of missionary activities in Ovamboland in 1870, there were no educational materials written in Oshiwambo. In fact, the language itself was not yet a written language at all. From the beginning of their work, missionaries knew that one of the major responsibilities in Ovambo was to produce books in a local language. It was not an easy task, because missionaries were not trained linguistically and were still in the process of learning Oshiwambo. They used the little knowledge of the Herero language they learned at Otjimbingwe to write basic materials (Tirronen 1977: 9).

One of the missionaries, Pietari Kurvinen, played an important role in preparing the first Oshiwambo book, called the ABD, which means "Alphabet" in vernacular Oshindonga. According to Kurvinen's own admission, "*taku holoka okaambeendee haka, onkambadhala yotango okutota embo Melaka ndika lyOshindonga, elaka ndyoka lyo opala panshitwe. Omushiti gwelaka nayambeke okukambaladhala nkuka kwetu, oshigwana shAawambo shi likole mo sha tashi ya kwatha mokukala kwawo kombanda yevi ndika sigo omuukwaaluhe*"

(Tirronen 1977: 6), which, in my translation, means: “Here is the first attempt of the ABD book in Oshindonga, a natural and beautiful language. The Creator blesses our works, so that this work could be a blessing to the Ovambo people now and forever.”

According to an annual mission report (1877, 6 see also Lehtonen 2001:7), the board of mission directors in Finland decided in favour of the request from Namibia to help in publishing this book. It was sent to Finland for publication in 1876. The print of 1 000 books in Oshiwambo was completed and it was announced on the mission celebration day of 1877. Later, in October that year, the first books arrived in Ovamboland.

By 1891, a book called “*A comparative grammar of South African languages*” was in use and helped the missionaries in the process of learning the language. The need to have more educational materials became demanding because of the increase in the number of learners. Hence, missionaries had to take up the responsibilities among themselves to translate such materials from the Finnish language into Oshiwambo. In order for this to happen, missionaries needed to have human resources. Thus, they initiated what Munyika calls the “new social group”, which consisted of missionaries themselves, indigenous preachers and teachers all focusing on the issue of translation (Munyika 2004: 303).

According to an annual mission report of 1879, as cited in Lehtonen (2001: 8), Finnish missionaries shared among themselves the responsibility of translation. Skoglund who was a group leader translated some biblical stories and the hymnal books into Oshiwambo. The report further pointed out that those translations were the direct translation from Finnish language into Oshiwambo. A total number of 1 000 books were published. The report further indicated that Tolonen contributed a lot in terms of the translation of education material. These translations included the Ten Commandments and Luther’s *Small Catechism* into Oshindonga, thereafter into Oshikwanyama and the Rukwangari dialects. The translation in Rukwangari started in 1977, when two pastors and a teacher, namely Kazumba, Lihongo and Eino, translated the Bible into Rukwangari (Lihongo 1978: 51). The other early translations were parts of both Old and New Testament books, such as Matthew in 1891, Mark in 1892, Luke in 1895, John in 1897 and the Acts of the Apostles in 1897 (Tirronen 1977: 38). According to Nashihanga (1993: 40) and (Tirronen 1977: 40), Albin

Savola translated part of Genesis and Exodus, while Martti Rautanen translated the whole Bible into Oshindonga, which was completed by December 1923.

All those books except the Bible as a whole were published in Finland in 1879 under the care of the FMS and arrived in Ovamboland the same year (Lehtonen 2001: 8). In fact, the publication process continued to take place in Finland until 1900. That was until 1901 when the Finnish Mission established a printing press at Oniipa (Annual mission report 1879, 16, see also Buys & Nambala 2003: 278).

The press opened the way for the printing of educational materials in order to address the problem of the shortage of schoolbooks. In this way, too, teachers had a chance to access textbooks for teaching purposes. The printing press also offered a new and effective way to disseminate the Word of God and other valuable information to the community (Lehtonen 1977: 17). The first edition of a church newspaper "*Osoondaha*" (Sunday) was, for example, published that same year (1901). This newspaper was later changed to a new name "*Omukwetu*" (Ours) and remains the newspaper of ELCIN until today. When the church in Ovamboland became independent, the press became the property of ELCIN, which is still operation (Auala 2009: 123-124).

It was not an easy job to prepare all the Christian education materials. Therefore, to further the written Oshiwambo language, in the missionaries' meeting in 1905 they selected three missionaries, Pettinen, Savola and Glad, to form a committee to examine and make corrections to the writings. The committee proposed that for the missionaries to conduct their work properly, they needed to learn Oshiwambo. Tirronen stated that in 1911 it was decided that all Finnish missionaries in Namibia had to learn Oshiwambo. Later in 1956, the same committee was changed into the language committee that was responsible for preparing books and teaching material through proofreading and editing the existing educational material (1977: 13). Because of all this development, from 1963 all the church minutes and resolutions could be written in Oshiwambo because of the work of the language committee. From 1964, the language committee resorted under the state, when the government of South Africa took over the responsibility of the national schools (Tirronen 1977: 13).

#### 4.3.4 Early teaching methodology

In each educational practice there is always a method to use in order to serve the purpose of education and carry the message across. This was the same with the Finnish Mission education programme. As this was the beginning of education, the teaching methods missionaries used were informal methods.

According to Skoglund's report (in Lehtonen 2001: 8), the following was written about education practice in the community: *"Ohandi hokolola ondjokonona yomOmbimbeli nohandi longitha wo omafano, opo aalongwa yandje ya yeletwe kiinima. Onde ya longo iipango omulongo yaKalunga ye yi tseye momutse. MOsoondaha ohandi ya uvithile pahapu nde dhi hogolola mOmbiimbeli, ngaashi nda tala dho opalele aapulakeni"*, "He taught the learners by using Bible stories and pictures so that they could follow and understand properly. He taught them the Ten Commandments to memorize and preached to them on Sunday on the text of his choice" (my translation-EN). At this stage, there were no education facilities in mission centres as are seen today. In other words, there were no chairs, tables, blackboards and no proper classrooms. People used to sit and write on the ground. For mathematics, they used small sticks to assist in learning how to count.

One of the challenges missionaries encountered in the process of education clearly was the lack of classrooms. This challenge was an ongoing problem throughout the mission works. Nevertheless, a special educational project, which was named "Bush school movement" was started in 1876, using the elementary textbook published in the same year (Lehtonen 2001: 17-18). The name "Bush school movement" defined the character of the schools as it took place deep in the villages where there were no proper structures. For this, the meeting places were under the trees. These schools took place during the week from Monday to Friday (Buys & Nambala 2003: 262). In order for the programme to be effective missionaries introduced a literacy programme that people had to complete.

This project was set as a condition for baptism and membership of the church. It was one of the most successful strategies used by the missionaries to convert indigenous people to Christianity. Teachers used to meet on Saturdays to prepare themselves for the lessons for the coming week (Buys & Nambala 2003: 262). They had to prepare their diaries together, because in the process they were also learning new skills. Apart from the bush schools,

missionaries at the mission stations/centres turned their houses into classrooms, especially during the rainy season (Mission committee report 1900, 19, cf. Lehtonen 2001: 17).

In order to improve both the spiritual and educational work missionaries decided in 1877 to ask FMS to make an amount of £30 available to them, but without success. The money was to be used to build one classroom at each mission station for both education and worship services. The reason given not to fund the project was the small number of learners. Further, the Society did not have enough money to fund the proposed programme. Their second application was approved. The first school building was built at Omulonga. Thereafter others schools were built at places like Omandongo and Olukonda respectively (Lehtonen 2001: 11).

In this context, the first result of education was realized when six men were baptized on 6 January 1883 at Omulonga, as was discussed in chapter 3. Before the baptism took place, they were tested to see whether they had met all the requirements of baptism which were a basic knowledge of reading, writing and singing (Peltola 2002: 90). As from then the number of baptised people increased, five people received baptism in the following year (Annual mission report 1884, 2). Three of them were women, namely Elizabeth, Emilia and Maria. According to the mission report (1884) Kambonde kaMpingana who was about to become a king of Ondonga attended the event. His presence made the baptismal event very special. This marked the break-through of the deadlock for the spread of Christian education. As mentioned earlier, during the period of the 1940s to 1950s, the bush schools increased significantly. In 1953 there were 98 of them with 4 200 pupils, while official elementary schools were 79 with 13 300 pupils (Miettinen 2005: 235).

#### **4.3.5 The first indigenous assistant teachers**

The education section of the missionary activities had grown and expanded to various parts of Ovamboland, resulting in high interest among the indigenous people. For this reason, a large work force was needed to assist the missionaries in their daily work. They therefore decided to find assistant teachers among their domestic workers.

At the time of the first baptism, the number of people in schools increased to 200, because many people had shown their willingness to attend school. People came from near and far, because baptism became the most important event in their lives. Although the number of



learners increased greatly in baptism schools, the level of education remained at the elementary stage and its target was basic Christian education (Lehtonen 2001: 14). The increase of people in schools forced missionaries to find assistant teachers. Missionaries were very careful when selecting their assistants. They always chose the best performers with better understanding of Christianity among their learners in the school to assist them. The annual mission report (1884) stated that these assistant teachers had no teaching experience. Therefore, missionaries started with in-service training to equip assistant teachers with the necessary skill. This was another method to encourage the rest to learn hard. As the name “assistants” implied, they were only helping the missionaries and did not act as independent or qualified teachers.

As reported earlier in this chapter, the first learners in the Finnish mission schools were the young people who stayed with the missionaries as their servants. These people helped the missionaries in their daily activities. For this reason, they emerged to become the first indigenous assistant teachers. According to the mission report (1882, 16), these learners were privileged to learn more than those who were just coming to school for the day. It was against this background that the first Ovambo woman, Eva Maria (Nanguroshi) who was baptized in Finland on 9 June 1876, emerged to become one of the first missionaries’ assistant teachers. Later she was elevated to a full-time teacher in the mission schools (Shejavali 1970: 38). Eva Maria arrived in Ovambo from Omaruru where she was staying with her husband. On her arrival, she was assigned to Omandongo in Ondonga area to become an alphabet teacher (Lehtonen 2001: 12). Omandongo is the place where missionaries established the first mission station and conducted the first Sunday service. The second person who started to assist missionaries was a male, Gustaa lithoko. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, he was a missionaries’ servant at Omaruru and was among the first group of people baptized on 6 December 1881 at Omaruru. Upon arriving in Ovambo, he became an assistant teacher in 1882, thereafter a teacher at Omandongo under Nehale’s Jurisdiction (mission report 1883, 19). According to Nambala (1994: 85), lithoko was originally from the Onayena-Oniihwa area. Apart from being a teacher at Omandongo, he also taught at Onamayi and Oyovu respectively. Many other indigenous assistant teachers were appointed and posted to different mission stations. As this was Christian

education, lithoko and other teachers' understanding made them become preachers as well as elders.

In the process of evangelization and education, the Finnish missionaries experienced a high demand for various needs. One of the crucial needs was that the indigenous people, especially the young people, were deeply in need of clothes. This situation touched their hearts and they felt it was necessary to find a way to help the needy community. Therefore, in 1885, they decided to start a weaving project as mentioned earlier in this section (Seppala 1978: 30). Elizabeth Litono was one of the servants who became the first assistant in this project to help other participants. Seppala (1978: 30) reported that she was later sent to Finland for training for that specific project. In order to develop this project, in 1899-1901 a Finnish missionary woman came from Finland to facilitate the weaving project among Ovambo women. This project grew and became one of the business arms of the church (ELCIN) where all the clerical clothes or vestments and normal clothes are made.

Here we can see the work of social development taking place among the people. This was indeed a great help, because it was a clear testimony of doing mission in both word and deed. Thus, as Munyika (2004: 304) put it, they addressed all human needs, as both physical and spiritual needs were considered equally important and needed attention. This was in fact a process of empowerment and community development. From then until now, the sewing industry became one of the most important industries in the north of Namibia. This industry marked the start of making clothes for the community that had a huge impact on the lives of individuals. This project took centre stage in providing not only clothes, but also in creating jobs for the local people.

Missionaries also provided vocational training for the indigenous people. Therefore, two artisans of the missionaries were responsible for building mission stations and fixing ox-wagons. They invited the indigenous people, especially men, to come and learn new skills from them, as this was also part of social development. It was a way of training them on the one hand but on the other hand, artisans were also helped. All those who responded to this invitation have learnt new ideas, which they had not known of before (Peltola 2002: 66-68).

*"Omumvo 1893 aalongwa ayehe kumwe moosikola dhetumo oya li 430. Ehokololo lyekomumvo lyetumo olya tseyitha kutya, aalongi aawambo yahamano oya li miilonga,*

*Shika osha yela kutya gumwe gwawa okwa li Kustaa lithoko*” [my translation-EN], “in 1893, the total number of students in all the mission stations was 430. According to the annual mission report (1893), missionaries appointed six Oshiwambo speaking teachers to work as full-time teachers and one of those teachers were Kustaa lithoko” (Annual mission report, 1893, see also Lehtonen 2001: 15).

The school statistics from 1903-1913 below show us how mission schools, learners and teachers increased over the period of nine years:

Year	Schools	Learners	Male teachers	Female teachers
1903	0	1 510	40	-
1906	15	1 267	26	-
1907	15	1 136	25	-
1908	23	1 548	35	-
1909	21	2 217	39	-
1910	9	1 883	46	5
1911	28	1 927	55	11
1912	39	2 228	53	8
1913	42	2 984	55	2

The information above as quoted from the statistics, clearly demonstrated that missionaries took non-formal (Christian) education in ELCIN seriously. These schools were mostly for baptism, confirmation and for basic reading and writing skills. The statistics also show not only the growth of schools and learners, but also the increased number of both male and female indigenous assistant teachers. Their contribution to this effect and the impact of this education cannot be underestimated.

Although there have been so many obstacles in the process of education, the missionaries’ activities continued to bear fruit with the help of assistant teachers. The congregational statistics of 1949 have shown a significant increase in the number of learners and church members as follows:

1. Baptism and Confirmation: 199 schools, with 7 536 learners

2. Sunday school: 268 schools and 10 980 learners
3. Youth group: 37 schools and 3 729 learners
4. Bible classes: 197 schools and 7 709 learners
5. Main stations: 12 occupied by Europeans
6. Congregations: 22 under the care of local pastors
7. The total number of membership was 57 710

(Congregational statistics 1949)

The mission report (1924) as well as the Finnish mission schools' statistics (1949) about educational works and workers reported as follows:

1. Educational works:			
a. Primary schools:	79 schools	279 indigenous teachers	11198 learners
b. Boarding schools:	9 schools	35 teachers	511 learners
2. Church workers:			
a. Europeans:	8 ordained missionaries	2 laymen	39 women of whom one was a doctor, the rest were nurses and teachers
b. Ovambo workers:	35 pastors	464 teachers, 40 evangelists,	18 nurses

At this stage, we learn from the statistics that the number of indigenous teachers, pastors and other church workers increased greatly. Missionaries started to develop the system of a second stage of formal education. At the same time, the government also started funding the mission schools as is pointed out below.

#### **4.3.6 Challenges of teachers' allowances and salaries**

This section of the study will look at the way in which missionaries handled the issue of allowances and salaries of the indigenous teachers. The assistant teachers started as volunteers helping the missionaries. Historical records do not give much information about

missionaries' salaries at this stage and gave little information of indigenous teachers' allowances and salaries. One may assume that salaries were not issued as both missionaries and their assistants worked as volunteers and not necessarily as paid workers. This does not mean that salaries were not needed; rather that they were not regarded as a provision of employment.

The financial report of 1896 indicated that just more than £3 were spent on the indigenous teachers' allowances. There is no information about how much missionaries themselves received. It is also hard to determine how much individual indigenous teachers received from that amount. This is a clear testimony to the fact that the mission activities were managed on a voluntarily basis.

The issue of allowances and salaries of indigenous assistants started to surface after 27 years of mission education effort. This concern was discussed in the meeting of the missionaries held in 1897. At the meeting, they resolved that congregations of the mission in Ovamboland should take responsibility for teachers' salaries. Congregations had to pay salaries in the form of "*Omahangu*" (millet). However, this idea was not to materialize, because most of the parishes were not in the position to pay those teachers due to financial constraints. For this reason, missionaries asked the FMS to help subsidize the teachers' salaries (Minutes of missionaries' meeting 1896, 3).

After the latter attempt failed, according to the missionaries' meeting report (1913), the matter was further discussed during the visit of the mission director, Haahti, from Finland. In their discussions, missionaries in Ovambo expressed their concerns that salary matters were slowly becoming a challenge to the missionaries' work. The report further revealed that salaries were a challenge because the indigenous teachers were not happy because their salaries were too low. They further said that the government of South Africa did not help them and mission congregations were not in a financial position to respond to their (teachers) demands effectively. The report concluded by saying that as a result some of them left teaching to go to *Uushimba*, meaning the South, to find better jobs that offered them better salaries. To address the matter, the missionaries' meeting with the mission director resolved that the parents of each learner needed to contribute generously to the salaries of teachers. The teachers' salary scale was upgraded to twenty marks per month to

complement what parent contributed. As mentioned earlier, the parents were asked to contribute *mahangu* (millet) to the teachers' salaries. In fact, the missionaries entered into a stage in which teachers needed better salaries (Lehtonen 2001: 23).

The issue of teacher's allowances and salaries continued to be a challenge to the mission work for many years until the government of South Africa got involved. According to the school committee report (1950), a new salaries agreement was signed in 1950 between the Department of Native Education and the Finnish missionaries. The new salary scale was clearly explained in the letter from the Department of Education dated 2 November 1950. It clarified the fact that the department was not paying "salaries" to the native teachers but only gave them allowances intended to supplement or subsidize the efforts of the missions. The report further said that the native teachers were not employed by the state and were therefore not entitled to salaries but allowances. In the same letter, the Director of Education asked the Finnish missionaries to give details of both native and Finnish teachers' salaries (Director of Education, 1950). The mission superintendent, Alho, responded to this by sending the required salaries' information in a letter dated 20 December 1950. The details and content of the letter about the Finnish and native teachers' salary scale was as follows:

- Finnish salaries:
  - for a married couple was £360 per year
  - for a single man was £180 per year
  - for a single woman £168 per year
- Ovambo: The native teachers employed in the boarding schools received allowances of £15 per year, in addition to what they received from the congregations.

The letter further gave details of the allowances of the local teachers in 1950:

Julius Nghaikukwetu	£15 per year
Reinhold Shituku	£8 per year
Tomas Kalumbu	£4 per year
Herman Sackeus	£3 per year
Otto Kankondi	£4 per year

(Alho 1950)

The allowances of the girls' schools teachers' (boarding schools) were between 2 and 3 pounds per year. Even though the allowances were too low, missionaries refused to recommend any increase in the allowances of the unqualified teachers. The reason was that it was felt that teachers did not need much money because they had no expenses on which to spend the money. This view affected mostly teachers who worked in the day schools of baptism and confirmation (Alho 1950).

The differences in salary scales demonstrated the situation of inequality, not only between Finnish and native teachers, but even among the Finnish teachers. The information did not reveal any complaint from Finnish single men and women about salary discrepancies. The general understanding was that salaries of single workers were smaller than that of the married workers. It was regarded as an internationally accepted norm and they understood it as being normal; despite the fact that these teachers were doing the same job as those married colleagues and had the same qualifications. The big problem was with the native salary scale, especially the gap between the two groups as indicated earlier. The second problem was the unpaid increase of their salaries that the missionaries refused to pay.

This matter caused tension and uneasiness between the Finnish missionaries and native teachers. The tension forced native teachers to arrange a secret meeting, which took place on 6 May 1953, to discuss further the matter of wages paid to native teachers in Ovamboland (Ngulifa declaration 1953). This meeting was meant for all native teachers in all mission schools in Ovamboland in the absence of missionaries. Therefore, invitations were extended to the Roman Catholic Mission Schools as well as Anglican Mission Stations asking all the teachers to attend the meeting. Teachers felt that missionaries refused to pay their increases that the government granted them. This meeting caused serious tension between teachers and missionaries. Native teachers lost confidence in the Finnish teachers because of their dishonesty with them in the matter. This resulted in disciplinary action against the native teachers. This study discovered five declarations of oath by the native teachers, which was conducted by the Commissioner of Oaths in 1953. Here follows part of one of the declarations:

"I am employed as a teacher by the Finnish Mission Society in Ovamboland and am stationed at Oshigambo in the Ondonga area. I am one of the people that arranged a meeting of teachers of

all Mission Societies in Ovamboland at Endola on 6 May 1953. To notify native teachers of our intention of holding a meeting, we sent out invitation letters.”

These letters did not reflect the names or addresses of the writers. The reason for this was that they did not want the Mission Societies in Ovamboland to get to know about their intention of holding the meeting. These letters were handed to private messengers who had instructions to hand the letters personally to the addressees. Their reasons for holding the meeting were as follows:

- To discuss the matter of an increase of payment or salaries
- To form a closer alliance of native teachers of the different Mission Societies in Ovamboland
- To get to know one another better for social reasons and in connection with matters concerning methods of teaching, etcetera.

(Declaration, Ngulifa 1953, National Archives, NAO, Box 66)

This part of the document revealed that not only indigenous teachers of the Finnish mission schools were unhappy with the issue of unpaid salaries. Teachers from other mission societies such as Catholic and Anglican were also affected. At that time, Ovamboland was divided into three zones<sup>6</sup> by the government of South Africa. It meant all three Mission Societies (Finnish; Anglican and Catholic) had their mission schools operating in the north. In June 1953, the Director of Education arranged the meeting with the native education. The meeting aimed to discuss and resolve the issue of allowances and remuneration of the native teachers employed in all the mission schools in Ovamboland (Chief Native Commissioner 1953).

This was done because FMS was mainly responsible for funding all the Finnish mission activities in the whole of Ovamboland. This included paying the salaries of both missionaries and indigenous teachers although the government through the Department of Education subsidized the mission’s formal education. This financial support continued until the time

---

<sup>6</sup> In 1924, Ovamboland was divided into three zones - among the Finnish Missionary Society, Anglican Mission and Catholic Mission. They were given conditional permission by the SWA administration that they confine themselves to the area allocated to them, that they have their own agreement with the local headman, promised in writing to support and promote government policy, and encourage the Ovambo people to go to work in the south as migrant labourers (Nambala 1994: 100-101).



when the agreement was reached between government and ELOC to take full responsibility for education (in 1970). At this stage, before the It was indeed like a “long walk to freedom” to come to that agreement.

#### **4.4 The role of ELCIN in Christian education**

After independence from the missionaries’ leadership and until today, ELCIN continued with this responsibility of Christian education. Even though ELCIN is no longer fully partaking in national or formal education, it has a great role to play in the life of its people through Christian education. The Constitution of ELCIN clearly mandated it to evangelize and teach the Word of God through Christian education. Article 10 of the church regulations gives guidelines for the baptismal classes. The person concerned has to attend baptism classes, learn basic Christian principles, basics of reading and must show a willingness to surrender to the Lord (Constitution 2001: 39).

Similarly, the Constitution regulated the confirmation process. Constitutionally, all church members of ELCIN, according to Article 16 of regulations have to go through confirmation (ibid 2001: 42). The Constitution further stipulated requirements of admission for young people between 15-18 years. The duration of classes is set to be not less than 60 days.

The procedure and the syllabus of confirmation as per the Constitution are as follow:

- Basic reading skills in case the person cannot read
- Understanding the church confession of faith
- Historical background of the history of the church of Christ
- Understanding of Lutheran teaching and Lutheranism including the history of ELCIN, catechism, and Christian doctrine
- Constitution and regulation, and structure and leadership of ELCIN

(Constitution 2001: 42)

All this shows that ELCIN took education as one of her top priorities in her ministry. Looking at the requirements of baptism and confirmation, the objectives are the same. For the ELCIN to continue playing significant role in terms of moral value and social wellbeing of the people, needs to intensify her Christian education. ELCIN established an office called “Christian education office”. The aim of this office is to oversee and promote Christian

education, theological education and all training of the church workers such as Sunday school and confirmation teachers, and all the leaders of different departments in ELCIN. The Engela Parish Institute (1952) and Paulinum Theological Seminary (1963) were established for this specific purpose of training (Shejavali 1970: 174; see also Buys and Nambala 2003: 222). More details about these institutions will be provided in the following chapter.

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

It took the Finnish missionaries thirteen years before they could convert anybody in the Ovambo area to Christianity. The first baptismal event in 1883 was not only a great achievement, but also an enormous motivation to carry on with their work of teaching and preaching. This chapter has illustrated the humble and simple beginnings of the Finnish missionary work on education. At the beginning of this chapter, it was mentioned that through this informal education, missionaries engaged in social development by educating people and making information available to help them to understand modernity. This was a long process, which needed patience and determination of the missionaries because of the strange environment, lack of education materials as well as poor communication in terms of the language materials.

The important thing is that they tried with the very little knowledge of language they had to translate the education material from a foreign language into Oshiwambo. Further, they managed to develop the local spoken language into a written form. This process not only made their work much easier, but also helped the indigenous people to have material in their own language. In addition, they made every possible effort to learn and master the local languages. This helped not only to develop the language, but also led to the fact that many books were written in Oshiwambo. The Finns wrote most of the books in Oshiwambo about the Ovambo people. In the process, the missionaries encountered many challenges of various forms. Some of those mentioned in this chapter are communication, education facilities, assistant teachers' allowances and the teaching environment.

The establishment of the printing press was one of the great achievements and developments as well, which advanced the mission activities in terms of education material. This printing press is still one of the business arms of ELCIN. In this regard, the missionaries laid a strong foundation for Christianity, education and language development. Therefore,

one can say that the missionaries were the pioneers of almost every form of modern development in Ovamboland. The chapter further gave the statistical proof of the schools missionaries established from 1870 until in the 1960s. These developments were viewed as moves in the right direction that laid the foundation for future education. In terms of Christian education, ELCIN took a firm stand to teach her members. The importance of Christian education in ELCIN is explained in the last point of this chapter. In order to take the education further, ELCIN have an education and training office to deal with the issues related to education. The growing and advancement of both theological and formal educational works will be discussed further in the next chapter.

## **Chapter 5: Social Development and Education: Formal Finnish Mission Education**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter is a continuation of discussions of chapter 4, which talked about informal education. The introduction of chapter 4 stated the reasons why education is the tool for development. In this chapter, the discussion will be more on formal education as a vehicle for further social development by way of education as is the case in chapter 4. Albeit, these two forms of education are different in the sense that one is for Christian education with the aim for Christianization and the formal education focused more on general education. Each form of education has its unique role to play in social transformation. They cannot, however, be separated; one cannot mention the one without referring to the other in respect to social change.

The idea is thus to discover how the missionaries themselves separated formal education from informal Christian education and how they implemented it. In addition, it will bring forward some issues that affected the missionaries' programme of education in relation to government. As we have observed throughout, from the beginning of mission activities the primary goal of the missionaries was to prepare indigenous people to embrace Christianity. This purpose continued to be the primary motivation also at the time when mission schools started to produce indigenous teachers as well as to introduce qualified teachers from Finland in 1911. The arrival of qualified teachers from Finland marked the beginning of separating Christian education (to learn the most important religious truths) for the purpose of Christianization (informal education) from general education (formal). This trend according to the letter from mission director, Paunu, of the Finnish Missionary Society dated 14<sup>th</sup> April (1936), intended to give the elements of general civilization matters to the children of the Christians as well as to other children of the native people. The chapter will further show how Missionaries developed two parallel programmes for informal Christian and national or inclusive education.

Education is power. Therefore, missionaries prioritized education to bring about social change and community development through training teachers. One of the aims of this chapter is thus to reflect in more detail on training for and the development of the education system. This includes, besides the training of teachers, the establishment of schools, curriculum development, and the issue of the clarification of the relation between church and state as it pertains to the education sector. All this would help in understanding the socio-developmental role of ELCIN and its predecessors in Ovamboland. A final element of this chapter is also to reflect, within the broad ambit of formal education, on the training of pastors and the establishment of theological seminaries, which happened simultaneously with the transition of leadership from the missionaries to indigenous pastors, as described in chapter 3.

## **5.2 Teachers' training**

The earliest training of teachers in Ovamboland was aimed at preparing indigenous people to be instructors in Christian teaching. Chapter 4 (cf. 4.3.5) described the status of those teachers and the way they have emerged to be assistant teachers to the missionaries. This trend was gradually developed to become the system of training of teachers for formal education in the mission schools. One cannot speak of education without educators. Therefore, in this section, the discussion will focus on the training of teachers, the establishment of teachers' seminaries as well as national schools. Training of teachers was a beginning of the new stage to take social development further by improving the education system in Ovamboland.

It was a historic moment when the first group of female missionaries, all qualified Finnish teachers, arrived in Ovamboland. They (Finnish) were: Maija Lansio (1908), Suoma Terho (1909), Hima Kupila, Suoma Hirvonen (1911), and Maija Lehtonen (1911) (Lehtonen 2001: 20-21). Their responsibility was to work as missionary teachers. In order for them to fulfil their dream and to start with a proper teachers' training institution, they first needed to have a proper place to do so.

Therefore, the Finnish teachers who had just arrived made all the necessary preliminary arrangements needed before the opening of the seminary. After all arrangements were made, the first teachers' training seminary of its kind was opened at Oniipa on 18 June

1913. The principal of the seminary was a Finnish missionary named Lilyeblad (Peltola 2002: 195). Since then, Oniipa has been an important place in the history of ELCIN, because it is a place where the first teachers' training seminaries as well as the theological institute were established. The latter will be discussed in detail later in this chapter. At the time it was also where the offices of the FMS in Ovamboland were located and currently also where the headquarters of ELCIN are located.

The seminary started with four indigenous male students who completed their three years' training and graduated on 12 August 1916. They were Natanael Amukugo, Sakeus liuhwa, Gideon litula and Pillipus Uusiku and were deployed as teachers at different mission schools (Annual school report 1916, 9/16; cf. Shejvali 1970: 174). In 1919 a group of nine students completed their teachers' training, while 20 teachers graduated in 1920. At the end of 1924, 34 teachers completed their training (School statistics, 1924). All this has demonstrated the commitment of the Finnish missionaries to education. This further illustrated the willingness and readiness of the indigenous people to participate in education. Through this process of empowerment, (because education created the hope for self-reliance), both the missionaries' and local people's confidence grew regarding the possibility of an independent church in Ovamboland.

The initiative of the founding of this training institution brought some improvement to the education programme of the church that included other subjects apart from purely Christian ones. The process was not easy but the need was there to have a separate and inclusive education (Lehtonen 2001: 37). Therefore, the Finnish missionaries prepared a school syllabus that included Bible studies, history of the church, environment study, natural science, mathematics, reading, writing, piano and sports (Syllabus, 1914). This new syllabus was a significant step ahead in addressing the needs of the community so that they could learn what is helpful. In addition, it helped to speed up the process of inclusive education in which all children would attend the school. It is unlike Christian education, which was meant especially for Christianization.

Eight years later the same education curriculum was reviewed in 1922 and implemented in 1923 to address the education needs. Two Finnish missionary teachers, Maija Lansio and Nestori Waananen, were entrusted with the responsibility of drafting the programme called

*“Efaneko lyelongo moosikola dhopetameko nshowo aalongwapangi”* (“Proposal of Education Curriculum for Elementary Schools and Nurses’ Training.”) The content of the curriculum was as follows: Bible study as a compulsory subject, reading, writing, environment study, singing, needlework, and mathematics (School committee proposal 1922; 22/2). In comparison, it is obvious that the review was not that fundamental because most of the subjects in the first syllabus still appeared therein. However, they added only one new item, namely needlework and removed some subjects like piano, sport, history of the church and natural science as mentioned above.

Missionaries were not only training men. Consideration was given to women as well. The school for women started ten years later. This first school of its nature was established at Onandjokwe in 1921. The principal of that school was a Finnish missionary, Rautaheimo. The main aim for that school was to teach the fiancées of the boys who were in the teachers’ training school at Oniipa. Additionally, to give them some basic skills for domestic and family care. This school attracted the attention of other young girls (Shejavali 1970: 171).

Consequently, apart from teachers’ training schools and seminaries, leaders of education realized the need for boys’ and girls’ schools. The idea of teaching the fiancées only was expanded to have more schools to include and cater for other girls and boys who wanted education. These schools were regarded as “boarding schools” where learners learned basic reading, writing and arithmetic progression. The admission requirement for entry of girls’ and boys’ school was 15 years of age. The initial idea was to call those schools *“Oosikola dhopokati”* (“junior schools”), but this name was never used. They adopted another name, namely “boys’ and girls’ schools” because missionaries wanted to have girls and boys in separate schools (Lehtonen 2001: 39). In light of this idea, girls’ schools were opened in 1924 at Oshigambo and Engela respectively. The founders of those schools were Anna Rautaheim (Oshigambo) and Suoma Hirvonen (Engela) (Seppala 1978: 31). For the same reason, the first boys’ school was opened at Engela in 1926, under the leadership of Kurvinen (Shejavali 1970: 172).

From then on, many schools for boys and girls were established elsewhere, like Tsandi, Elim, Oniimwandi, Okalongo, Ondobe, Omundaungilo and Kavango. These schools and many others were the schools for beginners and one can compare them to contemporary primary

schools. Over time, these schools were developed to the level where the government approved them in 1960 (Lehtonen 2001:107). This move can be seen as a process of transformation of society through education and of taking education to the people.

The challenge during this process was the lack of funds to build the much-needed classrooms of the boys' and girls' schools in different places. For that reason, learners were asked to work as volunteers in the building of the classrooms. Some congregations like Elim, Nakayale, Etilyasa and Engela volunteered to buy building materials for the schools. According to the mission report (1955), the congregations donated towards the schools project the total amount of R 53.00. As mentioned earlier, the admission requirement was 15 years, thus those schools were not for small children, but young people. At this stage, there was no (what we now call) primary education for small children. Therefore, the boys' and girls' schools were the kind of primary education of the mission education. The ELCIN newsletter "*Omukwetu*" confirms this when reporting about the requirement age of admission in different schools as follows:

- Girls' and boys' schools, age 15 years
- Teachers' training education, age 18 years
- Nurses' training, age 20 years

(*Omukwetu*, 1955: 11)

The emphasis of Finnish mission education at that stage was still more of a religious nature. Whoever graduated from these schools had to become a church worker in one way or another in the church programme, as there was no other alternative of finding jobs elsewhere.

According to Nambala (1994: 85), the first ever Ovambo woman who was trained as a teacher in that seminary was Johanna Kristof who graduated in 1928 at Oniipa. This served as motivation for other women to get an education in order to become teachers as well. Moreover, as from then, many young women came forth to study to become teachers.

The second teacher's training seminary that was meant specifically for women was opened in 1947 at Okahao (Shejavali 1970: 176). The aim of this training centre was firstly to provide training for young women, secondly to shorten the long distance to and from schools for teacher trainees. The first intake of learners at the new seminary totalled 25 girls (Mpanda 1996: 21).



However, there were also differences of opinion among missionaries regarding especially the church's involvement and promoting of civil (i.e. non-religious) education. There were those who felt it was not necessary to engage the community in civil education; the mission director, Rautanen (Nakambale) especially had a different view. He felt the most important thing was to preach the Word of Salvation. To him a seminary was too costly and there was not enough money to support it.

A mission director, Tarkkanen, visited Ovamboland in 1924 to familiarize himself with the situation and the progress made by the mission workers. He commended the missionaries on their great efforts invested in education. He strongly emphasized that education is the key to development. He further said school programmes were the only way to help the church to develop (Lehtonen 2001: 38).

The relationship between education and development was founded especially on the realization of the Finnish missionaries of the need for vocational schools. On 23 September 1925, missionaries held a meeting to discuss this issue. During that meeting, they discussed the economic development, or lack thereof, in the region (Lehtonen 2001: 45). On this point, they identified the need to train indigenous people to use new agricultural equipment and processes to increase their harvests (School Committee Report 1925). A year later, the annual mission report (1925 & 1926) referred to the opening of vocational schools at Ongwediva and Engela in 1926. As mentioned above, the aim of these schools was to help people by training them to use modern tools and new technology in growing crops.

Finnish missionaries constantly tried to work in accordance with the state policy of the native administration. Therefore, the agreement between the Finnish missionaries and the Commissioner of the Ovambo administration to establish these vocational schools was signed (School committee report, 1925). With the increase in mission schools in Ovamboland, more supervisors were also needed. In 1952, four teachers were given special training courses to oversee education programmes. Paulus Nakale-Uukwanyama, Josef Shivute-Uukwambi, Otto Kankondi-Uuninginino and Tomas Kalumbu-Ondonga were assigned as school inspectors to different circuits (Shejvali 1970: 180).

Since the middle of the 20th century, ELOC, through financial assistance from the Finnish mother church and FELM also began sending young people away for further studies at

universities abroad. Hans D. Namuhuja and Ambrosius Amutenya were the first indigenous students to graduate with a BA in Education (Shejavali 1970: 180).

### **5.3 Theological seminaries and the further training of pastors**

#### **5.3.1 Theological seminaries**

##### ***5.3.1.1 Introduction***

The establishment of theological seminaries in ELCIN started almost 50 years ago. Three institutions established and that are under discussion in this section are Oniipa, Elim and Engela. This section will look at the aims, significance and the role of these institutes. This will help in understanding the process of empowerment, indigenization, leadership development, as well as the social development of ELCIN. This section will look at the aims, significance and the role of these institutes. These theological institutions and teachers' training seminaries, as discussed earlier in this chapter (cf. 5.2), all represent important milestones in the history of ELCIN. At the same time, they enhanced the role of ELCIN in the transformation agenda of society in terms of education.

##### ***5.3.1.2 Oniipa Theological Seminary***

The increase of baptized members and establishment of congregations as well as mission stations raised the need for more pastors and evangelists in ELCIN. Hence, missionaries had to find a way to address the situation. Therefore, a theological seminary was introduced in 1922 at Oniipa for the first time in Ovamboland. This seminary was aimed at training of pastors and evangelists (Niinkoti 1978: 39). Earlier in this chapter, it was mentioned that the first teachers' training seminary was started at Oniipa in 1913. This was the first theological seminary, but it was the second seminary established by missionaries in Ovamboland. The first principal of the Oniipa Seminary was a missionary, Vaananen. This was the same seminary where teachers had been going for training – in other words, it was first an education institute and only later accommodated theological education. It means that there were two different programmes of training taking place in that particular seminary (Shejavali 1970: 97-98).

The curriculum of the study was as follows: biblical theology, dogmatics, ethics, church history and practical theology. This curriculum was formed in line with other theological education, as it was known in Finland (Niinkoti 1978: 39).

The seminary started with 17 male student pastors who registered for four-year theological training. At the end of the training, only seven of them qualified for ordination and were ordained in 1925, while the remaining ten became evangelists (Nambala 1994: 86). After ordination, they were deployed to serve in the different congregations of the mission church. Two of the ordained pastors, namely Simson Shituwa and Paulus Hamutenya, were already lay preachers under the Rhenish Mission at Omafo between 1916 and 1920 (Buys & Nambala 2003: 198).

According to Buys and Nambala (2003: 169) a total of groups of eight pastors were theologically trained at Oniipa. Their ordinations took place in the following years: 1925, 1929, 1937, 1942 and 1949. These pastors became the pioneers and leaders of most of the congregations that later formed the mission church. This practice influenced the establishment of the Mission Church that later led toward the self-governance of ELCIN. The Oniipa Seminary continued training until 1948 when it was moved to Elim.

### ***5.3.1.3 Elim Theological Seminary***

The inconvenience of having two different programmes in one seminary compelled missionaries to separate the two seminaries. For this reason, the theological seminary was moved from Oniipa to Elim in 1950. The teachers' seminary remained at Oniipa (Shejavali 1970: 100). The training of pastors continued at Elim for 13 years. During that period, according to Buys and Nambala (2003: 169), four groups of pastoral students were trained. Their ordination took place in the following years: 1949, 1954, 1959, and 1962.

At Elim, the criteria for admission as a student were changed. The first criterion was a teaching qualification for the purpose of improving the quality of education as well as the learning experience. The decision was made that all the students who were admitted to Elim had to attend a language course at Oshigambo High School. The language course covered English, Afrikaans, Greek and Dutch. This trend aimed at giving students a basic knowledge of these languages (Shejavali 1970: 100).

In 1963, ELCIN's Elim Theological Seminary formed a partnership with the "Rhenish Institute" of the sister Lutheran church (ELCRN). This resulted in the establishment of the united seminary located at Otjimbingwe called The United Lutheran Theological Seminary - Paulinum (ULTS) (Buys & Nambala 2003: 169). The ULTS-Paulinum was made possible by the financial support from the Theological Education Fund (TEF) of the World Council of Churches (WCC).

In 1960, the director of TEF visited the two Lutheran churches in Namibia. During the visit, the issue of the unity of the two Lutheran seminaries was discussed. The TEF director promised more additional financial assistance if the two Lutheran institutes were to unite (Buys & Nambala 2003: 222). This would make it easier for WCC to avail money for one united seminary instead of supporting them separately. This unification demonstrated the long-standing relationship between the two Lutheran churches.

The ULTS was relocated to Windhoek from Otjimbingwe in 1997. The reasons for this move included the argument that Otjimbingwe is too remote for study, communication and cooperation with other institutions like UNAM. It is still co-owned by the two Lutheran churches, namely ELCIN and ELCRN. All the pastors of the two Lutheran churches received their theological training in the ULTS before any further studies. This seminary has continuously strengthened not only a firm relationship of the two churches at leadership level, but also good relationships at the parishes' level.

The mission church was growing very fast, and the need for training church members for church activities has been a concern among the leadership of the church. Consequently, they decided to establish the Engela Parish Institute.

#### ***5.3.1.4 The Engela Parish Institute***

The new form of institution called "Engela Parish Institute" was started at Engela in 1952. The church council meeting held at Onandjokwe on 21 February 1950, resolved that a parish institute be opened at Engela, where parish workers would be trained (Church Council 1950, 7, cf. Church Council 1952). This was not a pure theological seminary, but more a multi-purpose centre. As mentioned earlier, the aim of this institute was for the training of church workers like evangelists, deacons, youth, men and women leaders (Buys & Nambala 2003:

169). The Engela Parish Institute became one of the most important centres for training in ELCIN.

High demand for community enhancement pressed the institution to upgrade its programmes on education and training. This was done to incorporate other programmes for community development. The following subjects were offered as part of the institution's programme: cooking, sewing, typing, domestic science, parish secretariat, Sunday-school teaching, leading Bible studies and Bible correspondence courses (Shejavali 1970: 194-189). The Engela Parish Institute was further developed to include a school for the blind. According to Buys and Nambala (2003: 223), the first group of 17 blind people was training at Engela. Thereafter, the rehabilitation programmes were moved to Oniipa rehabilitation centre, where all the related programmes had been taking place until the present. This was one of the milestone achievements in the history of the church to have such institutions as facilities of the church.

This means that the church was committed to doing community development, as it was the first school of that kind in the area. This initiative brought about significant social change in the lives of the people, including people living with disability. It further demonstrated the positive holistic approach of the church to the issues that affected the community. Some of these programmes like sewing, computer courses and secretarial courses as well as those related to the church service like preaching, Sunday school teaching and training for elders, to mention but a few, are still offered at the running Institute.

As was often the case with matters pertaining to education, the important consideration in this process was finance. FELM supported not only training for pastors, but also all the programmes and training of church workers. In addition, since ELCIN became a member of ecumenical bodies like Lutheran World Federation (LWF), World Council of Churches (WCC), Council of Churches in Namibia (CCN) and Lutheran Communion in Southern Africa (LUCSA), these ecumenical bodies have supported ELCIN financially through scholarships, and other forms of assistance, such as development programmes and later HIV/AIDS programmes (Shejavali 1970: 162).

### **5.3.2 Further training of pastors**

In order for the church to perform its work fully in line with the indigenization process, pastors and church workers needed good training and skills development to do specific work. The focus of this section is about the further training of pastors and theologians. As mentioned earlier ELCIN has its own theological institutions for training its pastors. It was also necessary for the church to have a programme of sending indigenous pastors abroad for special training. It was important because the church needs well-trained and equipped pastors. The aim is to prepare them to lead ELCIN as an independent church. Therefore, education and training remained the main concern of the missionaries to train future leaders of the church (Auala 2009: 67). The process of sending pastors for further studies started mostly in 1950.

The first two pastors sent to South Africa for one year of training were Auala and Amakutuwa. They were supposed to go to Finland for studies. This did not happen because the government of South Africa applied strict measures against the upliftment of black people. Therefore, they refused them permission to go. Instead, the government allowed them to study in South Africa for one year (Niinkoti 1978: 44).

In 1962, the church's programme continued, when two ELOC pastors Josia Mufeti and Absai Shejavali became the first pastors to study in Finland in the University of Helsinki. In 1965 Appollos Kaulinge was the first ELOC pastor to graduate from Mapumulo South Africa, followed by Kristof Shuuya, Tomas Shivute and Elia Niinkoti (Niinkoti 1978: 44).

For the church to have well trained pastors in special fields for specific responsibilities, some pastors were sent for further study abroad (Niinkoti 1978: 43). Thus, the table below indicates the names of pastors, year and course of study:

Name of pastor	Year	Content of study	Country
K. Dumeni	1962	Youth ministry	USA
K. Shuuya	1964	Diaconia	Finland
F. Ashipala	1965	Healing and counselling	Finland
S. Ekandjo	1967	Christian publication	Zambia
M. Nghipandulwa	1967	Stewardship and finance	USA
A. Lihongo	1967	Bible translation	England
E. Amaambo	1970	Bible translation	England
P. Shipena	1975	Administration and secretariat	England
R. Muremi	1975	Christian education	England
M. Amadhila	1975	Theology and law of the church	USA
H. Hausiku	1976	Church leadership	USA
E. Angula	1970	Bible study	England

**Table 3: Names of pastors, year and course of studies**

(Information from Niinkoti 1978: 43-46)

Through these training programmes, missionaries were strengthening the process of indigenization, social change and empowering its indigenous leadership. It was not possible to think of self-governance without people with proper training. Therefore, this programme was actually intended to fill the gap of leadership in the church. Further, it helped the church to have the right people in the right positions.

The training of female theologians started in 1968. The first two females, Hilma Tshilongo and Wilhelmina Amweelo, were admitted at Paulinum for theological training from 1968 to 1971. Thereafter, another two women, Aune Shilongo and Aino Max, followed to receive the same four years of theological training (Niinkoti 1978: 46). Even if the issue of ordination of women took a centre stage in terms of discussions at that time, ELCIN was not ready to ordain women. This was because of different opinions and views on this. However, this did not stop the process of training them as theologians. They were also entrusted with different responsibilities to perform in the church (Niinkoti 1978: 46). The debate about women's ordination started again without success during the synod that took place on 8 July 1977 at Engela (Synod 1977, 16). The ordination of women did not take place until 1991

after the synod held in Ongwediva on 1-5 October 1991 decided in favour of the ordination of women. The first ordination of women took place in 1992 at Oniipa (Synod 1991).

Further training, especially of pastors and other church workers, has up to the present remained one of the priorities of ELCIN. In this regard, ELCIN opened the office for education and training to deal with matters related to education and training. The office is responsible for handling students' applications and soliciting funds for education programmes. This always happens with international ecumenical bodies of which ELCIN is a member like FELM, LWF, WCC, CCN and LUCSA (cf. 5.3.1.4). These organizations supported, and continue to support, ELCIN programmes concerning education and social development.

## **5.4 Church and state relations regarding education**

### **5.4.1 Church and education under the South Africa Mandatory**

The focus under discussion in this section is on the relationship between ELCIN and the South African mandate regarding education. This will help to understand not only the relationship, but also cast light on the progress and achievement in terms of education as a result of this relationship. This relationship started after the Peace Treaty of Versailles on 28 June 1919 as described in chapter 2. The mandate system laid down in Article 22 of the League of Nations specified that the Mandatory shall have full power of administration and legislation over the territory subject to the present mandate as an integral part of the Union of South Africa as Class C mandate. The Mandatory should promote to the utmost the material as well as moral well-being and the social progress of the inhabitants (Harlech-Jones 1997: 11).

The section will look at some historical facts that affected the mission schools on education in relation to government. These facts were related to the education system and policies, regulations, curriculums and qualifications. It is important to note that the Finnish missionaries were very careful not to intervene in any political activities, as they did not want a dispute with the rulers. At the same time, they tried hard to communicate well with the state although it was not possible at all times. This was described in the letter addressed to the Native Commissioner dated 5 May 1948. In that letter the Finnish Mission in



Ovamboland assured him of its loyalty and willingness to collaborate with the government especially in the educational field (Vapaavouri 1948).

After the South African government was introduced in Namibia as new colonial ruler in 1919, a new Proclamation No. 55 of 1921 was introduced. The administration of the South West Africa was then mandated with the control of education for all Namibians (Forson 1993: 42). This was the beginning of the process of state control of education in Namibia. In fact, this resulted in education becoming compulsory among the white communities but not in black communities (Buys & Nambala 2003: 265). Even though the decision was made to place all the mission schools under state control, this decision was not fully implemented until 1963 when the “Bantu Education” was fully introduced (Amukugo 1993: 60).

In October 1923, a conference was held in Windhoek on education. It was an interdenominational missionary education conference chaired by H.H.G. Kreft in his capacity as Director of Education in South West Africa. Government officials and missionaries from Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican, and Methodist churches attended the conference (Forson 1993: 43). The aim was to make sure that the Proclamation Act no. 55 of 1921 was properly implemented. According to Forson (1993: 44), the conference discussed the following matters:

- Native education was meant only to cover four years as from sub A to standard 2; in other words the first four years of primary schooling;
- The courses of education, the structure, content and the medium of instruction of the non-white education;
- The content of syllabus included religious instruction, reading and writing, speaking either Afrikaans or English, woodwork, metalwork, gardening, building, needlework, basket making and homework for girls.

According to Amukugo (1993: 47), the missionaries were sceptical about the syllabus. However, missionaries agreed on the issue of the medium of instruction being English. They refused to take Afrikaans because of the lack of Afrikaans reading material. Instead, they opted for English because to them English was a universal language, thus it would be helpful in the future.

The outcome of the conference clearly shows that the missionaries were not prepared to support the Bantu education system. Some reasons might be that they did not have enough teachers to implement the government programme of education. On the other hand, the government's expectations regarding the education programme and the missionaries' abilities were complex. The level of understanding of the Ovambo people was low compared to what the government wanted to implement, but missionaries knew the Ovambo people better than anyone else (School Committee Report, 1930). Amukugo stated that the other fact might be that there were no funds available to subsidize the programme. This means the government was not prepared to fund the programme at that time (1993: 47-53).

The syllabus was not implemented until 1952 when the government enforced a common syllabus in all mission schools (School committee report, 1930, cf. Amukugo 1993: 47-53). During that period until 1962 education reform programmes of the government were intended to bring missionary education curricula in line with the colonial policy to create a cheap labour pool for settlers and colonialists (Winterfeldt, Fox & Mufune 2002: 239).

The significant increase of activities and lack of funds forced the missionaries to plead with the government for financial support. In 1924, the decision was taken by the Finnish missionaries to apply for financial assistance from the government of South West Africa (Lehtonen 2001: 49). According to the letter dated 5 October 1925, a mission director forwarded the school statistics to the Department of Education as proof of their activities. The letter indicated that the number of schools at the time was 129 with 9 European teachers as well as 231 indigenous teachers (letter 1925). For this reason, in 1926 the inspector of education came to Ovamboland from Windhoek. The aim was to assess the mission schools in the region (Lehtonen 2001: 49).

The mission education system was not in line with the government requirements, because the mission schools were more catechism classes than public schools (Buys & Nambala 2003: 32). The inspector of education advised the Finnish Missionaries to make some improvements in the education syllabus. For that reason, the government refused to approve their application for funds (Lehtonen 2001: 49). Consequently, that decision forced the missionaries to start reorganizing the school system to meet the government requirements. Therefore, on 16 January 1929 the mission board in Finland approved the

revised education programme of the mission schools in Ovambo. This programme was applied in all mission schools in Ovamboland. Due to this improvement, the state started to subsidize and support them financially (School board report, 1929). This development was short-lived after the coming to power of the National Party in South Africa.

However, the point of concern was that the mission education system in Ovamboland was not yet integrated with the national education system of the government. Further, it was still basically Christian education; the state did not regard it as a proper education system (Native Commissioner, 1935). Another challenge occurred in 1935, when the South African government introduced a new law of education and mission sites (information about sites will come later in this section). The aim of the law was to control the establishment of mission schools in the area. Before the new law, missionaries were free to set up a school wherever necessary. This law brought that practice to an end. There was no choice for the missionaries because the conditions and regulations the government enacted were compulsory. The law further guided missionaries how to build schools (using bricks). They further gave strict regulations regarding the distance of ten kilometres from one school to the other (Lehtonen 2001: 65).

In June 1936 a director of education visited mission schools in the north. He was not satisfied with the level of education as well as the nature of the classrooms. Because of that visit, the government decided to close some “bush schools” (Lehtonen 2001: 65). The state ordered the closure of 85 schools, mostly with under-qualified teachers and only 59 schools were permitted to operate. Similarly, the preaching places under lay preachers were also ordered to close (Nambala 1994: 87). This was a challenge to the missionary work because there was not enough money to build schools. A letter from the Native Affairs Department dated 30 December 1937 opposed the untrained native evangelists’ involvement in conducting services. The state felt that they were capable of coming into conflict with the headmen and the lack of experience may show lack of discretion. The government directive on education was that native teachers had to work under the direct supervision of the European missionaries until such persons acquired enough experience and a proper educational qualification (Administrator of Education, 1937). It was really a disturbing situation. However, in fact, it was a process from the state’s side to bring the mission education system in line with the government’s intention. This plan was for distinguishing

formal (national) education from (informal) Christian education. In this case, indigenous and missionaries had to choose between being a teacher or a pastor. This brought to an end the system of being a pastor as well as teacher at the same time.

Nambala notes in this regard that all the teachers had to have a teachers' diploma qualification and Afrikaans had to be compulsory in all mission schools as part of government requirement. This situation resulted in many children being affected because of the new regulation. Consequently, the government informed missionaries to stop using people who never had a formal education as teachers or preachers. The government prohibited even baptism and confirmation classes from taking place in cases where there were no buildings or ordained pastors (1994: 86).

However, according to the Commissioner's report of 1939, Finnish missionaries expressed their concerns and felt that the Administration worked against the mission work by placing many obstacles in its way. The report showed how missionaries challenged the government's order by saying mission work in other territories, especially in the Union of South Africa, received more freedom. They singled out the Dutch Reformed Church, which allowed its native evangelists to preach the Gospel freely, and the Union government did not require them to be ordained for that work, the report concluded.

The other issue was the "control sites proclamation" of Act 31 of 1932 as amended in 1936. The proclamation said that missionaries had to apply for the site whenever they wanted to set up either the schools or churches. The reason was that preachers always came into conflict with the traditional authority. Part of the letter addressed to the Finnish mission superintendent on 6 May 1940 under the title the "application for mission sites" read as follows:

I have the honour to inform you that the Chief Native Commissioner, Windhoek, has ruled that "application for mission sites" by your church must in the first place be submitted to the "Native Office" which will thereafter consult Native chiefs and headmen or council of headmen in regard to the site concerned. The procedure in the past has been to the effect that missionaries have to approach Native chiefs and headmen direct to acquire the land. This has now been altered (Native Commissioner, 1940).

In one positive development, the Administration of education in Namibia offered to assist the Finnish mission schools in Ovamboland with material means. They introduced what was called the “reading sheets” (it is a reading exercise based on sketches or pictures) similar to those used in the schools for Herero and Nama pupils in South West Africa. The aim was to supplement and improve the alphabetic materials in the mission schools (Native Commissioner, 1945). Finnish missionaries were happy with the new plan of the Administration for betterment of the mission schools in Ovamboland. The letter dated 14 May 1945 expressed the same sentiment. They (missionaries) through the same letter agreed to co-operate with the Administration in making the plan work. Further, they pledged to try to compile the reading sheets in two vernacular languages, namely Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama as per the request of the Department of Education (Alho 1945).

It was obvious that the government was not happy with the system of the Finnish mission schools. Nambala urges that these regulations were in fact an attempt of the government to impair and prevent the Finnish missionaries from improving black education (Nambala 1994: 86). Thus, the intention of the state was to introduce the Bantu education system that was part of apartheid. In the letters from Roorman, a Native Commissioner, dated 3 November 1947 as well as 26 February 1948 respectively, explained the government’s plan in relation to mission schools in Ovamboland particular. The aim of the state was to take control of all mission activities in general and of education in particular, in order to implement its policy (Roorman 1948).

However, this action did not go unchallenged. The General Secretary of FMS wrote a letter dated 5 May 1948 to the Native Commissioner and part of the letter read as follows:

It seems, however, that there are some points in the present practice, which need to be more clearly defined and eventually revised for the good and collaboration. The line between the educational field and missionary work proper should be more distinctly made clear. There is the field of proper education where the mission is collaborating with the Government, which largely supports and consequently supervises the work. On the other hand, there is the proper missionary work where full freedom has been guaranteed in accordance with the international treaties (Vapaavuori 1948).

Another letter dated 23 March 1948 from the Superintendent addressed to the Native Commissioner of Ovamboland echoed the same sentiment. The Superintendent was against the strict control of all the educational work of the mission by the Native Administration. Alho (Superintendent) wrote:

As it is shown in the annual statistics, there are baptism and confirmation classes, and other educational activities at work in the Finnish Mission. These educational branches are not only peculiar in the Finnish Mission alone. They are universally acknowledged in churches and Missions. In Ovamboland, also it has not been made the duty of the organizer of the Native Education to organize or inspect the Sunday schools or baptism and confirmation classes. These branches belong to the activities of the church (Alho 1948).

These two letters clearly indicated and drew the line of where the Government could and could not dictate. Missionaries stood firm in defending the autonomy of the church activities. They underlined the fact that Christian education belongs to the missionary work. Both letters concluded in requesting the government to allow them to do their work without any interference. This letter particularly demonstrated that ELCIN had always been ready to stand for what is right. In this context, they defended its autonomy and to speak on behalf of the vulnerable and to be a voice of the voiceless.

#### **5.4.2 Church and Bantu Education**

After World War II, the history of South Africa's relation with the newly established United Nations over the Namibian issue was a stormy one. It started with South Africa's refusal to place the territory under the United Nations trusteeship. South Africa's position was to view South West Africa as a *de facto* fifth province. For this South West Africa was regarded as an integral part of South Africa without any formal process of takeover (Harlech-Jones 1997: 11-12).

The main agenda of the South African government was to implement the government's policy of apartheid. This was a system of racial discrimination and social segregation, as seen in chapter 2. The introduction of the Eiselen Commission in 1949 to deal with Native education recommended that a complete separation of the administration system for black people should be set up. This was done in accordance with the policy of Bantu Education. Further, the same Commission also suggested that the control of missionary schools for

blacks be transferred from the church authorities to state control under the management of Bantu Affairs (Forson 1993: 48).

In 1952, the Department of Education passed a new school curriculum as mentioned earlier in this chapter. This curriculum enforced all schools in the north (Ovambo area) to have a common syllabus. There was no alternative; therefore, the church had to accept and implement it (Lehtonen 2001: 95). Nevertheless, missionaries were not happy with what the government wanted to implement. On 25 and 26 January 1950, Finnish missionaries held a meeting at Ombalantu (where the current Western Diocese Headquarters are located). They decided to establish a private school. All the preparations were finalized and the Oshigambo High School was officially opened in 1952 (Mission annual report 1953). The first missionary teacher at Oshigambo was Toivo Tirronen who was trained at the University of Stellenbosch in 1950 (Lehtonen 1978: 68).

The Oshigambo School was the first school that started in-service training and short courses for the indigenous teachers. In addition, it was also offering basic knowledge of English for theological students. As discussed earlier, the aim was to prepare them for theological training (Lehtonen 1977: 69; cf. 5.3.1.3). Later Oshigambo School was converted into a high school to give an advanced education to young people to prepare them for further studies. It became the first high school in the whole of Ovamboland in which learners could study until matric. The first examination of standard eight was written in 1962, while standard 10 was written in 1964 (Shejavali 1970: 178).

The government of South Africa, especially the Department of Education of Ovamboland, was not happy with what the school was doing. On 9 October 1951, the Native Commissioner<sup>7</sup> of Ovamboland informed the Finnish Superintendent that the Administration intended to close Oshigambo Mission Station (Native Commissioner, 1951). The reason was that they (the Administration) were to build administrative offices to access water because the site was close to the river. Oshigambo is located in a strategic place with a beautiful view. It therefore attracted the interest of both missionaries and government. This plan created tension between the missionaries and the Native Commissioner. In

---

<sup>7</sup> The Native Commissioner was a representative of the government of South Africa who was responsible for government affairs in Ovamboland.

response to that request, the FMS expressed their disapproval and dismay in a letter dated 26 November 1951:

It is extremely disturbing for the missionary activities in the involved area. Even if the Finnish Missionary Society is offered new suitable sites and sufficient means for rebuilding, the loss of time and energy and considerable interruption in the normal development of mission work is inevitable (Alho 1951).

The FMS further said they could only give it on condition that a new site of equal size within the same area was allocated to them free. The FMS also allowed the church building of Oshigambo to be destroyed before handing the site over to the Administration. The Administration paid a compensation of £8 500 in cash to the FMS (Alho 1951). These conditions have shown the seriousness of the missionaries in this matter. Subsequently, the plans for relocation did not materialize, because of the condition set by missionaries as compensation for relocation.

In another development in 1958, the Director of Education ordered the mission school, Oshigambo, to stop offering the advanced courses because the church had no right to do this. In a letter dated 7 May 1958, the church was informed that the Department of Education had decided that teachers would be trained at Okahandja (Director of Education, 1958). The seminary in the south belonged to the RMS. All this was aimed to stop mission education efforts at Oshigambo. The leadership of ELCIN, especially the mission education board members, disagreed with the government's decision. For this reason, the principal of Oshigambo High School had to resign in protest against the decision of the state to close the school. Despite all this, the church continued with its education programmes. At the same time, it appealed to the government to allow them to continue with Oshigambo High School (Annual mission report, 1958).

Therefore, in 1960, the school was reopened, and the new system for standard 6 to 12 was implemented with the following subjects: "Afrikaans, Engels, Wiskunde, Algemene Wetenskap, Sosiale studie en Landbou" (Lehtonen 1977: 71). This shows clearly that the mission of the church was far better than that of the state. Historically, church schools, not only of ELCIN but also of other churches in Namibia, provided quality education to its people. Therefore, most of the national leaders, if not all, received their education in the



church schools. For example, people like Kathindi, Shatona, Amwele and many others were recipients of church grants. Most of the national leaders in different professions in Namibia are the products of ELCIN and/or of other churches.

According to the school statistics (1959-1960), the mission schools were as follows:

Laer Primêre skole (Primary schools)	82
Hoër Jongenskole (Boys` secondary schools)	6
Hoër Meisieskole (Girls` Secondary schools)	9
Opleidingskole (Training schools)	2
Private Sekondêre skole (Private Secondary schools)	1

The total number of learners in all mission schools was 17 369 (Lehtonen 2001: 154). The statistics of 1969 showed the significant increase in numbers of teachers and students as follows: number of teachers 1 091, number of learners 51 077 (School Statistic, 1969).

In 1960, ELCIN received a letter from the director of Native Education informing them about the decision concerning the church schools. The letter announced the following decisions: Firstly, all the mission schools were to become national schools as soon as possible. Secondly, the state would pay the salaries of all the teachers employed in the mission schools as from 1 January 1961 (Native Commissioner, 1960, July 14). This system of financial support from government has continued up to the present moment.

The ELCIN church council resolution (1963) resolved to hand over all the boys' and girls' schools under state control. Therefore, in 1970 all the mission schools were fully under government supervision. Even though all the schools were officially handed to the state, two secondary schools, Oshigambo and Nkurenkuru High Schools in Kavango area, have up to the present moment remained church private schools. These schools have outstanding academic records of students' performances. Further, the church also played a role through its education office for soliciting funds for further study to support students who performed well.

The provisions relating to the private schools in the entire country were enacted in Section 9 of the National Education Act 1980. The Act of Education stipulated that all the non-government schools that provided education had to be registered officially with the Department of National Education. Such schools were seen to be run by a manager who had

overall administrative control of the school. Further, the government continued to support those schools by giving a lump sum annually in respect of teachers' salaries as well as school stock and equipment. However, those particular schools with the unqualified teachers had to pay them (unqualified teachers) from their own school fund, because of the government's refusal to recognise them in order to benefit from state funding (Forson 1993: 53).

## **5.5 Conclusion**

This chapter looked into aspects of ELCIN's relation with the state on the issue of education. Education from this perspective was very important on both sides, namely for ELCIN and the state. Both had their clear agenda of what they wanted to achieve through education. Under the Union of South Africa, the aim of the government was to give basic skills for the labour pool. On the other hand, the church's focus was on Christianization. All the mission schools then were for catechism. This chapter of the study explained how the education system started to change. The introduction of the Government proclamation 55 of 1921 to control education for all Namibians marked a beginning of relations of church and state on education. As from then, ELCIN started to improve the education system by developing and improving schools' curriculums.

On the other hand, the government through its representative in Namibia observed closely the performances of the mission schools. The study revealed that the state forced the church to apply and implement the government policy on education. The implementation of state policy on education of 1921 and Bantu education as proposed by the Eiselen Commission on Education in 1949, forced the church to establish a private school, Oshigambo High School and later Nkurenkuru. This was a clear indication that the church wanted to offer quality education based on international standards.

The chapter concluded by giving information about the agreement between the church and state according to which all the mission schools were handed over to the government by 1970.

## **Chapter 6: Summary and Concluding Remarks**

### **6.1 Summary**

This research was a church historical study of the public role of ELCIN as pioneer in social development. The study paid special attention to the aspect of education, in other words informal and formal education. To do this, the study examined some of the most important historical aspects in the history of ELCIN. This helped us to understand her role in the social life of the Ovambo people in a broader perspective.

In the first chapter of this study, background to and motivation regarding the study were given by way of reasons for the importance of the study of the history of the church, and in this case particularly the history of ELCIN (cf. 1.1). As part of its motivation, inspiration was drawn from valuable historical books about the history of the church in Namibia and of ELCIN.

As part of the introductory remarks, chapter 1 defined the importance of church history drawn from Gonzalez's understanding of (church) history as a field that always lights up our present and announces our future. Gonzalez explains that history does not only involve areas such as politics, culture and social events, but individuals as well, their actions and thoughts, and how all of these influence and were influenced by each other. Every person has a personal history that was influenced by the larger historical picture. This study aimed at presenting a bigger historical picture of ELCIN's public role, emphasizing the process in which education influenced the lives of individuals and the community alike in Ovamboland.

The main aim of this study was to investigate the role the church played and its involvement in both non-formal and formal education. The study discussed and brought to light some development of both programmes for Christian (non-formal) and inclusive (formal) education in ELCIN schools or mission schools in the Ovambo area. This study paid special attention to the role of missionaries in developing the education system of the mission schools during the time of the South Africa government's involvement through the Native Administration in Ovamboland. As part of ELCIN's formal education efforts, the study further revealed the role it played in the establishment of primary and secondary schools,

including boys' and girls' schools known as "boarding schools" as well as education and theological seminaries. These schools and institutions enhanced the effectiveness of social change among the Ovambo people. The outcome of the initiatives started by the missionaries through their education programme can clearly be seen in the development and social change that came about as a result of education. Education in this study formed a core focal point that validated the claim of the public role of ELCIN as pioneer of social development in Ovamboland.

At the beginning of this study several questions were asked regarding the research focus and research questions. These questions were as follows: Firstly, how can one understand the role of ELCIN in education in the broader history of ELCIN? Secondly, what role did missionaries play in terms of education? Thirdly, what were the arrangements that Finnish missionaries had made during the indigenization process to prepare ELCIN to become an independent church. The study and other historical records prove that, in fact, missionary work can be interpreted as a "process of indigenization", although it is not clearly stated in their reports on mission work. Fourthly, what were the challenges ELCIN faced during the time of missionaries until the time of its independence? Lastly, what were the external facts that influenced the role of the church in education? Therefore, to answer these questions, the study followed a specific methodology.

The methodology used in answering these queries was that of a non-empirical study based on a literature review and written secondary and primary sources. Firstly, the researcher used the primary sources as main resources to study and provide related answers to the research questions and research focus. Secondly, the researcher further consulted appropriate secondary historical resources that were available and that helped in bringing into view the historical background of Namibia, the planting of Christianity in Namibia as well as of Finnish missionaries and their activities in Ovamboland. To conclude this study, the researcher followed the structure of the research focus as it appeared in chapter 1 of the study. Therefore, the summary and findings of each chapter can be described as follows:

The second chapter of this study discussed the historical background of Namibia in which the study is placed. This deliberation about Namibia included references to its people, political development and the beginning of Christianity in Namibia. Moreover, the chapter

shared some details about the first explorers and settlers in Namibia as part of the process of bringing and planting Christianity.

Politically spoken, the research revealed that the Namibian people went through difficult times of German colonialism and resistance to the force of oppression, as from 1884-1915. Thereafter, Namibia existed under South Africa's apartheid system from 1919 to 21 March 1990 when the country received its independence. The research further revealed that Christianity, explorers, traders and colonialism in Namibia are interconnected because historically one cannot speak of the one without referring to the other. For that reason, this chapter gave some historical evidence of a special relationship between Rhenish missionaries in Namibia and the German government that led Namibia to become a German colony in 1884. Attention was also given to a brief history of various pioneer Mission Societies that arrived earlier than colonialism in Namibia. This study further pointed out that through the pioneer missionaries, namely the Rhenish missionaries who came earlier, Namibia had opened the way for FMS to come into the country. This resulted in the arrival of Finnish missionaries on 9 July 1870 in Ovamboland. In the absence of any other missionary work in the Ovambo area, the Finnish missionaries emerged to become pioneers and champions in the planting of Christianity through education in the northern part of Namibia (Ovamboland). For the ELCIN and Ovambo people in particular to be what they are currently, missionaries have had to cross many barriers and face various challenges. Some of these challenges mentioned in the study included the lack of financial support, the unfriendly attitudes of indigenous kings, the lack of food and water, long distance, diseases, and the political situation. The chapter concluded with the arrival of missionaries in the northern area known as Ovamboland.

Chapter 3 in this study looked mostly at the following: the establishment, growth and ecclesial life of ELCIN. The aim was to illustrate how missionaries started their mission activities and the growth of those activities from one stage to the other through the process that led to self-governance. The important things that emerged in this chapter include the arrival of Finnish missionaries on 9 July 1870 in Ovamboland and the beginning of mission activities by introducing Christian education among Ovambo people. In addition, the establishment of mission stations, schools and other institutions like seminaries in many areas of Ovamboland led to the birth of ELCIN in 1954.

The first baptism in 1883 not only marked a beginning or launch of the church (ELCIN) in Ovamboland, but also marked the first fruits of education. According to the study findings, the increase in mission stations encouraged missionaries to organize these mission stations into congregations to form the mission church. At the same time, through the expansion of mission stations missionaries also expanded education to different areas. The growth of members and congregations led to the draft of the “Church Order” which was adopted at the first Synod of 1925, as well as the drafting and adopting of the church Constitution in 1954.

The chapter further reported that the finalization of the Constitution paved the way for the independence of ELCIN. Therefore, the whole process, referred to as the “indigenization process”, was a process of leadership development through education and training. The chapter also highlighted some remarkable historical events and milestone achievements in ELCIN. These milestones include the training and ordination of pastors, the drafting of the Constitution and independence of ELCIN, the registration of ELCIN with the government, the alignment of requirements for marriage procedures with the government policy, the election of the native indigenous moderator, and the adoption of the name “ELOC” in 1954 which was officially changed to its current name, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN) in 1984. We learned through the study that the “indigenization process” was fully completed with the election and consecration of the native Bishop in 1963.

ELCIN also played a significant role as a public church in the political atmosphere and struggle for Namibia’s independence. The notable event that was revealed by the study was the open letter, jointly written by ELCIN and ELCRN, to the Prime Minister of South Africa in 1971. Through that letter, they declared their churches’ opposition to apartheid and the acceptance of the recommendation by the International Court of Justice for the withdrawal of the South African mandate and transition period toward independence. This stance provides one of the answers to how ELCIN acted as a “public church”. We have witnessed through this study that ELCIN did not choose to be silent or neutral, but rather sided with the marginalized and the poor. This is how the church should identify itself as one of incarnate marginality. Gonzalez (2002: 153) rightly states: “The proper place for those who follow Jesus Christ is the margin, valley and cross both as individuals and as the church. Therefore, in the face of injustice a neutral stance will always be evil.” Let us hope that

ELCIN continues in all situations to be a voice of the voiceless. The study was concluded with a reference to the manner in which the Constitution defined the foundation and responsibility of ELCIN.

Chapter 4 of the study dealt with the Finnish mission education in Ovamboland and drew attention to the role of the church (ELCIN) in non-formal education. The study uses the notion of “non-formal education” as a way to describe Christian education (with Christianization as its goal) in particular. The chapter further explained the significance of this form of education. Firstly, the chapter provided some brief information about the traditional education of the Ovambo culture in order to give a comprehensive understanding of the concept of education in Ovamboland before Christianity. Secondly, the study helped us to understand how missionaries introduced Christian education to convert people to Christianity through education. This was done with the aim of teaching indigenous people basic reading and writing skills before baptism. The study revealed that missionaries introduced education as a mechanism to convert people and transform the society into a Christian society. According to the study, education was not as we understand it today, but it was an elementary education with Christian principles of the Ten Commandments, catechism, biblical narratives as well as other Christian material, which they translated into the vernacular. Therefore, it made it possible not only for education to flourish, but also for evangelization that allowed the growth and independence of ELCIN to take its course. According to the findings of the study, missionaries were more willing to learn the local languages. As a result, it made it easier for them to translate education material, as well as to communicate and work with indigenous people. The chapter revealed that for this to be effective, missionaries established the ELOC Printing Press with the aim of speeding up the availability of teaching materials.

Further, the main idea of ELCIN was to establish the church institutions like Engela Parish Institute to educate and train preachers, Bible study leaders, elders, parish secretaries, Sunday school and confirmation teachers, so that they could be equipped with the necessary skills through education to take the church activities further. The study also discovered that most of the assistant teachers and church workers were doing this work on a voluntary basis. The study revealed that, in the course of change, the issue of allowances and salaries became a serious challenge in ELCIN. This threatened the progress of school

works, created tension between missionaries and native teachers and caused some teachers to resign in pursuit of better benefits elsewhere. The research brought forth some challenges that the church encountered in education as well as in the manner in which the church managed to handle them. Some of the challenges mentioned included the language, culture, norms and traditions of the Ovambo people. Nevertheless, the inspiration of the Holy Spirit as guiding principle in this exercise for missionaries to achieve their goal of social development cannot be undermined.

Although the chapter dealt with non-formal education, the other education phase, formal education, emerged. The research established that the missionaries developed both trends of education for spirituality in the church as well as for inclusive education to develop the community at large. However, the research established that the Christian education programme later expanded to include the training of pastors, evangelists, deacons and other church workers. Theological seminaries and other institutions were established in ELCIN specifically for that purpose. We also learned in this chapter that Christian education and biblical study were parts of the teaching curriculum. Therefore, it was easier for everyone in mission or church schools to learn about the Word of God.

However, after independence this is no longer the same in an independent Namibia, because the government declared the country a secular state. Nevertheless, in spite of Namibia being a secular state, the state does provide religious and moral education, which might be different from what the church views as needed in this regard. Hence, the church has to find its own way to educate her members regarding Christian moral values. The study discovered that missionaries were very serious when it came to education and training. This seriousness of missionaries made the church grow in numbers with committed church members. To claim back her integrity, ELCIN probably needs to strengthen and intensify her Christian education programmes among her members, especially in two areas: Sunday school and confirmation classes. It is almost impossible for the church to have such loyal members without them being educated through Christian education.

Chapter 5 of this research offered a continuation of what was discussed in chapter 4. However, in this chapter the focus was on formal education. Formal education was another mechanism that missionaries introduced to address the issue of illiteracy among the



Ovambo communities with a broad education programme. This chapter paid attention to and explained the process of formal education in the following: the aim and objective, the development of syllabus, training of teachers and the role they played in education. In addition, the chapter exposed the high interests of ELCIN in theological education to train pastors, evangelists, deacons and other church workers. To advance education, this chapter indicated that ELCIN had established theological and teachers' training seminaries for education purposes.

However, the chapter also explored the relation between ELCIN and the state on education and pointed out some challenges that hindered the progress in this area. This study revealed that despite the challenges, especially from the government, ELCIN or the missionaries remained focused and committed to their purpose of educating the community. It was further divulged that the government had tried to let them down by using various tactics such as imposing policies and applying strict conditions on education. The study pointed to some of the correspondences, directives and decisions from the government that caused tension between the church and government. In all these challenges, ELCIN stood firm and managed to bring about, through education, all that people can see, read and write about today.

As part of the evangelism to render services to the total human being, ELCIN built schools, hospitals and rendered agricultural services, which taught local people new methods of farming. This was necessitated by the fact that the Ovambo people were not catered for in the colonial government's education, medical and agricultural systems. ELCIN established schools in the rural areas where most of the poor and vulnerable people lived.

The research has revealed that the history of the Finnish missionaries cannot be separated from the history of ELCIN. It was almost impossible through this study to mention ELCIN without referring to the missionaries. Thus, this qualified the saying that the history of Finnish missionaries in Namibia is the history of ELCIN. Based on this, it is right to say that whatever the missionaries have done, it was done by ELCIN, because it was done in the name of ELCIN. Therefore, the conclusion is that the history of ELCIN and of the missionaries is inseparable and interrelated. We have observed this inter-connection throughout this study. This further affirms the idea that church history and mission history cannot be neatly separated (cf. Gonzalez 2002: 149).

## **6.2 Concluding remarks**

The beginning of missionary activities in Ovamboland was a simple start, but the end product is immeasurable. Missionaries were few in number, as we learned in the study, and they worked with minimal resources, but embarked on successful projects of education.

To conclude this study, it should be reiterated that the research topic of this thesis is clear about the nature of the study, which is a church historical study of the role of ELCIN. Therefore, looking at the research focus of the study as stated in chapter 1, it was based on several important questions as a guideline for the study. The study tried to search for answers to the research questions through this study, therefore the following.

First, although mission, evangelization and education are different things, they are, at the same time, related to one another. We learned that they are related because missionaries had a mission to evangelize by using education as tool to convert local people to Christianity. The study revealed that the vision and mission of the missionaries and of ELCIN in general, was a vision of the transformation of the society through education and evangelization. By introducing baptism and confirmation classes as well as Sunday services to educate people, a new understanding of God was made possible. Furthermore, the establishment of various institutions for education and training like Engela Parish Institute, Oniipa, Oshigambo and Elim seminaries gave us a broader understanding of the role of ELCIN in education.

It is almost impossible to mention anything related to education in Ovamboland without mentioning Finnish missionaries. Chapters 4 and 5 of this study have shown clearly the role missionaries played in education. Firstly, they introduced Christian education for Christianization. They further elevated the education system to be inclusive, translated education materials, developed education syllabus and introducing formal education. In addition, missionaries intensified theological education and other training for the church workers. With whatever else we can say about education in ELCIN, it is important to mention that the missionaries – notwithstanding possible critique – played a remarkable role.

In the second question, the study discovered the following: The most important thing in the whole process of indigenization was the empowerment of indigenous people through education and training. This process happened when the church (ELCIN) decided to establish institutions like theological and teachers' training seminaries at Oniipa, Oshigambo and Okahao respectively, as viable institutions and as a source of knowledge. In addition, further training was also provided, especially for indigenous pastors with the aim to give them special skills to enable them to take responsibility for the leadership and management positions of ELCIN.

Chapter 5 of this study looked at the development of further training for not only pastors but other church workers as well (cf. 5.3). For the equipping of workers, the training of evangelists, deacons and other church workers, Engela was introduced by the church. The study further explored the arrangement of congregations to form one church, the drafts of the Constitution, the ordination of pastors in 1925 and the registration of ELCIN with the government in 1957. All this led to the full realization of the indigenization process in 1963 when the first indigenous pastor was elected and consecrated as first Bishop of ELCIN.

The third question of the study was about the challenges that the church encountered in the process and which led them to act as a public church. The research revealed the following: One can conclude that all the mission activities, from the arrival of missionaries to the indigenization process, and throughout to the independence of ELCIN, non-formal and formal education was a challenging process. It was challenging because of the encounter of two diverse cultures, namely the cultures of the Ovambo (African) and the Finnish (European) people. The study illustrated how both sides struggled to adjust to a new culture of Christianity as well as to the new environment.

In addition, some of the notable challenges in this study were between ELCIN and the government of South Africa on education. The introduction of the government's Proclamation Act no 55 of 1921 emerged as one of the first challenges for the mission schools. The study pointed out that this Proclamation was aimed at implementing the South African government's decision to place education in Namibia under state control. The study further gave information about what the government wanted to see taking place in mission schools, which was different from the intention, aims and objectives of the church. The

government, through Native Administration, pushed for an agenda of education to be implemented on the one hand. On the other hand, the church tried to protect her interest of Christianization through education and the interest of local people as well. The implementation of Bantu education in accordance with the Eiselen Commission's recommendation of 1949 to place the education system for blacks under native education, as well as the control of mission schools for blacks to be transferred from church administration to the management of Bantu Affairs posed a serious challenge for ELCIN. In response to that, the church embarked on the road to private schools. The political atmosphere in Namibia, especially from the 1960s throughout until independence in 1990, has been a challenge.

The implementation of the government's Odendaal plan of racial discrimination and apartheid forced the church to react publicly by issuing an open letter in 1971. This letter denounced the system of apartheid and supported the International Court of Justice's decision for Namibia's independence. Based on the findings of the study, ELCIN can be more probably viewed as a "true church" if she continues to stand for justice, to be a voice of the voiceless, a unifying church and the church that speaks out against the evils in society.

In exploring the fourth question the study has found the following: The first limitation was the financial constraints, which resulted in a lack of understanding the concept sustainability and lack of stewardship education. The study revealed that financial difficulty has been the problem in ELCIN, not only after her independence from the FMS, but even before or during the time of the missionaries. Therefore, when ELCIN was declared independent in 1954, it was merely in word. Financially, it remained dependent on support from the mother church. The mother church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland and other donor organizations funded all the programmes of ELCIN at that stage, including staff salaries. The study also witnessed some other challenges, like low teachers' salaries, lack of classrooms and a lack of funds to pay contractors. As a result, students had to build their own classrooms. This remains a big challenge for the role of the church today.

Lastly, the study tried to find answers to the last question as follows: ELCIN has a great role and an obligation to fight for a society, which will enable every man and woman to live with dignity and well-being, and to work for the eradication of poverty and for the sharing of Namibia's wealth. We learned through this study about ELCIN's role in social care and

development among the Ovambo people by providing education and medical care where there would have been none. The same responsibility should continue in an independent Namibia.

It has been argued that the church needs to address through Christian education the trends about the already increasing gap between the rich and the poor caused by unjust practices. This will help the community to be able to live free from poverty. Nyerere rightly states that everything that prevents a human being from living in dignity and decency must therefore be under attack from the church (Nyerere 1997: 115).

As pointed out in chapter 1, development is not only the challenge to the church, but it is a responsibility of the ELCIN. Social development is an ongoing process that can go beyond 1970 to the present, in which ELCIN need to continue and intensify its Christian education program. This program's aim is to equip theological students, clergy and church leaders, and lay people at all levels of ELCIN to be an agents of social transformation. ELCIN has a responsibility to work with the people in order to build a future based on social justice. By doing this, the church is promoting not only the doctrine of love but also of care to all human kind. It is only through this that the church can justify its relevance in the modern and secular society, because one of the outcomes of the church being a Christian church is that it understands its calling also to advocate human dignity, justice and a right to development. Moreover, ELCIN has a duty to contribute to establishing a democratic society where the rule of law that promotes human dignity prevails. In this way, the church has a moral obligation to train its members in this regard. Therefore, it is the responsibility of ELCIN to act publicly to promote and sustain peace. In a contemporary society such as Namibia issues such as injustice, including domestic and gender based violence such as rape and murder of women (passion killing), dumping of infants, poverty and unemployment are increasing. ELCIN needs to equip her members through Christian education to be proactive in fighting against all these societal evils. In addressing these challenges in a society, much can be learn from the strength and weakness of this church's own history.

## Bibliography

### Primary sources: Reports

Annual mission report, 1876. Oniipa, Archives.

Annual mission report, 1877. Oniipa, Archives.

Annual mission report, 1879. Oniipa Archives.

Annual mission report, 1882. Oniipa Archives.

Annual mission report, 1883. Oniipa Archives.

Annual mission report, 1894. Oniipa Archives.

Annual report of school committee of the mission school, 16 September 1916.

Oniipa, Archives.

Annual mission report, 1953. Oniipa, Archives.

Annual mission report, 1958. Oniipa, Archives.

Annual report of the mission activities, 1877. Oniipa, Archives.

Church Council meeting, 1952, Oniipa, Archives.

Church Council, 1953. Oniipa, Archives.

Chuech Council, 1954. Oniipa, Archives.

Church council resolution, 1950. Oniipa, Archives.

Church Council resolution, 1963. 19 August.

Congregational statistic, 1949. Oniipa, Archives.

ELCIN Statistic, 2008. Oniipa.

ELCIN Statistic, 2010. Oniipa.

ELCIN financial report 2010. Oniipa.

Minutes of missionaries' meeting, 1896. Oniipa, Archives.

Mission meeting report, 1913. Oniipa, Archives.

Missionaries meeting report, 1896. Oniipa Archives.

Mission report, 1882. Oniipa, Archives.

Mission report, 1883. Oniipa, Archives.

Mission committee report, 1900. Oniipa, Archives.

Mission report, 1924. National Archives, ref: NAO 12, Vol 1, file no 6/2/1.

Mission report, 1955. Oniipa, Archives.

Minutes of the school committee, 14 January 1930. Oniipa, Archives.

Report of School Committee, 1950. Oniipa, Archives.

School statistics, 1903-1913. Oniipa, Archives.

School syllabus, 1914. Oniipa, Archives.

School committee proposal, 22 February 1922. Oniipa, Archives.

School statistics of the mission school, 1924. Oniipa, Archives.

School Committee report, 1925. Oniipa, Archives.

School committee report, 16 January 1929. Oniipa, Archives.

School board report, 1929. Oniipa, Archives.

School Committee report, 1930. Oniipa, Archives.

School statistic, 1959-1960. Oniipa, Archive.

School statistic, 1969. Oniipa, Archives.

Statistics of Finnish mission schools, 1949. In Oniipa Archives.

Synod resolutions, 1954. Oniipa, Archives.

Synod resolution, 1977. Oniipa Archives.

Synod resolution, 1991. Oniipa Archives.

### **Reports in the newspapers**

Census of 2011. *The Namibian Newspaper*, 12 April 2012.

Mashuna, T. 2012. *Namibian Sun*, 10 August 2012.

*Omukwetu*, No, 11 November 1955.

### **Correspondence**

Administrator of Education, 1937. Correspondence. 30 December, National

Archives, ref: NAO 12, file no 6/2/5.

Alho, V. 1945. Correspondence. 14 May, Onayena-Ovamboland. Oniipa, Archives.

Alho, V. 1948. Correspondence. 23 March, Onayena. Oniipa, Archives.

Alho, V. 1950. Correspondence. 20 December, Onayena-Ovamboland. National

Archives, ref: NAO 12, Box no 66.

Alho, V. 1951. Correspondence. 26 November, Onayena-Ovamboland. Oniipa,

Archives.

Application letter for church registration 1956, file Baaa, ELCIN Archives, Oniipa.

Chief Native Commissioner, 1953. Correspondence. 6 June, Windhoek. National,

Archives, ref: NAO 12, Box no 66.

Director of Education. 1950. Correspondence. 2 November, Windhoek. National



Archives, ref: NAO 12, file no 6/2/5.

Director of Education, 1958. Correspondence. 7 May, Windhoek. Oniipa, Archives.

Mission director, 1925. Correspondence. 5 October, Windhoek. National Archives, ref: NAO 12, file no /2/5.

Mission director, 1936. Correspondence. 14 April, Helsinki. National Archives, ref: NAO 12, Vol 1, file no 6/2/1.

Native Commissioner, 1935. Correspondence. 18 January, National Archives, Ref: NAO 12, file no 6/2/5.

Native Commissioner, 1940. Correspondence. 6 May, National Archives, ref: NAO 12, file no 6/2/5.

Native Commissioner, 1945. Correspondence. 23 March, Oniipa, Archives.

Native Commissioner, 1947. Correspondence. 3 November, Ondangwa-Ovamboland. National Archives, ref: NAO, Box no 66.

Native Commissioner. 1951. 9 October, Ovamboland. Oniipa, Archives.

Native Commissioner, 1960. Correspondence. 14 July, Oniipa, Archives.

Ngulifa, I. I. 1953. Correspondence. 7 May, Ovamboland. National Archives, ref: NAO box no 66.

Open letter. 1971. His honour the Prime Minister of South Africa. 30 June, Windhoek.

Rooman, D.R. 1948. Correspondence. 26 February, Windhoek. National, Archives Ref: NAO, Box no 66.

Vapaavouri, L. 1945. Correspondence. 16 April, Windhoek. Oniipa, Archives.

----- 1948. Correspondence. 5 May, Helsinki. Oniipa, Archives.

### **Constitution**

The Republic of Namibia, 1990. (online). Available : <http://www.orusovo.com/namcon/>

ELCIN, 2001. Constitution and Regulation. Oniipa, Printing Press.

### **Secondary sources**

Agarwal, A. 2011. The role of education in society [online]. Available: [www.preservarticles.com/201107048804/essayon the role of education in society.html](http://www.preservarticles.com/201107048804/essayon%20the%20role%20of%20education%20in%20society.html)

[2013, June 06].

Amukugo, E.M. 1993. *Education and Politics in Namibia: Past Trends and Future*

*Prospects*. Windhoek: Gamsberg-Macmillan.

Auala, L. 1978. In *Oshipala sha ELOC*. Oniipa: ELOC Press.

Auala, L. 2009. *Onakuziwa ya ELOC*. Oniipa: ELOC Press.

August, K.T. 2010. *Equipping the Saints: God's measure for development*. Bellville:

The Print-Man.

August, K.T. 2009. *The Quest for being Public Church*. Bellville: The Print-Man.

Barrett, D.B. 1968. *Dehism and Renewal in Africa*. New York: Oxford

University Press.

Bradley, J.E & Muller, R. 1995. *Church History: An Introduction to Research, Reference,*

*Works and Methods*. USA: William B Eerdmans Publishing.

Buyis, G.L & Nambala, S. 2003. *History of the Church in Namibia*. Windhoek:

Gamsberg-McMillan.

Chambers, R. 2003. *Whose Reality Counts? Putting the First Last*. Britain: Biddles Ltd,  
Guildford.

Cutter, J. 1986. Definition and Purpose of Worship (online). Available:

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09306a.htm> (2012, February 28)

De Gruchy, J.W. & Villa-Vicencio. C (ed.), 1983. *Apartheid is a heresy*. Cape Town: David  
Philip.

De Vries, J.L. 1978. *Mission and Colonialism in Namibia*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.

Dumeni, K. 1978. Ehokololo lyOngerki ya ELOC, in *Oshipala sha ELOC 1977-*  
*1978*. Oniipa: ELOC Press. 9-15.

ELCIN, 1993. *Okambo KelongeloKalunga*. Oniipa: Printing Press.

Ellis, J. 1984. *Education, Repression and Liberation*. London: CIIR (Catholic  
Institute for International Studies).

Francis, X. & Hezel, S.J. 1974: Recent theories of the relationship between

Education and Development (online). Available:[http://www.micsem.](http://www.micsem.org/pubs/articles/education/frame/rectheorfr.htm)

[org/pubs/articles/education/frame/rectheorfr. htm](http://www.micsem.org/pubs/articles/education/frame/rectheorfr.htm) [2013, June 06]

Forson, D.D. 1993. Comparative Education: An Investigation into the Role and

Function of Catholic Schools in the Namibian Education System (thesis).  
Pretoria: University of South Africa.

Gonzalez, J.L. 2002. *The Changing Shape of Church History*. USA: Chalice Press.

Gude, D.L. 1998. *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in*

*North America*. UK, Cambridge: William B Eerdmans Publication.

Harlech-Jones, B. 1997. A new thing: *The Namibian Independence Process*.

University of Namibia: Ein Publication.

Hekandjo, S.W. 1977. Ehokololo lyOngerki ya ELOC, in *Oshipala sha ELOC 1977-*

*1978. Oniipa*: ELOC Press. 76-81.

Heath, L.G. 2008. *Doing Church History: A User-friendly Introduction to*

*Researching the History of Christianity*. Canada: Clements Publishing.

Hofmeyr, J.W, Millard, J.A. & Froneman, C.J.J. 1991. *History of the Church in*

*South Africa*. Pretoria: University of South Africa.

Hofmeyr, J.W. & Pillay, G.J. 1994. *A History of Christianity in South Africa*.

Vol1, Pretoria: Gutenberg Book Printer.

Isaak, P.J. 2000. Critical Issues Facing the ELCRN, in Isaak, P.J. (ed.) *Evangelical*

*Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia in the 21st century*. Windhoek:  
Gamsberg-McMillan. 112-113.

Johnson, B. 2012. Apartheid definition (online). Available: [http:](http://www.worldnews.about.com/od/ad/g/apartheid.htm)

[//www.worldnews.about.com/od/ad/g/apartheid.htm](http://www.worldnews.about.com/od/ad/g/apartheid.htm) (accessed 02/06/2012)

Katjavivi, P. 1989. The Role of the Church in the Struggle for Independence, in

Katjavivi, P.P. Frostin, P. & Mbuende, K. (eds). *Church and Liberation in Namibia*. London: Pluto Press. 3-26.

Kaulinge, A. 1992. The Influence of Mission and the Role of the church in the Process of

Liberation and Independence of Namibia. (Unpublished paper), Tampere, Finland, On 10 October 1992.

Kyronseppa, H. 1970. *Sixty Years of Finnish Medical Mission*. Oniipa: ELOC Press.

Lehtonen, L. 1978. Osikola yokombanda ya ELOC mOshigambo, in *Oshipala sha*

*ELOC 1977-1978*. Oniipa: ELOC Press. 68-75.

Lehtonen, L. 2001. *Ondjokonona yoosikola mOwambo*. Helsinki, Finland:

University Printing House.

Levinson, O. 1961. *The Ageless Land: The Story of South West Africa*.

Cape Town: Tafelberg-Uitgewers.

Lihongo, A. 1977. Esanseko lyoyirugana momutayingereka gwaKavango, in

*Oshipala sha ELOC 1977-1978*. Oniipa, ELOC Press. 51.

Loytty, S. 2005. A Creative Collision? An Investigation of the Music Development

Born out of the Encounter between Finnish Missionaries and Ovambo Culture. Namibia: University of Namibia.

Loytty, S. 2012. *People's Church – People's Music: Contextualization of Liturgical Music in*

*an African Church*. Sibelius Academy, Docmus: Hansa Print.

*Lutheran Book of Worship*. 1993. Minneapolis: Augsburg.

Mbuende, K. 1986. *Namibia, the broken shield: Anatomy of imperialism and revolution*.

Sweden: Liber

Mbuende, K. 1989. Church and Class Struggle in Namibia, in P. Katjavivi, P.

Frostin & K. Mbuende (eds). *Church and Liberation in Namibia*. London: Pluto Press. 27-47.

Mckenna, A. 2011. *The history of Southern Africa*. New York: The Rosen publishing group.

- Miettinen, K. 2005. *On the way to Whiteness: Christianization, Conflict, and Change in Colonial Ovamboland, 1910-1965*. Tampere: Tammer-Paino.
- Mpanda, L. 1996. *Ondjokonona yOseminali yaakadhona mOkahao*. Oniipa: ELOC Press.
- Mujoro, Z. & Mujoro, E. 1989. Namibian Liberation Theology and the Future, in Katjavivi, P., Frostin, P. & Mbuende, K. (eds.) *Church and Liberation in Namibia*. London: Pluto Press. 93-108.
- Munyika, V. 2004. *A Holistic Soteriology: In an African context*. South Africa: Cluster Publications.
- Nambala, S.V.V. 1993. *Etaandelo Lyuukriste mOwambo Kavango*. Vol 4, Oniipa: ELOC Press.
- Nambala, S.V.V. 1993. *Omainyengo getumo mOwambo 1870-1990*. Oniipa : ELOC Press.
- Nambala, S.V.V. 1994. History of the Church in Namibia. *Lutheran Quarterly*.
- Nashihanga, H. 1993. *From Mission to Church in Mission: The Ongoing Story of The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia*. USA: Minnesota.
- Ndamanonhata, P. 2001. The Transformation of Authoritarian Leadership to Participatory Leadership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (dissertation). Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal.
- Neill, S. 1966. *Colonialism and Christian Mission*. London: Lutterworth.
- Nghipandulwa, M. 1978. Eyalulohokololo lyOmagongalo ga ELOC, in *Oshipala sha ELOC 1977-1978*. Oniipa: ELOC Press. 76-80.

Niinkoti, E. 1978. Eputudho lyAasita mu ELOC, in *Oshipala sha ELOC 1977-1978*.

Oniipa: ELOC Press. 39-47.

Nyerere, J. 1997. The role of the Church in Society, in Parratt, J. (ed.) *A reader in African*

*Christian theology*. Great Britain: Latimer Trend and Company Ltd.

Patte, D. 2010. *Dictionary of Christianity*. USA: Cambridge University Press.

Peltola, M. 2002. *Nakambale (the life and work of Dr Martin Rautanen)*. Pietermaritzburg:

Natal Witness Pietermaritzburg.

Oliver, R & Atmor, A. 1981. *Africa since 1800*. London: Cambridge University Press.

Schrotenboer, P.G. 1977. *The World survey of Reformed mission (third edition)*. USA: Grand

Rapids, Michigan.

Seppala, M. 1978. Oshilongatumo sha ELOC, in *Oshipala sha ELOC 1977-1978*. Oniipa: ELOC Press. 54-67.

Shejavali, A. 1970a. *Eholokepo lOngerki mOwamboKavango*. Oniipa: ELOC Press.

Shejavali, A. 1970b. *The Ovambo-Kavango church. (Ongerki yomOwamboKavango)*.

Helsinki: kaupakirjapaino Oy, 24-32.

Tirronen, T.E. 1977. *Oshigwana hashi lesa*. Oniipa: ELOC Press.

Tuupainen, M. 1970. *Marriage in a Matrilineal African Tribe: A Social*

*Anthropological Study of the Ondonga tribe in Ovambo*. Helsinki: Aurasem Kirjapaino.

Unam, 1993. *Study Guide for History of Education and Comparative Education*

(EHI5000). Windhoek: University of Namibia.

Winterfeldt, V., Fox, T. & Mufune, P. 2002. *Namibia Society*. Namibia: University of Namibia.