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**SECULARIZATION PROCESSES IN MALAWI AND GREAT BRITAIN: A
COMPARATIVE INQUIRY.**

BY

REV. BILLY LICKSON GAMA

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF
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IN THE FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my Sweetheart, Shamim (my wife) and my Sweet daughter, Yankho, many thanks for your sacrifice; you let me spent all those precious years just to make sure I earn this special qualification. Junior my boy, Thank you so much.

DECLARATION

I, Rev. Billy Lickson Gama, do hereby declare that this Doctoral Thesis entitled, **“Secularization in Malawi: A Study of the Process with Particular Reference to Britain”**, is entirely my original work except for the quotations and references that have been attributed to their authors.

SIGNATURE

DATE.....

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KEY WORDS

Secularization, Church, societal, organizational, individual, religious leaders, Britain, Malawi, modernization, and religion.

ABBREVIATIONS

ACB	Anti-Corruption Bureau
ACM	Anglican Council of Malawi
AD	Anno Domini
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ATR	African Traditional Religion
BFG	Bangwe Focus Group
BNSS	Bangwe Nazarene Secondary School
CCAP	Church of Central Africa Presbyterian
CHAM	Christian Hospitals Association in Malawi
DFID	Department For International Development
DPP	Democratic Progressive Party
ECM	Episcopal Conferences in Malawi
EU	European Union
FP	Full Primary
GAC	General Administration Committee
GMSS	Green Malata Secondary School
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus

KAR	Kings African Rifles
LCC	Living Waters Church
MAM	Muslims Association of Malawi
MBC	Malawi Broadcasting Cooperation
MCC	Malawi Council of Churches
MCP	Malawi Congress Party
MDFG	Mulanje District Focus Group
MEC	Malawi Electoral Commission
MP	Member of Parliament
MSDA	Muloza Seventh Day Adventist
NSS	Naisi Secondary School
NSS	National Secular Society
OPC	Office of the President and Cabinet
OSA	Operation Sunrise Africa
PAC	Public Affairs Committee
PAC	Public Appointments Committee
RC	Roman Catholic
SDA	Seventh Day Adventist
UDF	United Democratic Front

UFH	University of Fort Hare
UK	United Kingdom
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USA	United States of America

ABSTRACT

The major purpose of the study was to critically examine the applicability of manifestations and factors of secularization in Britain to Malawi. In examining the manifestations and factors the study had to examine the process of secularization in Britain and its causal factors using theoretical frameworks and examine manifestations and causal factors of secularization in Malawi using field research work as a major source supported by the theoretical frame works of secularization.

The study was guided by the key research question, “Are the manifestations and factors of secularization in Britain applicable to Malawi?” The question was supported by other follow up questions, namely, “What were the factors that contributed to the rise of secularization in Britain?” “What is the connection between Britain and Malawi?” “To what extent does secularization in Britain affect that in Malawi?” “Does Malawi have unique factors that are specific or are the same factors at work that have contributed to the process of secularization in Britain?”

The conceptual framework for this research was derived from the literature on “secularization” from different scholars, in particular, the work of Dobbelaere (2002) whose analysis of secularization provided the theoretical frame work for this study. Learning from Dobbelaere (2002) the study used three types of secularizations, namely, societal, organizational and individual. Dobbelaere (2002:24ff) distinguishes the three types of secularization in a very simple way: individual secularization, the lack of individual practice, societal secularization, the loss of influence on society, and organizational secularization as the effect on religious organizations by changes in society.

The methodological approach to the study was the mixed methods approach that involved three types of research methodologies: the qualitative, quantitative and case studies approaches. Data was collected through personal and focus group interviews. It was supported by secondary sources which include books, minutes of meetings in various institutions and the internet.

The study notes that all the three types of secularization are being experienced in Malawi; societal secularization has been manifested by the removal of religious connected syllabus in schools, suspension of homosexuality laws and involvement of religious leaders in different immoral issues just like non-believers. Organizational secularization has been manifested by fights among religious institutions e.g. boarder disputes that have been given as case studies in chapter five and finally the individual secularization is being manifested in Malawi as membership records indicate that there is a big decline in church attendance and participation in religious activities.

New knowledge that this study is proposing is that secularization is manifested in Malawi through the partial influence from Britain because of strong links between the two countries and the effects of modernization. The study further proposes that donor influences, Islam, lack of well educated religious leaders and African Traditional Religion are the unique factors of secularization in Malawi, while modernization, urbanization, industrialization are factors that are partially applicable to Malawi, and religious pluralism is fully applicable to both Britain and Malawi as a factor of secularization. Finally the study proposes that a proper training of religious leaders is vital for the sustainability of the church as it experiences the manifestations of secularization.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE SECULARIZATION PROCESS IN MALAWI

1.1 Statement of problem

According to the Malawi national demographic census of 2009, between 60 and 80 percent of Malawi's 15 million people consider themselves Christians (Phiri 2006:15).

This statistical reality motivates some Christians to expect the country to be characterized by high Christian moral values. However, available evidence suggests that secularization is withering the very moral foundation of Christian standards, as rightly observed by Michael Phiri:

The decline in attendance in some churches and the ignorance of the Christian story among other people in our society attest to the fact that something has changed in Christianity.

The delight with the treasures of materialism and obsession with sex is palpable. People seem to be getting what they want, whether it is taking alcohol in excess or indulging in sex of all forms and with different people. So, the question is often being asked: Is Christianity losing out to secularization? Some agree that these days, it is sometimes difficult to differentiate between a Christian and a non-believer.

The religious hard-line approach to issues such as abortion, contraception use, same sex marriage and many other issues seem to wither in these modern times (Phiri 2006:15-16).

Phiri's observations on secularization in Malawi provide a springboard for this study.

Out of Phiri's observations, this thesis would like to respond to the following questions: "What is secularization?" "What were the factors that contributed to the rise of secularization in Britain?" "What is the connection between Britain and Malawi?" While secularization is a comparatively new phenomenon in Malawi, the links between the current state of secularization in Malawi and in Britain, cannot be overlooked. Britain has influenced a number of systems in Malawi (e.g. the Judicial

and Education Systems). Since the issue of secularization is not new in Britain, it is necessary to include Britain in the study of secularization in Malawi.

These observations raise some fundamental questions, such as, “To what extent does secularization in Britain affect Christianity in Malawi?” Having identified factors that contribute to secularization in Britain, two questions arise: “Are there specific factors that promote secularization in Malawi or are there common factors that have contributed to the process of secularization in Britain as well?” “Are the factors of secularization in Britain applicable to Malawi?”

This study responds to the above questions by using theoretical work of different scholars, as in chapters two and three. It further responds to the questions by interpreting the field research findings discussed in chapters five, six and seven. The thesis is enriched by comparing the manifestations and factors of secularization in Britain to Malawi.

1.2 The aim of study

The aim of this research is to investigate two issues: the process of secularization in Britain, which will include trends in the process and factors that led to the process in Britain, as well as the process of secularization in Malawi and compare the process in the two countries. Firstly in investigating secularization in Britain, critical questions will be raised regarding the relationship between the church in Britain and the church in Malawi. The investigation will thus examine contentious concepts such as ‘*church*’ and ‘*secularization*’. The objective is to draw parallels between secularization in Britain and in Malawi. The study will look at the decline in religion and specifically in terms of Christianity.

The term 'church' means a gathering of believers. This thesis will look at the church as the "Christian Church". Secondly, the study will carry out a country-wide analysis of the church in Malawi, appraising how research and experience combine to identify the highly debatable concepts of *church* and *secularization*. The study will also highlight the challenges posed by secularization and develop plans and recommendations to ensure the sustainability of the church.

1.3 Hypothesis

The researcher is aware that some theologians, such as Cox, believe that secularization is actually good for the church. However, this study builds on Wallace's (1966:265) fear for the future extinction of the church, by investigating whether the factors of secularization in Britain are applicable to Malawi; as well as whether the Malawian church can use its theology to combat secularization. He suggests that the church become more meaningful and responsive to people's needs, aspirations and livelihoods. However, I would like to argue that the causes of secularization in Britain are only partially at work in Malawi. Secularization in Malawi is also caused by other factors such as: donor influence¹, the lack of well-trained and educated religious leaders, the rise of Islam, and African Traditional Religion.

1.4 The structure of the thesis

The thesis has eight chapters. In chapter one the problem statement has been addressed to give an overview of secularization in Malawi, the aim of study and the hypothesis of the entire research. However, the same chapter outlined the structure of the whole thesis. Chapter two discusses the concept of secularization by defining it and presenting three types of secularization, namely societal, organizational and

¹ Malawi is rated the 6th poorest country in the world 80% of its development programmes depend on donor-funding (Booth et al. 2005:10-15)

individual. These three types of secularization have been used as the theoretical framework of the thesis. Chapter three discusses the process of secularization in Britain and its causal factors. Chapter four is about the research methodology, since it precedes chapter five which is the first chapter to present the field research findings. Chapter six is the second chapter of presenting and analyzing the field research findings and secondary data in the discussion of the factors of secularization in Malawi. This chapter has noted that there are four factors of secularization that are specific to Malawi. Chapter seven assesses the similarities of manifestations of secularization in Britain to Malawi and the applicability of factors of secularization in Britain to Malawi and chapter eight which presents the research findings from the entire thesis. Recommendations are made to the church in Malawi to show a way forward though the process of secularization which has crept into Malawi is inevitable.

1.5 The relationship between Malawi and Britain

This thesis is about secularization in Malawi and it studies the process with particular reference to Britain. It is important to discuss the relationship between Malawi and Britain to justify the involvement of Britain in the secularization of Malawi. The relationship between Malawi and Britain dates from 1859, when Dr David Livingstone came to Malawi and brought Commerce, Christianity and Civilization and was strengthened in 1891 when Malawi became a British Protectorate. During the partition of Africa, Malawi was colonized by Britain. This relationship between Britain and Malawi, has contributed, to some extent, to the process of secularization in Malawi.

1.5.1 Historical relationship

The desires of Dr David Livingstone for Malawi were of bringing the three Cs, namely, Christianity, Civilization and Commerce. Muluzi *et al* (1999:3) wrote that the 30 years before the end of the nineteenth century were some of the most eventful years in the country (Malawi). During this period, the desires of Dr David Livingstone for the country were fulfilled. Missionaries sponsored by both the Free Church of Scotland and the Established Church of Scotland came into the country. The Free Church of Scotland established a mission station at Cape Maclear in 1875 before moving to Bandawe in 1881 and then, later, permanently to Livingstonia. The Established Church of Scotland settled at Blantyre in 1876 and is now called the CCAP Blantyre Synod, while the Free Church of Scotland established what is now called the Synod of Livingstonia. When this thesis talks of the church losing influence, it also refers to these Synods which form part of the 'Church in Malawi'.

The above reference shows that Britain and Malawi have very strong links, and therefore, as the study notes, the influence of secularization in Britain on Malawi, is based on their historical relationship. The bringing of missionaries to Malawi helped to eradicate the slave trade which was very common then in Malawi and neighbouring countries such as Tanzania (Muluzi 1999:3).

By the early 1880s, the British subjects exceeded 30. They began to pressure the British Government to declare the area in which they had settled a British Protectorate. Such a declaration would prevent the Portuguese from claiming the same area as theirs, as the Portuguese had already been in Mozambique for a very long time. They viewed the British as intruders in an area they had earmarked for natural expansion. In 1891, the British Government finally declared the area (Malawi)

a British Protectorate. They called it the British Central Africa Protectorate and appointed Harry Johnston as the first Commissioner and Consul-General to govern the protectorate.

The British having taken Malawi under their control had to make sure the environment was conducive for good governance. They disarmed the Yao slave trading chiefs. Muluzi *et al* (1999:4) wrote:

Despite profitable business, the ACC failed to contain the slave traders. Johnston realised that he would not succeed in governing the country if he did not disarm the Yao slave trading chiefs. Disarming them also meant abolishing the slave trade and Johnston made that his major goal. By 1895, he had subdued all the Yao slave trading chiefs in southern Malawi as well as Mlozi, a prominent Arab slave trader at Karonga. In 1896, he defeated the remaining defiant chiefs in the central region of Malawi.

The British missionaries had by 1900 expanded considerably. They had established many satellite mission stations. In the north, the Livingstonia Mission had established the Overton Institute to provide general education and skilled training to Africans. A similar institution in the south, the Henry Henderson Institute (HHI), was opened in 1909.

1.5.2 British systems still used in Malawi

Britain has a major influence in Malawi in various areas such as the civil service administrative system, security: the army and police structures, the judicial system, education, health, and the legislative system. Since the coming of British Missionaries and since Britain colonized Malawi, the country has used the systems introduced since 1891 when Malawi became a British Protectorate.

1.5.3 Civil services administrative system

The legacies of colonial systems still exist in the Malawi Government administration. In every district in Malawi, the District Commissioner is the head of the district. The government uses satellite administration; that is to say power is vested in the District Commissioner, who represents the central office, communicating with their subjects as the central office advises them to. This is also what happened during colonial era. The commissioner-general had the central powers.

In Britain the Prime Minister has executive powers to administer the government and, with his cabinet, initiates policies. Oakland (1995:101) wrote that the Prime Minister consequently has great power within the British system of government, and it is suggested that the office has become like an all-powerful executive presidency. But there are considerable checks on this power, inside and outside the party and the Parliament, which makes the analogy less than accurate.

In Malawi, the President, together with the cabinet, has executive powers to administer the government. Section 88 of the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi says that, (1) The President shall be responsible for the observance of the provisions of this Constitution by the executive and shall, as the Head of State, defend and uphold the Constitution as the supreme law of the Republic. (2) The President shall provide executive leadership in the interest of national unity in accordance with this Constitution and the laws of the Republic.

1.5.4 Organizational culture

The system of office administration in Malawi is British. The offices of bosses are sealed offices. The boss does not share an office with his subordinates. Usually the

boss stays in his own office. The use of memos is practised. The dress code in offices is formal. And usually the seniors or bosses are addressed as “Sir” or “Madam” for ladies who are superiors.

1.5.5 Security: army and police

The security system in Malawi is also British. For many years the Malawi Army was called the King’s African Rifles (KAR). The name itself is a British sounding one. The ranks in both the army and police follow the British ranking system. The protocol of a boss being always right is normally followed in the Malawi security System.

1.5.6 Education system

Formal education was brought to Malawi by British missionaries. The education system and curriculum were British. Since then, the Malawi Government has used the British system of education. To date, the business and official language used by Malawi is English. Although it is not important, it is natural to use English as the official language because in Malawi there are many local languages and it is impossible for the country to adopt the language of any particular ethnic group as national language. Such a move may cause a lot of political tension and argument because all tribes or ethnic groups are equal as Malawian citizens, hence nobody seems to mind the use of English as a common language. Both the judiciary and legislature use English in their business deliberations.

Within the education system, the curriculum is taught in English in all the other disciplines such as Geography, History, Biology, Physical Science, Mathematics etc. This system of teaching all subjects in English starts from the primary school to the university level. The technical term used for the type of English used in Malawi is the

Queen's English, which is also the Standard English in the United Kingdom. In Malawian high schools, the use of O and A level examinations was also adopted from Britain, with some of Malawi's schools still keeping the tradition till today.

The churches in Malawi are also involved in the education system of Malawi through the schools they run, and their chaplaincy work. As mentioned above, formal education was brought to Malawi by the early missionaries. Oakland (1995:240) also wrote about the involvement of the churches in Britain:

The church's central position in earlier centuries enabled it to create the first English schools in the sixth century, after the country had been converted to Christianity. [...] In later centuries, the church created more elementary schools, and a few local areas developed secular schools for young children.

The Church of England was not the only church involved from the United Kingdom (UK) but also other denominations. Oakland (1995:241) reported:

[...] But changes had occurred within the existing school framework. The Church of England lost its domination of education, and had to compete with the Roman Catholic Church, the Nonconformist Churches and other denominations. Although they had their own separate schools, and protected their independence from state and secular interference, they did provide much of the available schooling and a religious framework which affected later developments in education.

The above system of education and the relationship between the church and state in matters of education is similar to that between Malawi and Britain. And this continuously shows the link between Malawi and Britain, which will later indicate their impact on secularization in both Malawi and Britain.

1.5.7 Parliamentary system

The Parliament in Malawi is headed by the Speaker. And there are parliamentary committees assigned to tackle different issues as per their mandate. Some parliamentary committees are; the Public Appointment Committee (PAC) (responsible for the recruitments of all civil servants in Malawi) and the Public Accounts Committee, which is responsible for the auditing and review of finances in all the government departments. In Britain, the Parliament is also sovereign from the interference of the executive and judiciary, the Parliament is there to pass laws as John Oakland wrote:

[...] Parliament is the supreme legislative authority in Britain. Since it is not controlled by a written constitution, it has legal sovereignty in all matters, subject only to some European Union law. This means that it can create, abolish or amend laws for all or any parts (s) of Britain on any topic. In this sense Parliament is the sovereign power in the state. Its main functions are to pass laws; vote on financial bills so that government can carry on its legitimate business; examine government policies and administration; scrutinize European Union legislation; and debate important political issues (Oakland 1995:80).

In Malawi, the Parliament has legislative powers also. Section 48 of the Malawi Constitution (2013:30) reads:

- (1) All legislative powers of the Republic shall be vested in Parliament which shall have the powers and responsibilities set out in this Constitution.*
- (2) An act of Parliament shall have primacy over other forms of law, but shall be subject to the Constitution.*
- (3) Any question proposed for decision by the National Assembly or by the Senate shall be decided by a majority of the votes of the members present and voting, unless this Constitution or any other Act of Parliament otherwise provides.*

In Britain, Members of Parliament are elected after every five years, thereafter the Parliament is dissolved, before the next parliamentary elections. Oakland (1995:81) narrated that:

A Parliament has a maximum duration of five years, but it is often dissolved and a general election called before the end of this term. The maximum has sometimes been prolonged by special parliamentary legislation in emergency situations like the two World Wars. Each Parliament is divided into annual sessions, running normally from one October to the next, with a long recess from July to October. A dissolution of Parliament and the issue of writs for the ensuing general election are ordered by the monarch on the advice of the Prime Minister. If an individual MP dies, resigns or is given a peerage, a by-election is called only for that member's seat, and Parliament as a whole is not dissolved.

A similar procedure is followed in Malawi. Members of Parliament serve five year terms and if an MP dies, a by-election is held in that constituency, Also, the dissolution of Parliament is done by the President as section 67 (1) of the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi (2013:40) states:

The National Assembly shall stand dissolved on 20th of March in the fifth year after its election, and the polling day for the general elections for the next National Assembly shall be the Tuesday in the third week of May that year; Provided that where it is not practicable for the polling to be held on the Tuesday in the third week of May, the polling shall be held on a day, within seven days from that Tuesday, appointed by the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC). [...] (3) The first meeting of the National Assembly shall commence on a date to be appointed by the President occurring within forty-five days after the polling day or, where polling takes place on more than one day, within the forty-five days after the last polling day.

The procedures of the Parliament in Malawi also follow the British system. Every Member of Parliament must address the speaker when raising any issue and even the dress code for both the speaker and the members of Parliament are British.

Members must be dressed in a suit when they attend Parliamentary deliberations. They are not allowed to dress casually to attend parliamentary deliberations.

1.5.8 Judicial system

The judicial system of Malawi is British. Case citations, the dress code of judges and British laws are used in the judicial system of Malawi. In some cases, British Lawyers have been hired to Malawi courts. An illustrative case was that of Hon John Tembo, who was accused by the Bakili Muluzi government of masterminding the death of critical political leaders: three cabinet ministers, Honourables Aaron Gadama, Twaibu Sangala, Dick Matenje and David Chiwanga a Member of Parliament. In his case he hired a British Lawyer, Streighbook to lead other Malawian lawyers to defend him.

1.5.9 The relationship between the church in Britain and Malawi

There is a very strong relationship between the Church of England and the Anglican Church in Malawi. This gives the Church of England direct influence over the churches in Malawi. This relationship started in 1965 as Tengatenga (2006:29) wrote:

[...] As a direct consequence Bishop Wilson of Birmingham, UK and Bishop Arden began discussions on a companion relationship which has gone on between the Anglican Church in Malawi from 1965 to the present. Over the years many relationships have developed between parishes and dioceses and other organizations. There have been exchange programmes between Church leaders of the Anglican in UK and Malawi.

The citation above indicates that the relationship between Britain and Malawi is not only secular but also ecclesiastical, which makes it possible for the two countries to share information.

1.6 Conclusion

It is important to include reference to Britain in explaining secularization in Malawi because of the above analysis, and taking advantage of the fact that there is already available secondary data that discusses secularization in Britain. The next chapter unveils the conceptual framework for secularization. This includes definitions and types that are used as theoretical pillars to the entire thesis.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF SECULARIZATION

2.1 Introduction.

This chapter deals with the conceptual framework of secularization. It covers definitions and types of secularization. In order to understand the thesis, one has to understand the key word secularization, especially its definition and types, as presented by other scholars and as the researcher understands it. Sommerville (1992:3) observed that, defining the concept of secularization itself has been the subject of heated debate:

Secularization has not been much studied [.....] Secularization has seemed such a broad, diffuse, tautological, or even contradictory concept that sociologists and historians have become impatient with it. They cannot do without the term, but they use it very gingerly. Scholars complain, quite rightly, that the common notion of a unitary, linear, and inevitable decline of religion is only an assumption, and one which falsifies the evidence.

Scholars have understood differently the meaning of secularization, and to date there are still arguments on the subject of secularization. This study discussed the views of a number of scholars on the subject and arrived at a definition that was used as a theoretical frame work in this thesis.

Sommerville (1992:4) gave an example of two different societies; one which is centred on religion and the other one which is secularized. As a society which was religious, he gave the example of the Old Kingdom of Egypt, whose religious rituals were so woven into the fabric of their life that they could not separate religion from the rest of their activities:

The Old Kingdom of Egypt was considered to be the centre of the universe. The King used to descend from the greatest god and spoke with divine authority on all subjects in both politics and religion. Though the King was not free to change the law as he saw fit, he ruled by customs and traditions which were themselves considered sacred. Everything in life had a religious dimension.

The above reference is an example of a society which is religious. However, in a secularized society religion is pushed to the margins. It may be attached to a few individuals but not the entire nation or society as it was in the case of the Old Kingdom of Egypt. The approach further means that religion had power and influence. The symbols of religion were all over Egypt and that alone raises a good starting point for this study, that indeed there was a time when religion was very powerful.

The second example is of a society in which religion is only a matter of individual conscious beliefs, important primarily for one's most philosophical and poetic solitude. It would hardly occur to anyone to attempt to legislate religion, for religious ideas and institutions are thought to refer to an altogether different realm of spiritual concerns. This approach is that of a secularized society where religion has no authority over symbols or the society. This understanding of secularization agrees with Williams (2007:51) that secularization is "the decreasing influence of religion upon society, a decline in the faith that has been dominant there for, in many cases, over a millennium".

2.2 Views of secularization by different scholars

A number of scholars have defined the concept of secularization in different ways. Mark Chaves defines secularization as the declining scope of religious authority and advises that it should not be understood as declining religion:

Secularization is most productively understood not as declining religion but as the declining scope of religious authority. A focus on religious authority is more consistent with recent developments in social theory than is a preoccupation with religion; draws on and develops what is best in the secularization literature; and reclaims a neglected Weberian insight concerning the sociological analysis of religion (Chaves 1994:749).

This thesis agrees with Chaves' understanding of secularization because his observation above means that religion itself can maintain its existence but without any influence or authority upon the society. This means that, in such a society, the impact of religion has declined. In the Old Kingdom of Egypt religion was a way of life, as the laws of the country were guided by religious values. But when a society has been secularized, religion may be practised but it does not shape or influence the laws of the country or of that particular community. A community which is not secularized looks at policies based on a religious foundation, and religion has power and authority.

Wilson (1982:1149) defines secularization in terms of the decline in attendance at church services. "For years, everyone has agreed that many nations in Europe are extremely secularized- that few attend church services, that belief is on the wane and that the power and presence of religion in public life has faded to a shadow of its past glories". This thesis would like to argue that one cannot define religion in terms of a decline in church attendance but considers the decline in church attendance as a sign of secularization. When religion has no influence in the society, church attendance is affected; People may see the value of religion to the individual but not society. This researcher holds that, the low attendance at church services is one of the signs of secularization.

Though Wilson (1982)'s general assumption is that "everyone has agreed that many nations in Europe are secularized, that belief is on the wane and religion in public life has faded..." His assumption was challenged by some sociologists such as Rodney Stark and William Sims Bainbridge (1985) who believed that, many religious movements were born:

[...] we demonstrate that secularization is only one of three fundamental and interrelated processes that constantly occur in all religious economies. The process of secularization is self-limiting and generates two countervailing processes, one of these is revival. Religious organizations that are eroded by secularization abandon a substantial market demand for less worldly religion, a demand that produces breakaway sect movements [...], out of secularization is born revival as protest groups formed to restore vigorous otherworldliness to a conventional faith. Secularization also stimulates religious innovation. [...] New religions constantly appear in societies (Stark & Bainbridge 1985:2)

However, Wilson's observation of secularization is supported by other sociologists, such as Steve Bruce, who believes that religion in Europe was on the wane: "Despite the fuss made by a few sociologists keen to challenge the secularization thesis, the consensus is very clear; our medieval past was considerably more religious than our modern present" (Bruce 2002:56-58).

Although he says that modern Church membership is plummeting and "religious belief" is still just as strong, he refutes it by showing the relevant statistics in sociology and history. It can be challenged because this research indicates that, indeed, Christian belief has declined:

The trend is clear. Those marks of an enduring interest in religion that persist outside the churches are themselves becoming weaker and rarer. If one wants to call those residues 'implicit religion', then one has to recognize that the implicit is decaying in the same way as the explicit. It is not a compensating alternative.

But he continues:

Secondly, it should be no surprise that, though there are more avowed atheists than there were twenty years ago, they remain rare. Self-conscious atheism and agnosticism are features of religious cultures and were at their height in the Victorian era. They are postures adopted in a world where people are keenly interested in religion.

Another experience of the signs of secularization was felt in 2001. I had a privilege of going to Pittsburgh in United States of America² on a mission trip. I was asked to preach at Hilton Presbyterian Church. The first service had about 120 people and I was happy considering that I was warned that the churches in the United States were not as big as ours in Malawi. But during the second service, the attendance was very low, registering about 27 people. The minister in charge told me that attendance at the second service gets as low as 7 sometimes and that an attendance of 27 people, was rather good.

Berger (1969:107) has a different perspective, as he defines secularization as the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols as mentioned by Williams (2007) above.

This researcher believes that the views of Berger and Williams on secularization are more convincing, because, if religion has lost authority in a society, its influence declines and it cannot dominate in both culture and tradition. That is the reason Berger has understood secularization as the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols as cited above.

² The Partnership between the CCAP Blantyre Synod and Pittsburgh was initiated and started by The Very Rev. Silas Ncozana, in 1991 while he was the General Secretary of the Synod and normally there are exchange visiting programmes.

Acquaviva (c1979:35), offers a different perspective. He defines secularization as “the rejection of the magical use of the sacred”. In articulating secularization, he introduces the concept of ‘*desacralization*’, which is easily associated with secularization. He defines desacralization as the loss of the capacity to experience living as psychological sacred. This understanding of secularization by Acquaviva, equates secularization with desacralization. According to Acquaviva, in a society where the process of secularization has taken place, people have no moral conscience, as they do not measure their morality by religious beliefs. However, not everyone links conscience with religion.

In agreement with religion’s loss of authority, Dobbelaere (2002) has simplified the definition of secularization as the process through which ‘religion has lost its presidency over other institutions’. Because religion has lost its presidency and authority, there has been low attendance at church activities, which supports Wilson’s view of secularization as a sign of the loss of influence of religion in the society. People do not feel the importance of religion in their life; therefore, they begin to question the rationale of going to church or attending any church activity.

Berger (1967:135-7) understands the idea of secularization as the loss of religion’s overarching claims. Looking at the influence of religion from past to modern times, he noted that religion has lost its societal significance, and cannot be imposed on citizens, but, must be marketed:

In a secularized society the overarching and transcendent religious system of old is being reduced in a modern, functionally differentiated society to a subsystem alongside other subsystems, and religion’s overarching claims are losing their relevance. As a result religion has lost its societal significance, and is no longer backed by other subsystems. It can no longer be imposed on citizens, and must now be marketed.

Though Berger (1967) is suggesting that religion must be marketed, the impact of secularization has made it difficult to convince people to see the significance of religion as they used to see it in the past. The loss of authority and power of religion has made it difficult even to market religion, and this is the impact of secularization.

Crabtree (2006:1) declares that in secularization modern society rejects religion. He explains:

As modern society advances it will become increasingly secularized and religion will become increasingly hollow. However, the rise of science in the 17th Century caused some sociological commentators to suggest a permanent decline, and some have proposed that science and intelligence, both rooted in the Enlightenment, are anathema to religious faith.

Although Crabtree (2006) is not necessarily defining the term secularization, his observation that in modern society religion will become increasingly hollow is very important. He further mentioned some key contributory factors, such as enlightenment, science and intelligence. However, these factors will be discussed in details in the next chapter that deals with the manifestations and factors of secularization in Britain.

Giddens (1993:441) expanded his thinking of secularization by mentioning three great thinkers of sociology, who noted that the significance of religion would decrease in modern times. This idea of a decrease in religious influence is what this thesis is focusing on to understand secularization. And this supports Giddens' understanding of secularization as he reflected on the three great thinkers below:

The three 'classical' sociological theorists, Marx, Durkheim and Weber [all] thought that the significance of religion would decrease in modern times. Each believed that religion is in a fundamental sense an illusion. The advocates of different faiths may be wholly persuaded of the validity of the beliefs they hold and the rituals in which they participate,

yet the very diversity of religions and their obvious connections to different types of society, the three thinkers held, make these claims inherently implausible.

Roberts (1995:337-359) noted that secularization is important but also controversial. He argues that, in general, the theory holds that science, rationality, institutional differentiation, and technological progress combine to undermine the influence of religion in social life. Indeed, many social scientists would probably agree that the “modern empirical worldview has replaced the miraculous religious worldview.”

Roberts (1995) makes a valid observation that there are a lot of ideas in science that are usually felt to be in conflict with religion. An example can be given of the religious concept of belief. One believes because of faith in things that one has not seen with the physical eyes. However, in science, proof must precede belief. When religion was still powerful, though there was need to question its authority, people did not feel it.

Modernization has been said to be a major factor in secularization because science, rationality, institutional differentiation and issues of technology are all the outcomes of modernization. This idea of the effect of modernization will be discussed in detail in chapter three, which discusses, “secularization in Britain”.

Momen (1999:478) suggests five ways of looking at secularization, which are discussed below:

(a) Decline of popular involvement in institutionalized religion, and this can be seen in the decline in church attendance, with fewer marriages, baptisms and funerals being performed under religious auspices throughout Europe during the twentieth century.

Wilson's idea of the decline in church attendance and other religious activities was discussed at the beginning of this chapter. However, as noted above, this is a sign of secularization. But it makes sense that with the coming of secularization, popular involvement in institutionalized religion would decline.

(b) The loss of the prestige of religious institutions and symbols.

There has been a loss in the influence that religious institutions used to have over public policy, and a loss in the personal prestige of the religious professional in Europe. This idea of Momen's is acceptable, because the whole concept of secularization deals with the loss of authority of religion in the society. This loss can be seen in the lack of influence of religion in the society and the loss of religious vitality in religious organizations or institutions.

This loss of religious prestige in the society, has led to the difficulties that many religious institutions or organizations have in recruiting religious professionals, because many professionals would like have prestige in their work situations. Before the impact of secularization, religion had authority and influence in the society. Indeed, this is secularization, and it is related to how Berger (1969:107) defines secularization as "the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols." This definition of secularization falls under what is known as organizational secularization. The loss of the prestige of religious institution as result of the modification of its structure, or beliefs is discussed further under the section on organizational secularization below.

(c) The separation of society from the religious world, so that religion becomes a purely personal matter.

Momen noted that the process of secularization begins by contesting the public role of religion. It then substitutes other forms of authority for the authority of religion, and finally it relegates religion to the private sphere of human existence. Momen makes a good point when he says that in secularization religion becomes a private matter and is not imposed on the society. However, this may indicate that religion has lost its authority over that particular society and that is why it becomes a personal matter for individuals to make personal decisions, whether to practise religion or not. This is also related to societal secularization as discussed below.

(d) The “desacralization” of the world.

This is the loss of the idea of the sacred. As science increases our understanding of humanity and of the world, increases. Because of this knowledge, the area of 'mystery' and the supernatural decrease. Human beings begin to question some theories that were previously not questioned. As mentioned above, the issue of religion deals with faith, while science always wants formulae to prove facts. The critical thinking of the scientific approach dilutes the authority of religion, and this normally leads to secularization.

(e) Religious groups themselves become increasingly concerned with the things of this world rather than the spiritual world.

Religious institutions have their own ways of looking at issues. They have their own approach, but as a result of secularization, the goals of such institutions have become indistinguishable from those of the rest of the society because religion is seen as a leisure activity, among others. It is not basic to life, but an aspect. Momen

mentioned that some religious groups have begun to participate in the competitiveness of free-market capitalism. They compete, for example, with secular institutions in recreational, educational and social activities. They have made the religion that they offer into a commodity that they market. Berger (1967:135) made a recommendation that religion no longer be imposed on citizens but must be marketed. This is a sign of secularization because marketing religion means that it must be readjusted to suit the needs of the people.

The spirit of religious groups that are concerned with the things of this world cannot be ignored completely, as one must think of the prophetic role³ of the church. Religious leaders must be concerned with challenges that face the world and that is acceptable. However organizational secularization occurs when there is change in the religious organizations where vitality of religion is lost in order to accommodate the needs of the world.

The argument put forward by this research focuses on the involvement of religious groups in secularization. There is need to balance spiritual work and social work to avoid over-emphasizing social work at the expense of spiritual work. To some extent, if the social responsibility of the church is overdone, it would make it difficult to differentiate between a religious group and a social group or a political group in terms of politics. This leads to secularization as well.

³ The prophetic role of the church means that the church will speak on behalf of the voiceless or oppressed and the church been concerned with the problems of citizens and confront those in authority for the better of the people.

2.3 Types of secularization

Scholars have analyzed secularization differently. This thesis analyses three types of secularization; societal, organizational and individual. These types of secularization are connected because the loss of the influence and the authority of religion in society is referred to as societal secularization. This type of secularization has led religious institutions to reshape their structure and role to make them more easily accepted in society. Some who valued religion in the society because it had authority and influence, no longer see it in the same way, as religious institutions have also changed to adapt to societal needs, resulting in a loss of interest in anything remotely religious. This is what is referred to as individual secularization.

This typology of secularization was suggested by Karel Dobbelaere (2002)⁴ who has analyzed secularization, in a way that fits in well with the position adopted by this thesis. He advances three types of secularization, namely: societal, organizational and individual. These represent the main pillars to the thesis. The types of secularization are used to analyze critically which one exists in a particular context. Since the thesis is about the process of secularization in Malawi, the types of secularization suggested by Dobbelaere (2002) will be applied to the context of Malawi and of Britain.

Dobbelaere (2002:24ff) distinguishes the three types of secularization in a very simple way: individual secularization, the lack of individual practice; societal secularization, the loss of influence on society, and organizational secularization as the effect on religious organizations by changes in society.

⁴ Karel Dobbelaere is emeritus professor of the catholic University of Leuven and the University of Antwerp (UFSIA). He is an elected member of the Royal Flemish Academy of Belgium for Sciences and Arts, the Academia europaea, and a Former President of the International Society for the Sociology of Religion. He was a Visiting Fellow at All Souls College (Oxford, Great Britain), the Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture (Nagoya, Japan), and the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (Paris, France)

Dobbelaere's (2002) typology was chosen because he provides a useful framework for the present study. He has drawn the threads together and simplifies the concept of secularization. It has been noted that, indeed, secularization is a very complicated topic that cannot only be understood in simple terms. But the three levels of Dobbelaere's (2002) analysis make the topic clearer. This means that the right decision has been made in using Dobbelaere's work to interpret the topic of "Secularization in Malawi."

2.3.1 Societal secularization

Societal secularization is the type of secularization in which the autonomous religious institutional ideologies are replaced, within their own domain, by an overarching and transcendent universe of norms. Church religion, an "institutionally specialized social form of religion" is pushed to the periphery of life as noted in modern industrial societies. Dobbelaere (2002:19) defines "societal secularization as the shrinking relevance of the values institutionalized in church religion for the integration and legitimization of everyday life in modern society. This process leads to the dissolution of the traditional, coherent sacred cosmos" while institutional ideologies based on a rational orientation in the specialized institutional spheres, are developed.

In the above type of secularization, shows religion loses its dominance and authority in the society. This can be contrasted with the situation in the new Kingdom of Egypt. As cited in the first sub section of this chapter, the Old Kingdom of Egypt was religious and its policies were made based on religious guidelines. But with societal secularization such authority of religion is removed, and religion is pushed to the periphery.

Berger (1967:107); understands societal secularization as the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols:

[...] in modern Western history [...] Secularization manifests itself in the evacuation by the Christian churches of areas previously under their control or influence [...] as in the separation of church and state, or in the expropriation of church lands, or in the emancipation of education from ecclesiastical authority. When we speak of culture and symbols, however, we imply that secularization is a social- structural process. It affects the totality of cultural life and of ideation, and may be observed in the decline of religious content in the arts, in philosophy, in literature and, most important of all, in the rise of science as an autonomous, thoroughly secular perspective on the world.

Berger's definition enriches this thesis as it finds that secularization affects the whole society, which is no longer dominated or influenced by religious policies. It affects the totality of society's life. This idea that secularization affects the whole society is discussed further in chapter three, which deals with "secularization in Britain". The chapter suggests that secularization affects political life, legislation and education etc. in Britain. The analysis of secularization in other areas in Britain is very important to this thesis because it shows that secularization, does not only affect the churches but the whole life of the society.

An example of societal secularization has been presented by Durkheim (1965:466). He described the process of religion as encompassing an ever smaller portion of social life. Before the impact of secularization, he believed, the origin of every social interaction was religious:

If there is one truth that history teaches us beyond doubt, it is that religion tends to embrace a smaller and smaller portion of social life. Originally, it pervades everything; everything social was religious; the two words are synonymous. Then, little by little, political, economic, scientific functions free themselves from religious function, constitute themselves apart and take on a more and more acknowledged temporal

character. God, who was at first present in all human relations, progressively withdraws from them; he abandons the world to men and their disputes. At least, if he continues to dominate it, it is from on high and at a distance, and the force which he exercises, becoming more general and more indeterminate, leaves more place to the free play of human forces. The individual really feels himself less acted upon; he becomes more a source of spontaneous activity. In short, not only does the domain of religion not grow at the same time and in the same measure as temporal life, but it contracts more and more. This regression did since the origins of social evolution. It is, thus, linked to the fundamental conditions of the development of societies, and it shows that there are a decreasing number of collective beliefs and sentiments which are both collective enough and strong enough to take on a religious character. That is to say, the average intensity of the common conscience progressively becomes enfeebled.

He further said that nearly all the great social institutions were born in religion. The economy, politics, education and other social institutions evolved out of it. It is clear from Durkheim (1965), that religion had complete authority in the social life of human beings, in the social, political, economic, scientific functions, but due to secularization, societies began to let go of such religious attachments.

Berger (1967:128-31) observed that the effects of societal secularization are in the economic areas, specifically in those sectors of the economy being formed by the capitalistic and industrial processes:

The decisive variable for secularization does not seem to be the institutionalization of particular property relations, nor the specifics of different constitutional systems, but rather the process of rationalization that is the prerequisite for any industrial society of the modern type.

A modern industrial society requires the presence of large cadres of scientific and technological personnel, whose training and ongoing social organization presupposes a high degree of rationalization, not only self-perpetuating but self-aggrandizing. [...] As the modern state is increasingly occupied with the political and legal requirements of the gigantic economic machinery of industrial production, it must gear its own structure and ideology to this end.

On the level of structure, this means above all the establishment of highly rational bureaucracies; on the level of ideology, it means the maintenance of legitimations that are adequate for such bureaucracies.

Thus, inevitably, there develops an affinity, both in structure and in "spirit", between the economic and political spheres. Secularization then passes from the economic to the political sphere in a near- inexorable process of "diffusion".

Wilson defined societal secularization as the decline of a community and changes in social control from moral or religious to technical and bureaucratic control and noted that science as a secular potency has diminished the impact of theological views on the world and altered philosophical perceptions. These changes completely reoriented the educational system, and education has passed from religious control:

As knowledge itself became increasingly secular so priests became less appropriate as teachers, and as the content of education shifted from a religious-moral concern (developed at least partially in the interests of the maintenance of social control) to an increasingly instrumental-technical concern (developed in the interests of increased economic productivity), so education emerged into an institutional order in its own right (Wilson 1969:79)

To agree with Wilson's observation, the scientific approach to issues is different from the theological approach because in theology, faith plays a great role while in science facts or formulas count. Therefore science as a secular potency has diminished the impact of religion.

In reference to societal secularization, Dobbelaere (1979a:49-54) and Billet (1977:8-18) noted that not only had church schools been replaced by secular schools, but within secular and religious schools the significance of religious education and rituals greatly diminished. In a number of schools, which used to have Bible study clubs, they were stopped, and religion was no longer enforced.

Martin (1978:88) also links the breaking of the bonds of social control: "The religious symbols of community and the notion of intrinsic morality (which is rooted in religion though not exclusively religious) were both downgraded," and "social control has

shifted from intrinsic symbols to an appeal based on interest". The Martin's observation meant that religion remained a personal choice and was no longer imposed on citizens in the community. One had to have a personal interest to remain religious.

Luckmann (1976:277) agrees with Wilson and others that religion is a constitutive element of community, but the bulk of his argument is linked to the fact that modern societies no longer need religious legitimations. As a result, religion became an institution among other institutions, and the church an organization among others.

In this understanding of secularization, the proper sphere of religion and its organization is "private life". This segregation of the public and the private spheres is "quite 'functional' for the maintenance of the highly rationalized order of modern economic and political institutions:

Since religion is defined as a private matter, the church can "no longer rely on the state to enforce its jurisdictional claims" (Luckmann 1967:94). The original jurisdiction claimed by the "official" model of the church was "total"; now it is transformed into "a system of mere rhetoric", manifesting itself as "public rhetoric and private virtue" (Berger, 1967:133).

One would not expect the state to impose religion on its citizens in a secularized community. The understanding of secularization pursued here shows religion losing its authority or power on the society and this means that it can no longer be influential in shaping the community.

Religion has become a private choice by and within an individual and Dobbelaere (2002), citing Luckmann (1967) said, "...The private sphere is consumer-oriented, and the "autonomous" individual is free to follow his own subjective preference. He "may choose from the assortment of 'ultimate' meanings as he sees fit- guided only

by the preferences that are determined by his social biography” (Luckmann 1967:99), in the same way that he/she chooses friends, a marriage partner, neighbours, goods and services, holidays, a car, hobbies, and the like. In order to construct his personal identity and his system of “ultimate” significance, “a variety of models is socially available- but none is ‘official’.

Dobbelaere (2002:34) argues that according to the research on church religion, even in the case of church-oriented individuals, it is likely that effective priorities of everyday life, the subjective system of ultimate significance and the rhetoric of the traditional official model are incongruent. The Dobbelaere’s observation is very true because the change in the dominance of religion in one’s life has affected the whole life of individuals in their communities; therefore, to many people religion is not a priority.

Glasner (1977:67-76) notes that the process of societal secularization is a process of social change and implies a “base-line as well as an end-point”. And as mentioned above, the notion of societal secularization implies a comparative historical perspective, when religion had authority in comparison to the period that religion has lost its presidency over other systems. Glasner’s thinking seems valid since religion is no longer powerful enough to control other systems. Glasner (1977) looked at the change in the social context that religion has come to an end point in terms of social control and influence. This does not mean that religion itself has come to an end in the society but it is that vitality of control and influence that comes to the end.

Sorokin (1966:9-10) provides an explicit example of this approach. The base-line is “the religious animated Medieval Christian culture and society” and, according to

him, the process of secularization had begun already at the end of the fourteenth century A.D:

After the fourteenth century this process, with temporary interruptions, progressively grew, expanded over an ever-increasing sector of Western cultural, social, and personal life, and during the last five centuries radically transformed the pre-eminently religious Medieval sociocultural world into a basically different secular Western human universe.

Learning from Sorokin (1966:10-24)'s ideas, societal secularization can be examined in different ways:

An increasing demotion of Christian dogmas, beliefs, rituals and moral imperatives from the status of the God-given "revelations", unconditional moral commandments, and the sacred values to the status of secular, man-made, questionable rules of conduct, fallible human beliefs, and relative values.

A premodern society which is not secularised would believe in Christian dogmas, beliefs and rituals without questioning them, in the belief that they are God-given. In a secularized society the attitude towards such beliefs change, which supports Sorokin's understanding of secularization that people in the society begin to look differently at the same issues they used to believe in before their mind was secularized, raising questions to prove their realities. This is modern thinking which uses the scientific rules of not believing by faith only but believing with facts and tangible evidence.

Societal secularization can also be seen as, "*A decline of inspirational power of Christianity in animating, shaping, and determining the content as well as the style of the Western fine arts*".

Christianity had power in all spheres of life including in cultural activities such as music and painting. And the fact that Sorokin's idea of secularization mentions a

decline of inspirational power of Christianity in animating, and shaping the Western life, means that we are in agreement in looking at the concept of secularization. Because of secularization, Christianity can no longer influence the Western life. A religious society, which is not secularized, can influence a particular society. Therefore Sorokin's thinking of secularization makes sense according to the working definition of this thesis.

Sorokin (1966:10) further gave an example of societal secularization:

In the field of morality the decline of Christian religion, of its ethical ideals, values, and precepts and of their power in controlling the behaviour of the Western population has similarly manifested itself in many basic changes in Western morality and law, of the ethical and legal behaviour of Western population during the last five centuries.

Issues of morality are critical in secularization. In Malawi, the society has been affected very much because of the moral decay among religious leaders. This type of secularization was vital in assessing the factors of secularization in Malawi in chapter five of this thesis.

One would see an effect on the church, the decline of the Christian church as a social institution ...means that the medieval unity of the Christian Church has been increasingly broken, split, and fragmented into numerous denominations and sects fighting one another ideologically, politically, economically, and, once in a while militarily and bloodily. [...] It means also an increased "alienation" and "estrangement" of a considerable part of the Western population from the institutionalized Christian "Churches" and "sects" and a transfer of their allegiance to the secular substitutes of Christian religion, ranging from the atheistic, agnostic, skeptical and "humanistic" opponents of all religions and ending with the religiously

indifferent political, occupational, economic and social organizations and their secular ideologies.

Parsons (1967:36-37) opposed Sorokin's views on the basis of his selection of religious elements. "Sorokin clearly regards Protestantism, compared with medieval Catholicism, as primarily a step in the general decline of religiousness." This is based on a "degree of religious" identified with a transcendental orientation in the sense of other-worldliness. [...] The religious person will tend to renounce the world and engage as far as possible in ascetic or devotional practices or mystical contemplation and purely spontaneous acts of love, reducing his involvement in "practical" affairs which involve institutionalized obligations to a minimum.

Dobbelaere (2002:47) noted that Delumeau forcefully demonstrated that the great moment of the Christianization of Europe was not the Middle Ages but the "modern" period, beginning with the two Reforms. In Catholic and Protestant countries, the two Reforms fought "superstition" and "idolatry", for they wanted to sever the people, especially the rural population, from paganism. But these types of Christianization practiced pedagogy of fear and depended on the state, and so, were already a little secularised.

Mary Douglas opposed the comparison between primitive and modern mankind. For her the issue of secularization is not new though it is treated as a modern trend:

Secularization is often treated as a modern trend [...]. But we shall see that it is an age-old cosmological type [...]. The contrast of secular with religious has nothing whatever to do with the contrast of modern with traditional or primitive. The idea that primitive man is by nature deeply religious is non-sense. The truth is that all the varieties of skepticism, materialism, and spiritual fervour are found in the range of tribal societies. They vary as much from one another on these lines as any chosen segments of London life. The illusion that all primitives are pious, credulous and subject to the teaching of priests or magicians has

probably done even more to impede our understanding of our own civilization than it has confused the interpretations of archaeologists dealing with the dead past (Douglas 1973:36-37).

Douglas' (1973) arguments above challenge the idea that primitive man, by nature, was deeply religious. She agrees with Le Bras and Delumeau, who actually said that the pre-modern period was not an "age of faith" but of "faiths" with the plural "s" because according to man's pre-modern history, the faiths being referred to, meant, "believing in spirits, gods, demons, spells and witches.

In considering Christianity as religion, the belief in faiths cannot be Christian, or the age of faith in the particular context of referring to "anti-secularization". One may wish to know that in the context of this thesis, the age of faith means the period when religion had influence. It is a period when secularization was not an issue. Nobody paid attention to this critical subject-matter that has seen religion losing its authority and influence.

Before the process of secularization was introduced in the world, religion was felt in every society and was very influential. However, as a result of societal secularization, the impact of religion is no longer being felt because it has lost its importance in modern society. Dobbelaere (2002:52) noted that traditional, moral and religious culture is no longer the basis for legitimated control⁵. In a societal system, control is impersonal, technical, legal and bureaucratic: not local, human and moral as it once was. It is increasingly mechanical, technical, computerized and electrified.

In the words of Wilson (1976b:20), "As our society has become less dependent on moral regulations, and as our relations to each other have become more role-

⁵ Before secularization, anything against religion was considered illegal

regulated and less personal, so the functions of religion have declined". Fenn (1972:19) not only argued that religion is unnecessary: "differentiation in modern societies makes it impossible... for religion to provide the basis for cultural integration." As far as legitimacy is concerned, duly established priorities, effectiveness and propriety not religious or moral values become the primary sources. He adds that the increase in the productive capacity of modern societies tends to make less difficult the tasks of providing "legitimacy" for the social order and of motivating enough individuals to work. A religious basis to the normative order becomes less necessary. This is a reflection of societal secularization. The society is no longer basing its order on religious values.

Fenn (1972:19) noted that in a secularised society, institutions such as politics and education are accordingly withdrawn from the religious sphere and the "sacred" canopy is more and more restricted. Subsequently, sociologists extended the meaning of secularization not only to the society but also to the individual level. People were said to be secularized when their involvement in the churches declined and when important episodes in the course of life- e.g. birth, marriage, and burial- ceased to be sacralized, i.e. when fewer and fewer people participated in churchly rites of passage. This was called individual secularization and will be discussed below.

Blumer (1954:7) noted that sociologists have used secularization as a *sensitizing concept*, giving "the user a general sense of reference and guidance in approaching empirical instances", merely suggesting "directions along which to look", and resting on "a general sense of what is relevant". Blumer (1969:161-162) further suggested that, "Scientific concepts have a career, changing their meaning from time to time in accordance with the introduction of new experiences and replacing one content with

another". This approach is seen in the secularization thesis; it is a new experience that has displaced the tradition of religious dominance. However, scholars such as Yinger correctly pointed out that the changing meaning of concepts can be very confusing, as is the case with the concept of secularization, which forced Berger (1967:133) to conclude that America was both secularized and not secularized. The case of America is very confusing because denominations and churches are mushrooming all over and if one were to consider the number of denominations in America the conclusion would be that there is no secularization in America.

2.3.2 Organizational secularization

This sub-section discusses the second type of secularization, which is organizational. Dobbelaere (2002:25) has defined organizational secularization "as change that occurs in the posture of religious organizations –churches, denominations, sects, and new religious movements – in matters of beliefs, morals, and rituals. It implies also a study of the decline in and emergence of religious groups, while Shiner (1967:211-212) call this type of secularization "conformity with this world."

Shiner (1967) calls it "conformity with 'this world'" because this type of secularization normally is associated with religious institutions or organizations that adjust themselves to the beliefs or administrative policies of society to meet the needs of the people. This encourages quantity and not quality, because, learning from Berger (cited above), religion must be marketed as it loses its prestige in the society. This means that the focus of religion in organizational secularization is quantity. Therefore, Shiner's view is that in organizational secularization, the key is the change in the organization that adopts worldliness.

Organizational secularization provides an answer to the dilemma of Cox (1995), who saw Pentecostal and charismatic churches becoming more attractive than the main-line churches. When religious organizations are reorganized just to meet the needs of the people, it can attract more people but in the process they may lose their religious vitality and can be secularized as happens in organizational secularization.

Here Shiner (1967:209-210) discusses the decline of religion or dechristianization:

Organizational secularization, on the other hand, expresses change occurring in the posture of religious organizations- churches, denominations, sects, and New Religious Movements (NRMs)- in matters of beliefs, morals and rituals, and implies also a study of the decline and emergence of religious groups. This is the type of secularization that Shiner calls "conformity with 'this world."

Shiner comments that the New Religious Movements cause organizational secularization because, when there are so many churches, church members are able to shop from one church and to the other. In order to keep members in the churches, the quality and, sometimes, policies are changed to accommodate more members, and this is what organizational secularization is. Since the New Religious Movements will be organised around the needs of the people in the society, people will tend to be comfortable in them, and are drawn away from the traditional churches, which are then tempted to change to retain or attract back their membership, leading to organizational secularization. Dembski (2009:5) warned that as Christians, we must not confuse making our faith credible to the world with seeking its approval. Craving the world's approval is a sure road to perdition. Christianity must abandon the worldly staff and instead restore it to God.

Pfautz (1956:246) understood organizational secularization as the tendency of sectarian religious movements to become part of and like "the world". The church

would take initiatives such as modifying some religious policies to make the church more acceptable and attractive to the public.

Yinger (1962:69-72) calls this type of secularization “religious change” because, before the society changes in this theory of organizational secularization, change begins with a particular church that develops a cultural religion. Berger (1961:39ff) observes that the development of a cultural religion is a religious affirmation of the same values held by the community at large. An example can be given of the South African situation, where churches developed state theology just to support apartheid:

State theology is simply the theological justification of the status quo with its racism, capitalism, and totalitarianism. It blesses injustice, canonizes the will of the powerful and reduces the poor to passivity, obedience, and apathy (Villa-Vicencio et al 1986:252).

The above quotation is an example of organizational secularization because the church had to develop a type of theology that was suitable for the situation in South Africa during the apartheid era. The situation in South Africa in connection with organizational secularization is in line with Berger (1961:51ff) who ascertains that within the United States of America (USA) one finds a strong involvement of religious beliefs in the political processes and institutions, which he calls ‘symbolic integration’- a political, social and psychological religion.

Dobbelaere (2002:21) noted that “there is an inevitable adjustment of the church (beliefs and practices) to dramatic changes in the world within which it works, to make the church accommodative, especially to the people who could resist”. Such views seem to vindicate those who support organizational secularization as a good strategy for the church.

Berger (1967:108) suggests as a good example of organizational secularization, the situation in America, where the churches still occupy a more central symbolic position, but it may be argued that they have succeeded in keeping this position only by becoming highly secularized themselves.

What Dobbelaere (2002) has called organizational secularization, Luckmann has called “internal secularization” of the American denominations, and Dobbelaere has suggested further what churches can do to counter organizational secularization:

Berger’s American case is synonymous with a decline in church orthodoxy, what Luckmann has called the “internal secularization” of the American denominations (1967:33-37), and, which I call organizational secularization. This adaptation to the secular values of society is only one type of social change; churches may also react by making aspects of their beliefs, rites, and moral standards sacred and that would be just the opposite of organizational secularization.

Dobbelaere’s suggestion that churches simply counteract secularization, can only be theoretical because the process of secularization, once started, is irreversible as noted by Pannenberg (1989:28):

In contrast to Weber, as a committed Christian Berger lamented the inevitability of the progress of secularization in European and American culture. But he regarded the trend as irreversible, because the advance of secularization was a cultural concomitant of modern industrial society.

The extinction of churches can be avoided but the decline in influence of the churches cannot be avoided, and secularization in this thesis is understood in terms of religious decline in authority and influence.

However, there have been attempts to bring back the pure Church which is different from the one that some critical scholars believe has been contaminated. Wesley was

one of the Puritans who tried to challenge the Church of England as Collins (2003:1) wrote:

During the reign of Elizabeth 1 (1533-1603) an energetic and deeply principled movement emerged in the English Church that took exception to both the Act of Uniformity and the use of the Book of Common Prayer. [...] The movement was known as Puritans because they wanted to purify the Church of England from its Roman Catholic vestiges in terms of both doctrine and polity. In particular, many of the Puritans sought not only to eliminate episcopacy, but also to cleanse the English church from numerous ceremonies, vestments, and customs that harkened back to the Middle Ages and that, in their judgment, helped render the gospel opaque.

The aim of the Puritan movement was to bring back the original church because they believed that the church of that time had changed and readjusted itself to accommodate the wishes of the people. They were challenging the effects of organizational secularization.

This reinforces the idea that religious institutions or organizations adjust or modify their beliefs to accommodate what the society wants. In the process of reshaping such religious institutions they lose the essence of their religiosity and their core existence as religious institutions. This is organizational secularization. This, then, would define organizational secularization as the loss of the original sacred form of religious organizations or institutions in order to meet the needs of the people in the society.

In Dobbelaere's (2002) view, the social changes that stimulated societal secularization were brought about by rational processes that extended from the economic into the social world, leaving no sphere untouched; even the religious sphere had to rationalize, leading to organizational secularization. Berger (1967:137-148) noted that the pluralistic market situation forced religious institutions to market

their commodity, the religious traditions. In order to achieve “results”, the socio-religious structures were bureaucratized, which stimulated the professionalization of religious personnel and ecumenicity, and eventually, religion had to change and become secularized as its authority declined.

Organizational secularization can also be understood as the emergence of religious communities that changed in their organizational structures, beliefs, morals and rituals. Bellah (1964) looked at organizational secularization as a religious evolution. The purpose of changing religious organizations in terms of structure, beliefs, and rituals was to make religion more autonomous relative to its environment. Bellah (1964:358) defined evolution at any system level as:

A process of increasing differentiation and complexity of organization which endows the organism, social system or whatever the unit in question may be, with greater capacity to adapt to its environment so that it is in some sense more autonomous relative to its environment than were its less complex ancestors.

In organizational secularization, the Christian Churches try to adapt a quest for new social forms to the eternal truth of Christianity, i.e. the adaptation of its social appearance to the social patterns of modern societies. The eternal and transcendental truths, the core values and beliefs of Christianity are not the objects of such adaptation. Dobbelaere (2002:109) noted that these objects are the organizational structure and methods of the churches, their social ethics, adapted to facilitate their penetration of modern social structures with a Christian ethic, and the forms of belief.

Since religious institutions have been changing to fit in the society, they tend to lose their religious value. This means that the vitality of religious institutions is lost as they become like any other secular organization because the organizations change

to meet societal needs as mentioned above. Their structure, nature, attitudes will no longer be the same, as they have been secularised. The connection between the three types of secularization, namely societal, organizational and individual is evident because, religious institutions are modified to fit in the society, which is organizational secularization; in the process, religion loses its presidency in the society leading to societal secularization, and that leads to individual secularization because people's interest in attending religious activities declines.

Yinger (1962:73) opines that the change of religious institutions must be a positive thing for churches. For the survival of religion in a world that is evolving, it must readjust itself, otherwise it can just be pushed away and find that it no longer fits in the modern world. He says:

If one thinks of religion [...] as an ongoing search, subject to changed forms and revised myths, then lack of orthodoxy does not mean the weakening of religion. It can be a sign of strength [...] it is an indication of an expected churchlike response to dramatic changes in the conditions of life among the middle and upper classes in a prosperous society.

What Dobbelaere (2002) calls organizational secularization, Yinger prefers to call "religious change". In discussing Yinger's views in this context, Dobbelaere (2002: 115) states, "Yinger does not speak about organizational secularization or "internal" secularization; he prefers the notion of religious change, a point of view that is clearly dependent on his functional definition of religion."

Both Dobbelaere and Yinger discuss the fact that religious institutions have changed to fit modern society, and this is important because this thesis is about secularization as a subject that deals with change in religion whether in terms of its authority, as discussed in societal secularization, change in the church as institution

as discussed in organizational secularization or change in the perception by individuals of religion as is discussed in individual secularization.

2.3.3 Individual secularization

The two types of secularization, societal and organizational, that have been discussed above are connected, because the loss of influence of religious institutions leads to the adjustment of such religious institutions to attract the public and make the church important. Scholars such as Berger have suggested that religion must be marketed. The individual's indifference to religious or church activities is what is called individual secularization.

Individuals would remain committed to church activities if religious institutions were still vital and religion had influence. However, people have naturally been irreligious since the original sin. There is a process of inadequate sanctification that brings people to salvation; though in the process, Christians do backslide.

Dobbelaere's definition of individual secularization mentions individual behaviour and measures the degree of normative integration in religious bodies because one's commitment to religion can be measured by outward activities such as church attendance, participation in religious rites and attendance at religious activities.

Dobbelaere (2002:25) wrote:

Individual secularization refers to individual behaviour and measures the degree of normative integration in religious bodies. It is an index of the accord between the norms of religious groups in domains of beliefs, rituals, morals, etc. and the attitudes and conduct of their members.

Williams (2007:53) simplifies the definition of individual secularization as the lack of individual practice in churches or religious activities. In the analysis of the "de-Christianization" of the 19th century, reference is generally made to the de-

Christianization of the working class. De-Christianization is generally used to indicate a drop in church practice and beliefs.

The excuses that people made, such as being too busy at work or that they could not be committed to church activities were the result of people losing interest in religion. At the end of the 19th century, socialism was gaining a hold over the working class and in most European countries, the socialist leaders and activists were atheists. The secularist policy of the socialist parties alienated the workers from the churches.

According to Dobbelaere (2002:39), it is believed that by the 19th century, the involvement of the Catholic Church in the old order and the alienation of the working class from local political and Christian traditions had already stimulated the working class in some countries to abandon the church and to move to the left politically.

Luckmann (1967:29-35) noted that “the most ‘modern’ of the countries under discussion, the United States, shows the highest degree of involvement in church religion”:

Today the secular ideas of the American dream pervade church religion. The cultural, social and psychological functions which the churches perform for the American society as a whole as well as for its social groups, classes, and individuals would be considered “secular” rather than “religious” in the view the churches traditionally held of themselves.

The above quotation by Luckmann (1967:29-35) on the situation in America is related to the issue of organizational secularization which has shown that quantity matters more than quality. In the case of American, while the churches were seen to be well attended their influence remained minimal and Cox (1995) only mentioned growth in terms of numbers and not in terms of spirituality.

2.4 Conclusion

A number of scholars' definitions of secularization, suggest that secularization is the decrease in influence of religion on a society or institution. This means that religion has no influence, authority or power on the society. If religion has no power, then its influence on the society declines, resulting in a decline in the morality of believers.

Further, this decline in influence makes many individuals avoid participation in a number of church or religious activities. In reaction to that, churches are forced to modify their structures, beliefs and rituals in order to attract the society. This view of secularization will be used throughout the thesis.

In this chapter, three types of secularization have been advanced namely; societal, organizational and individual. The difference was clearly summarized by Williams (2007:53); individual secularization as the lack of individual practice, societal as the loss of influence on society and finally organization secularization as the effect on religious organizations of change in society. Though the three types; societal, organizational and individual are different in the research; it has been noted that they are very connected to one another. It is the loss of the authority of religion (societal) that has led to the lack of practice of individuals in religious activities (individual), and the churches, in order to remain vital in the society, have been modified in terms of their structure, belief and practices (organizational).

Having discussed the conceptual framework of secularization, the next chapter discussed the manifestations and factors of secularization in Britain. Britain has been identified because there is already available literature indicating that the process of secularization is already advanced there and there is a very strong relationship between Malawi and Britain as discussed in chapter one of this thesis.

CHAPTER THREE

MANIFESTATIONS OF AND FACTORS INFLUENCING SECULARIZATION IN BRITAIN

3.1 Introduction

Secularization is a relatively new experience in Malawi. The previous chapter discussed the definitions of secularization and types. This chapter discusses the manifestations of and factors influencing secularization in Britain. It is important to analyze secularization in Britain to gain insight into the process from a country that is discussed in secondary data (Britain), to a country (Malawi) that has no information on secularization in written form. Though this chapter discusses other manifestations of secularization outside the church but the focus has been on the church because this research is a theological approach.

3.2 Manifestations of secularization in Britain

Gill (2003:1) posed very important questions: “When did British churches and chapels start to appear more empty than full and why did this happen? [...] It is obvious to most people that the majority of churches and chapels in Britain today are more empty than full”. Gill’s (2003) observation confirms that indeed secularization has crept into Britain. Gill (2003), Bruce (2002), and Furlong (2001), have all noted that there is a big decline in church attendance in Britain. This indication of a decline in church attendance will be used in this thesis as the evidence of secularization in Britain and not as a definition of secularization.

One of the types of secularization discussed in chapter two, refers to a decline in the influence of religion (societal secularization) which supports the view that indeed the

process of secularization has occurred in Britain. What Gill (2003) noted was that, when journalists wrote about religious decline, they characteristically cited the empty church services as the primary evidence of the decline. They might or might not discover the repeatedly low attendance at church services, or simply single-point measurements of belief or of church-going, but without fail, they draw attention to the empty services.

A number of scholars have agreed that the process of secularization began in Britain in the nineteenth century. This is confirmed by Gill (2003:2,3) who wrote, "At the heart of the understanding of secularization, it is a process that started to affect British society in the nineteenth century and then affected the institutional churches themselves in the twentieth century."

This sub-section started with two questions posed by Gill (2003) about when and how secularization crept to Britain. Gill (2003:2) came up with propositions that he felt might be helpful in understanding his questions above, which are related to secularization in Britain:

Before the First World War a majority of churches in Britain were full, therefore the Victorians built extra churches because they needed them to meet the demands of rapidly expanding urban and rural populations. [...] However, the churchgoing started to decline generally in proportion to the population only after the First World War. Disillusionment resulting from the war was a significant factor in causing this decline, especially among urban working-class men.

From the above quotation, it can be noted that, before the First World War, the churches were full and there was not much discussion of the process of secularization, however scholars have noted that a lot happened in terms of developments in science and rational thoughts in the nineteenth century and this led to the process of secularization. Nevertheless, Brown (2002:187) noted that "the

statistics of British secularization showed that the greatest gradient of decline of formal Christian religiosity occurred after 1958". If one were to look into the date suggested by Brown (2002), then one would say that secularization grew further in Britain after the Second World War. Taylor (2007:424) noted that the decline of membership in Britain increased after the Second World War:

[...] thereafter there is decline, which becomes steep in the 1960s. Figures for adherents to churches rise in England during the nineteenth century, reaching a peak round the beginning of the twentieth century, before a slow decline sets in, which becomes faster after the Second World War, and quite precipitate after the 1960s.

Secularization originally meant the transfer of ecclesiastical property to civil or state ownership, and the first recorded use of this transfer was apparently after the Thirty Years War in 1648. Christian Churches were huge land owners, and religious institutions in non-Christian countries also held or controlled very large properties, which states increasingly secularized.⁶ In England Henry VIII's dissolution of monasteries was a secularizing step. Secularization over time came rather to refer primarily to a process in which religious influence over government, institutions, ideas, and behaviour is reduced and reliance on the worldly base of these spheres grows.

Secularization and secularism began in Western Europe, along with the rise of capitalism, and stronger states. Bruce (1992) noted that other secularizing forces occurring first in the West included the rise of science and the scientific outlook, over many centuries. The Copernican revolution in astronomy and the Darwinian evolutionary revolution were commonly believed to contradict the creation stories in Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Scriptures and cast doubt on these scriptures' literal

⁶ [http:// science//Niyazi,B](http://science//Niyazi,B) (1964), Bruce, S. (1992) Secularization and secularism, History and Nature of Secularization and Secularism to 1914 (1st December, 2012)

infallibility. The spread of the belief in this worldly causation to ever greater spheres, including history and social science, undermined ideas of divine intervention.

In the eighteenth century Enlightenment building on earlier science and philosophy, the idea of the Great Watchmaker who created the universe but did not afterward intervene became widespread among intellectuals, and was later refurbished to fit evolutionary stories. The Enlightenment contributed to the dilution of religion as it was against the traditional belief of believing without empirically testable facts.

Protestantism is often considered a force for secularization, though it initially increased religiosity and religious loyalties, both among Protestants and among reformed and aroused Catholics. Ultimately, the proliferation of sects, including some liberal ones, and exhaustion in religious wars, helped lead to religious toleration by governments and the recognition of various religious and irreligious beliefs- all elements of state secularism.

Nationalism provided an ideology for nonreligious loyalties. It accompanied socioeconomic modernization and industrialization. Nationalism was a secular force and religion could play only a subordinate role in most nations. In many countries including Britain, nation states struggled with church control over schools, laws, and social institutions, and generally nation-states won and expanded secular institutions.

Industrialization, urbanization, and the rising role of economic class groups helped undermine religious ties and promote secular ideologies, whether nationalist, liberal, or socialist. The rising sociologist movement was often anti-religious. The atheism of Karl Marx (1818-1883), who saw religion as unnecessary in a communist state, became widespread among workers and their supporters.

Until 1905, the Church of England remained established but partly as a result of struggles by secularist groups, legal restrictions on nonconformists, Jews, and atheists ended, and the established church's power declined. In all Western countries public education of children and young adults spread rapidly, and it was increasingly a secular education.

It has been argued by some scholars such as Brown (2002) that the concept of secularization was created by Enlightenment rationality and scientific method, and led to the Victorian obsession with counting churchgoers and non-church-goers which endures in today's focus on the 'church in crisis':

From 1800 to 1960 people drew on novels, magazines, obituaries, and tracts for the Christian language, morality and narrative structures with which to tell their own life stories in autobiography and oral history. But this personal Christian identity broke down suddenly in the 'swinging sixties' when new media, new gender roles and the moral revolution dramatically ended people's conception that they lived Christian lives.

However, the phenomenon of secularization was not felt until the 1960s though the Enlightenment occurred in 17th and 18th centuries. Brown (2002:170) notes that 'the late 1940s and 1950s witnessed the greatest church growth that Britain had ever experienced since the mid-nineteenth century'. Matemba (2011:13) observed that the emergence of modern society was the cause of secularization in the 1960s:

The emergence of modern society roughly between 16th and 18th centuries-triggered by major events such as the Protestant Reformation, the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution-brought cataclysmic changes to much of Western Secularization. Significantly, due to these developments the primacy of religious institutions was eclipsed by economic and political ones and religious values (Lyotard 1999). In extreme cases, such as in France after the Revolution (1798-1799), the country adopted a secular constitution such that to this day the teaching of religion in French public schools is outlawed (Nipkow 2009). Similarly

in the United States of America (USA) religion in public education is also banned in line with the secular nature of the country's constitution (Moran 2010).

The other reason that accelerated secularization after the Second World War was migration. The flow of immigrants into Western countries had a profound effect on religion. For example, Germany received mainly Muslim immigrants from Turkey (Henkel 2006), while the UK received Asian immigrants from the Indian-subcontinent (among them Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs) (Jackson 2004b) and also Asians and Blacks from the Caribbean (Rich 1987).

These immigrants came with their religions adding weight to religious pluralism. By 1970s many British cities were no longer monolithically Christian or indigenously White-British. Templeton (1999) suggested that the traditional religion based on the Bible was no longer relevant to the experiences of people.

Another reason for the acceleration in the process of secularization was that between the end of the Second World War (1945) and the collapse of the Soviet Union (1989), the Communism system of government was widespread. In the Communist states religion was repressed because the Marxist-Leninist ideology that underpinned its secular state considered religion the root cause of man's economic and social servitude, which could end only if religion were abolished in society (Valk 2007).

The emergence of radical theology also contributed to the process of secularization. In the 1960s a number of books emerged that expressed critical views on Christian Theology and thus set a new tone for radical thinking on the engagement between theology and the secular society. There were some great theologians involved, namely, John Robinson, Harvey Cox and Thomas Altizer.

Mitton (1963:276) wrote about Robinson's bestseller (reprinted eight times in 1963), *Honest to God*, "He argued that since the idea of God being up there was being rejected by most educated people, contemporary and secular man had to recognise that the idea of God being out there was becoming an out-dated simplification of the nature of divinity and the religious experience."

While Robinson's thoughts were perceived by religious conservatives as challenging orthodoxy, they were welcomed by liberal thinkers who felt that they had breathed fresh air into the debate about the relevance of religion at a time when people are not only casually turning from the church, but openly rejecting its faith.

Britain was religious before the First World War. Brown (2002:1) noted that "it took several centuries (in what historians used to call the dark Ages) to convert Britain to Christianity, but it has taken less than forty years for the country to forsake it." Gill (2003:2) discussed how the churches began to decline because of a number of factors:

Secularization- the product of nineteenth- century development in science and rational thought and spread in the twentieth century through better education- has proved to be the most abiding factor in church decline. Urbanization- involving the breakdown of rural communities upon which churches thrive has also contributed significantly to the church decline. Twentieth century leisure activities- cars, radios, televisions, have also contributed to church decline. An accumulative result of these various external factors is that British churches (with the significant exception of competitive evangelical churches) have recently become secularized and increasingly empty.

The above quotation responds to one of Gill's (2003) questions that were raised above about how secularization started in Britain and some of the factors that encouraged it. This whole process started with a crisis in religious belief. When

intellectuals like Darwin, Marx and Freud began to question the authority of religion upon the society as an effect of Enlightenment, the process of secularization began.

[...] In short, church decline started with a crisis in religious belief. The gradual effect of some of the leading intellectuals of the nineteenth and early twentieth century notably Darwin, Marx and Freud- has been that religious belief has become increasingly implausible to ever larger sections of the population and that churchgoing has, as a result, slowly atrophied and been replaced by other leisure activities.

The above quotation mentions several factors that will be discussed later in this chapter. The few intellectuals mentioned above had a reason to begin to question the authority of religion. However, the fact that they had begun to raise questions meant that there were other factors that need to be discussed, such as the Enlightenment, which provoked the above mentioned intellectuals. As discussed in chapter two, religion works by faith while science always wants to prove everything with formulas or facts. It is intellectuals with this background that began to question things people used to believe by faith without empirical testable facts.

Other scholars believe that secularization started when the society evolved from a theological to a metaphysical stage⁷. People still believed in God but could not openly express their faith, neither could they challenge religion. After that, people moved into the current scientific stage with the strong indication of a better stage. Modern societies have left both God and the supernatural behind, turning increasingly to the natural and the scientific as the primary modes of explanation.

Norris and Inglehart (2004) argue that human development is the key factor in secularization. As people develop economically, academically and socially they begin to question a lot of things:

⁷ It is an impersonal abstract explanation stage where people believe that God is an abstract being but with being affiliated to a particular religion e.g Christianity

In the long term and in global perspective, however, our theory predicts that the importance of religion in people's lives will gradually diminish with the process of human development. Moreover, it does so most dramatically during the first stage of human development, as nations emerge from low-income agrarian economies into moderate-income industrial societies with basic welfare safety nets safeguarding against the worst life-threatening risks; and, for different reasons. [...] This process does not reverse itself, but becomes less pronounced during the second stage, with the rise of post-industrial societies (Norris and Inglehart, 2004:54).

This observation by Norris & Inglehart (2004) above makes sense because many intellectuals who questioned the authority of religion appeared after the process of modernization. The basic welfare safety nets started in Britain only after 1945. This thesis discusses the concept of modernization, and later within this chapter, as a factor of secularization in Britain.

Dobbelaere (2002:25) noted that the emergence of new religious movements is part of secularization under organizational theory. There is an American sociological thinking theory which is against secularization theory. It is called "Rational Choice Theory" (RCT). This theory supports religious pluralism:

The contrasts with secularization theory are immediately apparent in so far as RCT is a mode of theorizing which recognizes the positive rather than negative connections between religious pluralism and religious activity, seeing the absence of religious market as the principal reason for the relative lack of religious vitality in Western Europe.

However, this thesis argues that religious pluralism contributes to the process of secularization. As Davie (2008:61) wrote: "Religious pluralism emerges as a very significant theme: both Berger and Bruce agree that an increase in the range of religious choices necessarily undermines the taken-for-granted nature of religious assumptions." Berger's understanding of religion in modern society is pluralistic. It is this religious pluralism which he sees as undermining religious vitality. It changes the

way people believe; because one has to decide for oneself which church to worship in instead of just worshipping in the most convenient church or one's parents church.

Religious pluralism further promotes organizational secularization. As discussed above, religious organizations are forced to re-modify themselves to allow many people to join them. It leads to the dilution of religious faith and vitality. This has affected many traditional churches as they reshape themselves to retain or regain their members who are flocking to the Pentecostal churches. Omenyo (2002:5) wrote that, as a means of retaining or regaining lost members by traditional mainline churches, they must practise Pentecostalism in their service of worship, though they are not Pentecostal churches.

Other scholars have suggested that the emergence of these movements or sects contributes to the decline of membership in the main line churches. However, it would seem that the decline far exceeds the number of members joining the new religious movements. As Bruce (2002:70) puts it:

The idea that secularization is impossible because people have an enduring need for religion, and hence that the decline of one sort of provider will be compensated for by the rise of some innovation, cannot be tested unequivocally because its proponents may always extend the timescale for its fulfilment. However, it seems reasonable to suppose that, were some such self-limiting mechanism in operation, we would by now have seen some signs of vigorous religious growth.

As long as people know that they can shop for a church, they will not be committed to one particular church. They will jump from one church to the other, without being committed in their belief. Pluralism also makes the church nervous, forcing it to concentrate on quantity and not quality. They would rather dilute some policies to gain more people, which leads to what Dobbelaere (2002) called organizational secularization. Churches need to be marketed, as discussed in chapter two of this

thesis. The idea of marketing churches started because there was a lot of competition as a result of several new religious movements that emerged over the years. Religion was losing influence and authority; therefore not many people were attracted to churches. In the process of marketing churches, churches as institutions had to adjust in order to accommodate the needs of the society, so as to become attractive. This has led to organizational secularization.

Davie (2008:53) actually said openly that religious pluralism erodes the quality of religion, "Religious pluralism and its effects have a great impact on religious belief. The relationship is dialectic: pluralism erodes the plausibility structures generated by monopolistic religious institutions in so far as it offers alternatives". In pluralism, the alternatives then compete with the older traditions, further contributing to the undermining of their plausibility, leading to secularization. This concept of religious pluralism is discussed further below in connection with modernization as a factor that caused secularization in Britain.

3.3 Evidence of secularization in Britain

This sub-section discusses evidence of secularization. A number of manifestations are discussed to underscore the notion that, indeed, secularization occurs in Britain. Bruce's research (2002:63) allows for the description of popular involvement in organized religion in terms of church attendance, church membership, Sunday school attendance, the number of full time clergy, the popularity of religious rites of passage, the size of new religious movements and the popularity of religious beliefs in Britain. The study further discusses other areas apart from the church that have been affected by secularization in Britain. Some of these instances discussed in this sub-section are; secularization and legislation, secularization and education,

secularization and the workers, secularization and the separation between political power and religion in Britain. The study indicates that secularization does not only affect the churches but British society as a whole.

3.3.1 The decline of church membership in Britain

Furlong (2000:1) made a very serious observation about the decline of church attendance in England. She observed that there was a big decline of numbers in different categories of the church:

The Church of England is between a rock and a hard place, and there are bitter pills to be swallowed. The most painful fact with which it has to deal (along with other churches) is the all-round drop in numbers: church goers, those on the electoral rolls, numbers of baptisms, confirmations, church weddings- all have dropped steadily since the 1930s, with consequential loss both of morals and of income.

The decline in church attendance is evidence of secularization. As Momen (1999:478) commented, “there are different ways of measuring secularization and one of them is the, “decline of popular involvement in institutionalized religion”. This can be seen in the decline in church attendance, with fewer marriages, baptisms and funerals being performed under religious auspices.”

It has been noted that during secularization, the power or authority of religion is lost, and because of this loss, a number of people are not motivated to attend church services or religion related activities. This situation is being experienced in Britain. As noted by Bruce (2002:60), “a considerable body of evidence on church membership and church attendance shows that, unless trends that have been held since the 1950s are soon reversed, major British denominations are only a generation from extinction”. Bruce’s observation was supported by reports that

showed the poor attendance in different religious activities. Bruce (2002:64) noted that church attendance was going down in Britain:

From Brierley (2000a)'s third English study conducted in 1998, he concluded that 7.5% of the adult population attended church. This represented a continuation of the trends previously found: the figures for his 1979 and 1989 census were respectively 12 and 10 percent. [...] The Roman Catholic Church (the largest of the institutional group) has seen its attendances drop markedly and at an accelerating pace. In the 1980s attendances fell by 14 per cent. In the 1990s they fell by 28 per cent. The second largest, the Church of England, saw attendances fall from 1,671,000 in 1979 to 980,000 in 1999- a fall of 24 per cent for the 1980s and 23 per cent for the 1990s.

Furlong (2000:216) showed that there has been a great decline of church membership in England. This decline has affected a number of churches:

In the twenty years between 1980 and 2000 the Church of England suffered a 27% decline in church membership. The Roman Catholic Church suffered a similar decline too, though in all the churches, it must be said; there have been significant successes in certain churches and particular enterprises. The only institutional church which has continued to grow has been the Orthodox Church – Greek and Russian – where demand for churches exceeds supply, mainly because of immigration from Orthodox countries.

However, the growth in Orthodox membership did not affect the theories of secularization, because scholars also measured secularization in terms of the decline of church's influence in society by considering how the churches influence social life, politics, legislation or the individual's life in Britain. It is also important to note that the Church of England is the state church in Britain and used to be much more influential before the process of secularization.

Brierley (2000:117) has helpfully aggregated the figures and concludes that church membership in the UK as a whole fell from 27 per cent of the population in 1900 to 10 per cent in 2000. Of course direct comparison with any period before the middle

of the nineteenth century is impossible because the nature of church involvement has changed so much.

Table A: Church membership, United Kingdom, 1900 to 2000

Year	Members	Population	Members
	(000)	(000)	(as % of a population)
1900	8 664	32 237	27
1920	9 803	44 027	22
1940	10 017	44 769	21
1960	9918	52 709	19
1980	7529	56 353	13
2000	5862	59 122	10

In table A above, Bruce (2002:67) shows that secularization has crept into Britain. The first column contains the information of the year in which these data were collected and they cover the period from 1900 to 2000. The second column contains the membership of the particular year in the church. The third column contains the population of people in Britain for that particular year and, finally, the fourth column contains the percentage of members registered in the church against the whole population for that year. Reading the figures above, especially the percentage column, one would agree that indeed the table has proved that there is a decline in

membership in the United Kingdom. The population growth over the years does not match the number of registered Christians in the United Kingdom, proving that secularization has taken place, and is influencing church attendance.

3.3.2 The decline in Sunday school attendance

Furlong (2000:210) noted a serious decline in Sunday school attendance in Anglican Churches:

A report on youth published for the General Synod Board of Education in 1996, which says that "the total Sunday attendance at Anglican Churches amongst 14 to 17 year olds is 60,739, a drop of 34.9 per cent since 1987. [...] If the same rate continues to apply, there may be no young people at all in the Church in twenty years time. The report goes on to say that this does not just apply to church services- a similar drop has also been observed in church organizations.

Until the middle of the nineteenth century in Britain (and later in many other places) most formal schooling was provided by the churches and many children (and some adults) attended Sunday school to gain a "secular" education. Even as a viable nationwide system of state schools was being constructed, very many non-church going parents sent their children to Sunday school. Their motives may have been secular but the result was that most Britons gained at least an elementary knowledge of the Christian faith.

Sunday school is very important in keeping the teaching of a particular church, and many churches do have Sunday school gatherings either on Saturday or Sundays. Their purpose is to teach the young ones about God. If parents do not see the importance of the church, then they surely would not send their children to Sunday school. The quotation above by Furlong (2000) is information from the Anglican

Church. The Anglican Church is the dominant church in England, and its decline in Sunday school attendance has a very big impact in the United Kingdom

Table B below shows that, at the start of the twentieth century, half of Britain's children were socialized into Christian beliefs and doctrines. By the end of the century, only the children of church-attendees went to Sunday school and not even all of these. Bruce (2002:68) indicates the statistics on Sunday school attendance as a percentage of the entire population of England from 1900 to 2000.

Table B: Sunday school scholars, United Kingdom, 1900-2000

Year	% of population
1900	55
1920	49
1940	36
1960	24
1980	9
2000	4

The figures above indicate a higher proportion in Sunday school than in membership because the Sunday school numbers also included some adults who attended, to get some secular education. As Bruce (2002:68) wrote:

One way in which the British churches dominated the culture and society was through the provision of education. Until the middle of the nineteenth century (and later in many places) most formal schooling

was provided by the churches and many children (and some adults) attended Sunday school to gain a 'secular' education. Even as a viable nationwide system of state schools was being constructed, very many non-church going parents sent their children to Sunday schools.

3.3.3 Decline in Full-time clergy

As membership of the churches in Britain declined so did the number of full-time clergy. Bruce (2002:69) provided statistics that indicated a decline in the number of clergy:

In 1900 there were about 45,400 clerics in the UK. That figure declined steadily, until in 2000 there were only 34,160: a fall of 25% despite a doubling of the population. [...] Had the Christian churches been relatively as powerful or as popular, at the end of the twentieth century as at its start, there would have been 80,000 clerics.

This, as well, is evidence for secularization in Britain because it indicates that even clerics themselves find churches not to be of much interest. Religion has lost its prestige in the society and one would normally not like to be associated with an institution which has lost its authority in the society.

The decline in the number of clergy is clear evidence that not many people are interested in religion. Nobody wants to be associated with something that is not attractive, so since religion lost influence in the society the number of clergy declined. This decline in the number of full time clergy could be interpreted in two ways: since religion was losing its precedence over other institutions, not many professionals were attracted to join the holy ministry; and, since it is clear that membership of the mainline churches was declining, it would be of no use to recruit more professional clergy to serve congregations. Many church administrators were

not interested in recruiting the clergy because they could not meet the proportional number of members, making it even more difficult to sustain their support.

3.3.4 Religious rites of passage

While the proportion of people coming to church to be married, baptized and buried remains higher than the number of members or regular attendees, the trends are moving in the same direction. In the nineteenth century most weddings were religious ceremonies. According to Bruce (2002:70), the proportion of English weddings then that was religious was 60%.

This declined fairly steadily to 31% in 2000. Given its position as the national church, the Church of England's record is a good indicator of how popular church weddings are for those outside the narrow circles of committed church members. In 1900, 67% of all weddings in England were celebrated in an Anglican Church; in 2000, it was only 20% (Brierley 1999). The decline in these rites of passage means that religion is no longer in the hearts of many people. These are very serious indicators of secularization.

3.3.5 Decline in Religious beliefs

Furlong (2000:3) observed that even the awareness of Christian teachings has diminished. The understanding of Christian ideas is no longer the same as it used to be. As she puts it:

Children who do not come from churchgoing homes- as I did not- now grow up largely ignorant of Christian ideas in a way unimaginable half a century ago. [...] The comments about religion by journalists in the press and on television suggest that even the basic Christian ideas are no longer understood by university-educated people, still less by others. Indeed even churchgoers can reveal an ignorance of the main elements of Christian belief.

Though Furlong's suggestion is that Christian teachings have declined, this study would like to argue that Christian teachings are still available but, because people have lost interest in religious matters, they chose to ignore the teachings. Religion is no longer attractive to the people. As Berger (1967:136) suggested above, it must be marketed despite being challenged by modern thinking.

That, indeed, there has been a very big decline in religious belief is supported by fifty years of opinion polls and attitude surveys, and their message is consistent. There has been a steady decline in the popularity of Christian beliefs. In the 1950s, 43% of those surveyed said they believed in a personal Creator God. In the 1990s, it was 31%. In May 2000, the figure was 26%. The number of those explicitly saying they did not believe in God rose steadily from 2% in the 1950s to 27% in the 1990s. Field (2001) has provided a very useful summary of Scottish survey data for the last quarter of the twentieth century and comes to the same conclusion as do Gill, Hadaway and Marler, which, in the words of Gill *et al* (1998:514) is that:

These surveys show a significant erosion of belief in God... the most serious decline occurred in specifically Christian beliefs including belief in Jesus as the Son of God as well as traditional Christian teachings about the after life and the Bible... While traditional Christian beliefs changed markedly, non-traditional beliefs remained stable albeit among a minority of respondents.

Aquaviva (1993), observes that those people who claimed the religious experience were also the most likely to be conventionally involved in the church. Ken Thompson concludes, "Whilst some form of religious commitment appears to be widespread, it seems doubtful that there is a dimension of religiosity which varies independently of the degree of attachment to traditional beliefs" (Thompson, 1986:229).

3.3.6 Other areas that have been influenced by secularization in Britain

While we have noted that secularization has affected churches in Britain, it has also affected a number of areas that will be discussed in this sub-section. Chapter two suggested that secularization is the transformation of a society from close identification with religious values and institutions towards non-religious or irreligious values, and secular institutions. Therefore, it is important to indicate some of the institutions that have been affected by the secularization process. The secularization thesis refers to the belief that as societies “progress” particularly through modernization and rationalization, religion loses its authority in all aspects of social life and governance.

The thesis has discussed above a major issue in the study of secularization; which is the extent to which certain trends such as decreased attendance at places of worship indicate a decrease in religiosity or simply a privatization of religious belief, where religious beliefs no longer play a dominant role in public life or in other aspects in decision-making. Such areas are noted because religion has lost its influence in the society. Areas that used to be influenced by religion no longer are.

3.3.6.1 Secularization influences legislation in Britain

Julian (2012:371) acknowledged that in these years of secularization, the relationship between the law and religion has been subject to increased scholarly interest, religion no longer influences laws:

In all the activities of legislative assemblies, there are signs that the relationship between law and religion is changing. [...] the constitutional settlement achieved by the end of the nineteenth century, religion has been overlooked and only appears in the guise of inadequately theorized commitments to individual liberty and equality. [...] In the new secularization thesis, the law treats religions as merely recreational and trivial. This has the effect of reducing the significance of religion as a

matter of conscience, as legal system and as a context for public service.

The above quotation indicates secularization has affected even legislation. Laws are no longer influenced by religion because religion itself has lost its authority and influence in the United Kingdom. The process of secularization goes beyond the boundaries of churches only. In a society that is secularized, the evidence will indicate that the whole life of individuals is affected. The example of the Old Egyptian Kingdom shows that legislation in a country which is not secularized is influenced by religion as discussed in chapter two of this thesis.

Johnstone (2007:155) gave an example of America, where religion used to influence the political structure especially in the “legislation of morality”:

American state and local governments have been riddled with so called blue laws, many of which are still on the books and most of which reflect strong religious influence. Laws restricting Sunday business activity, laws specifying how close to schools and churches bars and taverns may operate, laws restricting the sale of intoxicating beverages, laws regarding the sale and distribution of birth-control devices- all these laws were evidences of strong influence by religious groups.

In Britain, as a result of the loss of authority and influence of religion, the situation is different, religious groups can no longer influence legislation, which is manifested in the passing of many laws that are against religious practices and beliefs. Brown (2002:116) indicated that due to secularization process in Britain there were a number of laws that were passed with religious influence:

In the 1960s, the institutional structures of cultural traditionalism started to crumble in Britain; the ending of the worst excesses of moral censorship (notably after the 1960 trial of Lady Chatterley’s Lover and the ending in 1968 of the Lord Chamberlain’s control over British theatre); the legalization of abortion (1967) and homosexuality (1967) and the granting of easier divorce (1969); the emergence of the women’s liberation movement especially from 1968, the flourishing of

youth culture centred on popular music (especially after the emergence of the Beatles in late 1962) and incorporating a range of cultural pursuits and identities (ranging from the widespread use of drugs to the fashion revolution) and the appearance of student rebellion (notably between 1968 and the early 1970s).

It is therefore clearly seen that secularization does not only affect the churches but society as a whole. In this case, as a result of secularization in Britain, even legislation has been affected until today. There are a number of laws in effect, which are seen as anti- Christian, e.g homosexuality in Britain as indicated above. However there are other groups of people who seek to defend homosexuality from a Christian perspective.

3.3.6.2 Secularization separates political power and religion

Thinking of the period before the Reformation, there was no separation between political power and religion. The Pope at the time had both religious and political powers. However Martin Luther realized that the Pope could use his religious powers to silence his critics when he made political mistakes. The separation of political power and religion was part of the process of secularization. According to Davie (2008:54):

The secularization thesis, following Wilson, involves change in three areas of social organization: changes in the locus of authority in the social system (political power is freed from religious sanction and acquires its own legitimacy); changes in the character of knowledge as empirical enquiry and ethically neutral investigation lead to the development of scientific discovery; and a growing demand that those engaged in the work places of modern societies should conduct their lives in accordance with rational principles.

Therefore, the situation in Britain was that religion no longer influenced political decisions because the two institutions were different. As a result of secularization, institutions that were controlled by the churches were no longer under the churches

control. Davie (2008: 3) indicated the separation of the two institutions when she said:

One of these, paradoxically, is the aspect of secularization which the Europeans resisted for longest - the gradual separating out of different and more and more specialized institutions (political or educational for example) as part of the modernizing process. Societal functions that were previously dominated by the church (education, healthcare etc.) became increasingly autonomous.

However, there used to be a very strong relationship between the Church of England (The Anglican Church) and the government in Britain, before the secularization process. Tengtenga (2006:37) highlighted this relationship since the 16th century by saying:

Between 1532 and 1534 Henry VIII enacted seven bills which effectively passed. By the Conditional Restraint of Annates the convocations of the church pledged not to make any canons without the King's permission. The Act in Restraint of Appeals declared the King the supreme head of both church and state and underlined the sovereignty of England over and against the Pope in Rome.

To date, there is still a good relationship between the Anglican Church and the state in England and Tengtenga (2006:36) wrote, "The church was part of the state and the state part of the church. The church continued and still continues to play a prominent part in the government of England as the established church. It acts as critic and advisor."

The above observation on the role of the church in England is a reflection of John Calvin's theology on the government as suggested by Hunt (c1965:23):

No responsible Christian can be without concern for civil government...Detachment from these political stresses was unthinkable for John Calvin, the son of a law clerk, a graduate in law, a classicist familiar with the political treatises of Plato and Aristotle, Cicero and Seneca, and a man intent on reforms that were to shake the thrones of the mighty.

3.3.6.3 Secularization and the workers in Britain

Since secularization affects the life of individuals, it is necessary to discuss the behaviour of workers in Britain during the process of secularization. Momen (1999) clearly stated that:

Secularization has gradually permeated the Christian world. It led to the situation, in which by the nineteenth century, Christianity has ceased to have much real influence on the social and political life of Europe. [...] Religion no longer had a role, however, in the shaping of political and social policy. Other considerations and other secular ideologies had taken over. Following the loss of social and political influence, religion became increasingly irrelevant to the lives of ordinary people.

The citation from Momen's work testifies that during secularization, the thinking and actions of individuals are affected. The life of workers in Britain also changed when the effects of the process of secularization started to be experienced. Chadwick (1975:89) noted that "the great masses of the working classes, especially in the large manufacturing towns, were already lost to Christianity." What Chadwick wanted to clarify was that the working class people, during the period of secularization, were also secularized. Another factor influencing secularization is industrialization. When people are busy in industries, they even work on Sundays and they are committed to their work. This aids the process of secularization.

In relation to industrialization, another factor of secularization which is discussed below is urbanization. This phenomenon involved people moving from rural areas to urban areas to look for work. Most of these people were very committed to making money and in the process they were lost to Christianity. Therefore, one could rightly claim that the secularization process also affected the workers in Britain.

3.3.6.4 Secularization and education in Britain

Another area that has been affected and influenced by secularization in Britain is education. In Britain there are both religious and non-religious schools. The National Secular Society (NSS), in Britain, analyzed religion in schools as Britain experienced secularization. The society aimed at separating the schools funded by various religions from the others so that the influence of religion did not spill over. The National Secular Society (2012) made a statement to the British Government on the separation of religious and non-religious schools:

"[...] Despite a consistent and dramatic decline in church attendance and a growing proportion of non-religious citizens, successive governments have paved the way for ever greater religious involvement in education, often to the detriment of community schools. We think children of all faiths and none should be educated, rather than segregated into 'faith groups.' We want the secularization of Britain's education system. We would like to see publicly funded 'faith schools' returned to 'community school status, under local authority control. We campaign for an end to faith based discrimination against pupils and parents in admissions and against staff in employment. We campaign for radical reform of Religious Education and an end to compulsory worship.

3.4 Factors influencing secularization in Britain

This thesis has noted that Britain has been religious for a very long time as Gill (2003) noted above, but in the 1960s the same country became increasingly secularized. This sub-section will discuss some of the factors that led to the secularization in Britain.

3.4.1 Modernization

Modernization has contributed to the rise of secularization in Britain. As Norris & Inglehart (2004:3) wrote:

Once, the world was filled with the sacred- in thought, practice, and institutional form. After the Reformation and the Renaissance, the forces of modernization swept across the globe and secularization, a corollary historical process, loosened the dominance of the sacred. [...] the sacred disappeared altogether except, possibly, in the private realm.

Stark & Bainbridge (1987:23), though, challenged the secularization thesis⁸. They confirmed that “modernity and modernization are the causes of secularization, and science, which has the most deadly implications for religion, is an aspect of modernization”.

Davie (2002:4) claims that some scholars believe that secularization accompanies modernization whenever and wherever it occurs. Martin (2005:18) said that sociology and modernity were born together and so the focus of sociology was on what happened to religion under conditions of modernity and accelerating change.

In the very modern world, the ease of dissemination of information by means of computer technology has enabled the rapid transfer of ideas in a way unprecedented in human history. Ideas of secularism are readily transferred from Europe to parts of the world previously untouched by Europeans.

Modern technology has also helped the process of secularization to spread to other parts of the world. Bruce (2002:233) acknowledged that science and modern technology have been the main causes of secularization. Because of modern technology people are able to share information easily and some of that information questions the authority of religion.

⁸ Secularization thesis refers to the belief that as societies progress, particularly through modernization and rationalization, religion loses its authority in all aspects of social life and governance.

Through modern technology, there are computers, internet facilities, telephones that help unite those people who are against religion, share what they believe in, and build a common front. In the process of sharing factors in their defense of their conviction against religion, some people read their contributions and begin to question the authority of religion as well.

Pre-modern people respected religion, as it dominated many aspects of their social life without the need for empirical evidence to prove some of the factors cited in chapter two of this thesis. Modern people, on the other hand, have a different perspective on religion and their thinking is different.

3.4.1.1 Human Rights affect religion

Under modernization, there is a concept of human rights which contribute to the rise of secularization. Crabtree (2011) noted that human rights culture also contributes to secularization:

Women's rights, gay rights, slave rights, racial equality and many other rights (such as the right to change religion) have been viciously fought about between religious denominations. In the modern world, it is only religious groups that oppose many of these basic rights. By far the loudest anti-gay rights voices are Christian and Muslim, and the only groups that support female genital mutilation and patriarchy, are Islamic and Christian groups. Slave liberation and many other equal rights frequently caused splits to occur within organized religion, as gay rights are threatening to do now in the Church of England. (Accessed on 27th July, 2012)

Religious groups still pursue many legal reforms that result in a loss of legal equal rights. The Christian Institute in the United Kingdom⁹ successfully lobbied for changes in the law to allow Christian managers to fire gay staff on account of their

⁹ In 2003 March 2, Sefton Council workers refused to take part in adoptions for gay parents, because they say it was against their Christian beliefs and the council in was fighting for the two Christians based on Christian principles.

sexuality alone, and many Muslim countries continue to make apostasy (change of religion) illegal. Muslim countries, especially those which have areas that have adopted Sharia law, have human rights records that are as bad as those of Christians during the dark ages. In South Africa, laws which are regarded by Christians as immoral are being passed in Parliament. Jonathan Clayton (2005) wrote:

South Africa broke an important regional taboo yesterday by becoming the first African country to authorize same-sex marriage. The nation joined the handful of countries allowing the practice after the constitutional court ruled in favour of gay weddings and ordered Parliament to amend marriage laws within a year. South Africa will become the fifth country in the world to permit same-sex marriage, behind the Netherlands, Spain, Belgium and Canada; but the decision is not only at odds with the views of the vast majority of its own citizens, but also the rest of Africa, where homo-sexuality remains largely a taboo. (Accessed on 27th July, 2012).

Clayton (2005) reported that in a landmark ruling, the Johannesburg-based Constitutional Court ordered that the definition of marriage be changed from a “union between a man and a woman” to a “union between two persons”. In reaction to the ruling the leading churches have called for a referendum on the issue. The African Christian Democratic Party called for an amendment to the Constitution that would nullify the ruling.

Clayton (2005) summarized some of the comments from some Presidents in Africa on the issue of homosexuality:

President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe said, “It (homosexuality) degrades human dignity. It is unnatural and there is no question ever of allowing these people to behave worse than dogs and pigs.

President Museveni of Uganda said, “Look for homosexuals, lock them up and charge them. God created Adam and Eve. I did not see God creating man and man”.

President Nujoma of Namibia said, "See to it that there are no criminals, gays, and lesbians in your villages and regions".

President Obasanjo of Nigeria said, "Such a tendency is clearly un-Biblical, unnatural and definitely un-African".

In Rome, Paul Bompard reported about a high- ranking Vatican priest who has been suspended after a TV programme, using a hidden camera, recorded him making advances to a young man and asserting that gay sex was not sinful. Monsignor Stenico, when asked, responded that he was pretending to be gay in an attempt to unmask a satanic plot to seduce Catholic priests to homosexuality and thus discredit the Church. "I only pretended I was gay to show how priests are seduced, there are people who go after them. I believe there is a diabolical plan by groups of Satanists" (www.timesonline.co.uk 15/10/07).

While one appreciates the importance of human rights, this thesis argues that some rights challenge the value of religion. In the name of rights, there have been conflicts between what people believe as their human rights and religious values. As a result, the process of secularization is given a boost because people are confused and struggle to make the correct decision regarding religious policies that are against human rights. This leads to individual secularization because many people stop participating in religious activities as they feel they want to practise their rights freely without interference of religion.

3.4.1.2 Individualism leads to secularization

In the modern world, everything is global and open. Intelligent discussion and debate on beliefs is accessible on the Internet and in books, and to believe differently from your local culture or secular government no longer gets one imprisoned. There is a culture of tolerance and moderation, so that people are willing to accept the most extreme differences in belief as personal choice, not moral dilemmas. This individualism allows people to pick and choose their beliefs from those around them. No longer are strict religious bodies capable of honestly putting forward what is

"universally right" and having their believers follow suit. Actually, that never was possible, but in today's world it is more widely accepted that people are free to believe what they want.

Individualism and relativism have prevented narrow religious sects from making legitimate claims to truth. There is so much access to information that it is well known that people believe many things, and frequently no amount of intellectual arguing will change some peoples' minds. People have come to accept that beliefs are belief; separate from the identity of an individual, and no government or religion has the right to impose their beliefs upon individuals. Empathy towards those who have different beliefs has increased as a result of an increased emphasis on the values of dignity, choice, intellectual freedom and individualism. Pentecostals and evangelical proselytizers are less successful against individualists unless their religion has some *evidence* or intellectual merit... so that in an intelligent and individualistic society, secular culture prospers, and religious authority is less acceptable.

Momen (1999:479), like Crabtree (2005), argued that the spirit of individualism has put religion in a very awkward situation. Momen called individualism a blow to religion because it has led to the loss of the authority of the central institutions of religion:

The second blow to the religious perspective came with the increasing importance given to individualism in the modern world. [...] Today, there is an increasing emphasis on the individual's own point of view. This leads to a loss of the authority of the central institutions of the religion. As a corollary to this individualism came a belief in the beneficial effects of self-interest as the guiding principle of human action, a development that contradicts the teachings of most of the established religions.

The individualism that is characteristic of modern life in the West is reflected in the uncommitted, an *à la carte* approach to spirituality that has become very common. It is typified by individuals who flit from religious group to religious group, continually on a religious quest and never arriving at their goal. Very often such individuals do not join any religious group but attend meetings, read books and search through the Internet, adopting a *pot-pourri* of religious ideas on their way. This approach to spirituality is almost the exact opposite of the path advocated by traditional religion. The church is defined in a pluralistic dimension as a “gathering of believers” and the spirit of individualism is against that concept of togetherness. This is the reason that this is considered a force against religion.

3.4.1.3 Religion and Intelligence

Modernization has brought intellectual thoughts that questions issues that were not supposed to be questioned traditionally. Intelligence has been associated with the manner in which humans embrace religion. According to Crabtree (2011) most intelligent people have doubts about religion. Crabtree claims that:

In so far as the most intelligent people are the ones who doubt most, all religions have been challenged from within and without, by intelligent people. Education and intelligence as a whole are contradictory to faith and belief. Intelligent philosophers, over thousands of years, and others, have been recorded voicing their questions, doubts and concerns over the beliefs of popular religion. Such heretics and unwholesome people have been, largely, murdered, silenced and imprisoned but thankfully in many countries since the enlightenment this has ceased. Intelligence causes doubt of facts, as assumptions are the child of stupidity, and assumptions and faith are also two of the prime intellectual "qualities" of "intellectual" religious belief. (Accessed on 28th July, 2012).

In science or mathematics one has to prove things by using either formulas or scientifically proved evidence. However, those who believe that God works in mysterious ways and believe in miracles through prayer cannot wait for facts for any

new discoveries or they are less likely to have enquiring minds about how things work. Crabtree (2006) points to scientists who suffered because Christians did not agree with newly discovered facts about the world. Because of intelligence, people question a number of things instead of just believing without proof that God can do everything:

Scientists had to suffer torture, silencing, imprisonment and death at the hands of Christians who didn't agree with newly discovered facts about the world. Christians lost the first battle with astronomers who realized that, contrary to what Christians asserted, the sun did not orbit the Earth, and that the Universe doesn't seem to be designed specifically for humankind. Copernicus (1473-1543), Kepler (1571-1630), Galileo (1564-1642), Newton (1643-1727) and Laplace (1749-1827) all fought battles against the church when they published scientific papers challenging religious orthodoxy. Bible verses were all the theories Christians needed; and Joshua 10:12-13, 2 Kings 20:11, Isaiah 38:8 and Isaiah 30:26 all contradicted astronomers. [...Eventually] the church retreated only to fight similar ignorant battles, and violently imposed dogmatic errors, in the arenas of physics, biology and philosophy (www.vexen.co.uk/religion/intelligence-13/10/07).

Intelligence dilutes religion and promotes secularization because the more people question the authority of religion, wanting to prove facts, the more their beliefs wane. Religion requires belief by faith, intellectuals want to prove the facts, and therefore this is indeed a force against religion.

3.4.2 Science

It is true that some important sciences and institutions have been religious. A good example is Egyptian astrologers who were deeply religious while their calculations were scientific, and Pythagoras, who, aside from being a mathematics genius, was also a mystic and pagan leader. But in the modern era, science has been the bane of monotheistic religions, though some of the first scientists were deeply religious and investigated the world as a result of their respect for the creator. It is less a

threat to polytheism, which has tended to be science-friendly. Even basic scientific observations such as the earth going around the Sun (Copernicus) appeared to be anti-religious beliefs.

While some are indeed theories which have prompted secularism, such as evolution, others such as the big bang have been felt to support faith. It would seem that each major advance of science reduces the power of God, so that God has become what is called "God of the gaps". Einstein (1954) supported the idea of science reducing religious influence by saying "Scientific research can reduce superstition by encouraging people to think and view things in terms of cause and effect".

McCracken (1977:38) commented:

English education was, in no small part founded by scholarly Christians and monks. But despite appearances, many of these were Christian in name only because of forced conversions and social forces compelled most people to call themselves Christians. The influence of powerful Christian-Roman force and the inquisition were not to be lightly opposed.

McCracken (1977:39) further noted that many scientists and thinkers operating in Christian educational institutions were coerced by the Church to produce only material with which the Church had already agreed and much of science was done in spite of the Church's wishes rather than in accordance with them. The lives of many intellectuals, Christian or not, were replete with imprisonments, torture and oppression because their discoveries as Church leaders were not allowed encourage the public to come to any knowledge that undermined the Church. The history of science is a history of struggling against determined religious believers, who frequently were better armed and hardened.

Bertrand Russell (1997), also in support of the idea that science has made religious people disbelieve the things they used to believe without evidence, made the following comments:

In the modern world modern religion and science are largely reconciled, with God-believers believing that God (an uncaused organizational force) created the sciences, whereas atheists believe that the rules of the universe itself are an uncaused organizational force. With religious people themselves no longer believing most of what they used to, science has largely won and God has become a much more abstract, non-literal being and the same goes for angels, demons, Satan and the rest of the Western religious pantheon, retreating into a shadowy world of abstract emotional belief where science may never be able to shed light, but psychologists might.

Several other scholars support the idea that science is a factor of modernization. It is modern thinking that pushed science to the forefront to dominate the thinking of the people, thus making religion of less influence and importance.

3.4.3 Urbanization

Another factor contributing to the process of secularization is urbanization. Cox's (1968)'s understanding is that villages and cities used to be laid out to reflect the pattern of the heavenly city, the abode of the gods. Now they are laid out round a business centre. In the urban setting, the influence is in the way that succeeding generations experience life and visualize the gods. The societies they live in and symbols they use influence each other. Cox's (1968:1) understanding of urbanization is that the lives of people have changed, as they depend more on modern technologies than on traditional world views:

Urbanization constitutes a massive change in the way people live together, and became possible in its contemporary form only with the scientific and technological advances which sprang from the wreckage of traditional world views. Secularization is an epochal movement, that

occurs only when the cosmopolitan confrontations of city living exposed the relativity of the myths men once thought were unquestionable.

Life in urban areas is very busy and people are preoccupied with several things such as making a good living and education, and most of them are too busy to be involved in church matters. This contributes to the process of secularization because one's life is dominated by town life; and the thinking in urban areas is to work and earn money for survival. The thinking of urban people is mostly on 'you work and eat', which changes the mindset that God will provide.

Martin (2005:18) noted that in the great cities, administrative and industrial centres were the least likely to be religiously engaged. Religiosity was concentrated among women and the older age groups and in the more remote areas, because within the urban areas, the majority of the working class were men. It is a common observation that religion thrives among the needy in one way or the other. It is indeed true that in urban areas, people are more geared toward making money through hard working and not getting money because of being more religious.

3.4.4 Industrialization

Modernization has led to industrialization, and this has caused secularization. Brown agrees that the major causes of secularization in Britain are industrialization and urbanization, and both of these are the outcomes of modernization:

The theory of secularization posits that religion is naturally 'at home' in pre-industrial and rural environments, and that it declines in industrial and urban environments. The rise of modernity from the eighteenth century- the growth of machines, rationality, class division and dissenting churches, and the supposed decline of primitive husbandry, superstition and harmonious social relations- destroyed both the community foundations of the church and the psychological foundations of a universal religious world-view. Secularization is traditionally argued, was the handmaiden of modernization, pluralisation, urbanization and

Enlightenment rationality. Consequently, the theory identifies the main origins of British secularization in the industrial revolution and urban growth of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, which then accelerated in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Brown 2002:10).

As mentioned above, even industrialization, was the result of modernization. The decline in religion has been the consequence of modernity. Brown (2002:11) further states that the decline in religious activity in Britain is intellectually located in the distance between two 'worlds': the pre-industrial and the industrial. Pre-industrial society was the world we have lost- a world of innocence, humility, spirituality, economic simplicity and social harmony.

Brown (2002:16) further noted that "industrialization and the growth of large cities (urbanization) initiated the rapid decline of the churches, religious beliefs and religious morality". By contrast, the world we have found was and remains a world of technology, competitiveness, and social dissolution, with piety a transient signifier of class identity. This means that there were very few groups of people in the urban areas that openly identified with religion.

It is important to note that the secularization narrative did not originate in the twentieth century academy; but in the late eighteenth century world of changing power relations. To proclaim 'faith in danger' has been the perpetual task of churches in all historical ages speaking against backsliding, but it was only transformed into a perpetual thesis of 'religion in decline' in the special circumstances of agricultural improvement and the industrial revolution.

As a result of the growth of technology, industrialization naturally followed. This had a number of effects which encouraged the process of secularization. Lyon (1985:7)

suggested that religion is one of the casualties of the adoption of industrialization.

For Berger, secularization was an inevitable concomitant of an industrial society:

Since then this view has been a dominant influence in the discussion of the secularization of modern society. It was also shared by the American Sociologist Peter Berger when he wrote his book A Rumor of Angels in 1969. In contrast to Weber, as a committed Christian Berger lamented the inevitability of the process of secularization in European and American culture. But he regarded the trend as irreversible, because the advance of secularization was a cultural concomitant of modern industrial society (Pannenberg 1989:28).

Williams (2009:216-17) notes that the increased production enabled by industrialization resulted ultimately in economic security for many, and in a less perceived need for God's provision; thus, stimulating secularization. He observes that industrialization was accompanied by urbanization, which Chadwick (1975:100) feels was more significant for secularization than industrialization as such.

Norris & Inglehart (2004:58) documented the decline in religion as society moved from an agricultural through an industrial to a post-industrial society. He designed a chart to depict Religiosity by type of Society as provided below:

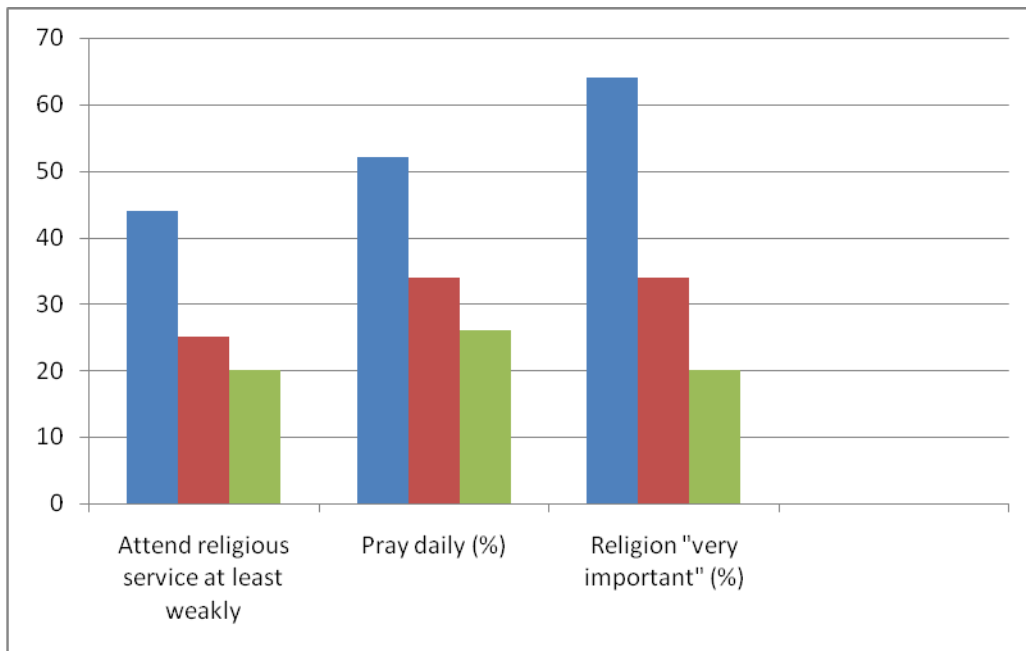


Figure 6. 1 Different societies: Agrarian, Industrial and post-industrial

In the chart above blue represents the Agrarian society, red represents Industrial society and olive green represents Post-industrial society.

The Agrarian society is the most committed to the church and to the belief in God. The mushrooming of industries led to great growth in the cities with large numbers of people being attracted there from the rural areas. In this way, they lost the immediacy of contact with nature and their appreciation of their total dependency upon God. Industrialization naturally moves God to the periphery as people are pre-occupied with industrial life, working and providing for material needs.

Martin (1978:86) avers that the concentration in cities is also a feature of what could be called the second industrial revolution; the revolution of electronic and information technology, which had even more effect than the first, especially where the first had

produced secularization. Industrialization not only affected the church but had detrimental effects on the world as a whole, as Williams (2009:219) suggested.

3.4.5 Religious pluralism

Cox (1995) has applauded the Pentecostal and charismatic churches for filling in the gap for religion in the world. Since his prediction in 1968 that organised religion would come to an end by the year 2000¹⁰, he has been shocked to read in an article published in a New York magazine that millions of people are joining Pentecostal churches. As a result, he authored a book “Fire from heaven,” which was published in 1995¹¹ in which he retracted the theory that organised religion would come to an end by the year 2000 but he suggested that the shape of religion has changed. People are more attracted to Pentecostal and Charismatic churches.

Religious pluralism can be a force and strength to religion if it can be considered in terms of increase in church attendance. As Davie (2008:57) suggested, “religious pluralism is a sign that more people are becoming religious, reflecting an increasing individualism in religious life” This idea of religious pluralism is supported by the ‘rational choice theory’. Davie (2008:67) noted that the ‘rational choice theory’ contrasts with the secularization theory:

The contrast with secularization theory are immediately apparent in so far as rational choice theory is a mode of theorizing which recognizes the positive rather than the negative connections between religious pluralism and religious activity, seeing the absence of religious market as lack of religious vitality in Western Europe.

However, this study’s theoretical framework lies on three types of secularization; societal, organization and individual. Organizational secularization has been

¹⁰ Cox (1968)’s book the Secular City fully cited in Bibliography of this thesis

¹¹ Cox (1995)’s book, Fire from Heaven [...] fully cited in Bibliography of this thesis

understood to refer to the phenomenon of religious institutions changing to accommodate the needs of society. Because of religious pluralism, religious institutions have changed their liturgy and policies to attract more people. It is part of the strategy to market religion; leading to organization secularization. Because of such change, religion loses influence, which then leads to societal secularization. “Both Berger and Bruce agree that religious pluralism undermines the taken-for-granted nature of religious assumptions” (Davie 2008:61). It is clear, therefore that religious pluralism has eroded religious vitality leading to societal secularization.

In confirming that religious pluralism is a factor in secularization, (Davie 2008:53) said:

[...] The relationship is dialectic: pluralism erodes the plausibility structures generated by monopolistic religious institutions in so far as it offers alternatives. The alternatives then compete with the older traditions, further contributing to the undermining of their plausibility. Pluralism is moreover part and parcel of modernization given the increase mobility (of both people and ideas) of the modern world. Pluralism becomes, therefore, the key variable in understanding the relationship between modernization and secularization. It is the pluralism tendencies of modernity that are corrosive of religion.

The above quotation is very important, as it connects religious pluralism to modernization. Through modernization, the movement of both people and ideas is very simple leading to easy formation of new religious movements. New ideas of challenging religion are shared, and as a particular religion is challenged, people form new religions which they believe are better than the mainline churches.

Oakland (1989:294) noted that there have been religious conflicts among different denominations. This notes that religious pluralism can cause conflicts among religions as it happens in Britain:

British religious history has been predominantly Christian. It has been characterized by conflict between Catholics and Protestants, and by division into separate Protestant churches and sects. But it has also included the Jewish community and other non-Christian denominations, as well as groups with humanist and special beliefs. Religious life in Britain today still possesses a diversity of religious denominations. These have been added to in the twentieth century by the religions of new comers to the country.

Religious pluralism also allows people to raise critical questions, about which religion is the best. This aspect is connected to the growth of Islam as well. Because Islam is a religion, when we discuss the issue of religious pluralism, people ask the same question: "If people are comfortable in joining Islam as religion while others are joining Pentecostal churches within the Christian family, then which is the real religion? This has resulted in the process of secularization.

Religious pluralism leads to a lack of commitment to any particular religion, because people realize that they can shop around for a religious group, since there are so many of them. The situation in Britain is the same, as the growth of religions is unavoidable and has led to people abandoning the older churches because they have wider choices as noted by Brown (2002:196):

In the 1960s, and four decades that followed, the churches in Britain are seemingly dead. The evangelical narrative has decayed; the discourses on gendered religiosity have withered, the search for personal faith is now in 'the New Age' of minor cults, personal development and consumer choice, leading to lack of personal commitment to religion.

Gilbert (1980:84) empowered by the intellectual bravado of the 1970s' sociology claimed that "Organised religion, everywhere in the British Isles, has failed to cope with the decline of the territorial community and the emergence of pluralistic, partial communities." The emergence of pluralistic religious communities has diluted the vitality of religion.

It has, therefore, been proved in this study that religious pluralism leads to secularization.

3.5 Conclusion

Modernization has led to the process of secularization in Britain and with the evidence that has been discussed in this chapter; scholars have agreed that the process of secularization has caused religion to lose its influence and authority. The chapter has discussed that secularization has affected other areas beyond the church, e.g. the legislature, education and political powers. However, two theories are in conflict with the concept of secularization. The Supply Side theory that originated in the 1980s believes that there is a constant potential human demand for religious goods over time and between societies. This theory is associated with post-modernization. Religion is becoming important again during the post-modernization era. However, the Supply Side Theory does not argue that secularization has led to the decline in the authority or influence of the church.

The other theory that has been noted to challenge the secularization theory is the Rational Choice Theory which believes that religious pluralism promotes religious vitality. This belief is against the secularization theory which believes that religious pluralism dilutes the vitality of religion. This thesis agrees with scholars who believe in religious pluralism as a factor of secularization, because religious pluralism values quantity and not quality. Religious institutions tend to focus more on keeping the people in church than on the quality of members in the church. Therefore, the Rational Choice Theory can be challenged because religious pluralism does not promote religious vitality.

The inclusion of Britain in a thesis about “Secularization in Malawi” was necessary because of the strong links between Malawi and Britain, and because secularization is not a new experience in Britain while it is new in Malawi. The next chapter discusses secularization in Malawi. Not much has been written on the secularization of Malawi, therefore, much of the information in the next chapter is an interpretation of the field work research done within Malawi.

CHAPTER FOUR

FIELD RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe and justify the methodology which was used to generate data to enable me answer the research questions. In a study of this nature, the Mixed Methods Procedure (Creswell, 2003:208) is recommended because of its ability to respond to the mixing quantitative and qualitative data in a single study:

Mixed Methods Research follows a purpose statement and research questions focused on understanding a problem using both quantitative and qualitative methods and the rationale for using multiple forms of data collection and analysis.

The chapter further outlines and discusses the three major research approaches employed in this study, namely, the qualitative, the quantitative and case study methods. The discussion describes the procedure for the selection of the cases as well as data collection and analysis. However, out of the three research approaches mentioned above, this thesis has dwelt much on two approaches: the qualitative and case study methods.

4.2 The Qualitative Research Methodology

The rationale for using the qualitative research methodology approach in to the present study was based on the research framework principally influenced by Lincoln and Guba (1985:227). They argue that the purpose of qualitative research is to “accumulate sufficient knowledge to lead to understanding.” Qualitative researchers

strive to develop concepts, insights, and understanding from patterns in the data rather than collecting data to assess pre-conceived models, hypotheses or theories.

The decision to choose the qualitative approach was further influenced by Strauss and Corbin (1998:11) who also note that, in some cases, a research exercise can be approached on the basis of the “nature of the research problem.” Research that attempts to understand the meaning or nature of the experience of persons with problems... and the act of ‘coming out’ lends itself to getting out into the field and finding out what people are doing and thinking. Qualitative methods can be used to explore substantive areas about which little is known or about which much is known. Qualitative methods can be used to obtain the intricate details about phenomena such as feelings, thought processes, and emotions that are difficult to extract or learn about through more conventional research methods.

In view of these insights, the present study focused on a critical understanding of Secularization in Malawi with reference to Britain. The study strove to understand the process of secularization in Britain, including factors that promote it and compare those factors to the process of secularization in Malawi. It follows, therefore, that one cannot understand the concept of secularization without understanding the framework within which the people involved interpret their thoughts, feelings and actions (Marshall & Rossman, 1989).

The literature on secularization and the need to develop a sound understanding of the current practices and perceptions in this field of inquiry was considered sufficient justification for the use of the qualitative approach. The literature review also raised many questions that influenced the choice of the qualitative approach. Dobbelaere (2002) has divided this concept into three types: societal, organizational and

individual. In an attempt to relate the three types of secularization to the process in Malawi as well as in Britain, compare the two, and elicit the collaborative mechanisms among the various development players in their quest to provide a better understanding of the subject matter, the qualitative approach was the best choice.

The conviction to employ the qualitative approach was also influenced by Taylor and Bogdan (1998:9) who argue that, “for qualitative research, all perspectives are worthy of study.” In other words, the qualitative approach was essential to show the interactive nature of the various developments within the religious environment. A closer scrutiny of the various perspectives was contextualised. Stories that are told by different people about religious leaders’ interaction with the society and how people’s thoughts have changed their perception towards religion, were not only essential in this regard, but also helped with conclusions from “different vantage points” (Taylor & Bogdan 1998: 9).

Qualitative research relies on the reasons behind various aspects of behaviour. It investigates the why and how of decision making (Hadden & Shupe 1989:27-43). Babbie (2007:285) commends qualitative field research because it enables researchers to observe social life in its natural habitat, to go where the action is. This type of research produces a richer understanding of many social phenomena that can be examined only through observational methods, provided that the researcher observes in a deliberate, well-planned, and active way.

Babbie (2007:377) defined qualitative data analysis as the nonnumeric assessment of observations made through participant observation, content analysis, in-depth interviews, and other qualitative research techniques. In researching the concept of

secularization in Malawi, it was necessary to perform interviews to assess the attitude of people towards religion and the church as a whole. Babbie (2007: 287) also recommended the qualitative research method as appropriate because it leads to the study of those attitudes and behaviours which are best understood within their natural setting as opposed to the somewhat artificial settings of experiments and surveys. For example, field research provides a superior method for studying the dynamics of religious conversion at a revival meeting, just as statistical analysis of membership rolls would be a better way of discovering whether men or women are more likely to convert.

4.2.1 The elements of Qualitative Research methods

The subject of secularization involves the change of behaviour, attitudes and social life of human beings towards religion. In order to understand the concept, the ideas of Lofland and Lofland must be applied. In agreement with Babbie (2007), Lofland and Lofland (1995:101-13) summarized the elements of social life which are appropriate to field research as follows:

1. *Practices*: Various kinds of behaviour, such as talking or reading a book;
2. *Episodes*: A variety of events such as divorce, crime, and illness;
3. *Encounters*: Two or more people meeting and interacting;
4. *Roles*: The analysis of the positions people occupy and the behavior associated with those positions: occupations, family roles, ethnic groups;
5. *Relationships*: Behaviour appropriate to pairs or sets of roles: mother-son relationships, friendships and the like;
6. *Groups*: Small groups, such as friendship cliques, athletic teams, and work groups;

7. *Organizations*: Formal organizations, such as hospitals or schools;
8. *Settlements*: Small-scale 'societies' such as villages, ghettos, and neighbourhoods, as opposed to large societies such as nations, which are difficult to study;
9. *Social worlds*: Ambiguous social entities with vague boundaries and populations, such as 'the sports world' and 'Wall Street';
10. *Lifestyles or subcultures*: How large numbers of people adjust to life in groups such as a 'ruling class' or an 'urban underclass'.

4.2.1.1 Practices

This refers to the behaviour of individuals: Various kinds of behavior, such as talking or reading a book. In the study of the process of secularization, it involves the process of various kinds of behavior of the society at different periods. In this case it is the period when the society is believed to be religious and later to a period when the society is believed to be secularized. The behaviour of the individual oscillates.

4.2.1.2 Episodes

Soanes (2004:296) has defined an episode as an event or a group of events occurring as part of a sequence, while Lofland and Lofland (1995) have clarified episodes as a variety of events such as divorce, crime, and illness as cited above. Through such social settings of episodes the field research reveals things that would otherwise not be apparent. During secularization, events such as divorce and crime are used to determine the gravity of the subject matter. A good Christian automatically becomes a good citizen as John Calvin suggested (Gama 2007:88-89):

[...] When the church practices state theology, Scriptures are used to justify their position. State theology supports the identificational model because of the belief that the church and state are complimentary to each other; the believer can be a civil servant and will be a good civil servant because of her or his Christian principles. The identifier believes that a good Christian becomes automatically a good citizen.

The qualitative method of research was very suitable for this study because the concept of secularization involves the attitude of people is more accurately determined through personal interviews that reveal the reason behind the attitudes of people towards Christianity or religion, as one cannot measure human behaviour in terms of quantity.

4.2.1.3 Encounters

When two or more people interact, they become close and get used to each other. Secularization would not occur without the interaction of people. The qualitative method is effective when data is analyzed through the encountering processes of the people in their society. This encounter goes beyond Malawi in the concept of secularization. Especially in this period of modern technology, people interact even at a distance; therefore, in this study of secularization, encounters played a very big role. An example can be given of a choir; because they interact then they share experiences. Also, immigrants come from different countries and bring some practices with them that can influence other groups. In research, all these must be considered when one interprets raw data.

4.2.1.4 Roles

When people move from rural to urban locations, their life-styles change. The standard of living, because of their positions, will determine their attitude towards traditional things. One factor that usually is affected is their attitude towards religion.

When their life becomes too busy, due to their positions, they tend to become too busy to attend church. As an element of the qualitative research method, roles have proved to be a relevant approach to answering the question of the study regarding whether secularization has been rampant in rural or urban settings. This approach has been helpful, as well, whether people change their attitude toward religion when they move from one location to another.

4.2.1.5 Relationships

In the preliminary research, it was discovered that the role of parents towards their children matters very much. Children from Christian families normally join their parents to practise Christianity, while those whose guardians or parents are not committed Christians also follow their parents. Relationships do determine the perception of members toward issues such as religion.

4.2.1.6 Groups

Groups are related to the element of relationships and encounters. But they are broader, since they involve more than one family. People that spend much time in groups such as soccer teams or ethnic groups influence one another. This must be analyzed during data processing to show how industrialization and urbanization have contributed to the rise of secularization.

4.2.1.7 Organization

Children coming from families with high moral standards sometimes are affected by their interactions with their fellow students at school and become different from the rest of the family. Research is to assess how organizations such as schools affect people and change their family practices.

4.2.1.8 Settlements

Life in urban settings is different from life in the villages. In urban areas, there are industries, modern equipment such as television and computers that can easily facilitate the transfer of information globally. For this reason, analyzing data from settlements is important. To measure secularization accurately one has to differentiate life in the village from life in town settings.

4.2.1.9 Social worlds

Life is shaped by one's environment. Babbie (2007:287) gives examples of the sports world or Wall Street. It becomes like one's god when one is addicted to sports. This also has a very big potential for shaping your behaviour and life-style. In this study one is to understand reasons of lack of participation in church activities, whether it means rejecting God or the social life of that particular individual affects his/her religious life.

4.2.1.10 Life-styles or subcultures

People of very high positions and the ruling class have their own life style. They normally do not like to associate themselves with people of the lower classes. In determining the concept of secularization, such factors must be considered. Accurately analyzing people according to their class enriched the research results.

4.2.2 Grounded Theory

Qualitative research methods, involve Grounded Theory. Babbie (2007:296) defines Grounded Theory as an inductive approach to the study of social life that attempts to generate a theory from the constant comparing of unfolding observations. This is very different from hypothesis testing, in which observations are used to generate hypotheses to be tested.

Strauss and Juliet Corbin (1998:43-46) recommend grounded theory as best because it allows the researcher to be scientific and creative at the same time. They further recommend that the researcher follow the following guidelines to get better results from the research:

- *Think Comparatively:* The authors suggest that it is essential to compare numerous incidents as a way of avoiding the biases that can arise from the interpretation of initial observations.
- *Obtain Multiple Viewpoints:* In part this refers to the different points of view of participants in the events under study, but Strauss and Corbin suggest that different observational techniques may also provide a variety of viewpoints.
- *Periodically Step Back:* As data accumulate, the researcher may begin to frame interpretations of what is going on, and it is important to keep checking the data against those interpretations. As Strauss and Corbin (1998:45) say, “The data themselves do not lie”.
- *Maintain an Attitude of Skepticism:* As the interpretation of the data begins, the researcher should regard all those findings as provisional, use new observations to test those interpretations, not just confirm them.
- *Follow the Research Procedures:* Grounded theory allows for flexibility in data collection as theories evolve, but Strauss and Corbin (1998:46) stress that three techniques are essential: making comparisons, asking questions, and sampling.”

According to Babbie (2007:296) Grounded Theory emphasizes research procedures. In particular, systematic coding is important for achieving validity and reliability in the data analysis. Because of this somewhat positive view of data, Grounded theorists are quite open to the use of qualitative studies in conjunction with quantitative ones.

In finding data for the subject of secularization, Grounded Theory is best because the concept of secularization involves the social life of human beings; change from their traditional belief of being committed Christians to that of not being committed to religious affairs at all.

4.2.2.1 Exploration

Another concept that needs to be discussed under the grounded theory is “exploration”. Babbie (2007:88) suggested that much of social research is conducted to explore a topic, that is, to start to familiarize a researcher with the topic. This approach typically occurs when a researcher examines a new interest or when the subject of the study itself is relatively new. Sommerville (1991:3) confessed that the subject of secularization has not been much studied, as noted above; hence the use of the exploration approach is best.

Babbie (2007:88) said that sometimes exploratory research is pursued through the use of focus groups, or guided small group discussions. This technique is frequently used in market research. [...] Exploratory studies are valuable in social science research. They are essential whenever a researcher is breaking new ground, and they almost always yield new insights into a topic for research. Exploratory studies are also a source of grounded theory.

Chapter three discussed the manifestations and factors of secularization in Britain and the literature review described the process of secularization in Britain. This is

different in the case of Malawi because the concept of secularization is relatively new in Malawi and much of the information depends on the research field work. This is an example of “Exploration”, Grounded Theory is therefore recommended for use in the qualitative research method.

4.3 Quantitative Research Methodology

Though much of the data was obtained through the qualitative research method as mentioned above, the quantitative research method could not be ignored completely because this study involved the decline of numbers in the attendance of church related activities. Babbie (2007:404) has defined quantitative analysis as the numerical representation and manipulation of observations for the purpose of describing and explaining the phenomena that those observations reflect.

In chapter five of this thesis, there are presentations of the rise in crime in Malawi as evidence of secularization. This will need statistical presentations to show the escalation in the incidence of crime in Malawi as a result of the decline of the influence of the church in the society. This definition reflects the understanding of the concept of secularization as religion loses authority and influence in the society during secularization. In chapter six of the thesis, one of the factors of secularization of the church in Malawi that is discussed is the rise of Islam. The rise of Islam is a move against secularization in society, but it contributes to the loss of influence of the Church. For the readers to understand this better, figures are shown to compare the growth of Christianity and Islam in Malawi. All these need the skills of the quantitative research method to present data accurately.

4.4 The Case Study Approach Research Methodology

There are various definitions of a case study provided by different authors. Mitchel (1983:129) defines the case study as “a detailed examination of an event (or a series of related events) which the analyst believes exhibit the operations of some identified general theoretical principles”. Unlike Mitchel, Yin (1989:23) describes the case study as an empirical enquiry that “investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context; when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.” In other words, Yin believes that to uncover pertinent issues in a study, deliberate attempts to understand the issues in their own real contexts form part of the process. Because of the indistinguishable nature of the phenomenon and context, other technical characteristics like data collection and analysis strategies have to form part of defining the case. In essence, Yin (1994:13) maintains that “the case study as a research strategy comprises an all-encompassing method - with the logic of design incorporating specific approaches to data collection and to data analysis”.

The case study approach was appropriate because it enabled a detailed investigation of churches and analyzed them critically to prove that they have been affected by the process of secularization. The main advantage of the use of the case study is that it allows an intensive examination of an organisation (churches in this case) and the interaction of the individuals within and outside it. A case study not only enables a more interpretative analysis of organisational phenomena (Diesing 1972), but also provides concrete observation, potentially unhampered by theories or pre-determined conclusions.

Sturman (1999:103) argues, “case study researchers hold that to understand a case, to explain why things happen as they do, and to generalise or predict from a single example, requires an in-depth investigation of the interdependencies of parts and of the patterns to emerge”. The present study does not seek to make generalisations, but, as already pointed out, it seeks to understand the dynamics of churches in the modern period, and how people behave in the church and their attitude towards the church today. This understanding is drawn not from a single case but different cases.

It is also vital to take note that the cases under study may be subject to a considerable degree of researcher’s interest, especially when the subjects or cases are ones to which the researcher or the researched may have obligations, responsibilities and attachments (Yin 1989:29, Yin 1994:1). Hence, it is important to acknowledge the researcher’s interests and positioning in the study. The researcher’s initial conviction to embark on this project started while he was ministering an urban church and he discovered how the Pentecostals were winning the younger generation to their churches and the comments of different people about the church, referring to the past church as a better one than today’s church. Having spent a number of years ministering in the church and at some point as a CCAP General Assembly¹² Youth Coordinator, his subsequent interaction with various people (both believers and non-believers) in and outside Malawi raised several questions regarding the pace and direction of the church. In particular, his interest in this particular topic is his passion towards the church, which is being challenged by the winds of secularization.

¹² CCAP General Assembly is comprised of five synods namely, Blantyre, Nkhoma, Livingstonia (within Malawi), Harare (Zimbabwe) and Lundazi (Zambia)

There is also a growing concern over how generalisable case study results are (Yin, 1994). A common complaint about the case study is that it is difficult to generalise from one case to another. Thus analysts fall into the trap of trying to select a 'representative' case or set of cases. Yet no set of cases, no matter how large, is likely to deal satisfactorily with the complaint (Yin 1994:37).

Burns (1997) also warns that while case studies may be criticized for lacking generalisability, what is important is the thorough understanding of the one or few cases examined. Also of importance is the manner in which the study is conducted. In the current study, the key focus was on understanding and learning from the cases. While case studies can be decried for being subjective, biased, impressionistic and lacking precision, it should not be forgotten that the uniqueness of the cases can nevertheless provide information that can be used to understand other complex phenomena on a wider scale.

4.5 Case Selection

One of the most daunting tasks when conducting case study research is the identification of appropriate cases, in other words, the method of selection of the cases. This section charts the processes undertaken to identify cases and the justification for their suitability. Following a rigorous examination of what kind of churches would provide appropriate data to respond to the research questions, the first task involved an examination of churches within the mainline especially the CCAP, then the Pentecostal and charismatic churches in order to assess the suggestion of Cox (1995) that this is the period of Pentecostal and charismatic churches. Further selections were the schools chosen as case studies and focus groups and their locations. It is because of the dilemma that other scholars have had

in the selection of particular case studies and individuals that this study indicates below the groups of interviewees.

4.6 The categories of people that were interviewed

A questionnaire was provided to the interviewees, and is attached to this thesis as appendix A for general members and Appendix B, for schools. The questionnaire was divided for different age groups, as follows: 14-19; 20-39; 40 and above. Age was important because the mainline churches in Malawi have been shaken by the exodus of the youth, many joining Pentecostal and charismatic churches. However the issue of Pentecostal and charismatic churches can only make sense if one looks at religious pluralism which has been dominated by the Pentecostal and charismatic churches and also organizational secularization, which has made churches readjust themselves to accommodate more people, and this has been identified as one of the characteristics of Pentecostal and charismatic churches.

The questionnaire also was distinguished in terms of male and female; (refer to appendix A (2.ii) male/female). This was important to determine whether gender was an issue in terms of church attendance. This comparison was also connected to the location, to assess whether in urban areas the attendance was different from that in the rural areas in terms of gender.

The questionnaire also asked the levels of education of the interviewees. This was helpful to the findings because the more some people obtain education the more they feel they are too busy to attend church services, and they are also open to the world through the internet. This exposure through the internet has affected many people in Malawi because of their having access to other cultures, which are not

acceptable in Malawi. An example of such unacceptable culture is the issue of homosexuality.

The questionnaire also asked about occupation/status. This category was helpful to find out whether occupation and status affect religion. This was relevant because in chapter three, industrialization was identified as one of the factors of secularization in Britain, therefore, to look at the occupation and status of the interviewees was very critical in understanding secularization in Malawi in relation to that in Britain.

Individuals were also asked about their experience in church matters. This was to see whether a person is in the church by choice or by birth. It also helped to determine whether individuals are rooted in their faith or not. Muslims believe that their religion is a way of life and this question about the experience of a person in the church helped us to determine the difference between the perception of religion by Christians and by Muslims.

Then, too, respondents were asked about their location, whether urban or rural. This was to determine whether in Malawi, secularization is affected by location or not, and whether there are other factors within a particular location that may determine the pace and spread of secularization.

More evidence was presented from the primary data gained through the questionnaire that was used to interview different people and focus groups. To some extent, to prove that secularization is indeed at work in Malawi, case studies and secondary data were used.

A total of 1000 people were interviewed through careful selection based on their location, church and experience in the church as mentioned above. Each table that

has been presented below shows the type of people who were interviewed and should add up to 1000 people. As appendix A (2.1) indicates in Table 4.6.1, they were divided as follows:

4.6.1 People that were interviewed

AGE	MALE	FEMALE	URBAN	RURAL
14-19	140	160	150	150
20-39	190	210	170	200
40 and above	190	110	170	160

The age category of 14-19 contains people mostly active in youth activities in their churches. The mainline churches also faced a lot of challenges with that age. This will be discussed in the next chapter as the field research work will be presented and how and why there is the youth exodus from the mainline churches to the Pentecostal and charismatic churches.

The 20-39 age group included married people, some of who joined the church because of their spouses. A number of people in this category were very clear and believed that they made a personal decision without any influence from any other person.

Ages 40 and above age group consisted of the more mature who have seen both what they could call the old church and today's church. This group was very

important in this research because they were able to explain and compare what they believe to be the old church which is different to the church today.

4.6.2 Representation of male and female

The results of the male and female respondents showed that, in both urban and rural areas, female respondents were in the majority. Of the 100 persons in this group, 40 were male and 60 female. In the 20-39 group there were 200 representatives, with 90 male and 110 female. These figures were proportional to the number of members in different congregations. The same representation of male and female was also reflected in the 40 and above group, 90 male and 110 female.

4.6.3 Levels of education of the people interviewed

The table below indicates the academic qualifications of the people that were interviewed. The education levels were identified in terms of primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Since secularization is a new concept in Malawi, it is important to note the educational levels of the people interviewed. People are agents of change and the thesis seeks to determine whether education plays a part in the spread of secularization.

4.6.4 Education levels

	Up to primary school level	Secondary school level	University level
No. Of people	170	680	150

In Malawi the level of illiteracy is still high, but the government is trying to address this by introducing free primary education. The research shows that, many people

have just advanced to secondary school level, supporting the observation by Msowoya (2009) that:

Malawi's literacy levels have tremendously increased from 40% in 1994 to 63% in 2005, a senior education official said, on Thursday. Deputy Minister of Education, Richard Msowoya told the journalists during the commemoration of National Day of Education, observed on every 19th July, that education played an important role in the country's social, economic and political development. According to Msowoya, the country's literacy levels have increased due to the free primary education policy put in place by the Former United Democratic Government of President Bakili Muluzi in 1994. Msowoya added that the policy had also raised the enrolment of pupils from 1.9 million before 1994 to the current 3.2 million (illiteracy level in Malawi, 28/03/2009).

4.6.5 Occupation/status

Since the research involves people from both urban and rural areas, the choice of the respondents was carefully made so as to include people formally employed and people who were not. Within this category, the status of a person was identified as lower, middle or high class. People were asked about their status in terms of their monthly earnings. Five hundred people in total and their incomes were categorized.

The table below indicates the status of people in urban and rural areas. Those in the lower class earned up to MK10 000.00, the middle class earned, between MK11, 000.00 and MK99, 000.00 while the higher class earned MK100, 000.00 and above.

	LOWER INCOME	MIDDLE INCOME	HIGHER INCOME
URBAN	120	310	155
RURAL	180	190	45
TOTAL	300	500	200

4.7 Data Collection Methods Appropriate to Case Studies

There is no single data collection method that adequately covers all the influences which interact within an entity. The use of a variety of data collection techniques commonly known as “triangulation” (Marshall & Rossman 1989:146; Mason 1996:148; Merriam 1988:69; Taylor & Bogdan 1998:80) is crucial in conducting case studies. As argued by Merriam (1988), “qualitative case studies rely heavily upon qualitative data obtained from interviews, observations and documents” (p. 68). A multi-method approach was therefore crucial in the present study of the secularization process, not because of the need to establish the authenticity of the findings, or to corroborate the findings, but rather to generate as much data as possible, from different perspectives with the ultimate goal of identifying issues that could illuminate the research questions, as Patton observes:

Qualitative data consists of ‘detailed descriptions of situations, events, people, interactions, and observed behaviours; direct quotations from people about their experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and thoughts; and excerpts or entire passage from documents, correspondence, records, and case histories’ (Merriam 1988:67-68).

Therefore, while the concepts of triangulation and corroboration were applied in this study, it is possible that research results may not be compatible. There could be contradictions, divergences and ambivalences. Ideally, this study was not aimed at discovering single truths but rather a range of views from various sources. In order to arrive at a point where the process of secularization in Malawi would be understood, there was a need to examine how it started and the factors that promoted it, in comparison to the same process in Britain.

4.8 Ethical Issues and Selection Criteria for Participants

The personal involvement of the researcher in the lives of others is of critical importance to the success of any human research. Beuchamp and Childress (1994) outline four major principles for ethical behaviour which can be applied to research as Holloway & Walker (2000:58) wrote:

- respect for autonomy (independence and self determination);
- non-maleficence (doing no harm);
- beneficence (doing good); and,
- justice (fair treatment)

This study only mention names where necessary after the approval of the personal interviewed and a direct quote of the public copy of the literature, as the issue of ethical is paramount in any research.

The researcher read a lot of literature and shared ideas on secularization with his supervisor. After the approval of the research proposal by the Higher Degrees Committee of the University of Fort Hare, a questionnaire was developed that was used in the field. The researcher also consulted all the relevant institutions involved in the study. These were first consulted through written applications while the researcher was in South Africa. Although different institutions were invited to participate, some churches and individuals did not submit the relevant data on time and others never brought any. These are some of the challenges of research. The research was largely done in Malawi.

4.9 Permission for Interviews

Minichiello *et al.* (1995) warn researchers of the sensitivity involved in conducting research. They argue that a range of issues has to be considered in the process of designing a piece of research, and suggest three of them. First, they suggest that every research project has to consider who the interviewees would be and, secondly, how to access them. They also advise paying particular attention to sampling strategies. These processes are sensitive because they believe that they constitute not only ethical but also political issues.

All interviewees were first informed of the study by the researcher, who was aware of the nature of the study. Prior to visiting their places, whether church or mosque, arrangements were made with those to be interviewed. However, prior to the actual interview process, the researcher explained in some detail who he was, where he was from, the course of study was undertaking, how this study was part of it, what the research involved, how they could help the study, what the help would involve, how the data obtained would be used, and how confidentiality and anonymity would be ensured.

4.10 Categories of interviewees

In this study, potential respondents were identified from different categories. This was important because it is believed that 'birds of same feather flock together' and people of the same categories will normally understand each other well. Therefore the categories were divided as follows:

4.10.1 Category 1: Religious leaders

Since the research is about secularization of religion in Malawi, religious leaders were involved as respondents to the questionnaire. About 300 religious leaders (both

clergy and laity) were interviewed. Since most of the analysis of religion focused on Christianity, many religious leaders were from different Christian churches. They were chosen based on their denomination. This was important to ensure that the responses were balanced and well spread within Malawi.

4.10.2 Category 2: Individuals

This category of interviewees went through a similar process described in Category 1 above. About 100 individuals were interviewed in this category. As time was limited for gaining access through letters to members of this category, telephonic interviews were favoured as a means of saving time to those that could not be met in person. The telephone calls were first targeted at individuals who could easily understand about the researched topic of secularization. The conversations briefly described the purpose of the study and why that person was considered vital to the study. Most of the interviewees from these categories were those who had some knowledge of the church and issues affecting the life of the church. However others were met in person as individuals but using the same questionnaire attached to this thesis as appendix A.

4.10.3 Category 3: British nationals/ those residents in Britain

This category comprised a cross section of people. These were mostly people who are British by nationality or people who were living in Britain. Some of them were interviewed by phone and some the researcher had a chance of meeting in Malawi. 50 people were interviewed in this category. The questionnaire attached to this thesis as "Appendix C" was used to obtain data from this category.

4.10.4 Category 4: Church members

This category was interviewed in a group as church members, after they had been briefed about the research topic. They were given a chance to study the questionnaire and ask any question related to it, so that they could express what they were aware of. These members were also from different churches and arrangements were made for a group from a particular church to be interviewed at the same place to allow them respond freely. This group included those members from the mainline churches and those from other churches who, originally, were in the mainline churches but had moved to Pentecostal and charismatic churches. The researcher had 150 interviewees in this category.

4.10.5 Category 5: Focus groups

This group comprised of a group of individuals in different locations, e.g Bangwe Focus Group. This group was chosen based on the questionnaire's area of interest. If the question was about rural/urban setting, the group came from either a rural or urban area so that they could give a firsthand account and in relation to where they lived. Normally a date would be selected and people would gather in a group after proper communication was established. 200 people were interviewed in total in this category.

4.10.6 Category 6: Schools group

This category had a total of 200 interviewees from different schools. Twenty schools were visited and 10 people represented each school. This group responded to the specific question of whether secularization has crept into schools in Malawi or not.

4.11 Data Analysis Strategies

Marshall and Rossman (1999:150) refer to data analysis as “the process of bringing order, structure, and interpretation to the mass of collected data”. Data analysis involves organizing what has been seen, heard and read so that one can make sense of what has been learnt. To do so, the researcher must not only categorise, synthesize, search for patterns and interpret the data collected (Glesne & Peshkin 1992; Lincoln & Guba 1985), but also look for continuities and disruptions in the emerging issues. While searching for patterns may be considered paramount, it is also important to look for contradictions in the events, processes and issues that have relevance to the phenomena being investigated.

There were two processes in which the study was engaged in order to critically examine not only the process of secularization in Malawi but also in Britain, since British secularization affects Malawi, owing to the strong links between the two. The first step was for the researcher to ‘immerse’ and socialize himself into and with the data right from the onset. In addition, he had to try and understand the core issues emerging from various sources. Given the qualitative and case study approaches of the present study, data analysis started at the beginning of the study. Data analysis was part of the research design. It also formed part of the literature review, data collection and data ordering. Data analysis strategies were largely influenced by the sentiments of Stake (1995:71), who argues that “there is no particular moment when data analysis begins”.

The analytic procedure which was preferred in this study and which was used to analyse data from interviews, was derived from a combination of data analysis techniques developed by Miles and Huberman (1984, 1998) and Yin (1994). Miles

and Huberman identify three linked sub-processes that are vital in data analysis, namely, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

4.11.1 Data Reduction

In comparison, Yin (1994) suggests two general strategies relevant to case study analysis. The first strategy relies on a theoretical proposition (Yin 1994:103) and is similar to Miles and Huberman's (1984, 1998) 'data reduction' model in that they are both based on the objectives and design of the study. In other words, the theoretical framework developed in the literature review, and, which also resulted in developing new insights, can be used to as a data analysis tool.

The second strategy Yin (1994) suggests is the developing of a case description, which essentially entails developing a framework for organizing the case. The description could be in the form of themes that could also further be developed to ascertain patterns of complexity, which may ultimately be used to explain or answer the research questions.

In this study, the theoretical propositions, as a data analysis strategy, included a literature review to establish and make explicit the initial boundaries of the study. It was also through the development of the conceptual framework that the second stage, which was the exploration and identification of the research problem, was done. As more and more issues emerged from the literature review, it became clear that purposive selection was appropriate, as it was envisaged that identifying suitable cases would provide an opportunity for understanding the issues in question. However, despite these processes, an extra dimension to the theoretical proposition process was a critical reflection on the divergences, contradictions, tensions and other ambivalences in the data. A critical examination of the various

themes based on this strategy helped in the understanding of the process of secularization in Britain and in Malawi.

4.11.2 Data Display

Data display, as defined by Miles and Huberman (1984:21), is “an organised assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action taking”. This activity, like data reduction or theoretical proposition, is a form of data analysis essentially aimed at clarifying the direction of the analysis through assembling data into displays such as matrices, graphs, charts, structured summaries, synopses, and vignettes. A genuine attempt was made in this study to emulate this model in the display of data collected through interviews and from documents, by collating excerpts from documents and interviews under appropriate headings relevant to the research questions.

4.12 Limitation of this study

This study acknowledges its limitation on the presentation of Britain because for the comparison of Britain and Malawi, much of the data used, though very reliable, were from secondary sources. However much of it were verified by some individuals who have been in Britain. Therefore this study acknowledges that gap and its limitation.

4.13 Conclusion Drawing/Verification

There are three separate concepts emanating from the terms ‘conclusion drawing’ and ‘conclusion verification’. The former, as defined by Miles and Huberman (1984:22), means “beginning to decide what things mean, noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, causal flows and propositions”. Additionally, the tensions, contradictions and ambivalences in the emerging issues were examined.

Conclusion drawing and verification were vital to data analysis in this study. Meanings were drawn from a critical examination of a cross section of reduced and displayed data. Comparing and contrasting, noting emerging patterns and themes, and clustering and looking for key issues, led to a clear understanding of the core aspects of the study. It was also at this stage that continuities and disruptions of issues that were examined and explained in relation to the research questions under the process of secularization in Malawi were critically scrutinized.

After discussing the research methodologies to be used in this study the next chapter is about the manifestations of secularization in Malawi. The chapter is the first to discuss and interpret data collected from the field research work using the questionnaires that are attached at the end of this thesis as appendices.

CHAPTER FIVE

MANIFESTATIONS OF SECULARIZATION IN MALAWI

5.1 Introduction

This chapter analyzes the manifestations of secularization in Malawi. It is the first chapter that contains the findings of the field research work. Chapters two and three were theoretical and were based on the literature review. This chapter, respond to the question of whether secularization has crept into Malawi. It will use the three types of secularization; societal, organizational and individual as a conceptual frame work for the thesis. This will be supported by findings that will be analyzed from field researched work and case studies. After presenting the research findings as evidence of secularization in Malawi, chapter six will present and discuss factors associated with secularization.

This study noted that the church has been strongly affected by both religious pluralism which started emerging in the 1980s, and national political changes from a one party system to the multiparty system of government which began in 1993. This change is reminiscent of the changes in the church that occurred in Britain after the Second World War, as noted by Davie (2007:136):

In the immediate post-war decades the emphasis lay on putting back what the war had destroyed, to the point almost of denying that anything had happened to the underlying structures of British society. This was a period in which traditional forms of religion flourished, epitomized more than anything in the rituals associated with the Coronation in June 1953. By the late 1960s everything had changed; attitudes, assumptions, behavior and institutions associated with earlier decades had been comprehensively swept away. The world in which relatively conservative forms of mainstream religion fitted quite well gave way to a decade in which confidence in secular alternatives dominated the scene- so much so that the churches very frequently followed suit in the efforts to 'catch up' with society.

One can see elements of organizational secularization in the above citation; religious institutions in Britain changed to catch up to society after the Second World War.

The test of freedom brought a lot of changes in terms of modernization in Britain. Dickens (1961:11) noted that after the Second World War, excitement brought so much freedom that the tradition of encouraging one another with dignity disappeared:

The 'health and home' formula was reapplied with a vengeance to girls' fiction in the post-war decades. New romance comics like Marilyn (founded 1955), Valentine (1957), and Boyfriend (1959) provided what Cynthia White has described as a 'simplified dream world peopled with heroes and heroines who rushed breathlessly through a series of ill-fated encounters towards the predictably happy ending where "girl-gets-boy"'.

The above experience of the post war period in Britain can be connected with the post referendum period in Malawi. After referendum where the people of Malawi voted for 'Multiparty system of Government', the thinking and actions of the people changed due to their overzealous celebration. The changes brought moral freedom, which deeply affected the life of the church in the areas of morality, attitude and perception towards its leaders.

5.2 Views on the meaning of secularization

Though the concept of secularization is relatively new to Malawi, after the introduction of the topic, the researcher asked the interviewees how they understood the term secularization. This was a very important question because in order for the interviewees to give the correct responses, they had to understand the topic fully.

Strauss and Corbin (1998:11) noted that in some cases, a research exercise can be approached on the basis of the "nature of the research problem." Such research

attempts to understand the meaning or nature of the experiences of persons with particular problems and lends itself from getting out into the field and finding out what people are doing and thinking. Learning from these scholars, the researcher had to explore substantive areas about which little is known and novel understandings to areas about which much is known.

This thesis looks at the concept of secularization in three dimensions; societal, organizational and individual. Secularization will be viewed as the decrease of the influence of religion upon the society or institution. This means that religion's influence is diminishing in the society. Where religion has less power, its influence in the society declines resulting in the decline in morality of believers. Furthermore, this decline in influence results in a decrease of involvement in church or religious activities for many individuals. In response to this, churches are forced to modify their structures, beliefs and rituals in order to be more attractive to society. This reflects the societal, institutional and organizational effects that secularization has on society.

As the field study findings are presented in this chapter, it will compare the responses of the people that were interviewed and the working definition of secularization. By the end of this chapter, however, the study must respond to the question of whether there are manifestations of secularization in Malawi or not. The approach of Hadden & Shuppe (1989:27-43) is that in an investigation of this nature, one has to find out reasons behind various aspects of behavior. Their approach investigates the why and how of decision making. This was supported by Lofland & Lofland (1995:101-113) who recommend that an element of practice within the qualitative research methods is vital because it analyses various kinds of behavior.

This was suggested in the previous chapter. In this case the research should be able to look into issues that forced secularization to creep into Malawi.

From the responses to questions about their understanding of the term secularization, it was clear that many people understood the term. 1000 people were interviewed from different places. This approach is recommended by Babbie (2007:404), who believes in numerical representation; in this study, the 1000 people represented different groups and individuals. In a population of about 15 million people, I must admit that there was no better methodological approach than the Mixed Methods Approach which allows a stratified approach. Creswell (2003:156-7) has supported the stratification approach which was used to sample the 1000 people because it shows the specific characteristics of individuals (e.g. both females and males) who are represented in the sample and because the sample reflects the true proportion of individuals within the population with certain characteristics.

As mentioned in chapter four of this thesis, from my questionnaires that are attached as appendix A, B and C, one can see the sampling of interviewees. They represent different categories such as gender, status and location as prescribed by the stratified approach, cited above. The results that are obtained using such approaches are acceptable because the sampling is very strategic. This informed the choices of the 1000 people as the stratified approach was applied.

Below are the answers that were given by the interviewees, when asked about their understanding of the concept of secularization:

Description of secularization	Number of people who gave that answer
Decline of popular involvement in institutionalized religion and reluctance in attending church activities	50
Less participation when it comes to open church functions unlike secular activities	30
Decline in church service attendance	200
The decreasing influence of religion upon society	700
Rejection of the magical use of the sacred	20
Going to church as a habit but without being influenced by church policies	0

When considering the responses of the interviewees to questions about their understanding of secularization, one would conclude that in general people do

understand the meaning of secularization. The working definition of the thesis is that 'secularization is the decline in influence of religion in the society' 700 people agreed with this definition. 200 people responded that secularization was related to 'the decline in church attendance.' In chapter two of the thesis however, the researcher mentioned that the issue of decline in church attendance is an evidence of secularization and not a definition. 50 people responded that secularization was about the decline of popular involvement in institutionalized religion and the reluctance to attend church activities. This is related to the issue of decline in church attendance, and similarly is an evidence of secularization. 30 people responded that secularization meant less participation in open church functions when compared to involvement in secular activities. 20 people responded that the rejection of the magical use of the sacred was a definition of secularization. None of them felt that going to church as a habit but without being influenced by the church policies was secularization.

5.3 Indications that secularization has crept into Malawi

Chapter three has discussed manifestations of and factors influencing secularization in Britain using available literature while this chapter provides research field work to prove that secularization has indeed crept into Malawi. After respondents indicated that they understood clearly the meaning of secularization, the next question was about the evidences of secularization in Malawi. The evidences that they mentioned were referred to as indicators of secularization in Malawi. This study has divided indicators into three

categories of secularizations as was discussed in chapter two of this thesis. These were individual, organizational and societal factors.

Questionnaires were developed which are attached as appendices to this thesis. The interviewees were asked whether they were conversant with the concept of secularization in order to assess whether the evidences they were to give would be in line with the concept of secularization. 700 interviewees responded that they knew secularization as the decreasing influence of religion upon the society. This was the working definition of secularization used in this thesis. Referring to Chapter three on the discussion of the manifestations of secularization in Britain, the first evidence that Britain was becoming increasingly secular was its decline in church attendance. The second question asked in the field work of the study was related to evidence of the manifestations of secularization in Malawi. The first evidence was the decline of church attendance especially in mainline churches. Clearly, secularization manifests in similar ways in Britain and Malawi. Much of this will be discussed in the following chapter.

5.3.1 Evidences of societal secularization in Malawi

Societal secularization has been defined as the loss of influence and authority of religion in the society. Case studies were used to obtain the respondents' responses to the question of whether secularization has crept into Malawi. The first indicator was whether religion has lost influence and authority in Malawi. The idea of using case studies to support an argument has been supported by Yin (1989a:23) who described a case study as 'an empirical enquiry that "investigates" a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, when the boundaries between the

phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident, and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.’ In other words Yin (1989a) believes that part of the process in uncovering pertinent issues in a study is making deliberate attempts to understand the issues in their own contexts. It is this understanding of the case study approach that was used when gathering evidence that secularization is currently being experienced in Malawi.

5.3.1.1 Societal secularization experienced in the legislation

system in Malawi

Commenting on societal secularization, Martin (1978:88) links two downgraded areas, “The religious symbols of community and the notion of intrinsic morality (which are rooted partly though not exclusively in religion) with “social control” which according to him “has to shift from intrinsic symbols to an appeal based on interest.”

Reflecting on Martin (1978), one would find such elements of “downgrading religious elements” in the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi. Such changes are not attached to any particular religious group. They merely state that Malawi is a sovereign country, and make no reference to religious affiliations. Looking at the statistical estimate of the number of Christians in Malawi, which stands at 80%, Malawi could declare itself to be a Christian country¹³. In an interview with the Clerk of Parliament she said that Malawi uses a secular constitution because there are a lot of religions in Malawi and would be difficult to monopolize one particular religion:

¹³ A Christian country is an official declared state that its policies of governing such a country are based on Christian principles.

Constitution is a legal document that serves all the citizens in this country and there is no way it can be biased to one particular religion. Assuming that we make Malawi a Christian country in our constitution, which Christian denomination are we going to follow because we have other Christian churches that takes alcoholic staff, others not, others do not accept any medication, others do, so it can be very difficult. But there is a provision of freedom of religion; every person can make a decision to choose a particular religion that he/she wants.

This study is however, aware of some conflicts between the government and some religious groups in Malawi because of their religious beliefs. These groups include Rastafarians, the 'Apostolic Churches' and the Zionist churches. For Rastafarians, the issue of dreadlocks has been a challenge in some public schools while the Apostolic and Zionist churches have refused to take medication, even when it was compulsory immunization following the outbreak of measles in parts of the country in 2011.

Another example of the removal of religious elements in the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi was noted on 5th November, 2012. The Malawian government issued a moratorium on all laws against homosexuality, meaning that police will not arrest anyone based on these laws. This move is against section 153 and 156 of the Malawian Penal Code which criminalizes sexual conduct between men. According to law, anyone convicted of violating sections 153 and 156 face up to 14 years imprisonment, with the possibility of corporal punishment. Section 137A of the Penal Code criminalises indecent practices between females with anyone found guilty liable to 5 years in prison.

In the action of Malawi Government two indications are clearly evident; religion has lost authority and the influence of religion on society is in decline. Clearly, societal secularization is taking place. What it means in Malawi is that religion has lost its power over key institutions; it can no longer control the policies of secular

organizations like the legislature. The Malawi Council of Churches issued a communiqué warning against legalizing homosexuality on 16th November, 2012. Part of the communiqué read:

The Malawi Council of Churches believes that Malawi is a God-fearing country, and as such continues upholds homosexuality and therefore sodomy cannot be part and parcel of the acceptable norms of our society. The Council further expresses that it maintains its stand against any gay practices as they are;

- *Biblically sinful Lev. 20:13*
- *Morally unhealthy*
- *Divinely against God's nature- Gen 1:27, 2:18-25.*

One can see that secularization does not only affect the church but it goes beyond it. The fact that laws aren't made in conformity with religion means that religion has been pushed to periphery.

The study notes that even pastoral letters are no longer respected as they used to be. The government is able to challenge and respond to pastoral letters. This study is aware that previously the government could respond to pastoral letters but the mood in the country could feel that indeed the church has spoken. In an interview with different people on societal secularization based on pastoral letters they said:

Nowadays the church is not active in politics because what is happening is that when another church issues pastoral letter, the government will normally connive with another church who normally criticises another church or sometimes the same church will respond and disown the same pastoral letter from their own church, therefore I think religion is not influential nowadays.

5.3.1.2 Societal secularization experienced in the Education system in Malawi

The missionary enterprise in Malawi started with schools. For people to understand Christianity better, they needed education; hence the introduction of schools. The mission schools were important institutions for both missionaries and the government. Sindima (1998:2) noted that “It was through schools that missionaries and administrators were able to launch an onslaught on the African value systems, and ritual practices.”

Mission Schools educated people who joined the government as civil servants in various junior positions such as clerks and interpreters. Missionaries boasted about producing qualified people who were employed in the government. They claimed that it was “perhaps in the spheres of the church that Africans have had the fullest opportunity of bearing responsibility” (Memorandum submitted to the Bledisloe Commission in April 1938 by the International Missionary Council of Nyasaland, 6). In turn the task of the government was to ensure security for missionaries and their stations. In the grand scheme of things, churches had a big influence on schools.

Since the missionaries owned schools, the churches used to conduct morning devotions, make policies and decide on entry of successful candidates for both mission and public schools. Nkhoma (2005:80) cited a statement in opposition to this by Dr. Kamuzu Banda¹⁴ where he stated that he did not want to see marriages between education and religion:

In my manifesto in 1961, as a leader of the Malawi Congress Party, I made a pledge that when my party is in power, will pay special attention to those parts of the country like the Muslim areas...where education has been deplorably neglected. Now that I have taken over the

¹⁴ Dr. Kamuzu Banda was the first President of the Republic of Malawi from 1964 to 1994.

government, I direct that there must be no marriage between education and religion (Nkhoma 2005:80).

The above statement meant that though various Christian churches remained as proprietors of the majority of schools in the country, control of educational policy as well as control of the entry to all schools passed firmly into the hands of the Ministry of Education so that religion would not control the education system. This is what Dobbelaere (1979a:49-54) and Billet (1977:8-18) referred to as societal secularization because as the schools were moving from religious influences to a more secular influence, as Dr Banda desired, a number of schools, which used to have Bible study clubs stopped, and students were no longer required to be religious.

A questionnaire entitled "*Secularization in schools*" was used to assess whether the practice of churches influencing many of the policies in schools was still present. The questionnaire has been attached to this thesis as Appendix B. A total of 20 cross-sections of schools from both urban and rural areas were visited. These schools were selected from all the three major regions of Malawi; South, Central and North. A total of 200 people were interviewed (10) from each school. A summary of the responses is as follows:

- There were no morning devotions in 15 of the 20 schools that were visited.

This means 75% of schools were not conducting morning devotions.

Though many schools were initiated by the missionaries as mentioned above, the data obtained by the researcher in this study is that many schools were no longer conducting morning devotions and Bible studies. The decline in the number of schools participating in such activities was 15 out of the 20 schools that were visited.

This means that religion is no longer a force that can be experienced in schools. In the absence of societal secularization one would expect that religion would be experienced in schools, through activities like Bible studies and morning devotions. However the findings of this study reveal that 75% of schools visited were not conducting morning devotions.

- 2 schools reported that they do have Bible clubs that meet every Friday but that the attendance is very low. This represents 10% of the schools.

The second question was related to Bible studies, with Bible studies being a good indicator of the religious activities taking place in schools. The findings of this study were that out of 20 schools that were visited, only 2 schools were conducting Bible studies. This represented 10% of schools. This percentage being on the lower side means that the religious activities in schools are declining. This is a reflection of societal secularization.

- In all the schools it was reported that 'Bible Knowledge' has been removed, and replaced with 'Moral Education' by the Ministry of Education

Dr Banda's comment above, that he "did not want any marriages between religion and schools" has resurfaced in Malawi in the form of the religious curriculum being replaced by a moral education curriculum. The reason was that Bible Knowledge was perceived to be promoting a particular religion, namely Christianity. The view was that Christianity was marginalizing other religions. The fact that the Malawi Government chose to intervene and removed Bible Knowledge, is noted in this study as a manifestation of societal secularization. Dobbelaere (1979a:49ff) noted that in societal secularization, church schools were replaced by secular schools. In an interview with the Education Secretary of the CCAP, Blantyre Synod, it was reported

that the CCAP Blantyre Synod alone has lost over 20 schools in the past 10 years. One would have to admit that the transformation of over 20 schools from church schools to the secular schools over a period of 10 years is huge.

- On the general question about the commitment of both members of staff and students to the issues of religion in their schools, about 140 people said that there was no commitment on matters of religion. This represented 70 % of the respondents.

This study noted that religion was no longer a force in many schools and therefore the participation of both staff and students in religious activities declined.

The Malawi situation is similar to the situation of schools in France and USA as cited in chapter three, where societal secularization was experienced in schools. Matemba (2011:13) cited Nipkow (2009), who noted that the teaching of religion in French public schools and the United States was outlawed and religion in public education in general was banned in line with the secular nature of the countries' constitutions (Moran 2010).

The manifestation of secularization in schools in Malawi is a clear reflection that secularization in a country does not only affect churches but affects the country as a whole. This mirrors the situation in Britain. .

5.3.1.3 Societal secularization creeps into Malawi as believers and non believers' behaviour becomes indistinguishable

The interviewees in all the categories mentioned in chapter four of this thesis agreed that there is no difference between the behaviour of Christians and non-Christians in Malawi. This is in line with the definition of societal secularization. In order to support

their responses, a case study of 20 prostitutes and 20 prisoners was used to support the concept that it is almost impossible to differentiate between believers' behaviour and that of non believers in Malawi. The prisoners were interviewed at Chichiri Prison in July, 2009, while the prostitutes were interviewed in December, 2009.

Statistics of prisoners and prostitutes that are attached to a church

	Respondents	Christians	Non Christians	Percentage of Christians
Prostitutes	20	15	5	75%
Prisoners	20	12	8	60%

The above table shows that out of 20 prostitutes, 15 confirmed that they were Christians while out of the 20 prisoners that were interviewed at Chichiri Prison 12 claimed that they were Christians. Clearly, people involved in various immoral or criminal practices are not simply non believers. One cannot differentiate the behaviour of believers and non believers. The case study above reflects the fact that the influence of religion on individuals has declined. Christianity is a religion and like many religions, should theoretically affect the morality of individuals in society. This is the point Phiri (2006) was raising in chapter one of this thesis when he stated that one of the problems or signs that Christianity in Malawi is losing its vitality, it is that it is no longer influential.

5.3.1.3.1 Religious leaders perceived to be corrupt

In an interview with the Mulanje Rural Focus Group B (MRFGB: 2008), it was also mentioned that churches nowadays no longer give clothes and food to those in need.

Most agreed that since the church is no longer concerned with the ills of society and as a result the church is perceived to be irrelevant to the society. The church must be light and salt to the members of the society. About 70% of the people interviewed felt that the church is not meeting their needs and that it was not necessary to be committed to a church which does not meet one's needs. In this case I would suggest that it is happening when religion has failed to influence the spiritual life of its religious leaders.

Respondents felt that today's church leaders are corrupt and materialistic. Respondents believed that religious leaders behave in such ways because they have been secularized. The reason is that even though they are in the church, their actions don't match what they claim to believe, meaning that religion has not changed their lives. Dobbelaere (2002) believes that in societal secularization, the influence of religion declines. Here even religious leaders have failed to be influenced by their own religion, hence they are judged as people who serve God for material gain. Such type of action by religious leaders reflects the reality that even though they are in the church, religion has not influenced their lives. This is a sign of societal secularization.

On the issue of material gain many respondents concluded that religious leaders do receive enough support materially and financially from well-wishers from both within and outside Malawi. This presupposes them to benefitting themselves at the expense of the needy. To the members of the church, such behaviour from religious leaders is a sign that they have been secularized. There were many examples that respondents gave to support their points. The next sub-section will highlight more on religious leaders and material gain.

5.3.1.3.2 Religious leaders and material gain

The question of religious leaders and material gain was asked to all the interviewees and almost 85% of the interviewees responded that in these days people have fallen in love with money and not God, unlike in the past when people were God-fearing and had no strong passion for money. To me this is a sign of societal secularization in which religious leaders do not live in accordance with their words. In an interview with Mr. Theu (2007), he raised a number of these concerns as the reason of his belief that secularization had crept into Malawi. Here is a case study of a religious leader who was arrested in Salima.

A 59-year-old CCAP Reverend was arrested in Salima for the alleged misappropriation of church funds. He was charged with two offences: theft and conduct likely to cause breach of peace. He was said to have misappropriated K543, 101.81 meant for the church's development work. The church came to realize that some money was missing when the treasurer was requested to give his report of the 2004 and 2005 finances. The respondent, who is also a member of the church, said:

The reverend asked the treasurer not to produce the said report but to concentrate on the months of September to November 2005 only. When the treasurer refused, the reverend ex-communicated him, and when church elders discovered the issue, the reverend intimidated them during his sermons. He told them that he would deal with them, thus when the elders reported the matter to police.

The respondent stated that at the time of the interview, the reverend was on bail while the police were continuing with investigations, but that the reverend had admitted that he had taken a part of the money.

Another respondent said that some religious leaders are corrupt because they receive money from politicians either to frustrate the government or to support

policies that are not popular with the people. The respondent referred to one Reverend from the CCAP Nkhoma Synod who was suspended in November, 2002 for such practices:

To say the truth I am very frustrated with some of these clergy who are not representing the people's voices. Imagine we have a reverend who went to the President, Dr. Bakili Muluzi in 2002 to collect money and since then all his sermons in the church would just support the policies of the UDF Party, whether they are good for the people or bad. But I am happy that the Synod suspended him, I hope others will take a lesson out of this. We respect you religious leaders but when you are corrupt you make the church cheap. That is why nowadays people are not respecting the church as they used to do.

The respondent stated that the church is very secularized nowadays, because its leaders are not demonstrating good examples of how church leaders should behave. He said that religious leaders join the church for money or because they could not get a better job. To be a reverend one must be called to serve the flock of God.

Some religious leaders have noted that such practices as cited above will affect the integrity of the church. In an interview with the Very Reverend Chimkoka, who was once the Moderator of the CCAP General Assembly, he made the following remarks:

The General Assembly of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), has warned clergy against receiving money or gifts from political parties or individual politicians, saying most of those gifts have strings attached and are aimed at wooing the church leaders to support certain policies, which may not serve the interest of people in the country .

The Rev. M.J. Kadawati, in an interview, distanced himself from the statement of the CCAP General Assembly Moderator. He argued that the church and its leadership may accept gifts when the intentions are pure. Rev. Kadawati said:

It is practically impossible for the church to reject financial support from politicians or political parties, because some politicians are members of our churches. So, how do you treat them when they give their obligations to God- tithes and offerings? The church has always

received monetary support or gifts from political parties or politicians. "What he (Reverend Chimkoka) meant is that the church should only accept gifts whose intentions are pure." However, am aware that the issue is problematic since it is not easy to tell one's motive when one supports church projects.

5.3.1.3.3 Pastor appears in court

One respondent agreed that religious leaders are more secularized and as a result fail to spread the Word of God effectively. He gave the example of a Pastor who appeared in court on the 4th September, 2007. The pastor was accused of assaulting his niece. The same pastor was allegedly accused of attempting to rape a woman in June, 2007. In an interview Mr. Nyirongo (2007) commented as follows:

Hearing of a case in which the Pastor of Word of Faith Bible Church is accused of injuring his niece is putting the church into shame. The Pastor appeared before Nkhata Bay First Grade Magistrate Court in July, A lady reported to Police in Nkhata Bay that the cleric allegedly broke her arms with a pestle when the pastor, after coming from a drinking spree, disagreed with her over what she referred to as "petty issues". The church has changed completely, and this is a secularized period of the church.

Religious leaders are torch-bearers for the community. Many people have great respect for them. However, if church leaders are associated with immorality, it frustrates the community greatly. Jesus referred to the disciples as salt and light:

You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men." You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven (Mat. 5:13-16).

The pastor's immorality reflects secularization. One does not expect such behaviour from religious leaders. So the expectation of the people is that religious leaders in every community will remain the salt and light. I am aware that other readers may look at this as a cause of secularization, however in this context, the researcher is looking at it in a different light. He believes that religion is supposed to improve for the better lives of religious leaders, showing that religion has influence. But all the case studies that have been noted show that though religion is being practised, it is not influencing the society and its individuals, including religious leaders. This has been the major proposal of this thesis: that secularization is taking place in Malawi and that this secularization is evidenced in religion being practised but with little or no influence on society and individuals.

5.3.1.3.4 Pastors convicted over fraudulent passport

In an interview with Ng'ambi (2007), the respondent said that religious leaders are not showing good examples as they are expected to. He gave the example of two pastors, who were arrested on the 16th of November, 2007. The information provided was verified by the Chief Immigration Officer. He stated that two pastors had indeed been arrested. The incident took place in Lilongwe. A Malawian Pastor helped a Zimbabwean cleric to acquire the country's passport with the intention of getting an American visa more easily. According to Mr. Thodi, the Chief Immigration Officer, the two pastors were convicted and were sentenced to twelve months imprisonment with hard labour with an option of paying a fine of K6, 000.00 each. The two opted to pay the fine at the Lilongwe Magistrates' Court. Such incidents are indicators of secularization in Malawi. The Malawian Pastor heads the Miracle Pentecostal Church in Mzuzu.

5.3.1.3.5 Two clerics fight for one woman

Another respondent reported a story about two pastors who fought over the same woman. This story took place in September, 2007. Both pastors were married, but despite this were still fighting over the woman. The respondent said:

Where is God, when rivals pray for same woman?" Seriously the world is coming to an end, how can our leaders in the spiritual matters be the ones setting a very bad example? The church has been secularized for worse. How can I go to church and see such a pastor preaching the word of God, and telling us about immorality? It is not possible.

Previously such stories would not come to light, even if they happened, but now they are reported publicly. Is Christianity not losing out to secularization? Surely secularization is on the rise in Malawi as is evidenced by secular behaviour of Christian believers. Such behaviour is a great disappointment to the society in which they take place.

5.3.1.3.6 Water Board fines reverend

Some indicators of secularization in Malawi are cases of high profile religious leaders. An example is given of a reverend who had an illegally connected water supply to his house. This incident was reported by a respondent who felt that the church has been secularized in Malawi. In the interview the respondent said:

For a long time in Malawi we had a totally different image of our religious leaders in terms of integrity and self-image. But I feel there is secularization in Malawi because in Mzuzu a very respectable man of God was caught and accepted that he was guilty of connecting water to his house illegally. He appeared before the court of law and was fined.

The matter was also reported in the National newspaper on 31st October, 2007 by Taweni Kalua. Comments by many people indicated that they were shocked and that

the public image of the church had changed. All people agreed that such incidents are indicators of secularization.

5.3.1.3.7 A minor implicates reverend in pregnancy

The policy of the CCAP Blantyre Synod is that when any member of the church is pregnant but not married, she must be brought before the congregational session for discipline. The Moderator, who is the leader and chairperson of such sessions, is an ordained church minister. Recent developments in Malawi indicate that even church ministers themselves may be complicit.

A respondent from St. Columba CCAP Church was concerned about secularization in Malawi. He said the behaviour of church ministers contribute to it and supported the claim by the following statement:

A Reverend who acted the Good Samaritan by employing a 12- year – old as a house girl to save her from an early arranged marriage has ended up having been implicated in the girl’s pregnancy, a matter which is threatening the reverend’s vocation. But the reverend has denied impregnating the standard 4 girl whose name could not be mentioned for ethical reasons. These are signs that the church has lost its saltiness and lightness.

Such practices as cited above are very common, and to the researcher, these are signs of societal secularization. This is what Dobbelaere (2002) referred to as the shrinking relevance of the values institutionalized in church. This loss of values soon spreads to the rest of society.

5.3.1.3.8 Church leaders and witchcraft

Many respondents referred to practises of witchcraft being advocated by guild members and church elders. Most instances of witchcraft were aired on Malawi

Broadcasting Cooperation (MBC) radio stations and reported in the country's main newspapers.

Respondents from both rural and urban area churches made mention of witchcraft. The churches named were, Chilumba and Nsuwadzi CCAP churches, Muloza SDA Church, Living Waters Church, Bangwe Parish and Gambula Catholic Parish).

Between 2000 and 2010 the following cases of witchcraft were reported in the above mentioned congregations. Note that every five years in the congregations, the number of reported incidents of witchcraft increased. According to the respondents, it is evidence of secularization that such a large number of instances of witchcraft are taking place in the churches.

Reported cases of witchcraft

DENOMINATION	2000	2005	2010
Chilumba CCAP	190	202	215
Nsuwadzi CCAP	270	314	411
Muloza SDA Church	320	470	608
Blantyre Living Waters Church	150	188	205
Bangwe Catholic Parish	185	211	279
Mzuzu Anglican Church	209	315	405

Though witchcraft is a private and very secretive practice, Table 4.6 indicates that in all the congregations the reported cases of witchcraft have been going up. That confirms that secularization has indeed made advances in Malawi.

Traditionally, society has always hoped that the church would conquer witchcraft, but the church is itself involved in it meaning that the church is being secularised. Momen (1999:477) defined secularization as the process whereby religious thinking, practice and institutions lose social significance. Where people once relied on religion to guide personal and social life, they now rely on science, education and their own personal tastes and ambitions. The common question that one may ask here is, how can people rely on the church to fight against witchcraft when the church leaders themselves are involved in it?

5.3.1.3.9 A church elder teaching children witchcraft

A respondent from Karonga gave an example of a church elder who was arrested on the allegation that he was teaching children witchcraft. This story was also covered in the public media. It is a very shocking story because church elders are highly respected in the society as role models. This is a sign of secularization.

Nyirongo (2007:6) reported this story, where church elder who was arrested on allegations of witchcraft:

Police in Karonga are keeping in custody a church elder on suspicion that she was training children in witchcraft. Karonga Police public relations officer Enock Livason confirmed the development on Monday, saying the suspect is a women's guild coordinator for Livingstonia Synod of the CCAP in Karonga. "We are indeed keeping in custody Margret Lungu, 45, from Yeremia Village, T/A Mzukuzuku in Mzimba for allegedly teaching children witchcraft".

This is a sign of secularization, because such stories of witchcraft allegations shows that church leaders have been secularized. The alleged leader would have been a highly respected leader in the Presbyterian system of church government, where both types of elders, teaching and ruling elders, are respected as senior religious leaders in the church.

5.3.1.3.10 Women's Coordinator of Blantyre Synod accused of witchcraft

Another instance is that of a woman from Mulanje who was alleged to be teaching children and white people witchcraft. She is a prominent women's coordinator of the CCAP Blantyre Synod. In an interview a respondent from Mulanje had this story to tell:

A 62-year old woman who is a long serving member of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) in Mulanje has embarrassed Blantyre Synod following accusations that she teaches children, including whites, from the surrounding area witchcraft. Though she denies the allegations, there are so many children that have confessed to be taught by her the witchcraft. This issue was confirmed in an interview with the Deputy General Secretary that indeed the Synod has received the allegation and they were investigating the matter. He further said that this is an embarrassment to the whole CCAP Blantyre Synod.

The suggestion of Momen (1999:480) as to the possible ways of looking at the phenomenon of secularization can be applied to Malawi. Of the five ways that he mentions two can be seen at work in the above examples:

The loss of the prestige of religious institutions and symbols: There has been a loss in the influence that religious institutions have over public policy and a similar loss in the personal prestige of the religious professional. Secondly, the religious groups themselves become increasingly concerned with the things of this world rather than the spiritual world. The goals of religious institutions become indistinguishable from those of the rest of society.

Religious leaders involved in evil practices such as witchcraft cannot be relied upon to guide the personal and social life of other people.

The rate of crime is growing in Malawi, yet, as cited above, between 60 and 80 percent of Malawi's 15 million people consider themselves Christians. The table below indicates the rate of reported cases for crime.

5.3.1.3.11 Statistics on the rise of reported crimes in Lilongwe

Malawi 2000 to 2010 as a sign of societal secularization

Type of crime	2000	2005	2010
Corruption	384	405	510
Home Burglary	293	315	401
Robbery	214	391	480
Theft of personal property	237	313	411
Assault	93	116	98
Crop theft	1,182	1,480	1,805
Theft of vehicles	3	5	7
Vandalism of vehicles	2	4	4
Murder	14	18	23

The above statistics was obtained in an interview with the officer in charge of Lilongwe Police Station. They showed the instances of reported crimes in 2000, 2005 and 2010. When we look at the statistics of the number of Christians one would expect that the statistics of crime would be declining. The fact that figures for reported crime rise every five years is evidence of societal secularization; Christianity has lost its influence in the society as cited above.

In 1997 the researcher was doing prison ministry in Malawi and noted that during Sunday services conducted in Zomba Prison, many of the people who attended were Christians who were serving their sentences in prison for a variety of crimes. John Calvin's theology is that a good Christian becomes automatically a good citizen (Webber 1979:147). If Christians are breaking the law like any other citizen, then something is wrong. This also is an indicator of secularization in Malawi. Again under normal circumstances, if one is a believer and does something wrong without one's conscience being bothered, it means Christianity has not changed the life of that particular person and ultimately that the church has lost influence.

5.3.2 Evidences of organizational secularization in Malawi

Dobbelaere (2002:25) defined organizational secularization "as change that occurs in the posture of religious organizations –churches, denominations, sects, and new religious movements – in matters of beliefs, morals, and rituals. This study explored the fact that many churches in Malawi are facing so moral decay challenges. This has led to a loss of trust of people in the churches. The image of the church has changed; people see the church in the same light as any other institution. This study has come up with a number of case studies that indicate that the church has diluted its integrity.

5.3.2.1 Disagreements among churches, church leaders and congregations

Division and dissension among church members and between churches was also mentioned by many as a sign of deepening secularization in the church, and in Malawi as a whole. Examples were given of divisions and disagreements that had occurred among church members and between churches. These included disagreements between reverends and church elders which have seen some

reverends being removed from their offices by force. Disagreements between church members that have resulted in groups establishing their own churches in the denominations concerned were also mentioned as well as conflicts between synods on issues that are considered petty by the public.

I am aware that in the early church there were doctrinal disputes and that some people were persecuted. But the respondents felt that today's disputes in the church are often petty and not related to divine or important doctrinal differences. It testifies to the church being influenced by society instead of the church influencing the society. A number of case studies will be discussed in this subsection.

5.3.2.2 CCAP flock chases reverend away

CCAP Blantyre Synod policy acknowledges the reverend as the most senior elder of the congregation she/he is serving. He/she is a leader in that particular congregation who provides guidance and leadership. However, recent incidents have been reported of congregations chasing their reverend away. A respondent from Chilumba CCAP, where they chased away their minister said:

Members of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) Chilumba Congregation in Bangwe, Blantyre forced their reverend out of the manse¹⁵ accusing her of being disrespectful to the flock. The allegations were that on several occasions she accused her congregation of not looking after her well. The respondent claimed a group of angry church followers on Thursday (July, 5) stormed the reverend's house near Mthandizi in Bangwe, demanding that she leaves the premises the following day. Police had to come in to quell the situation. Policemen guarded the house that night and reverend vacated the manse on Friday morning. The source alleged that the reverend's life style and speeches have always been the source of misunderstanding and conflict between her and the congregation.

¹⁵ The church house for the reverend

This event is hard to reconcile with a view of ministers believed to be role models in society. The church is expected to be peaceful and exemplary; it is the dwelling place of God. Such occurrences indicate progressive secularization.

5.3.2.3 CCAP flock chases Blantyre City Presbytery reverends away

Discipline is disappearing from the church, as many incidents illustrate. The message that emerges is that all the people interviewed agreed that the church in Malawi has been secularized. Another illustration of this fact concerns the members of Chilumba CCAP who chased away their reverends from the Blantyre City Presbytery. A respondent who was an elder of the mentioned church narrated as follows:

As elders in the CCAP, we feel that our church is no longer the salt and light, as Jesus described it in the Holy Bible. It happened at our Church, the Chilumba CCAP that the police had to intervene to bring security and peace on the wrangles between Moderator and the Chilumba congregation, the Presbytery officials had to intervene. The Presbytery officials came, and began to accuse the congregational members in support of the reverend. It was clear that there was no justice in the analysis of the whole issue. The first time the Presbytery officials sent some investigators; 99% of the session members agreed that the reverend was wrong and then on the day of addressing the congregation then, the congregation was accused. There was no justice. This led to the chaos that saw the Presbytery officials being chased.

The story was also reported in the public media. Gausi (2007:1, 2) reported the following:

Angry members of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) Chilumba Congregation, Blantyre, are said to have chased four reverends from the Blantyre City Presbytery office who went to the station to brief the flock about a new reverend to replace the one who was asked to leave in July for allegedly being disrespectful. According to the members of the congregation, there was chaos in the church when one of the clergymen announced that Blantyre Synod has decided to dissolve positions of session clerks at the church, claiming they did not follow procedures when they chased their reverend from the

congregation. [...] The whole church stood up in protest and the clergy were rushed to the church vestry until 997 Police arrived to rescue them.

The announcement by the Presbytery officials did not go well with members of the congregation who started shouting angrily at ‘the men of God’, and some of the members went to the altar in an attempt to beat ‘the men of God.’ They escaped to the vestry where they called the police who rushed from Bangwe Police Station. The police spokesperson, Mr Chingwalu said’ “Some congregation members threw stones at the police vehicle carrying the four pastors and the police had to disperse the crowd with tear-gas.” (Gausi, Nation Newspaper, 8th October, 2007).

5.3.2.4 CCAP members demolish church, share spoils

The institution of the church has always been regarded as holy. But wrangling among church members has been common in Malawi and manifests the presence of organizational secularization in Malawi.

A Mkombezi CCAP Church member reported that members of the church demolished the church building because of a misunderstanding. The policy of the CCAP Church when erecting the church building is very clear. Church buildings are dedicated to God. The Presbytery Moderator and other Presbytery reverends come to lay the corner stone.

When built, Presbytery officials come to conduct the inauguration of the church. It is a pure holy function so that whatever disagreements arise, nobody will decide to demolish the ‘house of the Lord.’

This incident was also reported in the media by Edwin Nyirongo as follows:

Members of Mkombezi Church of the Livingstonia CCAP Synod in Rumphu on Friday demolished a church and shared the property

following disagreements over which congregation they should belong to. [...] Investigations revealed that about three years ago, the area had one congregation called Henga.

The Synod, with the blessings from members, divided the congregation into two: Luzi and Mzokoto. The Synod then directed that the three churches: Luzi, Chololo and Mkombezi should belong to the Luzi Congregation, a move that displeased some members who wanted to belong to Mzokoto Congregation. Mkombezi church members agreed to put the issue to a vote and the pro-Mzokoto Camp won by 108 votes to 39.

However the Rumphi Presbytery is said to have ruled that the vote be ignored- which created confusion and anger among members who, as a result, began to exchange verbal attacks whenever they met. With no solution in sight, the pro-Mzokoto Camp wrote a letter to the pro-Luzi side to inform them that on March 29, they would come so that the two sides would share the church materials which members contributed to build the structure. Part of the notice read: “Vyalema kuzizipizga, tigawane katundu mumtende.” (We have persevered long enough; let’s just share the property in peace).

5.3.2.5 Synods fight over borders

The CCAP is a Church composed of five major synods, namely: Livingstonia, Nkhoma, Blantyre, Lusaka and Harare. These Synods are in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Since they are all Presbyterians synods, they formed a mother body called the CCAP General Assembly¹⁶ in 1924. In 1924, the General Assembly included the Blantyre and Livingstonia Synods while the Nkhoma Synod joined later in 1926. In the early 1980s, because members of these Synods went to Zambia and Zimbabwe to work, it was decided to gather together and start churches. Subsequently the Synod officials in Malawi decided to extend the church to Zimbabwe and Zambia. The leader of the CCAP General Assembly is called the Moderator and during his/her term of office, uses the title “Right Reverend” and after his term of office maintains the title “Very Reverend” until death. The relationship between synods has been very good until recent years. At the moment, the issue of

¹⁶ Until 2001 the General Assembly used to be called the General Synod

borders is very critical and threats of pulling out from the General Assembly have been heard from both the Livingstonia Synod and the Nkhoma Synod. Wrangling characterizes relations between these two Synods.

The Livingstonia and Nkhoma Synods have long failed to agree on where their boundary should be. The synods have had several meetings over this boundary issue. These forums were also attended by the General Assembly, Blantyre Synod and representatives from Zambia and Scotland. A source from the General Assembly in Blantyre disclosed that prior to the meetings; a commission of inquiry was set up to look into the problems that have caused division between the two synods. Their findings were distributed to all the synods and a meeting was called to discuss the issues raised by the report. The commission suggested new boundaries to be demarcated but the Livingstonia and Nkhoma synods refused these (Nation newspaper, 31st August, 2006)

5.3.2.6 Livingstonia Synod will only recognise Blantyre Synod

As mentioned above, the CCAP General Assembly is composed of the five synods. Previously, all the Synods recognised each other and have a mutual understanding of each other's autonomy. However, due to wrangling, the Livingstonia Synod declared that it will only recognise Blantyre Synod in its relationships with the General Assembly. Of the five synods in the General Assembly, three are in Malawi and the boundaries of the synods are demarcated according to political and geographical boundaries. These demarcations are as follows; Livingstonia Synods (Northern Region) established in 1875; the Blantyre Synod (Southern Region) established in 1876 and the Nkhoma Synod (central region) established in 1889.

In verification of the allegation that the border issues have spoiled the relationship between the synods, a respondent from Lilongwe said:

Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) synods of Nkhoma and Livingstonia are engaged in a battle over boundaries with accusations that Nkhoma Synod is encroaching in other synod's territory by building its prayer houses. The Livingstonia Synod has since vowed to retaliate and invade Nkhoma Synod's territory if the latter continues to defy borders. Both Livingstonia Synod and the General Assembly confirmed the fight and said the mother synod was to organise meetings of the two bodies to resolve the matter. [...]

From an interview Livingstonia Synod Deputy General Secretary, Rev. Maurice Munthali said that the problem over the boundary dates back to two decades ago and discussions have been going on since then without reaching a solution. The boundaries between the two synods are Dwangwa River in the upper land and Bua River in the lakeshore area. There is nothing more that we can do but we can't respect our boundaries with the Nkhoma Synod.

It is telling that these wrangles are championed by religious leaders who were supposed to be preaching about forgiveness, peace and reconciliation.

5.3.2.7 General Assembly has failed- Livingstonia

What can the church offer if there is a constant fighting from within? The wrangle between Livingstonia Synod and Nkhoma Synod has affected the integrity of the church in Malawi. Because of its failed attempts to solve the wrangle between the two synods, the CCAP General Assembly has been labeled as a failure. The remarks came from Livingstonia Synod's Moderator, Rev. Mezuwa Banda, in reaction to the remarks made by The CCAP General Assembly Moderator, Right Rev. Dr Felix Chingota, that the Livingstonia Synod was wrong to churches in Nkhoma Synod's territory.

Such events have made the church lose its saltiness and light. This is the reason that another respondent gave for believing that secularization has crept into Malawi:

Livingstonia Synod Moderator, Rev. Mezuwa Banda said in an interview that the General Assembly has failed to resolve the outstanding border wrangle between the two synods. The assembly's Moderator, Rt. Rev. Dr. Chingota told The Nation on Monday that what Livingstonia has done was regrettable. But Banda said the General Assembly knew all along Livingstonia Synod's decision on the border disputes. [...] He further said that Livingstonia Synod finds it strange for the assembly to accuse the synod of infiltration, arguing that the General Assembly has never condemned Nkhoma Synod which was the first to infiltrate into Livingstonia Synod's territory.

5.3.2.8 Livingstonia Synod rules out boundaries with Nkhoma Synod

Though the General Assembly has tried to resolve the boundary problem between the two synods, the problem still stands. It was reported on 16th October, 2006 that Livingstonia Synod will continue to take the stance that there are no boundaries between Nkhoma and Livingstonia Synods. Any argument against that idea will never be accepted by the Livingstonia Synod. Juliet Chimwaga reported in an interview:

The Livingstonia Synod of the CCAP, which recently launched its three churches in Nkhoma Synod, has ruled off boundaries with the sister synod, saying it is the only way the two can put their dispute to rest. Livingstonia Synod Deputy General Secretary, Rev. Maurice Munthali said that the decision came after a meeting that his synod held at Bandawe in Nkhata Bay.

If the church leaders can fail to set a good example in the area of reconciliation, then it is unclear what sort of a role model they can be for society. That is why many people feel the church has completely changed, and has lost its influence in the society. Rev. Munthali further said:

[...] But I should make it clear that the stand of Livingstonia Synod is that all we want to happen at the meeting with General Assembly is that they must endorse our decision that is irreversible. We will go to that meeting and remain unmoved on our decision to rub off the boundaries because we know that it is only through that, that we can peacefully co-exist with our sister synod, Nkhoma.

The Livingstonia Synod launched three churches in Nkhoma without the blessings of the CCAP General Assembly claiming that the General Assembly did not understand the problems that the Livingstonia Synod has had with Nkhoma Synod. The Livingstonia Synod General Secretary at the time, Rev Matiya Nkhoma, said after the launch that his synod did not see any problems with going ahead without the General Assembly's blessings because Nkhoma Synod had built about 80 churches in Livingstonia Synod territory.

The church has always played a very important role in society, but in the above scenario it has proved that the church has completely lost its social significance. This is what Momen (1999) described as secularization.

5.3.2.8 Fraud in religious institutions

In another development, the CCAP Blantyre Synod abolished its Projects Office amid reports of fraud by the church's development arm. The Synod has instead replaced it with a new department to be known as the Blantyre Synod Development Commission. Mr. Masingati stated in an interview that:

The projects office is a highly respected religious institution of the CCAP, Blantyre Synod, and, one would expect that the workers would be very honest, but seriously the findings that Fiscal Police in Blantyre are investigating how the K1.4 million went missing recently is a sign of a different image of the Church.. The police said their investigations have reached advanced stages and that they have arrested two people, Francis Vokhiwa and Charles Chinseu for alleged forgery.

One could ask the question that how an institution which is expected to be setting a good example could fall so far short of this? It is obvious that when the institution has been secularized, it no longer functions in the same way that it was designed to. Religion has lost influence and cannot influence religious institutions.

About 65% of the respondents from the Bangwe Urban Focus Group C (BUFGC: 2008) reported that the following evidences of secularization were on the rise in Malawi: disrespect for parents and the elderly by children, leaving church before it was finished, criticizing others at church and gambling . A case study of the Bangwe Seventh Day Adventist Church was discussed in an interview with members of the Focus Group.

They reported that the church members fought openly and that the church was divided because one group who wanted women to preach in the church while another group felt it is an insult for a woman to stand in front of the congregation and preach. They felt that allowing women to 'stand in front of the congregation' was unheard of in the past, but that now, due to the process of secularization, people do not respect the church. A biblical text which says that women must not speak in the church was quoted in this context. Also, the church was regarded as a holy place and there is no way people would have been fighting physically in the church in the past.

The people in Bangwe even felt that to allow a woman to preach was a sign of secularization. However, the issue is debatable because a number of churches nowadays do allow women both to hold leadership positions and to preach.

Traditionally the church was a highly respected institution, and fighting in church was viewed as very disrespectful. I am aware that even in the church of the past there were doctrinal differences but physical fighting would not take place. The fact that people can fight in the church itself demonstrates a lack of respect for God and His word. Finally, the fight itself shows that the word of God has had little impact on the

members of the Bangwe Seventh day Adventist Church. This presents a case that there is secularization of the church in Malawi.

5.3.2.9 Quantity versus quality in the church

If one were to compare the adherents of Christianity in Malawi to those in European countries, one might conclude that there is no secularization in Malawi. The statistics of the number of Christians in Malawi grow higher every year. Despite this, the critical question of why immorality, political bickering, family disintegration, and crime continue to grow higher in Malawi needs to be answered. The research reveals that a number of churches do not emphasize the condemnation of sin. In many churches, some of the people who help a lot in the church are the ones with marital problems, alcoholic addictions and corruption practices in their political or social lives. Because there are so many churches emerging nowadays, once a particular starts excommunicating people, they are likely to lose many of their congregants to other churches. This is what Dobbelaere (2002) has called organizational secularization. This is cited in chapter two of this thesis. This is part of marketing the church.

A number of people interviewed raised the above observation as a concern because although many of the churches seem to grow numerically, they are declining spiritually. The church leaders are focusing on quantity and not quality. This is also answering part of the concern of Phiri (2005), who feels that it is difficult nowadays to differentiate between a believers and non-believers.

5.3.2.10 Change of mode of dressing

Malawi was colonized by the British Government in 1891. The mode of dressing in Malawi in formal gatherings has always been similar to British attire, which is usually formal and decent. The church has traditionally associated such formal gatherings

with respect for God. When people are going to church they are encountering with God and need to look presentable and decent. But recent developments in the churches in Malawi have developed after the political change from one party system to a multiparty democracy, as mentioned above. There has been a lot of excitement that has affected the church. One of the respondents in an interview in Blantyre said:

The fact that some of the Godly principles have been devalued and watered down is another sign of secularization in the church. Nowadays, women and girls are going to church in miniskirts and some even in trousers. Young men are getting to church in casual wear and those fancy fashions of today yet the bible teaches us that the church is a holy place and it has to be kept so. What it means is that the church has slackened in its principles in the name of “we should not lose the sheep” due to competition over membership following the rise of many churches in the country. The church is now considered as a “potential business.

In another development, Goodwin Gondwe (2005) reported an issue with St. Columba CCAP church’s Sunday school children. He reported that some of them did not dress properly for church. An appeal was made to the parents by the Sunday School Superintendents of the church, asking them to encourage their daughters to refrain from putting on see-through clothes and other untidy attire. He reported:

St. Columba CCAP has taken a swipe at its faithful for tolerating girls to dress inappropriately when attending Sunday school classes and has warned of immediate action. Sunday School Superintendent, Robert Chirwa, denounced the tendency by some parents who encourage their daughters to put on see-through clothes, miniskirts and tight or short trousers. [...] “We are very concerned with such improper dressing. This is a church not a social club, “Chirwa said on Sunday (Gondwe 2005, March, 5-6 Nation Publications Newspaper)

5.3.3 Evidences of individual secularization in Malawi

The loss of interest by individuals in participating in religious or church activities is what is referred to as individual secularization. Williams (2007:53) simplifies the

definition of individual secularization as the lack of individual practice in churches or religious activities, while Dobbelaere (2002:25) understands Individual secularization as referring to individual behaviour and believes that it measures the degree of normative integration in religious bodies. He describes it as an index of the accord between the norms of religious groups in domains of beliefs, rituals, morals, etc. and the attitudes and conduct of their members.

This section explores the manifestations of individual secularization in Malawi based on the above understandings of individual secularization. In an interview with different individuals and groups of individuals, a number of responses indicated that many people were no longer attending religious activities for the core purpose of salvation or for other theocentric reasons. As the sample shows below, their reasons were often irreligious.

5.3.3.1 Attending the church to gain proper death service

80% of the respondent argued that people nowadays neither go to church because of their fear or respect for God nor do they attend for the purpose of worshipping God. They do it for the sake of “receiving the respect that is accorded to people who die whilst serving in the church.” There is a church policy, especially in mainline churches, that decent funerals can only be accorded to full members of the church. If a person of that caliber dies, then the reverend must be there in full uniform. The women’s guild too must attend in full uniform. The full funeral service is conducted in the church as a farewell to the deceased from the church. It is such a great honour to have this type of funeral service. This is the major reason that many people want to be members of the mainline churches.

Respondent 1

I attend the church service in the CCAP to update my records so that when I die I can get a decent burial. I am always impressed by the Christian funerals, the singing and the dressing code. It is an honour to get such a proper church burial, because for sure everybody is going to die.

Respondent 2

Any Christian who dies, the reverend will come to attend and conduct funeral service, in the church. It is a great respect for your remains to go through the church, with all the church songs. Christian does provide proper escorts to their departed colleagues. I want that respect to be accorded to me when I die.

This can be seen to be in agreement with Phiri's observation mentioned in chapter one, where he states that there is a lot of moral decay because our churches have many nominal Christians and few committed ones. In the above interviews one can easily observe that the Christians above are not committed to the church for reasons related to salvation but rather are solely interested in being given a decent funeral.

5.3.3.2 Decline in church attendance as an evidence

of individual secularization in Malawi.

Decline in church attendance has been one of the most common evidences of secularization in many countries, including Britain. This sub-section presents a number of case studies in Malawi as manifestations of individual secularization. A number of churches that were selected and statistics of their membership attendance was obtained.

The churches were selected from each of the three regions in Malawi, Southern, Central and Northern. In every case study that was used in this chapter, there was a common feature of the decline of membership; 'on the books' the figures were high but the actual attendance figures were very low.

5.3.3.2.1 Case study 1: St. Columba CCAP

St. Columba is the biggest congregation in the CCAP Blantyre Synod. It was established in 1957. As of 2010 it had a membership of about 9,000 people. This number has dropped from the records of 2003, which indicated that the membership was on the higher side. Though the membership is about 9000 'on the books,' the actual Sunday service attendance is less. Table below indicates the actual figures according to the records of the church. The researcher gave the session clerk questionnaires in advance so that he could give these to a group of 30 people who represented the church. The team of the people that were interviewed included: the Moderator of the Church, three session clerks, 5 elders, 5 representatives of the women guild, 5 representatives from the youth association, 5 ordinary male members, the Sunday school superintendant and 5 representatives of the choir. This approach of choosing representatives is a multistage approach and is called cluster sampling. It is suitable for this type of research and is recommended when it is impossible or impractical to compile a list of the elements comprising the population. In this case it would be for all practical purposes, impossible to compile the list of all 9,000 members of the St. Columba church to be interviewed. Creswell (2003:156) recommended this approach as the best. He states:

Cluster sampling is ideal when it is impossible or impractical to compile a list of the elements composing the population (Babbie, 2001). In a multistage, clustering procedure, the researcher first samples groups or organizations (or clusters), then, obtains names of individuals within the groups or clusters, and then samples within the cluster.

The case study of the St. Columba CCAP applied this procedure by sampling among the categories of different members of the church. The minister-in-charge and the two session clerks are the top members of the management team of the

congregation, women were represented, and youth and Sunday school children were represented, as were the choir members. This approach was used in different case studies that will be presented in this thesis.

Church attendance at St. Columba (every Sunday) (book membership versus actual attendance) and percentage of actual attendance (this information is from 1990 and 2000) Communal Registers, still being used to date 2013.

YEAR	TOTAL IN THE BOOK	ACTUAL ATTENDANCE (AV.)SUNDAY	PERCENTAGE OF ATTENDANCE
1990	9,000	6,500	72.2%
1995	8,500	5,690,	66.9%
2000	8,900	5,400	60.67%
2005	9,000	4,000	44.4%
2010	8,000	3,900	48.75%

In an interview with the 30 sampled interviewees of the St. Columba CCAP, all those present agreed that there was church attendance decline and that this was evidences of secularization. To support the above evidence the following statements were made:

The Moderator/ Minister-in-charge

It is worrisome that we have been hit by winds of secularization, in fact my observation is that people almost half of the people in the church

miss Sunday services for no apparent reasons, but the church is doing everything possible to nurture its members. Secondly the church is a voluntary organization, we can preach but we cannot force the people to attend church services. On pastoral point of view we encourage those regular absentees, but still the decision is theirs.

The representatives of the women said;

For us the absence is not only during Sunday services but even on Saturday, during the women guild session. We have membership of about 3000 but every time we gather less 500 people unless there is a special programme or a trip for the women they will come in their numbers but the figure will go up to 700. We have the register but still people will no mind even if they are recorded absent.

The representative of the Youth said;

To us we believe in making more attractive youth programmes to keep the youth, but I think many youths are just lazy to attend the church service every Sunday. There are some days that even if we make announcements that we are meeting as the youth on a particular day, they do not come and this has happened several times, may be they will change but I really doubt.

From the Sunday School Superintendant the comments were

The decline in church attendance has also affected the Sunday school, because on average we have 3000 Sunday school children, this include all categories of Sunday school but normally every Sunday we have about 200 Sunday school children. Many of them are not encouraged by their parents. Kids are kids they have to be motivated by their parents. We are actually working on having Sunday school gathering in all zones so that if it is the distance that makes many people not to send the children then we can meet them in their homes. We need the Sunday school to ensure that we still have the church tomorrow.

Representatives of elders

In the vestry we used to have at least 400 elders every Sunday, but now it is different because on average we have 100 elders every Sunday, which is about 75% drop as a percentage. Some of the elders do not even attend the kirk session, they do not even give an excuse for their absence. So this decline in church attendance affects all programmes of the church including the Kirk Session.

Representatives of men (ordinary members of the church)

The challenge that we are facing today is the economic one, due to economic hardships one has to work in order to eat, so sometimes you have to balance up knowing that we came to town to work. We believe in God the Almighty though we miss the church many Sundays. But we do know that indeed our church's attendance is very poor.

Representative of the choirs said

I think we are in very difficult days and we believe people are too busy to participate in all the church activities including the choir. It needs more commitment to find time for one's personal things and time for the choir too, therefore our choirs have been affected too because of low attendance especially during the practice.

The above statements from the case study of St. Columba indicate that the church has been affected by the individual secularization. Dobbelaere (2002:25) referred to individual secularization as being related to individual behaviour. He measures the degree of normative integration in religious bodies stating that one's religious commitment can be measured by the outward activities such as church attendance, participation in religious rites and attendance in religious activities. In the case study of St. Columba, one can look at the percentages of members who actually attend services and discover that the individual secularization is reflected in the behavior of individuals. This behaviour is demonstrated by their decline in church attendance between 1990 and 2010.

5.3.3.2.2 Decline in Sunday school attendance

The statement by the Sunday School Superintendent above indicates that when we are looking at church membership decline as an evidence of individual secularization, the Sunday school and other church departments are also affected. The researcher had an opportunity to see the Sunday School Superintendent who

provided the following figures (including the children that have been attending Sunday school.)

Sunday school attendance at the St. Columba CCAP from 1990 to 2010 (this data was taken from the 1990 to 2000 Sunday school register which is being used to date 2013)

YEAR	TOTAL SUNDAY SCHOOL REGISTERED	TOTAL OF ATTENDEES	PERCENTAGE OF AVERAGE ATTENDANCE
1990	2500	800	32%
1995	2500	605	24.2%
2000	3000	620	21%
2005	2800	400	14%
2010	3000	250	8.3%

Looking at the decline in Sunday school attendance for St. Columba, it is quickly apparent that the rate of decline is very high. This is a reflection that secularization has affected not only adults but also Sunday school groups.

5.3.3.2.3 Likuni Roman Catholic Parish

The Likuni parish falls under the Lilongwe Archdiocese, in Lilongwe, in a location which is semi-urban. With a cross-section of this research, I decided to select a different denomination and a different region from those I had previously been

studying. This was done in order to enrich my thesis. The subject of the St. Columba case study was a congregation of the CCAP Blantyre Synod, in the Southern Region of Malawi. In accordance with the Roman Catholic model, a parish is made up of out - churches. Likuni Parish has 10 out - churches with a total membership of 16,000. I had a conversation with 50 members of this Parish; five representatives from each out church. The Episcopal Conference in Malawi (ECM), popularly known as the Roman Catholic Church is considered to be the largest church in Malawi with a total membership of over 4,000,000. However the interview that I did with the 20 sampled interviewees indicates that the Roman Catholic Church has also been affected by the decline in church attendance. In chapter two, the decline in church attendance is shown to be evidence of secularization. The data below supports the evidence that secularization has crept into the Roman Catholic Church as well.

YEAR	TOTAL IN THE BOOK	ACTUAL ATTENDANCE ON SUNDAY (AV)	PERCENTAGE OF ATTENDANCE
1990	12000	11000	91.66
1995	14000	10000	71.43
2000	15000	8500	56.67
2005	15000	7500	50.00
2010	13,500	8700	64.00

The table above indicates the figures of the people registered at Likuni Parish from 1990 to 2000 and the actual attendance on average over each five year period. Final column indicates the actual attendance as a percentage of the people registered. This information was taken from the Church Register of the Likuni Parish.

5.3.3.2.4 The St. Mark Anglican Church in Mzuzu

This church became a parish in 1957. According to the church statistics, until the 1990s, it was always full. This was reported by the parish Priest, who also happens to be the Vicar general of the Northern Diocese of the Anglican Church. Because of such high attendance, they were forced to have more than three services on a Sunday but from the year 2000, due to decline in church service attendance, they normally have two services; one in the local language and one in English. The parish Priest made the following remarks:

Our church has been affected very much with the effects of democracy. People don't want to be forced or told about the church, they want to come to church at their own will. We used to have about 2500 members in our church the attendance was almost 80% but nowadays the membership has decreased to about 1300 and we normally have an average of 600 members during Sunday service.

This congregation is in the middle of town in Mzuzu, the Northern Region of Malawi. This case study shows that the decline in church attendance has affected churches regardless of the region in which they are located. Bruce (2002:67) indicated that church membership declined in Britain from 27% in 1900 to 10% in 2000. Though the phenomenon of secularization is new in Malawi, there is clear evidences to indicate that Malawi is being affected by secularization just as Britain is.

5.3.3.3 Decline of church involvement in key life events in the society as an evidence of individual secularization

In trying to come up with evidences of secularization in Malawi, the questionnaire presented a question to the interviewees about the authority of religion in the society. This was in line with societal secularization as defined by Dobbelaere (2002:19) where he defined it as the shrinking relevance of the values institutionalized in church religion, for the integration and legitimation of everyday life in modern society. This leads to individual secularization because if religion is strong enough to keep its prestige in the society then people want to participate in religious activities. This also influences the decisions and policies within the society. The first example that interviewees gave was referred to midweek prayers and the fact that few people attend such prayers. They suggest that the decline in attendance of midweek prayers is a clear manifestation of individual secularization. For the few congregations that are able to continue with mid week prayers, the attendance at prayers is very poor. Below are some of the responses that people gave to show that religion has lost authority in the society in Malawi. Such experiences have led to individual secularization resulting in a situation where individual participation in religious activities has declined.

5.3.3.3.1 Mid-week prayers

Considering the number of days in a week, many churches in Malawi do have special midweek prayers called “*milaga*” zonal prayers. One of the respondents commended midweek prayers as being of great importance. I quote:

The purpose of such prayers is to revive the spiritual life of individuals. One would imagine that on Sunday when an individual goes to church and hear the Word of God, is revived, and the message touches the person and reflect on it, but by the next Sunday it is practical that the

power or memories of that message is completely gone, therefore by Wednesday or any day within the week, it is important for a person to listen to the Word of God too.

As a reflection of individual secularization, in some zones, people have stopped meeting for mid week prayers entirely. This shows a decline of popular involvement in institutionalized religion, as suggested by Momen (1999:478) who viewed it as one way of looking at secularization.

The study further sought to find out the participation of individuals in religious activities around the rites of passage of different individuals. This was done by asking all 1000 interviewees in this study about midweek prayers and about the Christian rites of passage. The results of the survey are shown below.

5.3.3.3.2 Rites of passages: Birth to death period of a person

Fenn (1972:19) noted that in a secularised society, institutions such as politics and education are withdrawn from the religious sphere; the “sacred” canopy is more and more restricted. Subsequently, sociologists extended the meaning of secularization beyond the societal level to the individual level. People were said to be secularized when their involvement in the churches declined and when important episodes in the course of lives such as birth, marriage, and burial ceased to be sacralized. In other words when fewer and fewer people participated in churchly rites of passage it was referred to as individual secularization.

As an evidence of secularization creeping in Malawi, the involvement of the church in Christian rites of passage has declined. A rite of passage is a ritual or event that marks a person’s progress from one stage of life to another. These also include ceremonies surrounding events marking milestones such as puberty, coming of age, marriage and death. Initiation ceremonies such as baptism and confirmation are

considered important rites of passages for people of certain religions religion. The Christian rites of passages include baptism, confirmation, marriage, and death. With the influence of secularization, individuals do not feel the importance of the above mentioned rites of passage as much.

In Malawi the church has been influential in the lives of people, but due to secularization, this influence has been declining. In an interview with a number of people to examine their need for the church at key moments, the following responses were offered:

5.3.3.3.2.1 Birth

The questionnaire covered the period from 2000 to 2010, in 5 years intervals. It sought to find out if the people interviewed had any connection with the church for themselves or their children. Secondly the statistics assessed whether the birth of a child was reported to the church and whether children born were baptised in the church or not.

Out of 1000 people that were interviewed in the year 2000, 820 people reported that the birth of a child within their family was reported to the church and that they had received prayers of thanksgiving for the gift of a baby to the family. This represented 82% of the respondents. In 2005, of the 1000 people interviewed, 630 respondents had their born babies connected to the church, representing 63% of respondents, while in 2010, 600 respondents sought the connection of their newly born babies to the church, representing 60% of those asked. The observation is that church involvement at birth has been declining since the 2000 to 2010. This decline in the number of parents' connecting the birth of their children to the church reflects the individual secularization. This led to the idea of infant baptism for the newly born

babies. The above assessment dealt with reporting the birth of children to the church while the sub-section below tries to assess the frequency of parents actually baptizing their infants.

5.3.3.3.2 Infant Baptism

The questionnaire sought to find out whether infant baptism was still important to the people interviewed. In the year 2000, 690 responded that they believed that infant baptism was very important. That represented 69% of the respondents. In the year 2005, there was a drop of those who believed in infant baptism to 410, representing 41% of respondents, while in 2010 the figure stood at 300, representing 30% of those asked. This on average reflects that the percentage of people believing in infant baptism has been declining between the year 2000 and 2010. That is yet more evidence of individual secularization in Malawi.

5.3.3.3.3 Confirmation/adult baptism

Another rite of passage which is very important is confirmation, or adult baptism. In the CCAP Church in Malawi, a person is confirmed to become a Christian in a particular congregation if he was baptised as a child. If a person was not baptised while he/she was young, he/she needs to receive adult baptism. In the year 2000, 800 respondents said their family members were connected to confirmation or adult baptism, which represented 80% of respondents. In 2005, 650 reported adult baptism or confirmation, representing 65% of those asked. By 2010, the number had dropped to 380 representing only 38% of those asked. This is also an indication that the importance of confirmation and adult baptism was declining between the year 2000 and 2010.

5.3.3.3.2.4 Marriage

Marriage is sacred, and it is in the interest of the churches in Malawi to officiate Christian marriages. The desire to have one's marriage officiated by the church is a sign of commitment to the church and to God. The findings of this research proved that many people chose to cohabit. The decline in the number of people whose marriages were officiated by the church supported the evidence that secularization is creeping into Malawi.

360 respondents had their weddings officiated by the church representing, 36% of those who responded. In 2005, the number had dropped to 140, representing only 14% of respondents. The number further dropped in 2010 to 120 or 12% of those asked. According to the interview with one of the Reverends in the CCAP Blantyre Synod, the church is finding it a challenge to get people to have their weddings officiated by them. Many families have chosen to cohabit rather than marry even though it is a church requirement that any Christian should have his/her wedding officiated by the church. If the couple is not officially married, they cannot partake of Holy Communion, or take their children to church for baptism.

The established Christian church has always been against polygamy. Christians understand marriage as authorized by God, who intended men and women to live together. They believe it reflects the union between Jesus and the church (his bride) and as such should be characterized by supportiveness, faithfulness, and should be everlasting. (Mark 10:7-9) says that in marriage the couple "will become one," joined together by God in a union that no one should break. The love shared by husband and wife is believed to bring them closer to the knowledge of what Christian love means, closer to God, and closer to an understanding of God's love for his creation.

5.3.3.3.2.5 Death

This was a general question that asked whether the death in the family of any relative should be connected to the church or not. Christians believe in an afterlife and that belief in Jesus assures the forgiveness of sins and the assurance of heaven. Death is therefore not something to fear because it is not the end. Some believers before they die want to make confessions to their minister or priest while others feel that this is a private matter between themselves and God.

A Christian funeral service is usually held in the church, though sometimes it can also be taken on the ground outside the house. The service covers prayers, hymns, and an address that pays tribute to the life of the deceased. It may also include the Eucharist or a requiem Mass. Flowers are brought to symbolise the new life that the dead person is entering and candles may be lit to symbolise salvation. This is the 'final respects' given to a person. In the interview, a lot of the people felt that Christian funerals were the best and the most decent. The table above also indicates that many people felt the importance of the church in funerals. In the year 2000, 980 agreed on the importance of the church in funeral services. This was 98% of the respondents; By 2005 the number of people who felt the church was important for funerals was 906, which was 87% of those asked. By 2010 the number dropped to 840. This was 84% of the respondents.

Comparing the rate of percentages for the various rites of passage above, it should be noted that death as a rite of passage was supported more than others rites of passages. Many people actually suggested that they go to church regularly because they would like to have decent funerals. Every five year interval from the year 2000, the percentages for each category have been declining. This is evidence of

individual secularization because it means the importance of the church is becoming declining.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter set out to respond to the question of whether secularization has crept into Malawi. Using the research field work and theoretical framework of chapters two and three, it has been proved that secularization has crept into Malawi. Evidence for this has been seen in the facts provided. Though it has been noted that there are a lot of evidences of secularization in Malawi, the evidence that has dominated in the chapter is that of decline in church attendance. Chapter four has been helpful for this chapter because of the good research methodologies that it has provided for this thesis.

Case studies have been used from all the regions of Malawi; South, Central and Northern. The case studies were done on a number of the largest denominations in Malawi, namely: The Episcopal Conference in Malawi, The CCAP and the Anglican Church of Malawi. The chapter has used the Mixed Methods Procedures in interpreting the field work because the study used multiple research methodologies; qualitative, quantitative and case study approaches.

The chapter has skilfully applied the three types of secularization, societal, organizational and individual, Dobbelaere (2002). Showing how they were manifested in the secularization of Malawi.

Finally although the chapter has given evidence of secularization in Malawi, it has not discussed factors that have caused this secularization. The next chapter

therefore will discuss the factors of secularization in Malawi, looking critically into specific factors for Malawi.

CHAPTER SIX

FACTORS THAT HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE RISE OF SECULARIZATION IN MALAWI

6. 1 Introduction

The title of this study refers to “Secularization in Malawi, a study of the process with particular reference to Britain.” Chapters two and three were theoretical; introducing the concept of secularization and discussing the process of secularization as it took place in Britain. Preceding the first presentation of field work was chapter four which discussed the research methodology of my thesis. Using Mixed Methods Procedures, three research methodologies were applied; qualitative, quantitative and case study approaches. Chapter five presented the first research field work in which the process of secularization in Malawi was analyzed.

Chapter five presented evidence of secularization in Malawi using the findings of the field work research. This chapter seeks to further present the implications of the field work research findings. In this chapter the thesis attempts to answer questions related to the factors that have contributed to the process of secularization in Malawi. It explores how far these factors have progressed and why these factors are significant. The chapter discusses specific factors of secularization to Malawi.

From analyzing the research field work, this chapter suggests that there are four main factors of secularization affecting Malawi. These are donor influence, African Traditional Religion, lack of well trained religious leaders and Islam. It is important to note that the approach taken when analyzing secularization in this chapter is to analyze the factors that marginalize Christianity. The choice of Christianity as a

measure for the decline of religion has been mentioned in chapter two of this thesis. In this case the concept of secularization is discussed using a theoretical framework that has been influenced by Sorokin (1966:10), who describes secularization as “A decline of inspirational power of Christianity in animating, shaping, and determining the content as well as the style of the Western fine arts”.

This idea of measuring secularization in the context of Christianity makes sense if we consider Islam and African Traditional Religion not only as religions but also as factors in this context that contribute to the process of secularization in Malawi.

6.2 Specific factors of secularization to Malawi

The questionnaire was administered to 1000 interviewees to find out what they thought about factors of secularization in Malawi. Since the previous chapter, gave evidence that secularization has definitely crept into Malawi, this chapter, as mentioned above in the introduction, aims at finding out from the people being studied, what they knew about the factors of secularization. The researcher used the Mixed Methods Procedures approach, to collect raw data in response to the research questions in this chapter. It was important to use Mixed Methods Procedures approach in this chapter because the research involved both the qualitative and quantitative research methods. Creswell (2003:208) recommends this approach in a research which involves a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods. This study required both qualitative and quantitative methods. As Lincoln and Guba (1985:227) have suggested, the purpose of qualitative research methods is to “accumulate sufficient knowledge to lead to understanding”. The in depth nature of the factors surrounding secularization make qualitative methods necessary. Secondly Babbie (2007:404) states that the quantitative research methodology

approach involves numerical representation and manipulation of observations for the purpose of describing and explaining the phenomena that those observations reflect. This too was a necessary part of the research.

The researcher identified four factors that are specific to secularization in Malawi. These factors are Islam, African Tradition Religion, donor Influence and lack of well trained leaders. These factors will be discussed in this sub-section. The discussion is supported by data from the field research work.

Summary of number of interviewees and the percentage who agreed about each factor of secularization

Factors of secularization	Interviewees in total	Agreed	Percentage
Islam	1000	800	80%
Donor influence	1000	950	95%
African Tradition Religion	1000	800	80%
Lack of well trained leaders	1000	600	60%
Other factors	1000	Nil	Nil

The above table indicates that 1000 people were interviewed as was also mentioned in chapter four of this thesis. The respondents agreed very strongly that donors have significant influence on the secularization of Malawi. 950 of the interviewees felt that donors played a significant role. This amounted to 95% of those interviewed. Other strong factors according to the respondents were Islam and African Tradition Religion. 800 of the 1000 respondents (80%) felt that these two factors were significant. 600 people or 60% of the interviewees, agreed that a lack of well trained religious leaders, contributed to the rise of secularization in Malawi.

6.2.1 Islam in Malawi

Islam is one of the factors that has contributed to the rise of secularization in Malawi. It is a religion that people have seen as parallel to Christianity. The study found that people often compare Christianity and Islam. This comparison put Christianity at a disadvantage because it was measured against Islam. As Christianity has grown in Malawi, so has Islam. In this sub-section, the study discusses the history of Islam in Malawi, its growth, and how it contributes to the process of secularization in Malawi. Islam as a factor of secularization can be viewed in two ways; it leads to religious pluralism, which has been discussed previously as a factor of secularization in this thesis and it makes people begin to question the validity of religions because of the comparison it creates.

6.2.1.1 The history of Islam in Malawi

Musa (2005:10) noted that Muslims had already reached some parts of Malawi by the 15th century:

There is strong evidence indicating that as early as the fifteenth century, Muslims had engaged in trade with some Malawian tribes. First it was in the Zambezi and Shire Valley regions, which they only left after being

expelled by the Portuguese in 1629. [...] Before Jumbe's arrival, other Muslims had already set their feet on Malawi's soil as far back as the fifteenth and eighteenth century as traders and as local people whom he found practicing Islam.

The study notes that Musa (2005) is not very clear on the specific date of Muslims' arrival and establishment in Malawi. For the sake of this study it is only important to note that Islam reached Malawi and began to grow. The growth of Islam is very critical to this study because this growth has made Islam a religious force to be considered when making national policies in Malawi.

6.2.1.2 The growth of Islam in Malawi

The level of adherence to Islam in Malawi has been a matter of debate. Many people believe that Islam as a religion is practised by very few people in Malawi, the majority of whom are from the Yao tribe. Mangochi is one of the few districts where Islam is in the majority. Islam grew tremendously during the time when Dr Bakili Muluzi was President of the Republic of Malawi. Dr Muluzi, who is a Muslim, ruled Malawi from 1994 to 2004.

The growth of Islam during Dr Muluzi's reign was due to the fact that at the time many more opportunities opened to Muslims. This was an indication that the state had influence on religion. Some students received scholarships to study at universities, while others got the opportunity to work at embassies if they were Muslim and had good qualifications. Some were able to start good businesses due to their Muslim faith. These conditions prompted many people to choose Islam as their religion. It was also easy for Islam to penetrate at that time, because by then the church was already weakened by a new era of democracy and multiparty government which had resurfaced in 1993 in Malawi.

As Islam grew, controversy arose between Muslims and Christians as to the numbers of each group. This led the Malawi National Statistics Office to register the population by religion, sex and location in 1998. Musa (2005:9) reported the results of the National census of 1998-2008. The results are shown below:

NATIONAL	REGION (Total population of the people)	RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY	FIGURES
9,933,868	North: 1,233,560	Christians	1,187,779
		Muslims	17,684
		Other religions	18,754
		No religion	9,343
	Centre: 4,066,340	Christians	3,388,408
		Muslims	283,964
		Other religions	110,609
		No religion	283,359
	South:	Christians	3,357,586

	4,633,698	Muslims	970,781
		Other religions	175,598
		No religion	130,003
	Summary	Christians	7,933,773
		Muslims	1,272,429
		Other religions	304,961
		No religion	422,705
9,933,868			9,933,868

The above table indicates religions in Malawi, by region and denomination, according to the National Statistics Office population census of 1998. Out of 9.9 million Malawians at the time, 7,933,773 (79.86 %) claimed to be Christians while 1,272,429 (12.80 %) were Muslims. 304,961 (3.06%) of the population were people of other religion like Buddhism, Hinduism and the Baha'i faith and those claiming no religious affiliation represented 4% of the population.

Though the results of the National Statistical Office indicated that 13% of the population of Malawi was Muslim, Muslims in Malawi claim that they comprise 30% of the population. This figure was claimed during an interview with the Chairman of the Muslim Association of Malawi in 2011. He claimed the following:

In Malawi we are the fastest growing religion, and as of now our statistics show there are over 30% Muslims in this country. If you think of the eastern political region of Malawi which is dominated by Muslims we have about 15% of Muslims against the national population, now over 15% will be collected from all the three remaining regions.

From 1994 till the present, Christians insisted that Muslims are in the minority and should not wield power in decision making. This debate has continued for some time. Musa (2005:1) argued that Muslims have been influencing Malawian politics and developments for a long time:

Before Christianity was known to Malawi in both its “unofficial” phase in 1861, when Dr David Livingstone brought Bishop Charles Mackenzie to Magomero, and officially in 1875 when the Free Church of Scotland came to plant a mission station at Cape Maclear in Mangochi, the majority of the local people at that time in terms of expatriate religions were Muslims.

The District Commissioner for Mangochi confirmed the dominance of Islam in the Eastern region. He gave the example of the Mangochi District which has a population of 885,335, about 620,000 of who are from the Yao ethnic group. The Yao group represents 70% of the Mangochi population while 65% of the Mangochi population practices the Islamic faith. The District Commissioner reported the following:

I have been the District Commissioner in this town for about three years. Mangochi has a population of 885,335 and is dominated by the Yaos because about 620,000 are Yaos representing 70% and the religion which is very strong is Islam because we estimate membership of about 65% of the population. My belief is that people here are business minded and they have business with Asians of which many of them are Muslims. Secondly, we believe that Islam is a religion that unites people but also has people’s welfare at heart. Periodically Islam as a religion does organize almsgiving functions.

The statement reflects that Islam as a religion does attract people because it meets people’s needs through almsgiving. Secondly, Islam is accepted in the society as a

religion. This puts Christianity at a disadvantage because it is measured against it. I am however, aware that it could well do the opposite.

Some supporters of Islam feel that the figures given by the NSO are biased. They feel their numbers are being underreported for political reasons. They claim that if Muslims are viewed as a minority in the country, their benefits can then be legitimately limited. In an interview with the Secretary General of Muslim Association in Malawi (MAM: 2009), he expressed agreement with the observation made by Musa (2001):

The National Statistics Office (NSO) has been biased in presenting the data of Membership of Muslims in this country, Malawi. We are estimated to be over 30%, but we are put at less than 15% officially. We have areas like Mangochi, Machinga, Balaka, and Zomba where we are in majority and these are very big districts. I believe this is done as a political tool so that Muslims have a very small share from the cake of the nation.

The above comments by the Secretary General of MAM indicate that though Islam is growing in Malawi, its exact numbers are still not very clear because they have been so hotly debated. This indicates that the two religions, Christianity and Islam, are in contest.

Pachai (1973:49) noted that in the Muslim World magazine, the population of Muslims in Malawi was reported as 1, 145 Million. This figure from Pachai confirms that the population of Muslims in Malawi has been difficult to be confirmed for a long time. One of the respondents from the Islamic community argued that the estimates of the number of Muslims are often politically or religiously skewed:

I do not agree that the population of Muslims is not clearly known in Malawi but I do believe that people chose to ignore correct figures deliberately. If the one coming up with the figures is a Muslim, he/she will be biased to inflate the figures to prove that many people are

Muslims so that others can be attracted too. But also politically, if a person has some political ambitions, he would agree that there are many Muslims, so that when one argues about positions in government or parastatals can demand more Muslims proportionally to have such positions.

Sir Alfred Sharpe, one of the British Colonial governors stated in the Muslim World XVII, of 1927 (184-186) that:

Twenty years ago (1890), when I first knew Nyasaland, Mohammadanism (sic) was almost nonexistent except one or two spots where it had been brought in by the Arabs. Since then it has spread greatly, particularly during the last eight to ten years. The Yaos are the tribes who have been taken to Muslim teaching mostly, the movement has grown for itself; there has been nothing in the shape of propaganda. All through Yao land that is to say, from Lake Nyasa to the East Coast there is in almost every village a Mosque and a Muslim trader.

The above statement indicates that Islam has been growing over the years. But his dates would be in conflict with other researchers like Musa who believes that Muslims have been in Malawi from well before that time. Musa (2005:3) further provides in opposition to Alfred Sharpe's opinion that Islam was not being propagated at the time the names of two strong Muslim evangelists who were responsible for the spread of Islam in many parts of Malawi since 1875. He identifies them as Sheikh Abdallah Mkwanda and Thabit Muhammad Ngaunje. According to Musa, Islam was definitely being propagated.

Pachai (1983) wrote that there were reports in which both African and Asian Muslims demanded their own schools which would be free of Christian influence. These were reported to have taken place in the early 20th century. In fact up to 1930, the only schools built by the government were the Jeans Training Centre at Domasi, a school for Muslim (mainly Yao) children at Liwonde and a Police school in Zomba. This is

an indication that Muslims have been well established in Malawi for some time since they had already managed to obtain a Muslim school by 1930.

In 1998, Al Haj Yusufu Kanyamula, acting Chairman of the Muslim Association Media Committee, released a press statement in which he stated that the Muslim population was about 5 million. The declaration was made by the Chairman as a response to what was believed to be political propaganda against the Muslims led by Pastor Thaulo Phiri. Musa (2005:6) describes it in the following way:

[...] Al-Haj Kanyamula was particularly responding to a Pastor Thaulo Phiri, who declared himself as a government critic (particularly the person of President Bakili Muluzi). Acting in the name of a little known clerical grouping called Pastors' Voice Association and Fraternity; he made regular press statements exclusively published in the Daily Times. For example in the edition of February 9, 1998, he made charges that President Muluzi as a Muslim (a) allegedly "uses tax payers" money to fund the construction of a Mosque somewhere in Lilongwe (b) was to "Islamise Malawi", a theory popularized in all anti-government newspapers beginning from 1992 and (c) that President Muluzi had at one time authorized "the burning of Bibles" allegedly to defeat Christianity in the country.

The National Statistics of 2009 provided the information contained in the tables below which show the growth of different religions in Malawi. In an interview with the Commissioner of National Statistics Office he gave me this information:

YEAR	CHRISTIANS	MUSLIMS	NO RELIGION
1966	3,226,000	517,000	172,000
1977	4,431,000	711,000	236,000
1987	6,380,000	1,023,000	340,000

1998	7,934,000	1,272,000	423,000
2008	10,436,000	1,674,000	556,000

The information provided above covers the entire nation of Malawi from 1966 to 2008, indicating the growth of Christians, Muslims, and those claiming no religious affiliation. The observation is that each of the groups is increasing in numbers. The study assessed the growth in percentages, comparing the statistics of the above categories of people between 1966 and 2008. The results showed that in 1966, the population of Christians in Malawi was 3,226,000 and by 2008 the population had grown to 10,436,000, showing a 323.5% increase. Muslims numbered 517,000 in 1966 and grew to 1,674,000 by 2008, a 323.8% increase in numbers. Those who claimed no religion grew from 174,000 to 556,000, increasing by 319.5% during that period.

Because of the growth of both Islam and Christianity, this study notes that people will chose to ignore both. It is postulated that people will begin to question which religion is correct. The comparison between the two religions undermines the vitality of religion in general.

6.2.1.3 The impact of Islam on the process of secularization

This study has discussed the growth of Islam in Malawi by providing figures. One qualitative research method is the study of groups. Lofland and Lofland (1995:110) noted that people who spend a lot of time together in groups affect one another and tend to influence each other's behaviour. It is therefore in view of such tendencies

that qualitative research approaches have helped to analyze the interaction of Muslims and Christians and found that they influence each other because the religions are practised by people who live together, working together and in some cases even live in the same family.

6.2.1.3.1 Societal secularization in Malawi is due to Islamic influences

Berger (1967:107) has defined societal secularization as the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols. Because of the influence of Islam, the Malawian government made a declaration to remove all religious symbols from roundabouts during religious festivals. A case study will be used to discuss how Islam has influenced Malawi towards societal secularization. Mitchel (1989:129) refers to a case study as a detailed examination of an event which the analyst believes exhibits the operations of some identified general theoretical principles.

Case study (6.1): Ziyara Parade (2011)

The study explores the case study named Ziyara Parade (2011) because it happened on 16th February, 2011 in Malawi. The Attariqatul Qadria Sunni Association of Malawi (AQSAM) organized the Ziyara Parade in all the big cities of Malawi, Blantyre, Lilongwe and Mzuzu. As part of the preparation for the parade, the association erected mini mosques in all the roundabouts so that the Muslims would go around these as they were parading. In an interview with the Chairman of the organizing committee, he said that it was an annual event for all Muslims throughout the world. The event was done to celebrate the birthday of Prophet Muhammad who is the founder of the religion. The President of the Republic of Malawi subsequently noticed that religious symbols (mini mosques) had been placed in the roundabouts.

He instructed his advisor on religious affairs to contact the management of city assemblies asking them to remove the symbols from the roundabouts.

The organizing committee for the AQSAM argued that Christians put their religious symbols during the Easter period and the government never ordered any removal of them. In order to remain impartial, the government declared that from 2011, no religious symbols should be displayed in public places. The decision to remove religious symbols from public places affected not only Muslims but also Christians since they too are no longer allowed to display religious symbols in public places. The pronouncement avoids the misrepresentation that Christianity is favoured by the Malawian government.

The removal of religious symbols from public places is a sign that the influence of religion has declined. The government cannot reshape its policies based on religion. One would relate such actions of removing religious symbols to the understanding of secularization put forth by Momen (1999:478); “the loss of the prestige of religious institutions and symbols”. The Malawi Government’s decision to remove religious symbols from public places was influenced by Islam as a religious force. Because of the rise of Islam the government has decided to promote religious pluralism. If Islam existed in Malawi as a minority, the government would not see the need for religious pluralism, and there would be no need to legislate the removal of religious symbols. The co-existence of different religions is religious pluralism, and this thesis notes that religious pluralism encourages secularization since neither religion is seen to be authoritative. This then makes Islam a factor of secularization in Malawi and as the study has noted ‘the growth of Islam has meant that Christian symbols have been forbidden to avoid offending a significant portion of the population. This is societal secularization.

6.2.1.3.2 Individual secularization in Malawi as a result of

Islamic teachings contradicting Christian teachings

Though the comparison of Christianity and Islam is not the focus of this thesis, the study notes that, it is relevant to mention a few areas in order to see why people are confused when faced with both religions, resulting in the rejection of both religions. The numbers of both Muslims and Christians in Malawi are growing as is seen from the report given by the National Statistical Office census for the period of 1966 to 2008. What it means is that people are accepting a false religion. I would like to remind the readers of two important aspects of this research in order to understand why the contradiction of Islamic teachings and Christianity leads to secularization.

This research is looking at secularization in terms of religious decline in authority. In this research, the context religion is Christianity, so anything that marginalizes Christianity becomes a factor to secularization. The fact that Islam is growing in parallel with Christianity means that it is marginalizing Christianity. Sorokin (1966:9,10) looked at secularization as “an increasing demotion of Christian dogmas, beliefs, rituals and moral imperatives from the status of the God-given “revelations”, unconditional moral commandments, and the sacred values to the status of secular, man-made, questionable rules of conduct, fallible human beliefs, and relative values”.

The second important note for the reader is related to a point made by Yin (1989: 10) where he says that in the case study research approach, the researcher’s interest cannot be avoided in the selection of cases. It is my personal belief that Islam is a false religion and this is supported by Newbiggin (1958:54) who has also declared Islam a false religion:

If Christian schools are established only as an aid to evangelism, or as a charitable enterprise, a vital element in the Christian response to secularism is missing. Christian parents, charged with the whole training of their children, have the responsibility of educating them not in a secularist atmosphere, but in the nurture of the Lord. This is needful not only in countries where a false religion dominates the schools, as in the Islamic states, but also where the propaganda is secularistic. The freedom of parents to sponsor such schools is a keystone of true religious liberty. The spirit of secularism threatens to destroy that liberty in the name of national unity.

Sorokin's view of secularization is that it involves an increasing demotion of Christian dogmas, beliefs, rituals and moral imperatives from the status of the God-given "revelations". One vital aspect of secularization is a denial that the Bible is a real revelation. This is exactly what Islam does; it contradicts Christian dogmas, beliefs, rituals and moral imperatives that Christians believe are God-given revelations. People are less prepared to accept Christianity if they see a sizable number reject it. This sub-section will discuss teachings such as the Islam teachings that contradict Christianity.

6.2.1.3.2.1 Islam and Marriage

Islam allows a Muslim to marry more than one wife under certain circumstances; namely that the husband love all the wives equally. Dr Jamal Badawi, in 1998, produced a document entitled "Polygamy in Islamic Law", where he argued that even though other religions do not allow polygamy, in practice their adherents often cheat on their spouses. In light of these he argues that it would be better to legalize polygamy. He writes:

Man can reject the guidance of God, become his own god, and establish his own standards of morality. Ultimately, however, he may discover the mirage that alluded him. A few honest questions finally: What is the situation in countries that banned polygamy? Do they really enjoy sincere and faithful "monogamy"? What is the degree of cohesion of the family? Is there any significant number of mistresses, "Sweethearts", and illegitimate children? How observant are married

men and women of the strict “monogamous” relationships? Are infidelity and secret extramarital sexual relationships more moral than the legitimate, legally protected husband – wife relationships, even under polygamy if there is a pressing need for it? Which of the two situations is best (Badawi, 1998:2)?

Badawi (1998) further explained that in Islam, polygamy is allowed for men, with the specific limitation that they can only have up to four wives at a particular time. The Quran also states that men who choose this route must deal with their wives as fairly as possible, doing everything that they can to spend equal amounts of time and money on each of them. If the husband cannot deal with his wives fairly then he should stick to one. Women on the other hand, are only allowed one husband, although they are allowed to re-marry after a divorce.

It is also important to note that polygamy is not allowed in some Islamic countries. Badawi (1998) wrote; “Although many Muslim countries still retain traditional Islamic law which permits polygamy, secular elements within some Muslim societies challenge its acceptability. Polygamy is prohibited by law in some Muslim countries that do not adopt the Islamic Shariah law for marital regulations, such as Azerbaijan, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Tunisia and Turkey”.

A number of people have condemned polygamy, describing it as a hindrance to democracy. It does not promote freedom in society and has caused more problems than good. Stanley Kurtz, from the Hudson Institute, has lamented the modern arguments made by various intellectuals who call for de-criminalizing polygamy.

Kurtz concluded:

Marriage, as its ultramodern critics would like to say, is indeed about choosing one’s partner, and about freedom in a society that values freedom. But that’s not the only thing it is about. As the Supreme Court justices who unanimously decided Reynolds in 1878 understood,

marriage is also about sustaining the conditions in which freedom can thrive.

Polygamy in all its forms is a recipe for social structures that inhibit and ultimately undermine social freedom and democracy. A hard-won lesson of Western history is that genuine democratic self-rule begins at the heart of the monogamous family (Kurtz 2006).

Those who support polygamy, have a number of reasons for allowing a person to marry more than one wife. Hasting (1963:624) points to Abraham, Jacob, and David. In Deuteronomy 17:17, the king is warned not to multiply wives. Later regulations fixed the number at eighteen for a king and four for an ordinary man.”

Quran 4:3 notes that, “if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly with the orphans, marry women of your choice, two, or three, or four; but if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly with them, then marry only one”. Dr Jamal Badawi (1998) came up with the following applications of these as reasons for allowing a Muslim to marry more than one wife:

- *That polygamy is neither mandatory, nor encouraged, but merely permitted*
- *That the permission to practise polygamy is not associated with mere satisfaction of passion. It is rather associated with compassion toward widows and orphans, a matter that is confirmed by the atmosphere in which the verse was revealed.*
- *That even in such a situation, the permission is far more restricted than the normal practice which existed among the Arabs and other people at that time when many married as many as ten or more wives*
- *To sum up, Islam, being against immorality, hypocritical pretence of morality and against divorce unless a better solution is available, provides for a better alternative which is consistent with human nature and with the preservation of pure and legitimate sex relationships. In a situation like this, it is doubtful that any solution would be better than polygamy, which is, after all, an optimal solution.*

6.2.1.3.2.2 The Qur’anic teaching about God leads to individual secularization

In Christianity God is seen as three persons in one Godhead. Matthew 28:19 notes that one God exists in three distinct persons (Trinity); Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

But in the Islamic beliefs, God (Allah) is different. Quran 112:1 notes that there is only one God (Allah). This is called monotheism. Paas (2006:54) wrote that the most important theme in the *Qur'an* is its teaching about God or Allah. The central idea in this teaching is the unity of God (*tawhid*). The *Qur'an* affirms most strongly that God is one. God alone, God is not divided, and God has no partners, no associates. The *Qur'an* insists that this is the great truth that must be believed and refers to it repeatedly as in *Surah* 112:1-4, 'He is God alone, God the Eternal. He does not beget and is not begotten. There is none co-equal with Him.

Anything that is seen to deny the unity of God is condemned in the *Qur'an*. For this reason idol worship, which was practised by pagan Arabs, is condemned in *Surah* 5:92. Christians and Jews are also attacked for denying the unity of God: 'How they are perverted ... to extinguish God's light with their mouths'.

Paas (2006) further claims that Christians in particular are condemned by passages in the *Qur'an* for worshipping three Gods instead of one (*Surah* 5:77). It would appear from *Surah* 5:116 that in the *Qur'an*, the Christian doctrine of the Trinity is taken to mean worship of God, Jesus and Mary. The *Qur'an* regards with abhorrence the sin of *shirk*, that is ascribing any partners to God.

Much of the *Qur'anic* teaching about God is expressed in the titles given to him. These names designate his attributes. He is the mighty, the strong, the most high, the producer, the creator, the wise, the just, the true and the merciful. Some of the attributes of God in Islamic perspective are the same as those in Christianity.

Although some attributes of God are similar in Islam and Christianity, it is not so for all His attributes. Allah is said to be merciful, gracious and even all-forgiving. According to Islam there is also a different side to him, for example, God's guidance

expressed in *Surah 76:29*, 'you will not go straight unless God wills'. The *Qur'an* teaches that God's will is sovereign:

There are no laws and principles which can bind or question God's will. So much is God in control of the world, that everything that happens in the world is foreordained by God. It teaches that no good or evil can come upon man unless God wills it (Surah 9:51). This connects the doctrine of Allah's sovereignty to the doctrine of predestination or pre-decree (qadar/ taqdir). It means that Allah is the irresistible to whom human beings' will is totally subjected. Allah can do anything with a person. He can even kill without giving reasons for his actions. Paradoxically, the Qur'an also teaches that man is entirely responsible for his actions and will have to answer for them on the Day of Judgment (Paas 2006:55).

The above misunderstandings of the doctrines have made many people begin to look at Christian teachings in a different light and so reject religion. In interviews, some of the respondents gave the following responses:

Respondent one:

If indeed religion is real and we know God through revelations from God why are the two major religions in conflict against each other? If both Christians and Muslims do agree that there is God, why is it that the God of Christians seems to be different from that of Muslims? I doubt if all these religions are revelations from God. For me I just ignore both.

Respondent two:

I used to believe that Islam is the best religion. I stay in Machinga district and about 65% of the people living in Machinga are Muslims. But morally the way people behave in terms of prostitution and violence, I feel Islam is not a genuine religion, but again to think of joining Christianity, is as well as to just stay because a lot of Christians just pretend of what they are while they are not. If indeed religion can change the morality of an individual I would admit that in Malawi then we are still very far.

Similarly another respondent observed:

I believe these religions were just put in place to guide the society morally. But here in Malawi we see that even religious leaders themselves are not morally right; they are corrupt, they are materially oriented and some of them are adulterers. How can one be guided by such people and if indeed religion is real, why are such religious leaders not prepared to enter heaven or paradise?

The responses above show that people reject all religions on the grounds that Islam has made them question the authority of religion. Often Islam has been perceived as morally right, and this has attracted people from Christianity towards Islam. Here we observe the opposite. People's responses indicate that religion in Malawi has been seen as morally ineffective, and so has been rejected. Since both major religions in Malawi; Christianity and Islam, have been seen as useless, religion as a whole has been rejected. This contributes to individual secularization because people withdraw from religious participation and practice.

6.2.1.3.2.3 The Qur'anic Teachings about Jesus

This study notes that the Qur'anic teachings about Jesus have led to the rejection of religion in general, resulting in secularization. One of the respondents commented:

I used to believe that Jesus is the son of God, but two major religions that I know agree that Jesus is not the son of God; Islam and Jewish religions. At first when I heard about the Jews, my mind was clear that Jesus could not be popular among the Jews as he was from among the Jewish community. Later when I heard the same understanding from Islam, then I knew that religions are more confusing [...] the best is just to ignore both.

Christians have a very strong connection to Jesus Christ. Jesus is fully human and fully God. The Qur'an does not see Jesus Christ as Christians do. For Christians,

Jesus is God, while for the Muslims Jesus is one of the Prophets. This sub-section will highlight the *Qur'anic* views of Jesus Christ.

Jesus' Birth

In the Qur'an, Jesus is called Isa. Paas (2006) says that the name Isa appears in the Qur'an in 93 verses and is spread throughout 15 Surahs. In Surah 19, Jesus is given a place in the line of other prophets. It speaks of Zechariah, John the Baptist, Mary, Jesus, Abraham, Moses and Ishmael. The references to him are fragmented. God does not take a son (Surah 19:88-96). There is no incarnation (cf John 1:14). The Spirit appears to Mary as a man (Surah 19:17) and he is later identified as Gabriel, who announces that Mary will receive a 'pure boy'. This will be a virgin birth like the birth of Adam (Surah 3:59), but definitely not a virgin birth as Christians teach, because the Merciful did not take a child for himself (Surah 19:88-93). The Qur'an rejects the Christian account of the virgin birth, but its own explanation still gives Jesus a place near to God.

This study notes that the Qur'anic teachings about Jesus are in conflict with that of the Bible. Some of those who were interviewed felt that such differences in teaching pointed to the fact there was either no true religion, or that religion is not a divine matter but rather has human origins. They felt that if it came from God, there would not be so much conflict surrounding it and therefore felt justified in rejecting all religions.

6.2.1.3.3 Organizational secularization due to Islamic influence

In some areas like Mangochi District in Malawi where Islam as a religion predominates, many people practice polygamy. Referring to one of the strategies to reach out to Muslims, the CCAP Blantyre Synod General Secretary in March, 2009

made remarks that suggested that one has to turn a blind eye on polygamy in order to win more Muslims to Christianity. This study quoted him saying:

In Islamic dominating area we cannot win Muslims if we are too strict on polygamy; though we are not changing our policies but please do not be too strict by excommunicating those with more than one wife. Make pastoral efforts on them until they are convinced and make a personal decision to practise monogamy, otherwise we cannot penetrate in such areas.

The above citation is an example of organizational secularization, in which religion is modified to accommodate societal needs. Instead of religion influencing people, in organizational secularization one finds that the reverse takes place. This study notes that organizational secularization is defined as “change that occurs in the posture of religious organizations-churches, denominations, sects, and new religious movements-in matters of beliefs, morals etc (Dobbelaere 2002:25). Since the CCAP Blantyre Synod as a church has changed its approach towards polygamy in an attempt to convert Muslims to Christianity, it is clear from the study that it is experiencing organizational secularization.

6.2.1.3.4 Islam is a religion of influence and violence

The impact of Islam on the process of secularization is due to the fact that its beliefs are in conflict with Christianity. Since the Islamic religion has been growing, not only in numbers but in its influence on society, Malawi has been increasingly saturated with Islamic beliefs such as polygamy. Islamic teaching has also meant that many people don't see Jesus as God any more. The Prophet Muhammad's behaviour was not like that of Jesus Christ.

Paas (2006:37) wrote about Muhammad's views on marriage. He had more than one wife. The Quran justifies his reasons for polygamy:

During this period Muhammad proclaimed several revelations which led to a reform of the marriage system of that time. One such revelation is to be found in Surah 4:3, 'If you fear that you will not act justly towards the orphans, marry such women as seem good to you, two, three, four; but if you fear you will not be equitable, then only one'. This passage is the basis of the modern Islamic system of polygamy and the context makes clear that it was designed primarily to make provision for the widows and orphans in the early Muslim community.

[...] In 626 Muhammad married two wives, both widows of leading supporters who had died one at Badr and one at Uhud. In the following year he married the divorced wife of his adopted son which, according to the Arab custom, was incest. This led to the criticism of Muhammad but he received a revelation (Surah 33:37) which stated that this marriage was the will of God.

In Christianity, there is no such justification of polygamy as a God-given mandate. Where Christianity conflicts with Islam, some people will look at both religions and opt for the religion that supports what they would like or will reject both religions as previously mentioned. An experience of individual secularization as defined above was noticed as interviews were being conducted on the impact of Islam on secularization.

One respondent said in an interview:

I feel both Christianity and Islam are religions that are not clear, the stories of Jesus himself seem to be complicated; he is the Son of God, the son of Joseph or the Son of Man. The story of salvation as an example, is interpreted in Christianity in different ways; others says it is by grace, human beings have a choice (freewill) and others believe that it will come as a reward for the righteous. Islam as a religion says that Jesus is recognized as one of the prophets and Muhammad as the last Messenger of God. The salvation of Muslims is through Muhammad while the salvation of Christians is through Jesus, so difficult to believe the right religion as a result I am forced not to trust any of the two.

In chapter five of this thesis it was observed that part of the evidence for secularization in Malawi was that the church was corrupt, and that people believed that many of the Christian religious leaders were only interested in material gain.

This was evidenced in the fact that such leaders kept for themselves things like clothes and food that were meant to be distributed to the needy in society. People often assess Christianity in the light of Islam and end up in rejecting both religions.

The growth of the Muslim population in Malawi contributes to the rise of secularization because Muslims promote their beliefs, and offer reasons for what they believe. The more Islam grows the more people see competition between the two religions. This growth has made many people stop going to church because as they analyzed both Islam and Christianity, they felt it best to just ignore both religions.

Another respondent observed:

I like Christians because of being tolerant; the percentage of Christians in Malawi is higher than that of Muslims, if it was the opposite, Malawi would be declared an Islamic country already but Christians are not forceful. On the other hand I am aware that Muslims are more generous comparing to Christians when it comes to giving. Seriously these religions are more confusing. Nobody can understand them fully. The best for me is not to participate in both religions.

The above quotation indicates that people get confused about religion and think that the best thing to do is to ignore both religions. This is secularization because Islam causes people to question the rationale foundational premises of religion as a whole, leading to them not participating in either Christianity or Islam. The disagreements between the two religions have caused people to either participate less in both religions or just to ignore both. Secularization is a process where religion is rejected, and this study has clearly indicated how the growth of Islam in Malawi leads to the rejection of religion. Islam is therefore a factor of secularization in Malawi. It has caused both societal and individual secularizations.

6.2.2 Lack of well trained and educated religious leaders

Lack of well trained and educated religious leaders has influenced the process of secularization in Malawi in a number of ways. Firstly people have stopped going to church because they are not comfortable with the religious leaders who they feel do not present the gospel accurately. Some have failed to manage religious institutions properly, and as a result there is a decline in church attendance. This decline is a sign of both individual and societal secularization since it affects both individuals' participation in religious activities and the Christian religion's authority in society. A number of respondents confirmed that they were no longer interested in religious activities including church attendance because they felt their leaders were not conversant with the Bible. Some felt leaders were preaching a false gospel while others felt that they got either useless or hypocritical preaching from leaders. They reasoned that it was best just to ignore the church.

One respondent observed:

I stopped going to church regularly in 2000 because I felt our religious leaders do not understand the Bible but also do not respect the Christian calendar. On 25th December, I was expecting to hear the "Message of the Birth of Jesus, on Christmas Day." To my shock the message was about fundraising. I feel lack of well trained religious leaders is pushing many of us outside the church. Yes money is important to run the church but must not overshadow important Christian calendars.

Another respondent stated that he was disappointed with a church elder who had one day delivered a sermon about Joseph.

One day my church elder was preaching about Joseph who was sold by his elder brothers. According to that elder, he said that Joseph was very handsome and his parents were poor and could not afford to see their handsome son suffering because of poverty. They decided to sell him so that if he is to suffer the parents should not see. This is not true

because I know the story very well that Joseph's brothers sold him out of jealousy (Genesis 37:12-36)

The responses above show that members are more likely to withdraw from religious practice and participation if religious leaders are poorly educated and so preach erroneous doctrine. A number of people interviewed agreed that some religious leaders in Malawi lack proper training and education and as a result do not understand the Bible fully. This lack of training and education also affects their administration of the churches they are involved in. Some religious leaders have been accused of repeating the same sermons over a long period time. This is what one respondent reported:

I stopped going to church because my reverend keeps on preaching the same sermon all the time. He gives examples of animals being in love, for instance, a cat talking to a goat. I feel he has nothing to offer to the congregation. We have been complaining to the church's headquarters but up to now nothing is happening. The best is just to stay at home and watch television or do other things. Our religious leaders must be trained enough to meet the needs of the congregation.

Bruce Milne argues for the proper interpretation of Scripture. He offers the following rule:

The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself; therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture, it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly. This principle, technically known as the principle of harmonization, recognizes the unity and self-consistency of Scripture, deriving from its single divine author. [...] Interpret the Scripture according to the purpose of that Scripture, interpret it in the light of other passages on the same theme, interpret the earlier in the light of the later and fuller and finally the Scriptures must be interpreted dynamically (Milne 1992:46, 47).

For a religious leader to be able to interpret the gospel in this way, he needs better education. It is the responsibility of religious leaders to interpret the Word of God for

the members of their congregation. If the religious leaders have not acquired enough education to do so responsibly with the help of the Holy Spirit, problems will often arise. Leaders can cause people not to take the Word of God seriously when they project the image that they are not educated enough to preach the Word of God meaningfully. The eventual result is that people no longer participate in the activities of the church. This leads to the rejection of religion because faith has declined; faith is strengthened by constant participation.

A second problem is that some services, especially in urban settings are conducted in English. Though Chichewa is considered to be the main language used by the majority in Malawi, it is not the mother tongue of all Malawians. In urban locations, people who speak different languages and come from different background, have influenced urban congregations to introduce English services to accommodate everybody. When the researcher interviewed some members of St. Columba in Blantyre Synod, the members who always attend English service said that they preferred the English services because they were faster and because they struggled to fully understand the Chichewa services since Chichewa is not their mother tongue. It takes skill to interpret and translate English words into the vernacular language in such away as to make sense to the members. These skills need proper training and good education.

A respondent from St. Columba CCAP observed:

I am used to attending English service, but sometimes the preachers struggle to preach in English. This is unfortunate because we have so many potential elders who can preach much better. It puts me off if the preacher is struggling to preach in English, eventually I do not follow the sermon and I feel attending such services is just wasting of time.

English service is faster and due to so many engagements we prefer as a family English service but sometimes we are disappointed.

Some educated people, who read English bibles, feel that some biblical words are not interpreted correctly. The theological training of many mainline churches does not include English as a course on its own and as a result some church leaders struggle to preach in English. If a congregation agrees to have an English service, it becomes a requirement to preach in English which some church leaders with little education struggle to do. This puts off some members. It is important to note that successfully communicating in English has two facets; on one hand it is important that the preacher be competent in the language, while at the same time remembering that the congregation also needs to be competent in the language. However, this study notes that many of the responses that related to individual secularization could be traced back to poorly trained and educated religious leaders.

In Malawi the rate of illiteracy as a whole is high. An example can be given of the CCAP Blantyre Synod which was established in 1876. From that time till the present, the church has had five ministers who have held a doctorate. These are Rev Dr. S.D. Chipangwi (retired), Very Rev. Prof. S.S. Ncozana (retired), Very Rev. Dr F. L. Chingota, Rev. Dr. Joseph Thipa and Rev. Dr. Abale Phiri. The church has 212 church ministers and a membership of about 1.4 million. The church has twelve ministers who hold Masters Degrees, nine ministers who hold a Bachelor of Theology Honours degree and 19 first degree holders.

The study noted that inadequate education has led to poor management of some congregations. The study encountered a congregation that was declining when it was led by a religious leader who had a poor education. Later on the same congregation increased in numbers. The congregation had an uneducated religious

leader from 2000 to 2006 and the study noted that there was a decline in the number of attendees. The statistics indicate that the average church attendance for the English service was 200 in the year 2000, and went down to 90 by 2006. This is an overall decline of 222%. The Chichewa service declined from its 400 average attendance in 2000 to 375 in 2006, representing a 7% decline for the Chichewa service. According to the research methodology used in this thesis, the researcher has referred to the congregation as congregation 1 in line with the ethical rules noted by Beuchamp and Childress (1994). They outline four major principles for ethical behaviour which can be applied to research. Holloway & Walker (2000:58) describe two of these rules as: “respect for autonomy (independence and self determination) and non-maleficence (doing no harm). The researcher considers such ethical rules to be vital in order to avoid doing harm to the interviewees.

Comparison of church attendance in English and Chichewa services (2000-2012)

YEAR	ENGLISH SERVICE	CHICHEWA SERVICE
2000-2002	200	400
2002-2004	185	450
2004-2006	90	375
2006-2008	800	605
2008-2010	1400	900
2010-2012	2800	1200

In an interview with some members of this congregation, the members mentioned that attendance at the congregation's worship service declined between 2000 and 2006 because the minister lacked proper training and as a result people noticed that he was struggling to communicate in English. One member said that one day the reverend attempted to start an English hymn and the entire congregation booed him because he could not start it correctly. Many people stopped going to church because they did not want to be associated with such embarrassment. Uneducated religious leaders contribute to the rise of secularization. People have no confidence in them and are not comfortable being led by such religious leaders.

From 2006 to 2012, church attendance improved dramatically. Members of the congregation testified that they now had a lively and well educated church minister who engaged and managed the congregation very well.

Blantyre Synod church ministers as a case study of qualifications

Qualification	Frequency	Percent
Up to MSCE	65	41
Diploma	45	28
Undergraduate degree	19	12
BTh (Hons)	9	9
MTh	10	7
DTh	5	3
Total	153	100

One of the disadvantages of having church ministers with low qualifications is that they may feel intimidated by some high profile members of their congregations and consequently dilute their message to be more palatable to those members while having a good education allows them to be more confident.

In Malawi many people who call themselves pastors have never gone through any kind of theological training. They begin a church themselves and give themselves grandiose titles such as 'The Most High Bishop', 'The Very Reverend' and 'Apostle'. I am aware that the Bible does not explicitly require academic qualifications for pastors as Damazio (1993:5) wrote:

Then Moses spoke to the Lord, saying: "Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, who may go out before them and go in before them, who may lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the Lord may not be like sheep which have no shepherd" (Numbers 27:15-17). The Lord selected Joshua who was set before Eleazar the priest and the congregation as Moses transferred leadership authority to him. [...] Christ governs through chosen, qualified leaders He has ordained for the task.

Many Pentecostal and Charismatic church leaders in Malawi argue that education is irrelevant and does not qualify a person to lead, or pastor a church. A number of Pentecostal pastors interviewed stated that because the Holy Spirit guides or leads the church, one does not necessarily need formal education to be a pastor or church leader, they argue that what is needed is spiritual power.

Another respondent expressed a different opinion when interviewed on the matter of educational requirements for ministry. For him, both education and spiritual power were important because education provided perspective when combined with spiritual power. He stated that even in the 1870s when the missionaries were coming

to Malawi, they focused on establishing both churches and schools because they felt that formal education combined with spiritual power, would help people to read the Bible and count money and other resources for the church.

In the CCAP, one of the larger denominations in Malawi, church elders do not have to have formal academic qualifications to become elders but they still encourage the appointment of committed Christians who are able to read the Bible.

Another respondent asked:

Why do you allow some elders, with very little education, to read the Bible in the church? We feel bad to see some elders stammering and failing to read the Bible but yet they are allowed to read again and again in the church because of their influence in the history or structure of that particular congregation. If they struggle even to read the Bible properly, it brings shame to the entire session of the church and this also has affected the decline of churches.

The members of the congregations are put off by poor reading of the Bible. Sometimes they are unable to concentrate on the reading of the Word of God because of the poor presentation of the Word. The study notes that people are unlikely to stay in a church if they are uncomfortable with leaders who lead it.

6.2.2.1 The impact of inadequate education on secularization

This study notes that inadequate education has led to secularization in Malawi. I am aware that it has often been suggested that education at university level can destroy faith because it often raises a lot of issues that had not been previously considered. Malawi has seen the opposite effect as is evidenced by responses in the interviews related to inadequate education. The responses showed that those with good academic qualifications were more respected than those with inadequate education. Furthermore, those with good educational qualifications had more influence in the

society than those with inadequate education. Historically the Presbyterians have valued educated ministers.

The study further notes that when religion comes in a very unattractive container, that is, when religious leaders do not present religion in an appetizing way, listeners are put off, resulting in church attendance dwindling. Church attendance will decline due to inadequate leadership skills and poor education.

Milne (1983:47) argued that Scriptures must be interpreted dynamically:

God's Spirit is a living Spirit; he uses his Word in accordance with his great goals for God's people, their regeneration and sanctification. Biblical hermeneutics cannot confine itself to elucidating the true contextual meaning of the Bible. The Word which we have mined from the vein of God's eternal truth must be brought to the surface and put to work in the present. After asking, what does this mean in its own time and context and what does it mean for today- here and now in the life of this congregation, that person, and in my own life?

For a person to be able to interpret the Scriptures dynamically as Milne (1983) suggests, he/she requires a good education. In its absence, the scripture are not interpreted systematically and constructively, and secularization increases since the congregations crumble.

6.2.2.2 Poor education leads to poor leadership

As a minister, when you are appointed to a congregation, you automatically become the leader of that congregation. In the Presbyterian setting you are called the Parish Moderator. As the Parish Moderator, you are given powers to chair the sessions of the congregations as well as giving guidance to any issues that involves both the church and its membership. You lead funeral services, general church services and other church activities. If you have poor education, you have big problems. Nelson Mandela in 1991, at the University of South Africa (UNISA), said "Education is the

most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world". Without proper and good education, it is very difficult for the religious leader to exert influence and develop the church or society.

6.2.2.3 Poor education leads to individual secularization

This study has understood individual secularization as the loss of interest by individuals in participating in religious or church activities. Poor leadership and lack of vibrant management by religious leaders in their own congregations make people lose interest in participating, and attending religious activities, which leads to individual secularization. Whenever people go to church, they have expectation. For many people this expectation is to hear the word of God properly. If these expectations are not met, they become very frustrated and as a result stop attending church services. This leads to individual secularization. The study further noted that poorly educated leaders often taught poorly, producing weak Christians who were more likely to succumb to secularization.

6.2.2.4 Poor religious leadership and management leads to individual secularization

This study noted that the three types of secularizations that are being used in the theoretical framework of the study are related. Poor religious leadership and management have made individuals withdraw from participating in religious activities because they are not comfortable with staying in a church which they are convinced that are poorly managed. This is an indication of individual secularization. One of the respondent remarked:

I stopped attending church services way back because the leaders that we have cannot even express some of the words clearly. I feel these religious leaders are not well trained because it seems both reverends

and elders of this particular church are lost. May be in future but now I do not participate in any religious activities or attend church services.

6.2.2.5 Poor religious leadership and management leads to

organizational secularization

Since many people are no longer interested in participating in religious activities, various efforts to bring them back have been made. One method has been simplifying religious institutions to make them more attractive to society, leading to organizational secularization.

One of the interviewees said:

The church is no longer encouraging quality of membership, but is interested in money. Imagine there are so many people who are drunkards in that church, and yet nobody says anything. Secondly, trousers and mini-skirts are acceptable now; the church is changing for sure to adapt the current church. People are no longer interested in quality of membership but just quantity.

Dobbelaere (2002:25) has defined organizational secularization as “change that occurs in the posture of religious organizations –churches, denominations, sects, and new religious movements – in matters of beliefs, morals, and rituals.” These changes are intended to attract people to the church and to keep those who already attend. If people are no longer interested in participating in religious activities due to poor management, religious institutions begin to modify their institutions to retain people.

Organizational secularization will result in religious institutions changing in order to keep people in their church. This becomes necessary because people are becoming increasingly disinterested in attending church. The change in the religious organizations dilutes the original policies of the particular institution, the Gospel is

compromised and ultimately secularization results. For this reason, a shortage of well educated religious leaders is a contributing factor to the process of secularization in Malawi.

6.2.3 African Traditional Religion (ATR)

Another factor that has contributed to the process of secularization in Malawi is the belief in African Traditional Religion (ATR). The issue of how to deal with African Traditional Religion in Malawi is a pressing one. There are many people who believe that they can get whatever they want through traditional beliefs. Such people have more faith in African beliefs than in God. I am aware that ATR often includes faith in God. Despite this, the situation parallels that with Islam, in that the existence of several religions causes doubt to develop about the legitimacy of any religion. In the British situation as discussed previously, secularization was a loss of religion. The unique feature of African Tradition Religion is that people believe in God but relate to Him through their ancestors. Because people are able to get what they want when they pray to God through their ancestors, the church loses influence. This in turn makes people doubt the validity of all religions. Eventually they are likely to turn away from religion resulting in individual secularization, because religion has lost influence, which is societal secularization.

The African Traditional Religion is a false religion that does not recognise the Trinity. In the ATR my understanding is that God is approached through one's ancestors. Christianity teaches that African Tradition Religion is false religions and this is not secularization in and of itself but will lead to secularization because if people follow a false religion, it confuses their beliefs about the right religion. This may eventually

lead to them dropping both religions causing individual secularization as mentioned above.

As already previously, Norris & Inglehart (2004:58) state that religion is stronger where there is poverty or oppression. God is seen as an answer to their problems when people are in extreme need, but where people have many alternatives and are satisfied by African beliefs, they will no longer depend on the true God. The ATR becomes a factor of secularization in two ways; it promotes religious pluralism and it diminishes the value of a true God, making the true God of less importance. The true God is perceived as having less of an influence where ATR exists. Ultimately though, both religions are ignored, resulting in religion having no authority in such a society. This again is societal secularization.

6.2.3.1 Belief in traditional religion leads to societal secularization

This study notes that there are people who are settled in the use of traditional religion as a solution to their problems. If one person believes that Christianity is a religion that provides for the needs of people, while another believes that Christianity cannot resolve personal problems, the original person may become confused as to which view is correct. This has led to many people ignoring both stances. Under such circumstances, religion loses its authority in the society. A number of those interviewed sounded confused. This is shown below:

Respondent 1

I find it very difficult to believe in either of religions because Christianity is the religion of the white people, that is what other people say, while these traditional beliefs are ours, but traditional beliefs are associated with demonic and primitive life so what is true between the two. For me I feel none of them is saying the truth but people are just after money.

Such comments point to the fact that some people become confused when faced with both Christians and those who believe in ATR. This confusion leads people to ignore both religions. The result is that religion either declines in its influence in society or loses its authority altogether. Below the response of another respondent is shown. They felt that people promote their religion to make a living rather than it being something they genuinely believe in.

Respondent 2

Within the Christian churches people are different, others say believe in my church as Roman Catholic because it is the best, others are Presbyterians with different doctrines from those in the Roman Catholic, if indeed these religions were true, why all such differences? Let us consider African Tradition Religion there are similarities in each one of them even the way one would get medication, they are different traditional healers with different messages. These religions are just after money. The best is just to ignore all of them.

In the process of defining societal secularization in chapter two of this thesis, a simplified definition from Dobbelaere (2002) was provided. It described it as “the process that ‘religion has lost its presidency over other institutions’”. Because religion has lost its presidency even the traditional beliefs in this case could challenge it; this is societal secularization. People do not feel the importance of religion in their lives and therefore begin to question the place of involving religion in life at all.

Berger (1967:135-7) agrees with the idea of secularization as the loss of religion’s overarching claims. Looking at the influence of religion from the past to modern times he noted that religion has lost its societal significance, and cannot be imposed on citizens. Both responses above (Respondent 1 and Respondent 2) indicated that the presence of African Traditional Religion has caused people to reject both

Christianity and ATR because they find it difficult to accept one religion when two religions are in conflict.

6.2.3.2 Diverting from belief of God as a healer to Bimbi, a traditional healer

Christianity believes that God is a healer, while among the Chewa, there is a traditional belief in Bimbi as a healer. During an interview with some Chewa elders, it was said that all solutions are found in the Bimbi. They believe that although he is the healer, they call him a dreamer because of his potential and ability to know hidden things:

Bimbi is a person who dreams about rain and drought. He is not a god. He is just a dreamer. When he dreams about what God says to him, he tells the people about it and people do what he tells them to do in order to avoid drought and save their lives. Bimbi is very powerful and respected like God because people are able to get what they want through him.

Another respondent said:

Bimbi is the one who tells about the hidden events. Bimbi is a person who, when you ask him about hidden events, does not consult an oracle or use any medicine but tells you what he sees in visions. This is how he predicts the future. Bimbi is very respected and powerful among the Chewa.

Amanze (2002:16) further described Bimbi as a public figure; a kind of a mouthpiece of the spirits in this world as they interact with the living in their social setting. It must be borne in mind that not everyone who babbles is a Bimbi. The Bimbi's primary duty is to speak to the people about rain, to help people pray for it, and by means of prayer to eliminate negative personal and impersonal spiritual forces such as witchcraft, lightning and the anger of the ancestral spirits. They help deal with any spiritual force that might endanger the life or livelihood of the people.

One respondent said that another understanding of Mtsamila, an alternative expression for Bimbi, is that he is the one who controls the bags of rain. In this line of thinking, the Mtsamila is viewed as being in control of rain which is bestowed upon the people from God through the ancestral spirits. Since Mtsamila is the controlling agent of the rain on behalf of the ancestral spirits and without whom there would be an uneven and chaotic supply of rain, Bimbi can according to Chewa tradition be seen as synonymous to Jesus because through the Mtsamila or Bimbi, we have good rains. The Bimbi will consider the request of the Chewa people and take their issues to God who normally acts immediately.”

This belief among the Chewa dilutes the importance of Jesus, and equating Jesus with the Bimbi is an insult to Christianity. It is important to note that though Bimbi is a traditional figure among the Chewa, not all the Chewas have the same perception of him. In an interview with another man from Dedza district called Mayani, who is also a Chewa, he described Bimbi as a respected traditional figure who cannot be equated with God. He stated:

God is God and even if Bimbi can have all those powers, I do believe that they come from God; therefore one can not equate Bimbi with God. Of course I respect my culture but I also believe in God though I do not go to church. I am also aware that some Chewas believe that Bimbi is Supreme and can do anything that God can do but also he is supernatural.

In the Chewa tradition Bimbis are believed to be the source of healing. When a person develops an unexplained sickness, one would go to consult the Bimbis for healing. By profession, they are traditional healers and are consulted by a variety of people regarding various diseases.

According to Amanze (2002:29), the Bimbis do not use divinatory objects such as beads, horns, mirrors and written pieces of paper in Arabic as is a common practice in the area. Rather the Bimbis use their prophetic powers to determine the cause of a particular disease. Having determined the cause of a disease, using spiritual inspiration from the ancestors, the Bimbis decide what type of medicine the patient should take in order to effect healing.

One Chewa interviewee remarked:

One day, my son, about 26 years old was bitten by a poisonous snake. The only solution was to cut the leg, but in consultation with the Bimbi, African medicines were provided and immediately it was applied on the place where the snake had bitten, immediately the swollen leg became normal. There was no pain anymore and all went on very well, hence I can confirm that the Bimbis are the source of healing.

6.2.3.4 The impact of the Bimbishop leads to individual secularization

The fact that the Bimbis are believed to perform a very unique role in society, namely rainmaking, prophecy, and healing makes them seem like extraordinary human beings. There is also supposed to be an element of divinity within them. Their prophecies are often fulfilled. Christianity in Africa has been associated with poverty and oppression. What this means is that many people join the church because of being in need of something and their only hope is God through the church. But when the attention is divided between God as the Supreme Being and Bimbi, the Almighty God's is equated to human figures. This mentality leads to the process of secularization. My understanding of theology is that Jesus is the only expression of the incarnation, "God became human and entered human history (Erickson 2006:693-4)." For a human being to be equated with God is blasphemy. Unfortunately, since people have seen positive results in Bimbishop as cited above, a number of those interviewees noted that the organised religion such as Christianity is

no longer of value. Since such people find no value in Christianity, they abandon the church and stop participating in religious activities. This leads to individual secularization.

My choice to African beliefs was strengthened when I prayed hard to God to get a job but failed for over three years until my friend invited me to meet the Bimbi who actually helped. The Bimbi told me that within a week I will be offered a job and that happened. So I belt my strength in African traditional beliefs more than in the church. Of course, am more confused now because I have been told that it was coincidence of me to get a job, because still it is God who allowed that to happen. But what I know for sure is that I do not participate in any church activities, and I do not attend any church services.

6.2.3.5 Traditional practices that lead to societal and individual secularization

There are some traditional practices that are in conflict with Christianity. These include such practices as levirate marriages, *mbiliya*, *nthena*, blanket or pillow and hyena just to mention a few. These practices have made a number of people ignore their Christian beliefs. When the church asks such people to choose their Christian practices over their cultural ones, many of these people chose to abandon the church. The abandonment of the church activities is individual secularization.

Secondly such anti-Christian practices dilute the vitality of religion ultimately resulting in religion losing its authority in the society. The sub-section below will highlight such practices in Malawi that cause societal and individual secularization.

6.2.3.5.1 Chokolo (levirate marriages)

The practice of *chokolo* (*levirate marriage*) is practised in some places in Malawi, especially among the Sena tribe in the Nsanje and Chikwawa districts. When a

husband dies, the elders arrange for a brother of the deceased person to marry the widow. In interviews, elders gave two major reasons for such levirate marriages. Firstly, they still wanted the widow to be taken care of by the family members and to ensure that the children were looked after properly. In their view, when a person remarries after the death of one of their parents, it is often the children who suffer. Secondly, it is reasoned that it helps to maintain permanent relationships between the widow and the relatives of the deceased person.

In an interview one woman in Nsanje relates how she was chased from the house for refusing to have sex with the brothers of her late husband. This lady knew that she was HIV positive and did not want to infect his in-laws. Since it concerned a tradition, things did not go well and the relatives of her late husband chased her out of her husband's house for refusing. She said:

My husband died in 2001 and we were both tested HIV positive. According to tradition they brought my in-law (My late husband's young brother) to marry me. I refused because I knew my HIV status, and did not want to harm this innocent person. The relatives of my late husband were very angry and chased me out of my husband's house. I left and looked for an employment that keeps me comfortable to date.

Another respondent said:

My culture allows me to practise levirate marriage and since the church does not want me to do that I chose to ignore the church and am no longer a member of any church so that I can respect my culture without any problem. Most of the practices that Christians believe are either of Jewish or Western culture, so why should I abandon what belongs to me and respect what others believe?

Like Islam, African Traditional Religion has its culture which is in conflict with Christianity. Such anti-Christian traditions cause people to abandon the church. One would note that if people want a practice forbidden by the church, then they reject

the church. The fact that people abandon the church to freely maintain what they believe as their culture is secularization. This is because the Christian religion has failed to influence them to stop practicing a cultural practice which is against the Christian faith. As secularization is understood in this thesis, it is the decline of the authority of religion within the society. If the society can be moved by traditional beliefs to reject Christianity, it means Christianity is no longer in control. This is part of societal secularization.

6.2.3.5.2 Sazgi/mbiliya/nthena

This practice is common among the Ngoni and Sena people. When a husband takes good care of his wife, elders make arrangements to give the younger sister to him to assist him both sexually and socially. This practice is meant to help keep the marriage firm, and reduces the possibility of the husband going outside the family for sex when his wife is menstruating, has just given birth or has health problems and so cannot make love with her husband. During the interview with Mr. Ngwira who is a senior citizen in Chipwantha village, he reported that the practice is carried out in secret, not out of a fear of the law but because the tradition is viewed as a practice for a particular society and public scrutiny is not welcomed. He remarked:

Mbiliya is a common practice within our tribe and many people enjoy it. However it is done secretly because it is a practice for us only. Whether it is against Christianity or not but the practice will continue. Which is better to respect our culture openly or to be mischievous and dishonest? I believe it is better to practise and respect one's culture. I was called by church elders at my old church and I did not want to waste my time and their time, since then I have never gone to church.

This respondent abandoned the church to keep his culture. So African Traditional Religion contributes to the rising of secularization as it marginalizes the authority of Christianity and also provides an option for people to choose between Christianity

and traditional beliefs. This study notes that western literature is written in the context of one dominant religion while in Malawi there are several religions. Alternatives to Christianity include African Traditional Religion and Islam. The context of religious pluralism in Malawi contributes to secularization because people decide to ignore all the religions since religious people do not agree on a number of their doctrines. The competition between various religious faiths has often led to the rejection of Christianity, contributing to secularization.

6.2.3.5.3 Hyena (fisi) as a cause of individual secularization

This practice is done when husbands are unable to perform in bed or make their wives pregnant. Another man is hired to make the wife pregnant. Sometimes the practice is done to single women who have just given birth to a baby, to make the baby stronger or ready to be seen by the public. This practice is clearly not acceptable in the church. This study noted that the hired men reject the church to avoid being embarrassed. As a result, individual secularization is experienced.

6.2.3.5.4 Blanket or pillow cultural practices lead to organizational secularization

In this practice a visiting chief, church minister or other dignitary is given a woman or girl to entertain him at night. This practice is done under conditions of extreme secrecy but the senior elders of the church are aware it is happening. This is done to keep the discipline of the church in some areas while in others it is to please the church minister, and to make him like that particular church more than any other church. Since it involves the church, which is supposed to be a moral guiding institution in the society, it causes organizational secularization. In organizational secularization the churches as an organization changes and adopt the practices of

secular institutions. It should be noted that this practice is done in secret and only by a few churches which are mostly located in villages.

6.2.4 Donor and western influence

Due to modern technology Malawi has been influenced by and exposed to Western culture. Even though the coming of missionaries to Africa was good news since they brought Christianity, civilization and commerce, we must realize that what they brought was wrapped in Western culture (Gama 2007). Whatever was not done in conformity with the Western culture was regarded as sin. The music of the church was western, as was the liturgy.

The decline of Christianity in the West has affected Malawi as well. The secularization of the West was discussed in chapter three. The discussion mention observations by Gill (2003:2,3) that noted that secularization started to affect British society in the nineteenth century and then affected the institutional churches themselves in the twentieth century. People observe in current media what is happening in a society that is secularized like Britain and are attracted by certain practices like homosexuality. Once such practices are accepted, they influence the society in Malawi and lead to secularization.

Malawi depends on donors from the West, and the donations normally come with conditions attached, some of which are against Christian principles. For example some donors demand that a project must be finished within a specified period meaning that employees are forced to work on Sundays and to prioritize work over participation in religious activities. Other donors declare that they can only assist Malawi if homosexuality and abortion are legalized. I will highlight more about homosexuality and abortion in separate subheadings below.

6.2.4.1 Donor forced policies

The effects of Western secularization are being strongly experienced in Malawi. This study noted in chapter three that certain practices like abortion and homosexuality were legalized in 1967 in Britain after Britain experienced a period of secularization (Brown 2002:116). Such practices are being imposed on Malawi by the West as donor forced policies. These are practices that Malawi as a country would not even think of. The donors have been imposing such anti-religious practices as conditions for Malawi to get aid. I am aware that such anti-religious policies are not secularization on their own but they are indicators that religious influence has declined, and that is societal secularization. In the subsection below I will discuss these forced policies on Malawi.

6.2.4.1.1 Homosexuality in Malawi leads to organizational secularization

A new theology preached by the Moderator of the CCAP General Assembly, urges all Christians to adopt a theology of accommodation. He suggests that those who practice homosexuality should not be pushed out of the church but rather be accommodated since they were equally created in the image of God. One of the interviewees noted:

I feel the church is simplifying its vitality because of these homosexuals, why should the church accommodate people who are committing sin by practicing what is prohibited in the Bible? Homosexuality is sin and must never be condoned by the church. Since my conscious is not clear I am no longer interested in the church today, it is no longer salty, the church is changing because it wants to please people.

Homosexuality is being imposed in Malawi by the West. A case study of two men who got engaged openly, will be used as an example of donor forced policy in Malawi. The case study approach on this matter is important because it enables a

detailed investigation of the matter and analyzes it critically. In this case, it demonstrates how Western influence has affected the process of secularization in Malawi.

The main advantage of the use of a case study is that it allows the intensive examination of an organization or matter. It also allows the intensive examination of the interaction of individuals within and outside the organization. A case study not only enables a more interpretative analysis of organizational phenomena (Diesing 1972), but also provides concrete observations, potentially unhampered by theories or pre-determined ideas. One can see the picture of the influence of the West on Malawian secularization from a critical analysis of the visit of Ban Ki-Moon to Malawi. He met the President of Malawi and the President immediately after meeting with him, pardoned the arrested homosexuals; Tiwonge Chimbalanga and Steven Monjeza.

The case study: Steven Monjeza and Tiwonge Chimbalanga

On 29th May, 2010 for the first time, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-Moon came to Malawi and met the President of the Republic of Malawi, His Excellency Ngwazi Prof. Bingu wa Mutharika. He came to Malawi in response to a case involving two men. In December, 2009, Steven Monjeza and Tiwonge Chimbalanga held a traditional 'engagement' party. This was the very first homosexual couple to openly announce their engagement. On 18th May, 2010 they were found guilty of breaking the law by the High Court of Malawi, and were sentenced to 14 years imprisonment. On 29th May after meeting the Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-Moon, the President pardoned the two young men unconditionally and made the following statement:

These boys committed a crime against our culture, our religion, and our laws; however, as the head of state I hereby pardon them and therefore ask for their immediate release with no conditions. I have done this on humanitarian grounds but this does not mean that I support this.

The practice of homosexuality is viewed as very strange in Malawi. When one examines the circumstances surrounding their pardon, it is clear that the President was pressurized by the West. The researcher had the opportunity to interview some of the people who supported the idea of pardoning the two young men. Here is one person's remarks:

Our laws are British, and in Britain homosexuality has been legalized, what is so special with Malawi that they are treating us like criminals. We will fight for our rights until the government bows down. We will write to the United Nations, and the Scottish Parliament to withhold aid to Malawi because of not respecting the rights of the minority.

In *Afro News* of 12th August, 2009, there was an article which read:

In Africa, homosexuality is illegal for gay men in 29 countries and for lesbian women in 20 countries. The legal status in many ways mirrors the widespread homophobia on the continent, documented so clearly by statements made by, for example President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, President Nujoma of Namibia and President Museveni of Uganda. [...] South Africa stands apart when it comes to the legal status of gays and lesbians in Africa, and stands comparison with Western European countries. Not only is homosexuality legal and visible, but there exists a national legislation which bans discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Gay and lesbian office bearers are not unheard of. Annual gay pride parades are arranged, with substantial participation.

Homosexuality in Malawi is illegal. On 12 February, 2005, *Nyasatimes* newspaper reported that the African Anglican bishops blocked the appointment of a "pro-gay" bishop in Malawi. Liberal British vicar, Rev. Nicholas Henderson, was rejected for his support of gay rights. In a statement made by the Anglican Church of Central Africa, it was reported that the bishop-elect of the Lake Malawi diocese was rejected

because of his association with the theologically liberal Modern Church People's Union.

On 23 January, 2007, a local NGO in Malawi, the Centre for the Development of People (Cedep), reported that it was unhappy with some sections in the Penal Code of Malawi which criminalize homosexuality and wanted them repealed:

Malawi cannot stick to old laws that were not respecting the rights of the minority, in Britain homosexuality is allowed and we want Malawi to legalize homosexuality too. We have a lot of things in common and most of the laws we are using are British, why are we not accepting homosexuality? We will report to Cameron to support us and for sure Malawi will suffer for not respecting rights of the minority.

But the Attorney General, Jane Ansah, said in an interview that what Malawi has is a law that could be changed by Malawians themselves and that they must not be influenced by the West. She stated that not all that is done in Britain is good for Malawi; and that "we have to respect our own culture as Malawians." This statement from the Attorney General confirms that there was a lot of pressure coming from outside the country. In an interview with the Attorney General, she responded:

Reverend, we need a lot of prayers from every citizen who wishes well this country, where are we going as a nation? I am also a pastor and my conscience cannot be pushed because of money. We are getting a lot of pressure from our donors in the name of "the rights of the minority" They say we must respect the rights of the minority as well, in this case the homosexuals. God will be angry with us as a nation.

One of the donors that has been pushing the issue of homosexuality in Malawi is Britain. Chapter three of this thesis has discussed the process of secularization in Britain because of the strong relationship between Britain and Malawi. Britain is also Malawi's major donor. The Prime Minister of the United Kingdom made a threatening

statement in Perth, Australia, during a Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting, in October, 2011:

Receiving UK aid should adhere to proper human rights. We are saying that this is one of the things that determine our aid policy, and there have been particularly bad examples where we have taken action.” [...] British aid should have more strings attached.

In a further interview with the Department For International Development (DFID) Spokesperson, to support the idea that Western countries are influencing Malawi through aid, it was reported that, “Malawi recently had £19m of budget support suspended following various infractions including poor progress on human rights and media freedoms and concern over the government’s approach to gay rights”.

On 22nd April, 2007, the *Nyasatimes* newspaper had an article that reported the existence of homosexuality in Malawi prisons:

The words ‘homosexuals’ and ‘lesbians’ were almost a taboo in Malawi and most parts of Africa. But in today’s fast modernised world, they are becoming common in our society. Although it is not easy to come across a person in the country who can publicly declare that he or she is gay or lesbian, their existence cannot be ruled out. One place where this act is reported to be rampant is in prisons. But it remains mere speculation as none of the inmates or Malawi Prisons Service officials has confirmed it. Balaka North Member of Parliament, Lucius Banda, who spent more than two months at Zomba Maximum Prison, confirms that homosexuality, popularly known as “chikayidi” within the prisons, is rampant.

On 20 August, 2008, Rachel Charman reported that gays and lesbians in Malawi have formed the Malawi Gay Rights Movement (Magrim). This was very shocking news to many Malawians who never expected that to happen, as homosexuality is a criminal offence that is punishable with imprisonment and hard labour in Malawi.

McLeod interim Magrim chairperson, said:

What people must know is that Malawi has always had an active gay population, and these people have been meeting for a long time. Only that now we have decided to come forth because we want our views heard; we are Malawian citizens who should be protected like anyone else. Doesn't our Republican Constitution say everyone is equal, and that nobody is more equal than others? [...] In fact, Malawi has an active population of 89,000 homosexuals, and this we say because we meet, and have sexual intercourse. We have a place in Blantyre City Centre where we have been meeting for the past six years.

Indeed, the West has a very big influence on Malawi and this has resulted in some things which are in conflict with Christian morals being accepted. When religion is compromised because of worldly things it is weakened. At times the church is forced to change its laws to fit in worldly demands, leading to organizational secularization. This move was clearly embodied in a sermon of the CCAP General Assembly Moderator for 2011. He preached a sermon during the 2011 biennial CCAP Blantyre Synod conference where he stated that the true church of God must be accommodating and accepting of those who are different from us. He highlighted differences in beliefs about marriage, and whether or not they advocated homosexuality or monogamy. He said that despite differences they must be accepted by the church. A number of media sites commented that the Church in Malawi is on the path to promoting homosexuality. In an interview with a church elder, he made the following remarks:

Our church has been westernized, polluted and secularized, how can the whole Moderator preach a sermon which is promoting homosexuality? This is Malawi and not Britain. I am disappointed for sure. Is it all about money? This is being influence by the West because in Malawi, I would expect that our reverends would understand that it is not acceptable to think about homosexuality. I better quit the church which is promoting anything against my conscience.

The remarks of the above church elder are a reflection that some practices that have been promoted by the West are making people abandon religion. A number of

interviewees noted that since religion doesn't have the power to influence the society towards Christian morals, then religion has failed and there is no need to be part of it. This is a feature of secularization.

This study notes that the West continues to influence Malawi on a number of policies that are not religious. On 11th December, 2012, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon made remarks about Malawi during a special event on "Leadership in the fight against Homophobia, in New York":

[...] We are pleased to have Gift Trapence, a prominent human rights defender from Malawi. When I visited Malawi in 2010, two young men had just been sentenced to 14 years of hard labour for the so called "crime" of celebrating their wedding. At my request, the then President Bingu wa Mutharika pardoned them on the very day when I asked him, but he defended criminal sanctions.

The above statement by Ban Ki-moon confirms the influence of the West on Malawi.

Ban Ki-moon further stated:

Now under the new leadership of Her Excellency President Joyce Banda, Malawi is weighing possible changes in the law. I hope Malawians take the opportunity to turn a page. [...] Let me say this loud and clear: lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people are entitled to the same rights as everyone else. They too are born free and equal. I stand shoulder-to-shoulder with them in their struggle for human rights.

In response to such remarks, a poor country like Malawi is forced to follow in the footsteps of the West. As of September 2013, Malawi has suspended its homosexuality laws until its Parliament meets to deliberate the bill on homosexuality.

6.2.4.1.2 Abortion in Malawi

Though Malawi is not officially declared a Christian country it is believed that Christian moral standards used to have the greatest influence of all religions in Malawi. This is because Christianity has the highest numbers as mentioned in

chapter one of this study. Of late, however, Christianity no longer has the vitality it once did. This is evident in the spread of anti-Christian practices. One such practice is abortion. For a long time the issue was almost unheard of in Malawi. But recently a number of people have been petitioning the government of Malawi to legalize abortion. The move to support abortion in Malawi is being pushed by the West again as the rights of the minority.

One respondent said:

Why is Malawi living in the past? People have different reasons of abortion. Others have to abort when the life of the mother is in danger. But again abortion cannot be a sin because the baby that is aborted has never lived before and why should it be an issue. Abortion is done even by Christians why should it be an issue? It must be legalized. I have been in Britain for over ten years and this is not an issue, it is acceptable why not here?

Another respondent said:

Civilized countries like Britain having legalized abortion and I am sure for Malawi to legalize it cannot be a problem. Why should it be an issue here, a poor country like ours? I have no problem to see abortion being officially legalized. Actually it will save life of many people. Because it is illegal, many girls do abortion secretly and use means that are deadly, but if it will be legalized such girls can be assisted properly and save their lives.

Abortion in the United Kingdom has been acceptable since the Abortion Act was passed in 1967. At the time, this legislation was one of the most liberal abortion laws in Europe. Malawians are learning from the West, especially now that so many of them live in the United Kingdom. These westernized Malawians exert their influence in various matters including that of abortion. Such pressure is felt by the Malawi Government. Currently Malawi Law prohibits abortion. Pilirani Semu-Banda (2009) reported:

An influential women rights organization in Malawi, Women in Law in Southern Africa-Malawi (WILSA-Malawi), is suing the government of Malawi for preventing women from accessing safe abortion. Malawi Law prohibits abortion. Section 149 of the country's penal code reads that, any person who administers abortion shall be liable to imprisonment for 14 years, while section 150 indicates that any woman who solicits abortion is liable to seven years imprisonment.

But WILSA-Malawi's executive director, Seodi White, calls the existing laws nonsensical because they infringe on women's rights. She says that they enforce women to seek back-street abortions from traditional healers and illegal clinics thereby putting their lives in danger. "These laws do not make sense at all. They are contributing towards the death of so many women. We need to get rid of them as soon as possible". Urged White.

The researcher personally interviewed Seodi White and she made the following remarks:

Malawi got independent way back in 1966 and to date we are still practising primitive life. Whether we accept it or not but so many people know that many women are practising abortion, why can't we legalise it and let people be free to make a personal choice, to do it or not? Our colleagues in the West legalized abortion by the 19th century and here we are up to the 21st century. Here we are losing so many innocent women, it's very unfair, and the Malawi Government must act now.¹⁷

In interviews, a number of people made references to Britain, and this indicates that the West has a very great influence on Malawi. Unfortunately the influences militate against Christianity. It is traditionally accepted that in Christianity homosexuality and abortion are prohibited, though those people who campaign for the rights of the minorities often deny that Christianity as a religion is against the practices of homosexuality and abortion.

Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world. The government of Malawi receives over 60% of its development funds from donors. The latest United Nations Development Programme for Human Development Report ranked Malawi 162nd

¹⁷ Interview with Seodi White, the Executive Director of WILSA-Malawi on 5th July, 2009 in Blantyre, Malawi

among 173 countries measured on its Human Development Index. Pelser, Burton & Gondwe (2004:1) wrote:

Internationally, Malawi markets itself as the “warm heart of Africa” A land of lakes and stars known for its warm, polite and hospitable people, though it is one of the world’s most impoverished countries as one can see by the indicators. [...] 45.9% of Malawi’s population is less than 15 years old; Life expectancy at birth is short- 38 years; Malawi’s per capita GDP, calculated for purchasing power parity, is US\$570; A third of Malawi’s population (33%), is estimated to be undernourished; Between 1990 and 2001, 41.7% of Malawi’s population lived on less than US\$1 per day and 76.1% lived on less than US\$2 per day.¹⁸ ”

In addition, Malawians face severe health problems related to malaria¹⁹ and HIV/AIDS²⁰. The severity of its poverty and under-development has important implications for the safety and security of Malawi’s people.

The Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper which was drafted in 2003 states:

[...] insecurity makes it too risky for the poor to accumulate assets or wealth, particularly in a rural setting, as any assets or wealth are likely to be stolen. This undermines the ability of the poor to generate their own incomes and reduce their own poverty...Poverty and crime can also be part of the vicious cycle crime reinforces and increases poverty and poverty causes crime. For the ultra-poor, the only means of survival may be stealing or assets from other poor people. It is therefore important that this cycle be broken by poverty reduction efforts [...] (Pelsers et al 2004:2).

The donors have assisted and influenced Malawi in different ways. The DFID report of 2006 reveals a number of initiatives on the part of the British Government with respect to Malawi:

When 16-year old Georgina was threatened with prison after a dispute with her husband it looked like nothing could save her. But then a DFID

¹⁸ Human Development Reports (2003) United Nations Development Programme

¹⁹ The UNDP Human Development Report, reports that a staggering 25,948 cases of malaria were recorded per 100, 000 people in 2000.

²⁰ Malawi’s National AIDS Commission (NAC) estimates a national adult HIV prevalence rate of 15%: 25% in urban areas and 13% in the rural areas. The NAC estimates the total number of HIV-infected people in Malawi, including children, is approximately 845,000.

–funded initiative stepped in- settling the dispute and helping her to make a fresh start. [...] M'buka Primary School was bursting at the seams after school fees were abolished. Many more kids were getting an education, but facilities were badly over-stretched. Shockingly, the school had no toilets for its 3,000 pupils. A DFID/UNICEF project came up with a practical solution. [...] Too many girls in Malawi drop out of school because they fall pregnant or get married. A DFID-supported programme helped to do something about this, getting young mothers back into school to receive a quality education.

Programmes that are donor-funded are done according to parameters set by the donors. The coordinator of the HIV/AIDS DFID programme observed in an interview that they were encouraged to run the programmes seven days a week:

It is true the donors do assist us but the big challenge is that we are told even to work on Sunday. For them they do not mind as to whether you are a Christian or not. Now this project is affecting my Christian life, because I cannot find time to attend church services. Actually I used to ask them to allow me, not to work on Sunday, as we were just launching the programme, but almost all the requests were turned down, so I just gave up.

This meant that there was no Sabbath day for the people because the donors demanded that the programme be finished within a specific period of time. In that project, the Government of Malawi and its development partners were committed to spending about US\$600 million until 2009 to fight HIV and AIDS. The HIV/AIDS Pool Funding Partners provided US\$72 million direct to the National AIDS Commission, including US\$7.2 million from the DFID. The Global Fund, to which DFID also contributed, has agreed to commit US\$ 262 million until 2009. Because of these combined efforts, Malawi has been able to achieve the following results:

- An HIV infection level that has stabilised at 12%
- A dramatic increase in the number of people tested for HIV. The figure rose from about 150, 000 in 2002 to over 3 million in 2008

- An increase in the number of people who have started taking anti-retroviral treatments. The figure rose from 4,000 in 2003 to 184,000 in September 2008.

6.3 Conclusion

This chapter has noted that secularization has crept into Malawi through a number of factors; the most notable of which are Islam, African Traditional Religion, Lack of well educated religious leaders and donor and Western influences. The chapter has ably shown how the three types of secularization are promoted by the four factors mentioned above. Islam and African Traditional Religion have contributed to religious pluralism in Malawi. Religious pluralism has contributed to the rise of organizational, individual and societal secularization. People interviewed noted that when conflicts arose between religions, their solution was often to abandon all religions. This made people not participate in religious activities and ultimately led to individual secularization. On the other hand since people had abandoned religion, it lost its authority in the society, leading to society secularization, and in an effort by the church to bring back more people to the church, the churches as institutions are modifying themselves to meet the needs of the society leading to organizational secularization.

The shortage of well trained and educated religious leaders promoted two types of secularization; individual secularization and organizational secularization. People tended to be put off by poor management of congregations and inadequate sermons from poorly educated ministers. This often resulted in a decline in the attendance of congregants. In an attempt by religious institutions to attract more people to the church they often adjusted their policies to make them more suitable to people. This led to organizational secularization.

The study noted that the influence of donors and their culture brought to Malawi two critical changes; the suspension of homosexuality and contention around abortion laws. People have noted that since such practices exist among Malawians, then religious influence has declined. This can be viewed as societal secularization. They feel that the decline in influence has led to individual secularization because people have been forced to work during Sundays and ignore church attendance but at the same time have no confidence in religion.

The next chapter will compare the manifestations of secularization in Britain and Malawi and assess the applicability of factors of secularization in Britain to Malawi. The study has noted that both Britain and Malawi are experiencing secularization, and notes that there are strong links between Britain and Malawi. One of the questions raised in the introductory chapter of this study was; are British factors of secularization applicable to Malawi? It is therefore important for the next chapter to respond to that question.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE SIMILARITIES BETWEEN BRITISH AND MALAWIAN SECULARIZATION AND CROSS- APPLICABILITY OF CAUSAL FACTORS

7.1 Introduction

Chapter one noted the strong relationship between Malawi and Britain since 1859 when Dr. David Livingstone came to Malawi. The chapter also highlighted that a number of systems in Malawi are British due to strong links between the two countries. Chapter three is the second theoretical frame work of this thesis, as it discusses the manifestations and factors of secularization in Britain. Because of such strong links between the two countries, this thesis has noted that secularization in Britain bear some similarities to that in Malawi. This chapter will further discuss the applicability of factors of secularization in Britain to Malawi.

The comparison between the two countries, Britain and Malawi is important for three reasons. First, there is a very strong link between Britain and Malawi, as Malawi was colonized by Britain in 1891 (Sindima 1998:3), and also receives support from Britain. Secondly, secondary sources contributed the concept of secularization in Britain, as discussed in chapter three of the thesis. This has been used as the foundation of the field research work that has been presented from chapter five of this study. Thirdly, with the onset of globalization, there has been a lot of information flow between Britain and Malawi, based on the existing links between the two countries as discussed in chapter one of this thesis.

7. 2 Similarities between manifestations of secularization in Britain and Malawi

Chapter three of this thesis reported Gill (2003:2) as observing that the post war period had seen the change in the traditional vitality of religion in Britain, as a general decline church membership in proportion to the population was experienced. Brown (2002:187) noted too that the statistics of British secularization show, by all indicators, that the greatest gradient of decline of formal religiosity occurred after 1958. These changes that happened in Britain can be observed to be happening in Malawi. The post-independence experience of a multiparty system of government in Malawi as discussed in chapter five of this thesis broke the traditional way of doing things because of excitement after referendum in 1993, in which Malawians voted for a multiparty system of government.

The excitement of freedom from war supported the spread of secularization in Britain because by the 1960s, the institutional structures of cultural traditionalism started to crumble in Britain as noted in chapter three of this thesis. Brown (2002:172) attested that during the late 1940s and first half of the 1950s, organised Christianity experienced the greatest per annum growth in church membership and Sunday school enrolment, and this happened because traditional values of family, home and piety were suddenly back on the agenda between the end of war and 1960.. And later, after the Second World War, the situation changed again.

Such experiences were felt in Malawi too where, during the era of the one party system of government, people's hope was in the church and churches were well attended; but after the experience of multiparty politics in the 1990s the situation of the churches changed, the attitude towards the church changed, people felt free to

break away from the traditional way of doing things including the church, dressing and behaviour in the society.

As chapter three of this thesis records the decline of church attendance in Britain, from 1900 to 2000 as evidences of secularization, chapter five of this thesis has also recorded the decline in church attendance in Malawi from 1990 to 2010. The similarity between Britain and Malawi in terms of secularization is that both are experiencing individual secularization that has been manifested by a decline in the numbers of people participating in religious activities.

British secularization was not only experienced in churches, but was felt in different institutions and other secular organizations. Chapter five of this thesis has indicated that the Malawi secularization was also experienced in other institutions outside the church. This sub-section will discuss these other institutions outside the church that experienced secularization in the comparison of the two countries, Britain and Malawi.

7.2.1 The impact of secularization in Education in Britain and Malawi

Schools and hospitals were brought to Malawi by the missionaries. This enabled religion to have very strong influence on schools. In an interview with Bishop Dr. James Tengatenga of the Anglican Church, he said:

The foundations of Malawi are Christian because what is called Malawi today was founded by missionaries who came to Malawi and invited the British to form a government in 1891 hence Malawi became a British Protectorate in 1891. When they came to Malawi, the missionaries established hospitals and schools. The missionaries believed that the converts to Christianity must know how to read and write and also should be treated when they fall ill hence the establishment of schools and hospitals.

This study notes that the education system in Malawi is British previously mentioned in this thesis, and in an interview with Billy Mac Aneney, a British national who came to Malawi, he mentioned that there have been forces in Britain that have forced the separation of religion from schools and one notable one was Dr. Paul Kelly who said, "I feel that children have a right to not have a particular point of view. They should not be promoted to a political party, nor should they to a religion. The daily act of worship is, I think, inappropriate at school". The National Secular Society also challenged the government to separate religion and schools in Britain.

Such forces in Malawi were mentioned by the then head of state who actually said that there should be no marriage between schools and religion. However the study notes that there are a number of Malawians who studied in the United Kingdom, many of whom were steeped in British culture, and when they came back to Malawi they practiced what they had experienced in Britain. One of them said:

Malawi is too primitive because our democracy is still young. I cannot imagine that people find it difficult to accept abortion in Malawi; they are still finding homosexuality as an issue, why should one be forced by parents to join any religion? People in Malawi have a case to answer because of violating the rights of their children. Even at 18, Malawian parents still want to control decisions of their sons and daughters and that is not good.

This study notes that education in Britain has also impacted secularization in Malawi. If one analyses development in Britain and Malawi, it is obvious that British educated Malawians express themselves better in English than others. This also influences secularization in Malawi.

In comparing the manifestation of secularization in Britain to Malawi one can see similarities in the presence of secularization in schools in Britain and Malawi. The difference is that in Britain it was an independent body that took the initiative to

petition the government to separate religion and schools, while in Malawi it was the Head of state pronouncing that he did not want to see any connection between religion and schools.

Brennan (2005:7) alleged that “in pre-modern or traditional Western societies most people adhered to the teachings of the church as the absolute truth”. This understanding of the church helped the church to be acceptable in many institutions including schools. Tester (1993) agreed with Brennan (2005) in identifying the image of the church during the pre-modern era as influential:

People lived in homogeneous communities in which morals were strictly enforced by religious officials. Such officials were thought to have a divine right as intermediaries between man and God because the prevailing thinking was that, on his own, man was unable to have direct access to God. Generally, in pre-modern society, religion galvanized communities and it also served as a guide for people’s understanding of reality.

The above situation is applicable to Malawi because the education system before independence was run by the missionaries but after independence many missionary schools were handed over to the government. Based on a directive from the Head of state, religion became a personal matter that could not be imposed on schools in Malawi. One can see that what has happened in Britain regarding the separation of religion and schools is also happening in Malawi.

7.2.2 Similarities of secularization of legislation in Britain and Malawi

The Constitution of the Republic of Malawi is not attached to any religion. It states that Malawi is a sovereign country. Looking at the statistics of Christians in Malawi which is 80%, Malawi could declare itself a Christian country but the question that follows is within the Christian denominations there also are differences, so then, one would ask which denomination the country should follow?

However though the Constitution is not framed to suit any particular religion, the government generally respects religious freedom in law and in practice. However this study is aware of some conflicts between the government and some religious groups in Malawi namely, the Rastafarians and the Apostolic Church and the Zionist. For Rastafarians the issue of dreadlocks has been a challenge in some public schools while the Apostolic and Zionist movements have been refusing to take any medication even compulsory immunization following the outbreak of measles in some parts of the country in 2011.

In an interview with Billy Mac Aneney on the issue of the British Constitution, he said:

Though Britain has an 'uncodified' constitution, within its various accumulations of various statutes, conventions, judicial decisions and treaties which collectively can be referred to as British Constitution, there is a particular religion that these documents rely on. However, the Church of England is an official state church but no citizen would be punished by the government based on religious laws.

Therefore it is this aspect of not prosecuting any citizen based on violation of any religiously framed law that one sees Britain's secularization of legislation being similar to that of Malawi. The particular churches mentioned above demanded the laws of Malawi to change based on their religious beliefs, but the government's Attorney General disagreed in the statement below:

We cannot amend the Laws of Malawi based on religious beliefs because by accommodating a particular religious group one will discover that several others are offended. To avoid such conflicts our constitution is not attached to any religion, but every citizen will enjoy his/her rights regardless of his/her religious affiliations.

This study therefore notes that the secularization of Malawi is similar to that of Britain, whereby no religion is attached to the Laws of Malawi.

7.2.3 The similarity of membership decline in Britain and Malawi:

Individual secularization is experienced in both countries

Though the Malawian churches look well attended compared to the British churches both countries have experienced a decline in church attendance. Chapter three of this thesis has indicated that church membership has been declining in Britain from 27% membership in 1900 to 10% membership in 2000, while Sunday school attendance has declined in Britain from 55% in 1900 to 4% in 2000, and that is manifested in the process of individual secularization in Britain. In chapter five of this thesis, it was indicated as well that in Malawi, membership has declined from 72.2% membership at St. Columba in 1990 to 48.75% in 2010 while the Sunday school attendance dropped from 32% in 1990 to 8.3 % in 2010 . In Britain the great decline happened after the Second World War, the Malawi secularization has been felt largely after the second era of multiparty system of government.

My analysis of this observation is that there were a lot of developments that took place after the referendum in Malawi. The celebration of Human Rights bodies, the beginning of television and other modern technology facilities accelerated individual secularization in Malawi. An example of this is the experience of a friend whose son wears earrings, sometimes, dreadlocks, and one day when he was confronted by the father he simply responded “Dad watch television this is not strange it’s done all over the world!” Such comments show that television has affected the lives of many people. It was further noted that this boy does not attend any church services because he is always watching different programmes on television, which leads to individual secularization.

The administration of Dr Banda was very dictatorial and instilled fear in Malawians. Malawians all over the country had the spirit of obeying without questioning and that helped to strengthen religion in Malawi. However what is important is that both Britain and Malawi have been affected by the membership decline as a manifestation of individual secularization.

7.2.4 The similarity in the applicability of the separation of political power and religion in Britain and Malawi

Davie (2008:54) noted that the separation of political power and religion is a manifestation of secularization. In Britain political leaders are not appointed because of their religious affiliation. Malawi also has had different government and political leaders who were not elected for their religious affiliations. No leaders were elected in Malawi for their religious affiliation because if that was the case Malawi would not have a Muslim President when Malawi's population is dominated by Christians at about 80%. The separation of political power and religion happening in Britain is therefore similar to the situation in Malawi. This study notes that since religion has no influence in political powers, both countries are experiencing societal secularization.

7.3 The applicability of Britain's factors of secularization to Malawi

This sub-section discusses the applicability of Britain's factors of secularization to Malawi. The study has noted that secularization in Malawi is caused by four factors; African Traditional Religion, donor influence, lack of well educated religious leaders and Islam. Chapter three noted that British secularization is caused by the following factors: modernization, science, urbanization, industrialization and religious pluralism as the main factors. In this sub-section this study assessed the applicability of these factors in Britain to Malawi.

7.3.1 Modernization and its applicability to Malawi

Modernization has brought so many positive effects such as easy communication, and easy movement of both ideas and people. However, it is a challenge for religion since its emergence in Britain affected the vitality of religion. Thomas (2005:42) argued that religion retards development as it belongs to a static tradition which is against the new era of modernity. Religion was pushed to periphery as it was seen as a force that was pushing development backwards. It is this spirit of reservation that was and is still seen in other religious leaders who resist change.

The emergence of other new ideas and beliefs which were common in 1960s in Britain were seen by others as signs of development while from a religious perspective, they were seen as evil or sinful. Too much freedom to the extent of disregarding traditional values was regarded as development. After the Second World War people were very excited about the move to freedom and development.

Summerfield (1984:184) in his analysis of women's oral history narratives on the wartime lives, divided women into the modernizing woman and traditional woman. The modernizing woman put her accent on the war's effects on change and opportunity, a welcoming of the liberalization of women's roles. The second, who was traditional, pictured the war as something to be endured till the return to normal or traditional female roles.

Brown (2002:171) commented on the ideas of Summerfield that "Few of those who pushed, or identified with, the discourse of modernization departed from the dominant, traditional view that women's main purpose at the end of the war was to 'return home' and recreate a domestic haven." Brown further noted that:

As late as 1961, a columnist in Women's Own advised, you can't have deep and safe happiness in marriage and the exciting independence of a career as well...It isn't fair on your husband. I believe [any man] would tell you that he would rather his wife stayed at home and looked after his children, and was waiting for him with a decent meal and a sympathetic ear when he got home from work.

The above observations of conflicting ideas between tradition and modernization led to societal secularization, because with modern thinking, religion was questioned unless it was supported by facts. Modern thinking had its own understanding of ideas including religious ideas. Modernization was an issue in Britain after the Second World War, so many new ideas came in the name of freedom and development.

Brown (2002:175) confessed:

Secularization could not happen until discursive Christianity lost its power. From 1800 until 1950, after the end of Second World War, the British Christian Churches had no state sanction to force people to be adherents or believers as had been the case before 1800. It had been the 'salvation economy' which had wielded a power over the individual to make the choice to absorb and adapt gendered religious identities to himself and herself. It was only when that discursive power waned that secularization could take place.

It is modern thinking that brought different devices like computers, critical opinions towards religion, the internet, Skype etc and it is modern thinking that has brought radical thinking towards religion and God. Modernization leads to societal secularization because through modernization religion has lost the authority and influence that it used to have. Modern thinking makes human beings question traditional beliefs such as religious beliefs. People want empirical evidence in order to believe, which is not the case in religion.

The study has noted that modernization has brought globalization, and in globalization ideas, goods etc flow from one place to the other. Perrons (2004:1)

noted that globalization encapsulates the transformation of economic and social relations across the globe:

Globalization and the new economy encapsulate the transformation of economic and social relations across the globe. People and places are increasingly interlinked through the organization of work, the flows of goods and services and the exchange of ideas.

The practices and ideas in Britain have been flowing to Malawi very easily because of the internet, television and many other means of communication. Also, the migration of people between the two countries has eased due to modernization. A number of secular ideas and practices have been noted. An example of these practices is homosexuality. This practice has hit Malawi in a very serious way because it was legalized in Britain in 1967. Brown (2002:176) put it clearly that in modern Britain things have changed:

In the 1960s, the institutional structures of cultural traditionalism started to crumble in Britain; the ending of the worst excess of moral censorship (notably after the 1960 trial of Lady Chatterley's Lover and the ending in 1968 of the Lord Chamberlain's control over British theatre), the legalization of abortion (1967) and homosexuality (1967), and the granting of easier divorce (1969) [...].

The study has noted that as a sign of secularization in Malawi, moral decay has been on the increase, as indicated in chapter five. Several case studies that were discussed in chapter five were clear examples of moral decay in Malawi. Since secularization (societal) has been defined as a decline in religious influence, the moral decay is an indication of religious weakness, it shows that religion has no influence on society, an obvious proof of secularization.

This study notes that the process of secularization in Malawi has been on the increase because of modernization. In the very modern world, the ease of

dissemination of information by means of computer technology has enabled the rapid transfer of ideas in a way unprecedented in human history. Through modernization the world has become one village. Some practices may differ from one country to another but certainly, information on the practices has been shared.

According to Chadwick (1975:9) secularization grew rapidly when modern ideas influenced the masses. Through modernization the belief that people had “come of age” and could make rational decisions for themselves developed. Feuerbach and Nietzsche saw God as the supreme enemy of this (Mascall 1965:175).

Williams (2009:211) in his view of Britain noted:

People had ‘grown up’ and like children, no longer needed to relate all to their father. There was no need to just believe and accept on authority, but people had the ability to assess for themselves. They were able to choose freely. Berger (1969:78) commented that increased knowledge at the same time led to increased awareness of evil, sharpening the problem of theodicy, and encouraging secularization. It is in this that secularization has become highly significant in modern society. Secularization is indeed essentially a mental matter, which has societal effects when its attitudes are adopted corporately.

A further result of modernization was a change in attitudes toward the Bible, for it was no longer just regarded as the inspired Word of God, to be accepted and obeyed without question. Rather, its statements were felt to be subject to rational enquiry. They were doubted because they could be the result of misconceptions of the authors, or even deliberately intended to mislead. Unless Biblical statements could be substantiated, they were simply not accepted. The idea of divine authority became secondary to human intellect and was questioned. Naturally the practice of the religion, which is based on the Bible, weakened.

Another effect of modernization on secularization is that it led to the development of science and technology. This effectively enhances the control, which weakens dependence on God for need satisfaction (Richard 1982:22). Interestingly, although it often results in increased personal freedom, technology can in fact reduce it, and enslave man, becoming his master.

Schumacher (1973:25, 30) in Williams (2009:214) claimed that it is greed that removes a sense of perspective and delivers people up to the power of the machine. Both aspects have contributed to societal secularization, the capitalist process and technology. Rejection of religion is often attributed to a perception that it is contrary to science, although this is questionable (Barry 1969:30). Science does not cause atheism, but its underlying stress on rationality weakens the role of religion; an empirical attitude cannot accept talk of God (Richard 1967:100).

Williams (2009:215) noted that even if the rise of science does not directly undermine religion, it does result in pragmatism and a profanity (in the neutral sense of 'this worldliness'). Blumenberg (1983:44) noted that there had to be less emphasis on unverifiable eschatology, and therefore the Church had to be relevant by involvement in this world, in itself secularization. This idea of the church being involved in the world has already brought heated debates about whether it makes the church vulnerable to worldly things and more secularized, leading to organizational secularization.

Bruce (2002:233) acknowledged that science and modern technology have been the main causes of secularization. Because of modern technology people are able to share information easily and some of that information is questioning the authority of

religion. When the authority of religion is questioned, its influence declines and this is societal secularization.

The study has also noted that modern people have different perspectives on religion. Their thinking is different. Davie (2008:12) agreed that the thinking of modern people was different by referring to Berger's statements, "In the 1960s Berger was a major contributor to the idea of secularization, paying careful attention to the ways in which modern people believe. Some 40 years later his views are somewhat different".

Scholars such as Hamilton (1986:105-107) mentioned that during the pre-modern society of Britain, religion was very strong. He gave some examples that support the idea that religion was very strong:

[...] They believed sufficiently in hell, the power of the church, and the unique status of Holy Writ for the swearing of oaths on the Bible to be an effective means of social control. They avoided blaspheming. They spent considerable sums of money supporting large numbers of priests whose sole function was to say mass for their benefactors. Many people seem to have accepted that it was necessary to make reparation to God for serious and willful sins either in this life or in the next.

The same spirit of total commitment was in Malawi before the influence and impact of secularization. It is this modern thinking that has contributed to the dilution of Christianity in Malawi. These are the ideas that Phiri (2006) raised as introducing this waning of Christianity in Malawi. The field research findings that were presented in chapter five of this thesis are true reflections of the type of modernization that brought secularization theory to Britain is also the same modernization that has contributed to the theory of societal secularization in Malawi.

7.3.1.1 Modernization leads to Human Rights demands and leads to societal secularization

Crabtree (2007) noted that a human rights culture also contributes to secularization. After the Second World War, Britain had to enjoy and celebrate the post-war effects. Unfortunately it affected religion. There was great excitement that led to the legalization of many things in the name of human rights which were in conflict with religion. Many people feel it is their right to do whatever they want even at the cost of violating the rights of others. Women's rights, gay rights, slave rights, racial equality and many other rights (such as the right to change religion) have been viciously fought about between religious denominations.

In the modern world, it is only religious groups that oppose most of these basic rights; by far the loudest anti-gay rights voices are Christian and Muslim, and the only groups that support female genital mutilation and the *must obey man* mentality, are Islamic and Christian groups. Slave liberation and many other equal rights frequently caused splits to occur within organized religion, as gay rights are threatening the Church of England now (Crabtree 2007:5).

Religious groups still pursue many legal reforms that result in a loss of legal equal rights. The Christian Institute in the United Kingdom²¹ successfully lobbied for changes in the law to allow Christian managers to fire gay staff on account of their sexuality alone, and many Muslim countries continue to make apostasy (change of religion) illegal. Muslim countries, especially those which have areas that have adopted Shariah law, have human rights records, as bad as those of Christians

²¹ In 2003 March 2, Sefton Council workers refused to take part in adoptions for gay parents, because they say it was against their Christian beliefs and the council in was fighting for the two Christians based on Christian principles.

during the dark ages. In South Africa, laws which are regarded by Christians as immoral are being passed in Parliament. Jonathan Clayton (2005) wrote:

South Africa broke an important regional taboo yesterday by becoming the first African country to authorize same-sex marriage. The nation joined the handful of countries allowing the practice after the constitutional court ruled in favour of gay weddings and ordered Parliament to amend marriage laws within a year. South Africa will become the fifth country in the world to permit same-sex marriage, behind the Netherlands, Spain, Belgium and Canada; but the decision is not only at odds with the views of the vast majority of its own citizens, but also the rest of Africa, where homosexuality remains largely a taboo.

Clayton (2005) reported that, in a landmark ruling, the Johannesburg-based Constitutional Court ordered that the definition of marriage be changed from a “union between a man and a woman” to a “union between two persons”. Such ideas are the reflection of modern thinking and they have contributed to the rise of secularization, as they make it easy for religious policies to be ignored.

Clayton (2005) of course reported that; “In reaction to the ruling, the leading churches have called for a referendum on the issue. The African Christian Democratic Party called for an amendment to the Constitution that would nullify the ruling”. The reaction of churches to the ruling is a sign that the ruling was in conflict with the church policies, and in that case, religion lost.

In Malawi, the situation is similar. While one appreciates the importance of human rights, this study argues that some rights challenge the value of religion. In the name of rights, there have been conflicts between what people believe as their human rights and religious values. As a result, the process of societal secularization is entrenched because people are confused and struggle to make the correct choice of believing in religious policies that are against some human rights.

The secularization of Malawi has been accelerated by these concepts of human rights. Human Rights groups have supported immoral issues which are against religion. An example can be given of the suspension of homosexuality laws. The force behind the legalization of homosexuality is the 'human rights' aspect. Religious leaders have tried their best to fight against such policies but all in vain because the issue of homosexuality is considered to be a human rights issue in these modern times.

In the name of human rights, parents can no longer force their children to join their denomination or attend church services. The freedom of association and worship has brought rebuke to religion as there are too many religions which are even in conflict against each other. The emergence of Pentecostal and charismatic churches have added weight to the process of secularization as they are mushrooming all the time, and their leaders have no proper training, leading to poor management of their churches. The action of every church leader affects all churches. As mentioned in chapter five, many people choose to ignore all religions because religions themselves contradict each other.

7.3.1.2 Modernization leads to individualism and contributes to secularization in Malawi

Momen (1999:479) like Crabtree (2005) argues that the spirit of individualism has put religion in a very awkward situation. Momen called individualism a blow to religion because it has led to a loss of the authority of the central institutions of religion:

The second blow to the religious perspective came with the increasing importance given to individualism in the modern world.[...] Today, there is an increasing emphasis on the individual's own point of view. This leads to a loss of the authority of the central institutions of the religion. As a corollary to this individualism came a belief in the beneficial effects

of self-interest as the guiding principle of human action, a development that contradicts the teachings of most of the established religions.

The individualism that is characteristic of modern life in the West is reflected in the uncommitted, *a la carte* approach to spirituality that has become very common. It is typified by individuals who oscillate from religious group to religious group, continually on a religious quest and never arriving at their goal. Very often such individuals do not join any religious group, but attend meetings, read books and search through the internet, adopting a *pot-pourri* of religious ideas on their way. This approach to spirituality is almost the exact opposite of the path advocated by traditional religion. The church is defined in a pluralistic dimension, “gathering of believers” and the spirit of individualism is contrary to that concept of togetherness, which is the reason that this study considers this force to religion, under modernization because individualism is promoted by modernization.

Pollack (2010:1) noted that in Western Europe more and more sociologists of religion are talking about religious individualization instead of secularization to describe the religious change in modern societies. The spirit of individualism has contributed a lot to the decline of religious influence in the society in Britain and this is societal secularization. The Church promotes unity, fellowship and love, but all these are ignored in the spirit of individualism. In an interview, Marilyn Woodworth²² from Glasgow said:

I spend much of my time at my house, and it is almost five years since I attended a church service. For me, my family and I are happy spending our precious time at home because I do not gain anything in fellowship, and in church. I have to work to survive, I have to think of what my family needs are, these are modern times.

²² Marilyn Woodworth is a British lady who used to come to Malawi running Orphanage Centre

Analyzing the response of Woodworth clearly shows the spirit of individualism at work in her. She does not believe in fellowship and that has affected her spirit of attending the church service. Lack of individual participation and commitment to religious activities has been defined as individual secularization.

This spirit of individualism has been experienced in Malawi in recent times. Until the early 1990s, Malawians were very well-known for the spirit of communal life. One of the focus group meetings in Mulanje District testified that until 1990s they used to eat together as families:

We used to sit together about five families in our village, each family would bring food and we would sit together, men in one circle, children in theirs and women in their circle too. This same spirit would make us go to church encourage one another. However since 1990s, that spirit has been diminishing and until now it is no longer happening.

The above spirit of communalism was good for the church. The spirit of unity helped the church because the church had a strong foundation in the already united families. Hervieu-Leger (1999:161) commented on the spirit of individualism against communal life:

Religious modernity is individualism; in various guises this proposition constitutes the central contemporary motif of sociological reflection upon religion. But what exactly does this signify? And what are the implications of this individualization of the forms of 'communalization' (as Webber calls it) which provides believers with means of exchanging, sharing, and validating together their personal convictions?

Hervieu-Leger (1999:162) attempts to respond to his questions above by presenting two meanings of religious individualism. First, it is the faithful observation of minutiae of prescribed actions and the second implies, in a mystical or ethical fashion, the personal and continuous appropriate of the religious truths of each believer.

It is the spirit of individualism that has also contributed the increase in the number of denominations. Many religious leaders formed their own denominations in the belief that their personal views in terms of doctrines, church management etc are better than those of others and for others it is for the material gains, to be the sole beneficiaries of all the material wealth. This is the spirit of individualism. The spirit of individualism leads to religious pluralism, later on it leads to individual secularization as individuals withdraw from communal life of participation in the church, it also leads to organizational secularization, because many denominations in order to market their church they modify their policies even where religious vitality is lost but so long they attract people, and societal secularization is experienced because their religion loses authority and influence.

This study has noted that this spirit of individualism from Britain is also evident in Malawi, as supported by the examples of the breakdown of communal family gatherings into individual families.

Though Malawi has experienced both human rights and the spirit of individualism, the study notes that the levels of modernization in Britain and Malawi are different. Britain's level of modernization is higher than that of Malawi. However, there are a number of examples that support the idea that Malawi has been modernized too, in thinking that has led this study to suggest that Malawi has experienced societal secularization. In an interview with Mr. Fred Kamwaza, Deputy Director of Malawi Switch Centre Limited (Malswitch) said, "We launched our modern facilities in 2006 as part of modernization in Malawi, because it is our belief that we need to transform the minds of our people in the society from a rural and agrarian to urban and industrial one by providing them with such facilities."

The Malawi Customs also launched its modernization policy in 2011 as Mr. Muhara, who was the Commissioner General then commented:

Malawi is no longer the same today, in order to enhance our services in Malawi Revenue Authority we need a modern facility that would monitor the goods brought to Malawi. With this modern facility people will not be under charged when paying their duties because the modern system machine will detect whatever goods they have.

Though the factor of modernization is applicable to Malawi, this study has noted that the process of modernization has only been discussed in Malawi since 2006, while in Britain scholars noted it was there before the 1960s, therefore its applicability to Malawi is minimal compared to that of Britain.

7.3.2 Urbanization in Britain and its applicability to Malawi

Scholars such as Cox (1968), Bruce (2002), Brown (2002), Davie (2008), have noted that urbanization has contributed to the process of secularization in Britain and other parts of the world. Urbanization refers to the process by which rural areas become urbanized as a result of economic development and industrialization. Demographically, the term urbanization denotes the redistribution of populations from rural to urban settlements over time.

Johnson & Howard (1945) wrote that, "McLeod produced various statistical exercises which showed that English towns had lower rates of churchgoing than rural ones, and that industrial zones had lower rates of churchgoing than agricultural zones." This idea supports the findings of this study that secularization manifests more in urban and industrial locations.

Pred (1977) alleged that the rise of industrial capitalism in the late 18th century led to the emergence of urban societies in Great Britain, North-West Europe and North

America. Chapter three of this thesis has noted that, before the Industrial Revolution in Great Britain, no society could be described as urban or urbanized. It is industrialization that brought urbanization to Britain and made it secularized. People moved to cities to work in industries. As mentioned above, workers became so preoccupied with work that they did not attend church services regularly, which led to individual secularization.

In urbanization, the traditional thinking that God will provide does not apply, so people have to work in order to earn a living for their survival. In an interview, Bertha Mwangala²³, a Malawian living in London said:

Life here is very busy. One has to work in order to survive. We have no communal life as we used to have in Malawi of just getting assistance from a relative or a friend. If you do not work you cannot eat. I am also working in two different companies so I have no time to attend church services and we are many of us from different countries I do not remember seeing any body attending church service. I have been here in London since 2002 and my life has been operating like that.

Urbanization as a factor of secularization in Britain is partially applicable to Malawi.

Malawi has three main cities; Blantyre, Lilongwe and Mzuzu. Looking at the population in town and the percentage of church attendance, it is evident that the percentage is very low. The statistics of membership and attendance at St. Columba CCAP as discussed in chapter five has shown that indeed secularization has crept into Malawi.

The process of secularization has been accelerating in the urban areas in Malawi because of the many factories that are found in cities. Many people are occupied by work. Another reason that applies to Malawi is that in urban locations the system of communication is efficient. People in town have better access to global issues than

²³ Bertha Mwangala was a member of my congregation in Malawi from 2000 to 2002 when she left for Britain, Interview was done on 11th August 2011

those in the rural areas making them more vulnerable to modern thinking which has radical theology and immoral practices that are against the religion of Christianity.

This study notes that urbanization is partially applicable to Malawi because according to the UN-HABITAT report of 2006/2007 only 20% of Malawi's population is classified as urban, making it one of the least urbanized countries in Africa. In an interview with the Chief Executive of Blantyre City, he made the following remarks:

Indeed Malawi's urban level is 20% only and by world standards that is very low, with less influence. Many countries' urbanization is because of industries in big cities but in Malawi it occurs because people want access to good health and education in urban areas. People move because of poverty, poor housing, poor education and poor health facilities in the rural areas, therefore their life style is not affected much because of urbanization.

This study notes that Malawi's population in terms of religion is higher in the rural according to (National Statistics report of 2011- refers to Appendix D). The people registered as Christians during the census, were fewer in town than those in the rural area, and during the interviews the researcher noted that though the urban life was very busy but the other reason was that Malawi's economy is more of agrarian, than industrial. This study therefore notes that urbanization as a factor of secularization in Britain is partially applicable to Malawi because of the above facts.

7.3.3 Religious pluralism in Britain and its applicability to Malawi

Momen (1999:478) said that secularization occurs when there is a loss of prestige of religious institutions and symbols. There has been a loss in the influence that religious institutions have over public policy and a similar loss in the personal prestige of the religious professional. This may be partly responsible for the difficulty that many religions have in recruiting religious professionals. This is the case in

Britain, where it has been difficult to recruit priests and church ministers. The Christian Churches that have mushroomed, all over, as fixtures in landscape of British institutions, are under threat. Ecclesiastical statisticians are now routinely predicting the disappearance of churches. Major denominations, ranging from the Roman Catholic Church to the Church of Scotland, are short of recruits to the priesthood and ministry, while new movements have many self appointed pastors.

Malawi is different in that the recruitment of religious leaders is on the rise. However, this study notes that religious leaders in Malawi are attracted to the church for material gain. A number of respondents acknowledged that many religious leaders in Malawi are self-serving seekers of material gain and not feeders of their flock. This is manifested in the many denominations that have mushroomed in the last twenty years. According to Malawi Registrar's office, within the past twenty years, Malawi has seen over 900 denominations being established, resulting in religious pluralism. This has affected the vitality of religion in Malawi because people are marketing religion to make it more attractive. As a result they make their denominations change in their policy to fit the needs of the society, which results in organizational secularization.

Peter Berger noting the growth of pluralism, and competing religious (and secular) alternatives, suggested that it would be difficult to maintain religious commitment in the face of so many contradictory beliefs and competing social environments. With the emerging of several religions throughout the world, secularization has been encouraged because many people ignore all religions as the choice is too wide.

Csordas ed. (2009:61) notes that Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity have mushroomed successfully and this has promoted religious pluralism:

Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity have arguably been one of the major success stories of the past several decades of cultural globalization. Kinds of Christianity focused on the availability of the Holy Spirit to all contemporary believers, they have spread rapidly around the world since the birth of Pentecostalism early years of twentieth century.

Barrett & Johnson (2002: 284) also note that in many continents Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity has grown rapidly, and this supports this study that there is religious pluralism world-wide:

The past thirty years or so have been a period of particularly rapid growth of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity in Asia, Latin America, Africa, and Oceania, and recent estimates suggest that at present Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity have as many as 523 million adherents, of whom two-thirds live outside the Western world in which these religions originated.

Religious pluralism has a very big impact on secularization because people reject religion as they find it difficult to choose which one is a true religion, when there are so many religions with different policies and structures. This is where religious pluralism contributes to the process of individual secularization, as people reject religion and stop participating in religious activities.

Petre (1999: 15) has noted a general flight from institutions in general. Trade union membership is down, as is that for political parties and voluntary organizations. The process has accelerated since the Second World War. Stephen Neill (1984:248) notes that in the Church of England, the number of baptisms and confirmations, which were the norm for the British population, halved in the decade of the 1960's. Numbers of members and adherents of most major denominations continue to decline while there are too many denominations that have mushroomed. One would expect that the number of members in the church would be growing but it has been the opposite. Though, Davie (2008) in her rational choice theory (RCT) has

commended that religious pluralism is a sign of religious vitality in the life of people, this study has found that it is the opposite. People chose to ignore all religions when there are too many contradicting religions.

This study finds that religious pluralism contributes to all the three types of secularizations. In organizational secularization, religious institutions are modified to market themselves in order to attract more people because of competition with too many other religious institutions. Religious pluralism dilutes religious vitality, reducing its influence and resulting in societal secularization. As religion loses influence people lose interest as well and stop attending religious activities, which, then, leads to individual secularization. One interviewee, who no longer attends any church services because he is unable to make a choice as too many religions contradict each other said:

It is very confusing to note that there are more than 900 registered denominations in Malawi. Most of these church leaders are just power and money hungry. If indeed God is one, all loving and caring why can't we see that reflection in these church leaders? The more we have different churches the more conflicting and different messages or doctrines I hear. The best is just to ignore all.

This study further notes that in religious pluralism, there are differences among religions because what constitutes religious pluralism, is that there is more than one religion and these religions are different in terms of their doctrines, liturgy or practice and procedures, just to mention a few. Religious pluralism is applicable to both Britain and Malawi. While religious pluralism has widened the choice of religions it has contributed greatly to the rise in secularization. Malawi registered 900 denominations (see Appendix D, which is attached to this thesis as list of registered denominations in Malawi).

The study identifies African Tradition Religion and Islam, in chapter five, as some of the factors of secularization in Malawi. It has also been suggested that because of more than one religion, people begin to look for the best religion and as they compare these religions, they end up ignoring or rejecting all. It is therefore suggested that, indeed, religious pluralism as a factor of secularization in Britain is applicable to Malawi.

7.3.4 Industrialization in Britain and its applicability to Malawi

Brown (2002:10) agrees that the major causes of secularization are industrialization and urbanization. Malawi is described as an agricultural country because it depends largely on agricultural products for its economy. In an interview with Dr. Maxwell Mkwezalamba, the AU Commissioner for Economic Affairs, he said:

Currently Malawi is facing a lot of economic challenges because its industrialization is rated at 15% and that is very low. Malawi needs sound policies and strategies that can extractive natural resources to transform through accelerated industrialization. The African Union (AU) and Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) view is that accelerating Africa's industrialization agenda is one way through which the recent economic growth achievements could be sustained.

The then Minister of Agriculture and Food security, made the following remarks in agreement with Dr. Mkwezalamba that Malawi is still considered a predominantly agrarian society and not an industrial society:

Following democratization in 1994, the Malawi government put great emphasis on reducing poverty. The predominantly agrarian economy has had little rural-urban migration and Malawi's current level of industrialization and urbanization is low by world standards.

While Malawi is struggling to accelerate industrialization, chapter three of this thesis noted that Britain was the first country to industrialize in 18th century during the Industrial Revolution. If one is to think of the rate of industrialization in Britain in

comparison to Malawi, then one will conclude that there is no industrialization in Malawi. Industrialization is a period of social and economic change that transforms a human group from an agrarian society into an industrial one. Malawi has not yet moved from an agrarian society to an industrial one, therefore this study concludes that industrialization is a factor of secularization in Britain, but it is not a major factor in Malawi, therefore it is partially applicable.

7.4 Conclusion

Davie (2002a:7) noted that the secularization of Europe is not for export. This means that the secularization of Europe is unique to Europe. This chapter's findings argue that there are some similarities in the manifestations of secularization in Britain and Malawi. However, this study has noted that some of the British factors of secularization are applicable to Malawi while others are only partially applicable while some British factors are not applicable to Malawi.

This chapter has also noted that the phenomenon of globalization has accelerated the process of secularization in Malawi, considering that the flow of information in a global world is fast and simple as Perrons (2004:1) noted:

Globalization and new economy encapsulate the transformation of economic and social relations across the globe. People and places are increasingly interlinked through the organization of work, the flows of goods and services and the exchange of ideas.

With a number of Malawians experiencing the British life, the study notes that British secularization has influenced Malawi's secularization, because, there is much information flow between Britain and Malawi, hence the influence of British secularization on Malawi.

This chapter has successfully responded to the questions that were raised in chapter one of this thesis, which are:

- What were the factors that contributed to the rise of secularization in Britain?
- What is the connection between the secularization of Britain and Malawi?
- To what extent does secularization in Britain affect that of Malawi?
- Does Malawi have factors that are specific to it or they have the same factors that have contributed to the process of secularization in Britain affected Malawi?
- Are the factors of secularization in Britain applicable to Malawi?

Although it is clear that secularization is manifested in both Britain and Malawi, the British factors are only partially applicable to Malawi, while Malawi has four factors that are not applicable to Britain, namely; the rise of Islam, African Tradition Religion, Donor influence and lack of well educated religious leaders. Therefore this study has managed to respond to the questions that were raised in chapter one by using theoretical frame works from different scholars and research field work.

Since the study has managed to respond to all the questions that were in the first chapter, the final chapter concludes the study. The chapter of concluding chapter discusses possible ways to manage the process of secularization for the sustainability of the church in Malawi. The chapter also discusses the limitations of the study and recommends possible areas related to secularization, for further research.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Introduction

This chapter synthesises the results from the research project and, in particular, conclusions based on the emerging issues. The chapter further outlines the implications both from theoretical and practical perspectives, as well as recommendations largely drawn from both the qualitative and quantitative data. The chapter ends with recommendations to guide the church in Malawi to become more meaningful in the society although it has been affected by the manifestations of secularization.

8.2 Focus and Purpose of the Study

This study focused on the process of secularization. The purpose was to investigate the manifestations of secularization and the factors that influenced the process in Britain, as well as to assess their applicability to Malawi. Thus, the research also examined, using both theoretical and research fieldwork; the manifestations of secularization in Malawi and factors that influenced the process. In the introductory chapter, the study outlined the strong links between Britain and Malawi to explain why the process of secularization in Britain may have influenced the same process in Malawi. The study also examined the challenges of secularization which, by inference, were intended to help the church plan for sustainability in these times of a decline in church attendance, its minimal influence in society, and poor material support from its membership. The study was thus premised on a hypothesis that the causes of secularization in Britain are only partially applicable to Malawi.

Secularization in Malawi is also caused by other factors such as donor influence, poorly educated religious leaders, Islam, and African Traditional Religions.

8.3 Main Findings

Since the research was aimed at finding out the trends of secularization in Malawi, and factors that have caused it in Britain and assess critically their applicability to Malawi, this subsection will highlight such findings.

8.3.1 Findings from chapter one

It was the introductory chapter of this study on the topic of secularization in Malawi. It highlighted the reason behind the researcher's choice of topic as being Phiri's (2006) observation that the influence of Christianity was diminishing in Malawi. Though Christianity was estimated to be 60 to 80 percent of a total population of 15 million people, secularization was withering the very moral foundation of Christian standards, as manifested in the decline in church attendance, the religious hard-line approach to issues such as abortion, homosexuality and the decline in religious influence in different institutions such as schools and the legislature.

Chapter one raised very important questions such as, "What is secularization?" "What were the factors that contributed to the rise of secularization in Britain?" "What is the connection between Britain and Malawi?" "To what extent does secularization in Britain affect Christianity in Malawi?" Having identified factors that contribute to secularization in Britain, two questions arise: "Does Malawi have any factors that are specific to it or have the same factors contributed to the process of secularization in Britain?" "Are the factors of secularization in Britain applicable to Malawi?" These questions have been answered by the field research work as well as by secondary data throughout the thesis.

Finally, chapter one discussed the relationship between Britain and Malawi, to enable the readers see the reasons why Britain's secularization is able to influence the process of secularization in Malawi.

8.3.2 Findings from chapter two

Chapter two was about the conceptual framework of secularization. It examined definitions from different scholars. However, out of the views on secularization expressed by different scholars, this study focused on "the diminishing influence on the society of Christianity as a religion, considering that there are different religions". This chapter responded to one of the questions that were raised in chapter one, which is, "What is secularization?"

Chapter two identified three types of secularization, namely: societal, organizational and individual. These types of secularization were adopted from Dobbelaere (2002). The choice of Dobbelaere (2002) was inevitable because his analysis of secularization in three levels provided the theoretical framework for this study. The three types of secularization were assessed throughout the thesis and were proved to be connected to one another. When religion loses influence in the society (societal secularization), the participation of many people in religious activities, including church attendance, declines (individual secularization) and religious institutions are forced to re-adjust themselves to accommodate people's needs and market their religion (organizational secularization).

8.3.3 Chapter three findings

This chapter was about the manifestations and factors of secularization in Britain. The study noted that, though secularization started in the 17th to 18th century because of the Enlightenment, it was not manifested much until after the Second

World War. The study noted that after the age of austerity and the Second World War, came the modernization period. The modernization period changed people's thinking and their views on different traditional factors, including religion. Modernization has been noted as the key factor of secularization because, through modernization, people started moving from the village to town to work in industries. The movement of people from the village to town led to urbanization and this urbanization a result of industrialization. All these are factors of secularization in Britain.

The study noted that secularization was manifested in Britain as evidenced by the decline in church attendance, in religious beliefs, in the recruiting of clergy, in religion in schools, of influence in legislation, workers and the separation of political power and religion.

The study further noted that the secularization process in Britain was caused by a number of factors namely; modernization, science, urbanization, industrialization, religious pluralism and communism. Most of these factors are connected as they are all the after effects of modernization.

In this chapter the study noted that there are two theories that are in conflict with the concept of secularization. The Supply Side theory, which came in 1980s, believes that there is a constant potential human demand for religious goods over time and between societies. This theory is associated with post-modernization. Religion is becoming more important again during the post-modernization era. However the Supply Side Theory does not argue that secularization has led to the decline in authority or influence of the church.

The other theory that has been noted to challenge the secularization theory is the Rational Choice Theory, which believes that religious pluralism promotes religious vitality. This belief is contrary to the secularization theory, which believes that religious pluralism dilutes the vitality of religion. This thesis agrees with scholars who believe in religious pluralism as a factor of secularization, because religious pluralism leads to organizational secularization or rejection of religion because when there are many religions they are in conflict with each other, so some people choose to ignore them all.

8.3.4 Chapter four: field research methodologies used

This study used the mixed method approach, which involved the qualitative, quantitative and case study approaches because of its complex nature. The use of mixed research methods was inevitable, because it allowed different research methods to be applied in one research project. Qualitative research relies on reasons behind various aspects of behaviour. It investigates the *why* and *how* of decision making (Hadden & Shupe 1989:27-43).

The qualitative approach drew its credence from Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Strauss and Corbin (1998) whose fundamental argument in relation to qualitative research is based on an understanding of the intricacies of the issues in question. This entailed understanding not only the emerging patterns of issues but also a critical examination of the contradictions, divergences and ambivalences in the emerging issues.

The study used numerical representations in some chapters, and the manipulation of observations for the purpose of the data that were used to support the research

findings. This, inevitably, enabled the use of quantitative research method as suggested by Babbie (2007:404).

The third research method that was used in this study is the case study approach. It involved the study of a number of cases which were relevant to this kind of research. Mitchel (1983:129) defines a case study as “a detailed examination of an event (or a series of related events) which the analyst believes exhibit the operations of some identified general theoretical principles”. Unlike Mitchel, Yin (1989:23) describes a case study as empirical enquiry that “investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context; when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.”

This approach was very helpful because it enriched the thesis by giving specific cases that supported the idea that indeed secularization is manifested in Malawi.

Three sets of questionnaire were used. The first was used to collect information from different individuals within Malawi and is attached to this thesis as (Appendix A)The second set of questionnaire targeted focus groups and institutions and is attached to this thesis as (Appendix B), the third set was used to collect data on secularization in Britain and is attached as (Appendix C). The questionnaires were very helpful as guidelines to investigate whether secularization has crept into Malawi and how. 1000 respondents were organised proportionally in terms of age, gender, occupation, academic qualifications and location i.e. urban versus rural as indicated in chapter four of this thesis.

8.3.5 Findings from chapter five

Chapter five was the first chapter to present the field research findings. It was about the manifestations of secularization in Malawi. Using the questionnaire (Appendix A), it was noted that indeed secularization is manifested in Malawi. The study identified the following evidence to prove that, indeed, secularization has crept into Malawi:

- That there is a steady decline in church attendance, using St. Columba CCAP and Likuni Roman catholic Parish as case studies. These churches showed an average attendance of membership at 72.2% in 1990 and 48.75% in 2010 and average attendance in of 91.66% and in 2010 of 64.00% respectively
- That the influence of religion has declined in key life events in the society
- That participation of people in religious activities has declined
- That religion's influence in legislation has diminished
- That religion has been detached from the education system
- That there is moral decay among religious leaders

8.3.6 Findings from chapter six

Since chapter five has noted the manifestations of secularization in Malawi, chapter six is about factors that influenced secularization in Malawi. The study has noted the four specific factors that have caused secularization in Malawi; the rise of Islam, donor influence, lack of well educated religious leaders and African Tradition Religion. In these factors the study has noted the following:

- *The rise of Islam*- the rise of Islam has led to religious pluralism, and the thesis has noted that when there is more than one religion and these are in conflict, people begin to question which is the true religion and some end up in rejecting all.

- *Donor influence*- there are some practices which are against religious policies, for example, homosexuality. The study has noted that donors have demanded that some practices to be legalized as a condition for aid. Because Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the World, the country has acceded to such demands, and people are put off because they consider the church as without influence, thus they reject religion.
- *A lack of well educated religious leaders* – the study has noted that uneducated religious leaders have been challenged by poor management of religious institutions, making the institutions ineffective in the society and people lose interest or reject them, and this leads to individual secularization because people no longer feel the worthiness of attending or participating in religious activities.
- *African Traditional Religion*- the study has noted that belief in African Traditional Religion leads to the rejection of the true religion. People have an alternative to consult for help instead of relying only on God the Almighty. God becomes less important.

This study notes that there are other general factors that have been mentioned in chapter seven like modernization, urbanization, industrialization which have partially contributed to the rise of secularization in Malawi and religious pluralism which is applicable to Britain and Malawi, but the main focus of this chapter was on the specific factor of secularization in Malawi.

8.3.7 Findings from chapter seven

The main purpose of this chapter was to answer the question of whether Britain's manifestation of secularization and the factors responsible for it are applicable to Malawi or not.

The findings of the study were that some manifestations of secularization in Britain are very unique while others are similar to those in Malawi. The study has noted that the effects of globalization have contributed much to the movements of ideas or individuals from one place to the other making British ideas accessible to Malawi.

However as noted in chapter six of this thesis, Malawi has four specific factors that were not applicable to Britain and as Davie (2002a:7) suggests secularization in Europe is not for export. He emphasizes the uniqueness of every country. Although two countries can be closely related to one another, it is not possible for all the manifestations and factors in Britain to be applicable to Malawi, hence the findings of this study in chapter seven are that other factors of Britain's secularization are applicable, others are partially applicable and others are not applicable in Malawi.

8.3.8 Findings from chapter eight

This chapter ties the whole study together by summarizing the findings of every chapter. It synthesises the findings in order to raise new questions for further study. It also raises the implications of this thesis and makes recommendations to the church for sustainability in the era when the process of secularization is manifested in Malawi.

8.4 Implications of the findings

The findings of this research have implications that need to be highlighted in this subsection. The concept of secularization in this thesis has been measured in terms of the decline in the influence of religion; however the word “Religion” has been focused on Christianity. Momen (1999: 22-24) noted that it is only Christianity that was clear as a religion to present its beliefs, comparing to any religions. Therefore its decline has been noticed too.

Secondly the researcher is a Christian, and Christianity is the religion that he practises therefore the research may have a bias towards Christianity as a religion because of the researcher’s interest.

Thirdly, there is emphasis on ethical issues, where the source was a direct quotation which was made publicly, in the news paper by a journalist. However, where possible the use of names has been avoided. Most of the people who gave interviews were not mentioned by name, unless it was with their special permission when there was a need to put a name to the statement.

Finally, it is evident that the subject of secularization is very complicated. This observation was made by Sommerville (1991:3), cited in chapter two of this thesis. Therefore, one study cannot cover all the pertinent areas of the concept of secularization. Some ideas of secularization are even in conflict of one another.

8.5 Recommendations

There are a number of recommendations that this thesis is putting forward. These recommendations are applicable to the secularization process in Malawi. As discussed above, the factors of secularization differ in different environments. Britain

that has been used as a reference, but this has proved that some of the factors that are applicable to Britain are not applicable to Malawi. It is also important to note that the level of secularization today is such that one cannot imagine any recommendations that can stop the process, but recommendations will be put forward to enable the church survive despite secularization.

8.5.1 Training of religious leaders

One of the factors of secularization in Malawi is the use of uneducated and poorly trained religious leaders. Training of religious leaders is very important. This training should cover a number of courses, such as Biblical studies, church administration, systematic theology and practical theology. Well trained leaders will manage congregations better and that will help to strengthen members. Religious institutions should decide on minimum qualifications for their leaders before they are given a congregation. Refresher and short courses should be a requirement for all religious leaders. This will help them administer their congregations professionally. It will help limit the rise of secularization due to poor education of religious leaders.

Religious leaders must be innovative. There are rules that an advocate or preacher needs to follow to make the strategies of reaching secular people effective;

Make the Gospel interesting to retain people's interest. In this research it was observed that if the preaching is not interesting many people were dozing in the church. But once the preacher could be making some jokes related to his theme, many people could pay attention. This is just an example of many strategies of keeping people attentive to the gospel.

Many people could learn more effectively through participation than by passively receiving information. Harvey Cox agrees with Soper that participatory gospel is

more attractive than a passive one. When Cox (1995) visited one of the Pentecostal churches in the USA, had confessed that:

[...] In each of the churches the worship followed the pattern I have now learned to expect in Pentecostal churches: high-amperage music, voluble praise, bodily movement including clapping and swaying, personal testimonies, sometimes prayers "in the spirit", a sermon full of stories and anecdotes, announcements, lots of humorous banter, a period of intense prayers for healing, and a parting song (Cox 1995:6).

Religious leaders must be taught to encourage participatory services of worship as Cox advises above.

8.5.2 Engage people in dialogue and congregational management

Cox's (1995) observation was that one of the main reasons for the growth of the Pentecostal churches was participatory services. This was a move away from traditional churches that have always relied on authoritative preaching to reach the unchurched masses, but most people experience such preaching as authoritarian preaching.

Rick Warren was quoted by Hunter III (1992:57) in a private interview as suggesting that there are no more "great orators". The speakers who get a hearing today "engage in animated conversation," like Johnny Carson or Ronald Reagan. Warren offered the above advice to would-be communicators with the secular mind.

The most proven approach for engaging secular people at the point of their doubts is dialogue. Samuel Shoemaker emphasized that reasonable caring conversations with secular seekers are already achieving more than the church knows, and the approach could be multiplied throughout the world because it really works. In an interview with many people, they agreed that dialogue gives opportunity for interaction. It keeps the listener alert hence dialogue is very important in reaching

people in a congregation. An innovative religious leader will engage his flock, to know what their challenges are and their strengths are.

8.5.3 Religious Leaders to overcome self-centeredness

In the research findings it was noted that a number of conflicts among religious leaders were due to self-centeredness. The issues of power, if centered in the ministry, will always create conflict. Religious leaders must understand that they are called to serve God. An example was given in chapter five, where there was conflict over boarder boundaries of two Synods. It is evident that the issue of boundaries is a touchy one because religious leaders want control, to show that they have power over many congregations. If they understand that they are serving God, then, surely, they would appreciate each other's boundaries.

8.5.4 The Church must define and differentiate between secular and religious values

The church must be clear in differentiating for their members between secular values and religious values. This will guide members to know the direction of the church. It is true that the concept of secularization is very complicated, but if people understand the concept clearly, they will be rooted in their faith. In an interview with many respondents it was clear that many people do not even understand the mission statement of their church. If people know and understand secular values they will be able to avoid them. People must be taught to differentiate between secular and religious values.

8.5.5 The church must develop theology that will meet the needs of the people

Theology must be contextual. As Milne (1993) suggested, Scriptures must be interpreted dynamically in meeting the needs for the people today. Many people feel the church is no longer important in their lives because the church is not meeting their needs. People are tempted to join Islam if they feel Islam is meeting their needs and if people feel that traditional beliefs like Bimbi are the source of their comfort they will focus their life on Bimbi. Therefore, religious leaders must develop theology which is relevant to their church. However, Dobbelaere (2002) warned of the temptation to cross into organizational secularization, where the church changes its policies to accommodate the needs for their people. This is common among the Pentecostals, who focus on the Holy Spirit and giving only and not much on morality and church policies.

8.6 Conclusion

The church must know that it has a responsibility to work on theology that will bring back the good image of the church. Though some have noted that secularization has a positive side, much of it, one can conclude, has affected the church in a very negative way. People are no longer committed in religion as they used to be in the past. With a collective effort from the Church as one body of Christ, following recommendations in this chapter, the church in Malawi can make an impact in the society. Though secularization can be felt, still the church will be felt too. Religious leaders must put God first, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, the nation can remain strong even though the process of secularization has crept into Malawi.

It is therefore, the researcher's belief that the following questions from the introductory chapter of this study have been answered:

- What is secularization?
- What were the factors that contributed to the rise of secularization in Britain?
- What is the connection between Britain and Malawi?
- To what extent does secularization in Britain affect Christianity in Malawi?
- Does Malawi have her own specific factors or are they the same factors that have contributed to the process of secularization in Britain?
- Are the factors of secularization in Britain applicable to Malawi?

It is recommended that research be done in future on the following questions;

- Why are the Pentecostals still more attractive to people despite the advent of secularization in many countries?
- Why is United States of America more religious in terms of religious pluralism than other nations?
- The period of post-modernism is experiencing religious revitalization. Some scholars are suggesting that secularization is dying and a comparative analysis of religion in the pre-modern, modern and post-modern era is vital.

In discussing the concept of secularization, it has been discovered that some sociologists feel it is good for the church while others feel it is a threat to the church. Such conflicting ideas make studies pull against each other. However, this does not paralyze the thesis because both groups of sociologists have reasons for their position. Considering organizational secularization, it would seem that its positive side is keeping the church relevant to the society. The fact that religious institutions are shaped to meet society needs must be seen in a positive way in this particular context.

All sources of this study will follow as bibliography in two categories; primary and secondary sources, and also appendices will be attached to this study for the purpose of references where need arises.

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APPENDIX A

SECULARIZATION IN MALAWI

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. INTRODUCTION (interview & Respondent(s))

2. PERSONAL/GROUP PARTICULARS

I. AGE RANGE:-----

II. MALE/ FEMALE:-----

III. EDUCATION LEVELS:-----

IV. OCCUPATION/STATUS:-----

V. EXPERIENCE IN CHURCH MATTERS:-----

VI. URBAN/ RURAL LOCATION:-----

3. In your view what is secularization?

6. Compare and contrast the present and past (20 -25 years ago) stand of Christians' participation in the following religious functions

i. Sunday services

ii. Mid week prayers

iii. Any other religious function

7. Compare and contrast the present and past (20 -25 years ago) status of
church offerings by Christians

i. Sunday offerings

ii. Pledges

8. How do Christians perceive the following Marriage and marital rites

i. Church weddings

Probe on # of weddings officiated in their congregation in the past five years

Is the number increasing or declining as compared to 20-25 years ago.

ii. Cohabitation:

Probe for # of families that they know have cohabitated in the past five years in their area (-----)

Is the number increasing or declining as compared to 20-25 years ago.

iii. Divorces:

Church's position on divorce

What do you think are the factors that are making couples to divorces?

Probe for # of divorce cases they know in the past five years (.....)

Is the number increasing or declining as compared to 20-25 years ago.

iv. Infant baptisms:

Probe on # of infants baptized in their congregations in the past five years

Is the number increasing or declining as compared to 20-25 years ago.

APPENDIX B

SECULARIZATION IN MALAWI SCHOOLS

1. INTRODUCTION (interviewer & Respondent(s))

2. SCHOOL PARTICULARS

School Name:-----

Zone: -----**District:**-----

Proprietor----- Date of establishment:-----

3. PERSONAL/GROUP PARTICULARS

I. AGE RANGE:-----

II. MALE/ FEMALE:-----

4. Do you have religious activities like morning devotions, Bible study that take place at this school?

5. How often do you hold prayers at this school? -----

6. How do you compare frequency of holding prayers at this school now and five years ago?-----

7. *How often are you visited by church chaplains for spiritual guidance?*

8. How do you compare the frequency of church chaplain visit for spiritual guidance at this school now and five years ago?

APPENDIX C

SECULARIZATION IN BRITAIN

1. INTRODUCTION (interview & Respondent(s))

2. PERSONAL PARTICULARS

I. AGE RANGE:-----

II. MALE/ FEMALE:-----

III. EDUCATION LEVELS:-----

IV. OCCUPATION/STATUS:-----

V. EXPERIENCE IN CHURCH MATTERS:-----

VI. URBAN/ RURAL LOCATION:-----

3. In your view what is secularization?

iv. Pastoral letters:

Church offerings by Christians

i. Sunday offerings

ii. Pledges

8. What can you say about Christians' present religious beliefs in matters below?

i. Belief in God

ii. Belief in life after death

iii. Belief in resurrection

iv. Belief in parousia (2nd coming of Jesus)

v. Belief in judgement

9. How do Christians perceive the following Marriage and marital rites

i. Church weddings

Probe on # of weddings officiated in their congregation in the past five years (-----
)

Is the number increasing or declining as compared to 20-25 years ago.

ii. Cohabitation:

Probe for # of families that they know have cohabitated in the past five years in their area (-----)

Is the number increasing or declining as compared to 20-25 years ago.

iii. Divorces:

Is the number increasing or declining as compared to 20-25 years ago.

iv. Infant baptisms:

Probe on # of infants baptized in their congregations in the past five years

Is the number increasing or declining as compared to 20-25 years ago.

9. What do you think are the factors that have contributed to the rise of

Thank you for sparing your time to talk to me on this issue of secularization in Britain. May the Good Lord bless you.

APPENDIX D

2011 MALAWI POPULATION BY RELIGION AND SEX AT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS

Population by Religion and Sex at National and Regional Levels					
Area and Sex	Total	Christian	Islam	Other	No Religion
Malawi	9,933,868	7,933,773	1,272,429	304,961	422,705
Urban	1,435,436	1,206,351	172,085	34,649	22,351
Rural	8,498,432	6,727,422	1,100,344	270,312	400,354
Males	4,867,563	3,842,535	616,584	148,255	260,189
Urban	742,839	618,183	91,315	18,105	15,236
Rural	4,124,724	3,224,352	525,269	130,150	244,953
Females	5,066,305	4,091,238	655,845	156,706	162,516
Urban	692,597	588,168	80,770	16,544	7,115
Rural	4,373,708	3,503,070	575,075	140,162	155,401
Northern Region	1,233,560	1,187,779	17,684	18,754	9,343
Urban	159,671	149,616	6,618	2,742	695
Rural	1,073,889	1,038,163	11,066	16,012	8,648
Males	601,752	576,644	9,628	9,236	6,244
Urban	80,205	74,640	3,673	1,380	512
Rural	521,547	502,004	5,955	7,856	5,732
Females	631,808	611,135	8,056	9,518	3,099
Urban	79,466	74,976	2,945	1,362	183
Rural	552,342	536,159	5,111	8,156	2,916
Central Region	4,066,340	3,388,408	283,964	110,609	283,359
Urban	567,604	466,481	77,660	11,624	11,839
Rural	3,498,736	2,921,927	206,304	98,985	271,520
Males	2,016,166	1,644,811	143,070	53,575	174,710
Urban	296,019	239,953	41,847	6,092	8,127
Rural	1,720,147	1,404,858	101,223	47,483	166,583
Females	2,050,174	1,743,597	140,894	57,034	108,649
Urban	271,585	226,528	35,813	5,532	3,712
Rural	1,778,589	1,517,069	105,081	51,502	104,937
Southern Region	4,633,968	3,357,586	970,781	175,598	130,003
Urban	708,161	590,254	87,807	20,283	9,817
Rural	3,925,807	2,767,332	882,974	155,315	120,186
Males	2,249,645	1,621,080	463,886	85,444	79,235
Urban	366,615	303,590	45,795	10,633	6,597
Rural	1,883,030	1,317,490	418,091	74,811	72,638
Females	2,384,323	1,736,506	506,895	90,154	50,768
Urban	341,546	286,664	42,012	9,650	3,220
Rural	2,042,777	1,449,842	464,883	80,504	47,548
Source: National Statistical Office, Malawi Population and Housing Census					

APPENDIX E

REGISTERED RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS IN MALAWI AS OF 1ST JULY, 2009

Abraham Church, Abraham International Church, Achewa Providence Industrial Mission, African Continent Mission, African Evangelical Church, Africa Evangelical Fellowship, Africa Muslim Agency, Alliance Church of Malawi, African Methodist Episcopal Church, African Yordan Church, African Assemblies of God Mission, African Bible College, Agape Congregation, Alimadiya Muslim Association, All for Jesus Ministry Church, Apostolic Christian Church, Apostolic Faith Mission, Apostolic Church in Zion, Apostolic Church of Pentecost, Atumwi a Yesu Khristu Church, All Nations New Testament Church, African Emmanuel Church, African Samaritan Mission, All Nations Church, Emmanuel Faith Mission, Agape Life Church, African Chiyambi Church, Apostolic Faith in Jesus Church, African Church of Malawi, Association of Vineyard Churches, Abundant Life Church, Antioch Church, Assemblies Movement Church and Mission, Assemblies of God Church International Word of Life Ministry of Madureira, Amazing Grace Pentecostal Church, Alpha Omega Bible Church, Acts Pentecostal Church, Ambassador for Christ Church, Abundant Life Mission, Apostolic Pentecostal Church of God, Brethren Christian Assemblies, Blantyre Baptist Church, Brethren in Christ Church, Baptist International Missions, Bantu Church of Christ, Bethany Bible Church in Malawi, Back to the Bible Church, Blantyre International Church in Christ, Bethel Pentecostal Church, Bible Methodist Church, Bible Believers Church, Bible Baptist Church, Bride of Jesus Church, Bread of Life Church International, Association of Vineyard Churches, The Believers of Jesus Christ Church, Bread Gospel Church, Bible Gospel Church in

Malawi, Bethlehem Pentecostal Church Interhealing in Jesus, Blood in Jesus African Church, Believers Blessed Assurance Church, Christian Body Pentecostal Church, Christ Alive Family Church, Cross Revival Church, Chikondano Pentecostal Church, Christ for All Revival Mission, Church of God African Nation, Come to Jesus Ministry Church, Church of New Life for All, Chisomo Christian Church, Churches of Christ Africa, Church of St. Paul, Church of the Nazarene, Church of Christ, Church of God Prophecy, Chipembedzo cha Makolo cha chikuda, Conference of the Lutheran Church, Church of Disciples, Church of Central African Presbyterian in Malawi, Christian Zion Church, Christian Gospel Churches, Confessional Lutheran Church, Christian Apostolic Church, Christian Apostolic Church of God, Church of Jesus Christ, Christian Apostolic Church of God, Church of Jesus Christ, Christian Apostolic Church in Zion, Christian Church Mission, Calvary Holiness Church, Church of Rama, Church of Forward in Faith, Christian Catholic Church, Church of Forwarding in Faith International, Central Islamic, Capital City Baptist Church, Church on the Rock, New Testament Bible Church, Church of Jesus Christ, of Latter-day Saints, Christian Life Church, Calvary Life Missions International, Church of Christ (Mbulumbudzi), Church of Africa Presbyterian, Jehovah's Sabbath Church, Church of the Restoration of Jehovah's Sabbath, Charismatic Pentecostal Church, Christian Salvation for Africa, Christian Brethren Churches, Christian Churches in Many Lands, Christian Bible Churches, Calvary Tabernacle Church in Malawi, Calvary Life Mission Church, Chilungamo Church, Christian Covenant, Church and Mission, Church of God Abrahamic Faith, The Christ Power Mission, Church of God in Malawi, Diocese of Mangochi, Dutch Reformed Church, Diocese of Nyasaland Anglican, Dedza Diocese, Dorothea Mission, Dedza Muslim Jamat, Deeper Christian Life Ministry and life Bible Church, Episcopal Conference Church of Malawi, East

African Church, Emmanuel International Church, Evangelical Brethren Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church, Evangelical Baptist Church, Elim Pentecostal Church of Malawi, Evangelistic Assemblies of God Church, Evangelical Church of Jesus, Everlasting Gospel Church, Eagles Pentecostal Church, Free Baptist Church, Full Gospel Church of God, Followers of Jesus Christ, Full Gospel Church, Fuller Life Restoration Church, Free Pentecostal Church, Fountain of Life Church, First Pentecostal Church, Gospel Messages Church, Greek Orthodox Church in Malawi, Good News Revival Church, Gospel Assemblies Church, God Believers Church, Glory of God Church, Grace Church in Malawi, Good News Outreach Church, The Greater New Macedonia: Church of God in Christ, Gospel Outreach International Church, Gods Love Church, Global Baptist Church and ministries, Gethsemane Hour Church, Glorious Light International, Holiness Revival Church, Harvest Rock Church, Holy Assemblies Church, Holy City Church, Heavens Embassy Church, House of the Living God Church, Hope of life Church, Harvesters Bible Church, Hozanna International Church, Integrity Family Church, Jehovah's Reformed Church, Jesus Pentecostal Church, Jesus for All Nations Pentecostal Church, Jubilee International Church, Everlasting Covenant Church, Jesus Worship Church, Kingdom Evangelical Church, Kings Victory Church, Light of Jesus Christ Church, Landmark Missionary Baptist Church, Light of God Church, Light of Life Church, Messengers of God Church, Mandarin Mission Church, New Chipangano Church, New Testament Baptist Church, New Living Gospel Church, New Testament Church, New Church of Christ, New Jesus Christ of Nazareth Pentecostal Church, New Apostolic of Life International Church, New Life Pentecostal Church of God, Word for Life Church, Word of Faith Bible Church, Pentecostal Holiness Church, Philadelphia Bible Church, Peak House Church, Power House of God Restoration Church, Power

Revival Evangelistic Church, Peace of God International Church, Pillar of God Church, Power of Salvation Pentecostal Church, Pool of Bethesda Pentecostal Church, Zambezi Industrial Mission, Zambezi Evangelical Church, Zone Christian Church, Royal Grace of God Church and Ministry, Resurrection Pentecostal Church, Remnant Church of God, Redeemed Pentecostal Church, Seventh Day True Way Church, Saint Georges Church, World Wide Church of God, Wells of Revival Church, Watchman Revival Church, World Mission Society Church of God, Will of God Church, Original Seventh Day Baptist, Oasis of the Lord Church, Protestant Revival Church, Power Revival Church, Presbyterian Churches of Malawi, Pillar of Fire Church, Pentecostal Waters of Life Church, Pentecostal Living Church, Synod of Blantyre (CCAP), Synod of Nkhoma (CCAP), Synod of Livingstonia (CCAP), Spirit and Power Full Gospel National Church, The Shalom Christian Church, Shekina Church of God, Salvation in Jesus Christ Church, Salvation Pentecostal Church, Seed of Abraham Pentecostal Church, Seventa Last Trupet Church of God, Showers of Blessings Church, Salvation Faith Pentecostal, Trinity Gospel Church, The Holy Ghost Christian Church, Topia Church, United Pentecostal Church, United Evangelical Church, United Apostolic Mission, United Assemblies of God, United Living Gospel, United Full Gospel, Unity Church, United With Christ Church, United Church, United New Jerusalem Church, Umodzi mwa Khristu Church, United in Faith Mission and United Christian Church.

Source: Registrar General in Malawi