

150 YEARS OF MISSION-CHURCHES IN SWAZILAND, 1844 - 1994
ELITISM: A FACTOR IN THE GROWTH AND DECLINE

by

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SUMMARY

In 1994, Swaziland celebrated 150 years of Christianity. Three distinct eras are identified in the history of mission-church growth, each of which is related to elitism.

1884 saw the start of missions in Swaziland, but this effort was short-lived. The mission became caught up in internecine warfare, the resident missionary and the Swazi Christian community fled to Natal where the church grew and matured in exile during a period of missionary lacuna in Swaziland itself.

After thirty-six years, the missionaries were once again allowed to settle in Swaziland and the church grew rapidly, mainly as a result of the widespread institutional work undertaken. Soon an elite Christian community developed as people came to identify with a mission or church, many of whom had little Christian commitment.

In 1968, Swaziland was granted independence. A return to culture accompanied a strong wave of nationalism. Mission-church growth in this period declined as those, whose commitment to the Christian faith was shallow, returned to culture or joined one of the Independent churches which catered for varying degrees of syncretism.

The third era outlined in this study is one of secularisation. Family structures were eroded, materialism took hold and the church was in danger of becoming irrelevant. The older churches continue their decline, but new churches, appealing particularly to the new elite, are growing.

150 Years of Mission-Churches in Swaziland, 1844 - 1994

Elitism: A Factor in the Growth and Decline

Key Terms: Swaziland; Churches in Swaziland; Elitism in Swaziland; Church growth, Swaziland; Christianity in Swaziland; Religion, Swaziland; Wesleyan Church, Swaziland; Anglican Church, Swaziland; Christianity and culture, Swaziland.

PREFACE

My interest in this little Kingdom of Swaziland began a number of years ago when I was asked to edit a chapter on the status of Christianity in that country for MARC/Lausanne. During my period of field research, I was impressed with the quality of some of those people who assisted me with providing information. Through them, I learned of the tension that exists between the culture of the Swazi people and Christianity and the difficult issues it presents to the church.

I then realised I had more information than I ever needed for that particular project and assured myself that one day I would use this for the benefit of Swaziland. This happened with the production of the *Swaziland Christian Handbook* in 1994. But somehow, there was still more to find out and document. Not much has been written on the church in Swaziland, and little attempt has been made to compile the scanty statistics on the growth of the church. This dissertation seeks to fill that void.

I would like to thank Dr Nico Smith for his wise guidance as my supervisor during this period of study and for his availability when I have needed him. I would also like to thank my friend and husband, Harald, who has encouraged me to be all that God is wanting me to be and do.

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INTRODUCTION

Swaziland is a fascinating country, full of contrasts. Its people are friendly and courteous. They are to be found in their rural homesteads in traditional attire or working in pinstripe suits in modern office blocks. The church in this country has been popular but has suffered decline. Paradigm shifts have significantly affected the status of the church.

The period covered by this survey is significant. It marks 150 years of church planting in Swaziland. Christianity's potential to influence the country came when King Sobhuza I invited missionaries to settle in his country in 1839. By the time they eventually arrived in 1844, his young son Mswati II had taken over as monarch. After two years of growth, the church was caught up in royal intrigues. The King's half-brother took refuge at the church which resulted in a massacre. The mission was aborted and thirty-six years were to elapse before the church was given permission to work in Swaziland again.

Since that time, the church has grown and matured. The church planted in this tiny Kingdom has grown with the country. It has played an important role in the development of the country through its education programmes and medical care. Some aspects of the church have remained static, needing new vision and initiatives, while other parts of the church are alive and relevant.

This study identifies three eras of missionary enterprise. The first was a period of growth in which the church became an elitist symbol. This was followed by a period in which culture and tradition became the status symbol. The accession of King Mswati

II to the throne in 1982 saw the beginning of yet another era, marked by a rapid modernisation of the country which affected the way people thought about themselves, their country and the relevance of religious beliefs.

This dissertation does not claim to be a scientific analysis of available statistics. Indeed the sources of these statistics are themselves inadequate. Rather, this study has sought to collate all available sources of statistics ranging from church annual yearbooks and other church records, surveys conducted, Official Yearbooks of the Union of South Africa to Census Reports. Time was spent in the Archives, and the National Library in Swaziland, as well as the library of the University of Swaziland at Kwaluseni, searching for information. The State Libraries in Pretoria and Cape Town filled in some of the gaps. Some statistics were given by the church leaders themselves. This study, then, examines these statistics and seeks to discover trends. At best it is only a guideline, but as such it will be useful to the church in examining where it is coming from and where it should be heading.

Neither does this study claim to be a comprehensive study of the growth of the whole church in Swaziland. It is quite specific. It seeks to examine the growth and decline of the mission-churches. This includes both evangelical and ecumenical churches. It does not make any attempt to document the growth of the Independent Churches in any detail other than to give trends on their growth and possible hindrances to their continued growth. However, the President of the League of African Churches, Isaac Dlamini, has been helpful in supplying a complete list of member churches of this body, and information relating to these churches. A large group of Independent Churches other than the League of African Churches exists. These groups are not affiliated to any co-ordinating body, and little is known of these churches or congregations.

Research on different aspects of the church in Swaziland has already been done.

The statistical aspect, however, has been neglected. The necessity for research in this field has given rise to this dissertation.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AIC	African Independent Churches
E	Elangeni - Swazi Currency Unit
Enl	Enlightenment (used in tables)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
LoAC	League of African Churches
MARC	Missions Advance Research Committee
ME	Me (Self) (used in tables)
NERMIC	New and Emerging Religious Movements and Independent Churches
NIV	New International Version
OC Ministries	Formerly: Overseas Crusades
OY	Official Yearbook (used in tables)
PACLA	Pan African Christian Leaders Assembly
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SCC	Swaziland Conference of Churches
SET	Swaziland Evangelism Task
SNL	Swaziland National Land
SW	Spirit World (used in tables)
TEAM	The Evangelical Alliance Mission

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO SWAZILAND

A brief introduction to Swaziland is necessary to give context to this study on church growth. A profile of Swaziland giving geographic, social and economic information can be found in Addendum 1.

Origins of the Swazi people and their early history

The early history of Swaziland is important to this study and the roles consecutive kings played in the growth of Christianity and the development of the country will be looked at in greater detail in later chapters.

The Swazis form part of the Nguni ethnic grouping. A sub-group broke away and settled in Mozambique in the 16th century. Around 1750 they crossed the Lebombo Mountains into present-day Swaziland under the leadership of Ngwane III. They conquered the clans living in the area, and absorbed them into the Swazi nation and Swaziland became established as a monarchy. Sobhuza I, commonly known as Somhlolo, took over power in 1839 and he played a significant role in the introduction of Christianity to Swaziland.

In the mid-19th century the Swazi nation was consolidated under the powerful rule of Mswati II, who succeeded his father Sobhuza I in 1845 following a period of regency. It has been stated that he was the greatest of the Swazi fighting kings (Kuper, 1961, p. 15). It was under his rule that a Christian mission was established and later aborted. His death in 1868 brought an end to an era of bloodshed.

Another significant king in the history of Swaziland was Mbandzeni, who ceded

his country to land hungry settlers. At the time of his death in 1889, little of the land was in the hands of the Swazi nation. It was during his reign that Swaziland was opened up for the entrance of Christian teaching. It was also under his reign that western civilisation took hold.

The Swazi nation fought to exist as a nation, and battled against the Boers, European settlers and the British Government. At the end of the 19th century the Swazi people found they had lost their land to Boer Control through concessions and, after the Anglo-Boer War, to British control. In 1907, Swaziland became a High Commission Territory, but throughout this troubled period, the monarchy continued to exercise societal control. All these factors had an impact on the growth of the church and will be studied in greater depth in Chapter 6.

Political development

King Sobhuza II gained ascendancy to the throne in 1921. He soon proved himself to be a skilled politician and diplomat. He was the first king to receive an education and the thanks was due to his grandmother, the regent before he became king, who saw that power lay in education (Scutt, 1966, p. 27).

Sobhuza inherited a country eaten away by concessions, overtaken by colonial powers and bankrupt financially. He tried fruitlessly to challenge the legality of the concessions, including leading a delegation to London. He fought to buy back the land sold to concessionaires during the colonial period. The land that he regained became Swazi National Land and is kept in trust for the Swazi nation.

During Sobhuza II's reign, Swaziland became involved in a liberation struggle resulting in Swaziland being granted the status of a self-governing state in 1967, and in 1968 Sobhuza led his country to independence. A Westminster form of government was introduced at independence, but this was replaced in 1973 with a system of government combining western and traditional structures. Sobhuza encouraged the formation of the

League of African Churches and the period surrounding the struggle for independence politically, also saw the rapid growth of Zionist and Apostolic churches. Sobhuza died in 1982 after ruling Swaziland for sixty one significant years in the life of the country.

King Mswati III succeeded his father in 1986 at the age of eighteen.

Population growth

Swaziland has one of the fastest growing populations in the world with a growth rate of 3.4%. The population in 1995 was 908 000 and it is anticipated this figure will reach 1,1 million by the year 2001. This rapid growth in the population is increasing the ratio of non-churchgoers to churchgoers since many of the younger generation do not feel Christianity to be important to them. This will become evident as church membership as a ratio of total population is examined in Chapter 4.

No less than 47% of Swaziland's population is under the age of fifteen, and 58% under the age of twenty. This high growth rate will affect the ability of the country to meet the needs for employment, and will place education and health care systems under strain in years to come. Since churches and missionary societies pioneered education and health care, and an institutional approach has been used to extend the church, this factor is of significance in a study of church growth. The estimated number of people currently living in urban areas has risen to 30%. Some 55% of the country's people live between Mbabane and Manzini.

Culture and traditional religion

Swaziland has a rich cultural heritage of which it is proud. Its old traditions are carefully guarded, and colourful ceremonies, held throughout the year, have held the culture of the people intact. While other countries in Africa have readily accepted a western way of life, Swaziland has protected its traditional values watchfully. The King, who is deeply respected, plays a major role in uniting the people. Religion and culture

are intertwined, and although people of purely traditional beliefs are few, the majority of the people exercise their faith in one of the indigenous churches which blend traditions of the fathers with Christianity in varying degrees.

Traditionally, Swazis believe Mvelinchanti is the supreme being. He is the creator (or the great ancestor) and has personhood. He regulates society through disasters, and the ancestors (*emadloti*) play an intercessory link between Mvelinchanti and the family members. Religion is part of the structure and fabric of society and there is no separation between sacred and secular. Traditional religion is about people, attitudes and values as they affect relationships and environment. Traditional religion affects social, economic and community activity. Community ties in Swazi society are important, deep and inter-dependent (Froise, 1994, p. 19).

Ancestors are appeased or venerated but never worshipped. The family has a responsibility to care for one's ancestors and should this duty be neglected, disaster will befall the family. At times it is difficult to know the wishes of an ancestor and then a diviner or medium is consulted. The responsibility for caring for one's ancestors and ensuring the delicate balance between the dead and the living, is the responsibility of the oldest male family member and for this reason it is difficult for a man to commit himself to Christianity (Kuper, 1986, p. 61-64).

The return to culture which accompanied independence has affected the growth of the church and these implications will be considered in Chapter 7.

CHAPTER 2

EARLIEST BEGINNINGS OF CHRISTIANITY IN SWAZILAND

King Sobhuza I's dream and the requests to the Wesleyan Church

King Sobhuza I had a dream which played a significant role in the history of the church. Sobhuza I saw men carrying round pieces of metal and a scroll. In his dream he was told to choose the scroll. It is not certain whether the scroll (or book) in the dream signified either the Bible or education. The church has taken the meaning to be the scriptures, while secularists feel it was education. Whatever interpretation is placed on the dream made little difference at that time since education of indigenous people was undertaken by the missionaries.

Missionaries were already working south of Swaziland in the area that was then Basotholand and Sobhuza sent a delegation of men to the Wesleyan Mission requesting that teachers come to his country. Before his death in 1839, Sobhuza is recorded as having addressed his counsellors, "Seek a white man (teacher) for my son; he will preserve him and the nation" (Jones, 1993, p. 182). Several delegations were eventually sent, but it was not until after the death of Sobhuza that the call was responded to.

This dream of Sobhuza held a further message for the Swazi people. To Sobhuza, it was a warning from the ancestors never to fight the white people and this played a role in Swazi relationships with Europeans through the years (Scutt, 1966, p.18).

The Wesleyan Church responds

The account of the Wesleyan attempt to introduce Christianity to the Swazi people has much wider ramifications than merely establishing Wesleyan churches. Rather it affected the planting of churches in Swaziland for many years to come.

James Allison, the son of 1820 settlers, became a teacher, then lay-preacher and later a pioneer missionary in the Wesleyan Church (Eveleigh, 1920, p. 116). Allison, accompanied by Richard Giddy and Sotho evangelists responded to Sobhuza I's call and arrived in the Baraputsa country, as Swaziland was then called, in June 1844. They were met and escorted to the residence of the regent who had oversight of the country until Mswati II, Sobhuza 's young son, was old enough to take control. The welcome was warm. The speeches that were made gave some indication of the expectations of the people. Perkins (1974, p. 80), quoted from Allison's diary, records the speech made by the Queen Mother. Extracts are quoted below:

“The teachers have at length arrived in the midst of us. Our enemies have long oppressed us. The teachers are our only hope. Through them we may be preserved from destruction.”

It can be seen that the Swazi people were looking for more than education or religious instruction, but rather that the missionaries would act as a buffer between them and their enemies, particularly the Zulus. They were allotted land in the south and the position of the site given to the mission, strategically placed between the royal court and a troublesome Zulu tribe, further confirms this view. In their enthusiasm to present the gospel message Allison and Giddy may not have fully understood this implication. They stayed long enough to build a house and chapel and plant the fruit trees they had brought before returning south. They left two Sotho evangelists, Job Nkambule and Barnabus Mthembu (Jones, 1993, p. 12) to commence the work in Swaziland.

Allison and Giddy returned to their mission station and Allison made formal representation to his mission to consider commencing a work in Swaziland. While awaiting his mission's response he began learning Siswati and translated the First Catechism with the assistance of two Swazi men who had accompanied him home. On his return to Swaziland he took with him 400 copies of this booklet that had been printed on a press at the mission station.

The first year - 1844 to 1845

Nkambule and Mthembu commenced a school and conducted services and when Allison returned a year later he found a number of people ready to be baptised and children and adults who had learned to read. This period was unsettled politically. Mswati II had taken over leadership, and trouble was brewing between Mswati and the former regent, Malambule.

Power struggles ensued and, in the process, whole villages were destroyed. The evangelists showed their disapproval by sending a notched stick to the royal household indicating the number of villages that had been eliminated. Mswati responded by sending a cow in an effort to make reparation but these were rejected by Nkambule and Mthembu.

A year of growth - 1845 to 1846

A year later, in July 1845, Allison returned to Swaziland with a party of thirty. He developed the base at Mahamba, the site allocated him by the royal household. Mission stations were established in new areas and the teachers, who had accompanied Allison, began the task of establishing the new ministries. The work advanced rapidly. Allison's congregation at Mahamba grew to between five and six hundred, including those from surrounding villages. Requests were received from chiefs across the country for teachers to be sent to them. The records of achievement over the two years of Wesleyan work in Swaziland showed remarkable growth. Four chapels and six preaching stations were established, recording twenty-six accredited church members and a further forty-one on-trial members. Allison, together with ten catechists, was planting churches and ministering to the people. During the second year of ministry in Swaziland an estimated 12,000 attended church services (Jones, 1993, p.13).

Trouble brewing

This period of rapid expansion and growth in the church was taking place at a politically turbulent time. Mswati II, the newly installed young king, turned against Malambule, who fled before him to take refuge at Allison's mission station. Allison refused to take sides and attempted in vain to mediate. A force of about 1 200 of Mswati's warriors, supported by Ohrigstad (Lydenburg) Boer Commandos, arrived at the mission station during a Sunday morning service attended by some 700 - 800 people. A carnage took place leaving between fifty and sixty people dead, including women and children (Jones, 1993, p. 14). Du Plessis relates an incident in which Mrs Allison saved several young girls by casting her arms around them and covering them with her clothes to protect them from the Swazi fury (1910, p. 344). Mswati demanded the surrender of the wounded, all the women and children and also a woman who had stated that 'God was greater than Mswati' (Mears: [sine anno], p. 11). It was clearly believed by Mswati and his councillors that Allison had interfered in internal politics (Jones, 1993, p. 14) and this incident was referred to many times in years to come as the church sought to advance.

With hindsight, historians have suggested that Allison erred in not making contact with the king on his return to the country, and that his personal intervention could have avoided the carnage and his subsequent retreat. Perkins (1974, p. 98) suggests that the king's reconciliatory gift of a cow to the two evangelists was the key that could have opened the door for the presentation of the gospel to the royal household.

The exodus

Allison surveyed the damage caused by this incident. The area around the main Mahamba mission station was depopulated for thirty miles, while an outstation was burnt to the ground, killing twelve people who had taken refuge. On the 17th September 1846, Allison reached a decision to move to Zulu territory and, together with about 1 000

people, he arrived at one of the outstations. Two months later Allison reached Pietermaritzburg accompanied by about 200 people.

The refugee settlement at Indaleni and later Edendale.

In 1847 Allison and his Swazi followers settled at Indaleni where he established a Christian community based on a European village model. The people were taught trades to enable them to earn a living and the young people who had accompanied him were schooled and clothed.

Four years later, Allison purchased a farm just outside Pietermaritzburg and most of the Swazis moved with him. He again established a model village. He named this settlement Edenvale and sold land free-hold to the people. This was seen by other missionary societies as being the most successful enterprise in Natal (Perkins, 1974, p. 127). The Swazis were soon well established in trades and farming and became wealthy through their own initiatives. Allison's influence in their lives not only enabled them to become prosperous financially, but he also instilled in them a commitment to spread the gospel and financially support church work. In effect the work at Indaleni and later Edenvale became the Swazi church in exile.

This refugee settlement in Natal was of great significance to the church in Swaziland in later years. The Swazis never forgot their homeland and many years later spearheaded the return of the Wesleyan church to Swaziland. One of the young people who had fled with Allison was Daniel Msimang who was later to re-establish Wesleyan witness in Swaziland.

A closed door for Christian witness

The door to any religious activity was effectively closed with the withdrawal of Allison and his party. For Mswati II, the Christian missionary experience had not been a happy one. He perceived the missionaries had meddled in politics but he also resented

the fact that Allison had fled with his subjects (Perkins, 1974 p. 121). Furthermore, the missionaries had created a Christian counter-culture that challenged and undermined Mswati's supremacy and the existing social structure. Allegiance was being paid to the missionaries and Christian teachers rather than Mswati. His indiscriminate killing was challenged, and traditions such as polygamy, levirate marriages, and dress codes were opposed.

In 1859, Merensky and Grutzner of the Berlin Missionary Society visited Mswati to request permission to establish a mission. He kept them waiting for a number of days before agreeing to see them but was evidently distrustful of their motives. When he did grant an audience, he made it clear he was more interested in the firearm they were carrying than in allowing them to commence mission work, and stated he would not tolerate a doctrine that forbade warfare and bloodshed. The missionaries left with heavy hearts (Du Plessis, 1910, p. 345). In 1871 Bishop Wilkinson and Rev Robertson of the Anglican church visited Swaziland but their request to commence a ministry was denied (Jones, 1993, p. 618).

Mswati II died in 1868, but a long period of regency followed during which missionaries were still not allowed to propagate their faith or establish settlements, even though many white farmers and traders were allowed to live in the country and land concessions were granted to them. It was only after the accession of the new king, Mbandzeni, in 1875 that missions were allowed to commence ministries in Swaziland.

CHAPTER 3

CHURCH GROWTH IN SWAZILAND FROM 1880 TO 1994

Once the door was opened to missions following the years of prohibition, missionary activity abounded. Many denominations and mission agencies have been involved in ministry in Swaziland over the past century despite the fact that it is but a small country. Apart from establishing congregations, the churches have also established schools, health care facilities, centres of learning and many other ministries. This institutional approach to church planting had in it both seeds of strength and seeds of weakness. The number of church members and adherents increased rapidly, but nominalism and syncretism were problems. This will be discussed in subsequent chapters. However, whatever the effect this approach has had on the church and its growth, it has done much to develop the country's infrastructure. This chapter will chart the growth of the church over the period from 1880, when Joel Jackson was given official permission to work in Swaziland, to 1994 which marks 150 years of ministry in the country, albeit interrupted. Statistical sources will be examined to verify growth patterns. It will be seen that growth in the mission churches was rapid in the early years, it reached a peak and subsequently declined in affiliation when measured against population growth rates. In fact, the root causes for its decline were already being sown in the pioneer years when the church seemed to be flourishing. Chapters 6 and 7 will show that a clash of world views, and a lack of understanding of the culture of the people, played a major role in the decline in the church.

Three phases of church growth in Swaziland

The expansion of the church can be divided into three eras:

The pioneer period: 1880 - 1910

This period was a turbulent time in the history of Southern Africa. In neighbouring Transvaal, the British were trying to gain political rights for its subjects which eventually culminated in the Anglo-Boer war (1899 - 1902), and Swaziland was drawn into a battle with which she had no concern. It was during this period that Swaziland's land was being eaten away by concessions granted to white settlers by short-sighted kings. This resulted in a people dispossessed of their land and in 1907 Swaziland was taken over by Britain as a High Commission territory.

The early missionaries in Swaziland were of a special breed. They were dedicated and tenacious despite the apathy or opposition of the ruling monarchs. Membership records at the end of this period reveal a considerable measure of success given the difficulties these early pioneers encountered. However, statistics are not able to document the actual penetration of the gospel message into the lives and culture of the people. Neither do they tell us of the incredible hardships experienced by those early pioneers as they gave their all to extend the Kingdom of God. It will be seen, even in this early pioneer period, that a number of factors were present which eventually influenced the growth of the church.

The Anglo-Boer interrupted missionary activity during this period and all expatriate missionaries, except Malla Moe (TEAM) left the country (Nilsen, Sheetz, 1956, p. 99 - 117).

Anglican beginnings

The first lasting work in Swaziland was commenced by the Anglican church. Father Joel Jackson established a mission in the Transvaal on the boundary of Swaziland in 1871 and used this base to gradually win the confidence of the king and his people. His

relationship-building was rewarded when Mbandezi ceded him a tract of land in 1880 at Usuthu to build a school. The growth of this church is studied in greater depth in Chapter 5.

The Wesleyans return

Daniel Msimang was a young boy when he fled to Natal with Allison. The vision of returning to Swaziland with the Christian message challenged a number of Swazis in exile, and in 1881, thirty six years after he had left his homeland, Msimang, accompanied by others from the settlement at Indaleni, returned to head up the Wesleyan work (Mears, 1955, p. 9). The re-establishment of the Wesleyan church is dealt with more fully in Chapter 5.

Non-denominational mission agencies commence ministries in Swaziland

The first of the non-denominational groups to commence work in Swaziland was an indigenous mission, the **South African General Mission** which was started with the encouragement of Dr Andrew Murray. John Baillie was sent to conduct a survey of the area and it was he who was asked to begin the work in 1880 (Perkins, 1974, p. 277-279).

The Scandinavian Alliance Mission, an American agency, was commenced in 1892 by Rev W E Dawson. The name of this mission was later changed to **The Evangelical Alliance Mission (TEAM)** (Perkins, 1974, p. 292-298).

In 1887 members of the Lutheran Church left the Berlin Mission settlement at Botshabelo near Middelburg to settle in Swaziland. Laws governing the number of families resident on any given farm in the Transvaal forced eleven families to seek some other place to stay and, although they were of Basotho descent, they chose to move to Swaziland. They established several Lutheran churches in Swaziland under the name **Bapedi Lutheran Church**. Scarcely any recognition is given to their enterprise in Swaziland, and little information on their work is available, probably because the church was under indigenous leadership (Perkins, 1974, p. 168-169). In 1913 the **Berlin Mission** established a ministry and the Rev Johannes Mdiniso, a minister from the Bapedi

Lutheran Church became their first missionary. The work of the Bapedi Lutheran Church in Swaziland was absorbed into the work of the Berlin Mission. Twelve years later the first expatriate missionary joined Mdiniso in this mission (Kusel, 1976, p. 47).

Floyd Perkins (1974, p. 449) compiled statistics of the church membership in 1910 which he feels are 'reasonably accurate' using mission reports and other sources. This data is listed in Table 1 below.

After 30 years of ministry, membership of the four churches totalled 1 365 while attendance at the services amounted to 5 215. These figures compare favourably with the Census report of 1911 which gives the total number of Christians (Native) as 2 925. From these Census figures, we can assume that not all those attending church were willing to stand up and be counted as 'Christian'. This Census total of 2 925 in 1911

Table 1
A comparative statistical table - 1910

	Wesleyan	Anglican	SAGM	SAM	Total
Number of Swazi evangelists	18	2	15	14	49
Number of resident missionaries	0	4	15	6	25
Out-station churches	21	7	11	15	54
Main mission station churches	2	3	5	1	11
Baptised members	450	445	245	225	1 365
Number in regular attendance	1 950	920	1 395	950	5 215

Perkins, Floyd, *A History of Christian Missions in Swaziland to 1910*. University of Witwatersrand, 1974, p. 449.

¹ Discussion with Bishop R Schiele of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Swaziland.

² Perkins does not take into account that several of the Wesleyan workers were fully ordained ministers. An hierarchical structure existed in terminology. The highest in the order were ordained ministers (usually white), then came evangelists (black), followed by lay preachers.

TABLE 2

Church development in Swaziland

<u>MISSIONS AND CHURCHES COMMENCING MINISTRIES</u>		<u>CHURCHES ESTABLISHED</u>
ANGLICAN CHURCH	1880	
WESLEYAN CHURCH	1881	
	1885	
BAPEDI LUTHERAN CHURCH	1887	
SOUTH AFRICA GENERAL MISSION	1890	AFRICA EVANGELICAL CHURCH (1963)
SCANDINAVIAN ALLIANCE MISSION	1892	EVANGELICAL CHURCH, EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH (1956)
	1895	
	1900	
INDEPENDENT METHODIST CHURCH (Ex Wesleyan)	1904	
	1905	
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH	1908	
CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE	1910	
SWEDISH ALLIANCE MISSION (Ex Scandinavian Alliance)	1910	ALLIANCE CHURCH OF SWAZILAND (1974)
PILGRIM HOLINESS MISSION	1910	EMMANUEL WESLEYAN CHURCH (1968)
PENTECOSTAL ASSEMBLIES OF GOD	1912	PENTECOSTAL ASSEMBLIES OF GOD
ROMAN CATHOLIC	1913	
BERLIN MISSION	1913	EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH (1976)
NORWEGIAN FREE EVANGELICAL MISSION (ex Scandinavian Alliance Mission)	1915	NORWEGIAN EVANGELICAL MISSION
AFRICAN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, S D A	1920	
NEDERDUITSE GEREFORMEERDE KERK	1922	
	1925	
	1930	
	1935	
	1940	
ASSEMBLIES OF GOD	1943	
METROPOLITAN CHURCH ASSOCIATION	1944	
UNITED CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF AFRICA	1944	
	1945	
	1950	
SWAZILAND REFORMED CHURCH - was NGK in Afrika	1951	
BANTU SWEDISH FREE CHURCH	1954	SWEDISH FREE CHURCH
	1955	
	1960	
SWAZILAND ASSEMBLIES OF GOD	1961	
ASSEMBLIES OF GOD IN SITEKI	1962	
FREE GOSPEL MISSION	1962	FREE GOSPEL CHURCH
	1965	
SWAZI NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES OF GOD	1968	
NEW APOSTOLIC CHURCH	1970	
SWEDISH ALLIANCE CHURCH OF CHRIST (ex Swedish All. Miss)	1971	
	1972	
	1975	

Acknowledgements to Kasei (1975, p. 58)

gives an adherence figure of 2.95% of the total 1911 gives an adherence figure of 2.95% of the total black population.

It is of interest to note that the Wesleyan church, as recorded in Table 1, had the largest number of congregations as well as the largest number in regular church attendance despite the fact that there was no white leadership.

The consolidation period - 1910 - 1975

Historically, this period covers the reign of Sobhuza II who came to power in 1921. He fought to regain the land given to concessionaires, he fought for independence for his country and he instilled a sense of pride in tradition and culture in his people. It is against this backdrop that the church expanded and the move towards indigenous churches commenced.

A new awakening in missionary interest was occurring in Europe and America. The Student Volunteer Movement had as its watchword "The Evangelisation of the World in this Generation". Later, the Edinburgh Conference of 1910 became a catalyst that resulted in rapid expansion of the church in many parts of the world, and as a result, many new missionaries arrived to work with established agencies and a number of new missions were commenced. Notable in the new arrivals were the Church of the Nazarene, African Methodist Episcopal Church, the Roman Catholics, the Berlin Mission, Seventh Day Adventists, Dutch Reformed Church, and the Pilgrim Holiness Mission. Dates of their commencement, and the start of other churches, are listed in Table 2 which gives a graphic outline of the development of churches in Swaziland from 1880 to 1975 (acknowledgements to Kusel, 1976, p. 49 - 56). The development of the indigenous churches is not included in this chart.

This period was marred by a number of schisms and splits from these new ministries, particularly from the Scandinavian Alliance Mission, which gave rise to many small missions and subsequently a number of small churches.

The number of churches across Swaziland spread rapidly during this period and

official records show the number of congregations increased from sixty-four in 1920 to 434 in 1938. Church attendance increased from a little over 7 000 in 1922 to nearly 40 000 in 1938 (Official Yearbooks of the Union of South Africa).

The end of this era coincided with the granting of independence to the Swazi nation. We see the church was also involved in its struggle to reach adulthood and gain 'freedom' from the mother churches, and the right to control the churches they had effectively helped to establish. Control did pass from western missionaries to nationals during this period but even African leaders question whether their churches were really ready for the independence they attained since little had been done to prepare leadership for control. This will be discussed further in Chapter 7 of this study.

The church comes of age - 1976 onwards

This period is marked by a rapid increase in the number of churches and mission agencies springing up. The registry office records a greater number of new ministries commenced after 1975 than was recorded in the history of the church in Swaziland up to that time. No less than seventy-two new ministries were registered between 1988 and 1992 alone. The Swaziland Christian Handbook (Froise, 1994 p. 30) lists a total of 184 in three categories of churches:

Mission churches and ministries (includes indigenous charismatic churches)	83 groups
League of African Churches (LoAC)	48 groups
AIC's not belonging to LoAC	53 groups

Of these, no less than 54% were Zionist or Apostolic groups. Addendum 1 lists the church groups recorded in the Swaziland Christian Handbook.

There are a number of reasons for the proliferation of new mission groups and churches during this period. Firstly, it marks the rapid growth of the African Independent

Church (AIC) movement. With King Sobhuza 's encouragement, the Swazi people began to take pride in their culture, at the heart of which was their religious beliefs. To accommodate both their culture and Christianity they chose to give their allegiance to the AIC churches. The growth of these churches will be dealt with more fully later in the study.

This period also coincided with the rise of the Charismatic movement worldwide. With a strong emphasis on the involvement of the laity, many small ministries began to appear, started initially by expatriate workers, but soon taken over by local initiative. A significant number of new Charismatic ministries, commenced by indigenous leaders, are now emerging and its churches are growing.

The number of congregations in 1994 totalled 1 044 and they were served by 610 pastors and priests. The number of members per church and preaching point, averaged sixty-two. These figures exclude the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches who calculate the church population rather than actual membership or church attenders. If these figures were included, the resultant figure would not give a true reflection of the members per church at that time.

³ The African Independent Churches now prefer to be referred to as indigenous churches or African Initiated Churches but for the purpose of this study the term AIC will be used to distinguish them from other indigenous churches.

⁴ The number of communicants and adherents per congregation in the Anglican church totalled 428, and the corresponding figure for the Roman Catholic church was 384.

CHAPTER 4

CHURCH GROWTH STATISTICALLY

Religious affiliation from Census Reports 1904 - 1956

How has church growth fared in the first half of the century? To try to establish the extent of growth, this study will look at the census reports which list religious affiliation. Unfortunately the religious question in the census questionnaire is no longer included, thus these figures are only available from 1904 to 1956. Furthermore, the 1956 Census only gives one total figure for the Black community which makes comparison with other years difficult. These statistics are tabulated in Table 3 and include the census year, the population, and the number who claim

Table 3

Religious affiliation from 1904 to 1956 according to the census reports

Year	Population	Affiliation (total pop.)	% of population	Black affiliation	% of Black population
1904	85 491	1 622	1,9%	682	0.88%
1911	99 959	3 241	3,2%	2 925	2.9%
1921	112 951	9 552	8,4%	7 051	6,3%
1936	153 270	48 677	31,7%	45 644	30.0%
				25 453*	16.6%
1946	181 215	68 852	37.2%	64 922	35.8%
				51 908#	28.6%
1956	237 041	144 863	61,1%	137 566	59,8%

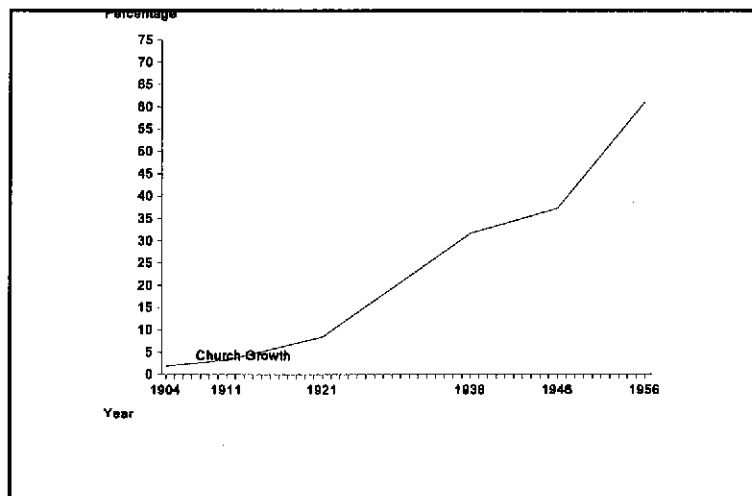
* Excludes 'Native Separatist Churches'. However this figure appears to include non-mainline mission churches also.
Excludes African Indigenous churches.

affiliation to a Christian church. The affiliation is also listed as a percentage against the total population, both for the total population and the Black population. The full census reports and notes on those reports are tabled in Addendum 2.

Table 4 shows the growth of religious affiliation from 1904 to 1956 as recorded in the census reports and listed in Table 3 above. It includes all population groups as well as the indigenous churches. The graph shows the steady growth of Christianity except for a period during the second world war when growth in the mission-churches was protracted. This will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter 6.

By way of contrast, Holleman's sample survey of 1960 (1964, p. 160) finds that 46.6% claim to belong to a Christian church, either mission or indigenous, while the Official Yearbooks give considerably lower membership figures. These statistics are given in Table 6.

Table 4
Church growth from 1904 to 1956 from census reports
as a percentage of all population groups

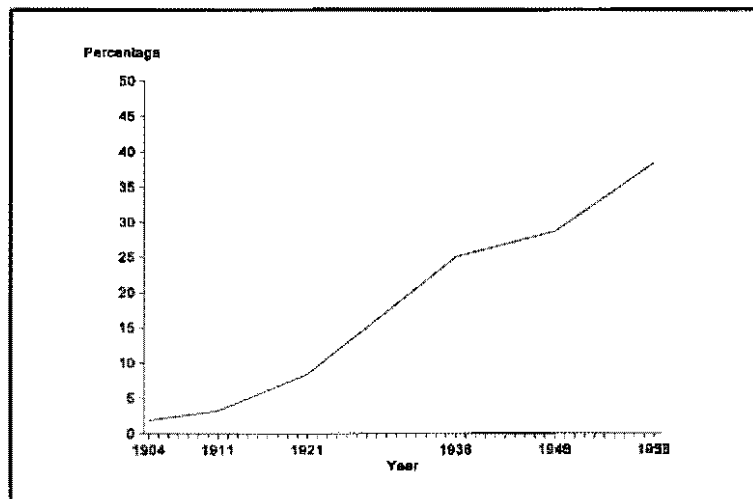


In Table 5 these figures have been adjusted to give an assessment of Black mission-church affiliation. African Independent Churches (AIC's) began to make an

impact on statistics in the 1936 census report and the data has been adjusted to exclude these groups. It will be seen that mission-church affiliation grew from less than 1% at the beginning of the century to nearly 40% of the total population in 1956. This compares with Holleman's figure of 29,3% (1964, p. 163) in his 1960 sample survey.

Holleman notes a preponderance of mission-church Christians in the urban and peri-urban areas. He records 68,7% mission-church affiliation in the urban areas compared with 32,1% in the rural areas. However 80% of those living in rural areas with an education above Standard IV claimed to belong to a mission-church. His figures for AIC ('separatist') churches show less disparity: 17,2% in urban areas compared with 20,3% in rural areas.

Table 5
Black mission church growth from 1904 to 1956 census reports
after adjustments



Notes:

1. The 1936 Census report has a category 'Native separatist churches' listing 20 191 affiliates, while the 'Other Christian' category lists only 869. It would appear that many mission-churches have been listed under the former category. In order to correct this, a figure of 6 000 has been allocated to separatist churches (half the figure in the 1946 Census), while the balance of 14 191 has been allocated to mission-churches giving an affiliation of 25.9% of the Black population.

2. The 1956 Census report gives no breakdown of religious affiliation for the Black population. An estimate has been made, using Holleman's figure of 21.4% separatist church adherence in 1960 (1964, p. 164) and excluding it from the 'Christian' category giving a total of 39,7%.

Religious affiliation from Official Yearbooks of the Union of South Africa

The Official Yearbooks, published by the South African Government, record church attendance from 1922 to 1956. Table 6 lists the population, church attendance and the percentage attending church against the population figures. Where available,

Table 6
Population, church attendance, and % of population attending church

Official Yearbooks	Year	Population	Attendance	% of pop	No of churches	No of groups
OY 1910/1918	1918	104 957	3 569	3,4%	64	15
OY 1910/20	1919	105 691	3 800	3,6%	64	15
OY 1919/24	1922	109 207	7 113	6,5%		
	1923	111 500	8 273	7,4%	185	16
OY 1926/27	1925	116 231	10 172	8,7%		
	1926	118 671	11 160	9,4%	206	
OY 1930/31	1929	126 304	22 262	17,6%	354	23
	1930	128 956	26 960	20,9%		
OY 1933/34	1932	134 427	29 041	21,6%	389	
OY 1934/35	1933	137 249	33 619	24,5%		
	1934	140 131	39 090	27,9%	433	23
OY 1938	1935	143 073	39 568	27,6%	434	23
OY 1941	1939	156 158	34 974	22,3%	452	
	1946	179 320	35 000	19,5%	452	23
OY 1948	1948	189 806	35 000	18,4%	452	
OY 1952/53	1952	208 692	35 000	16,7%	452	23
OY 1955/56	1955	224 079				25

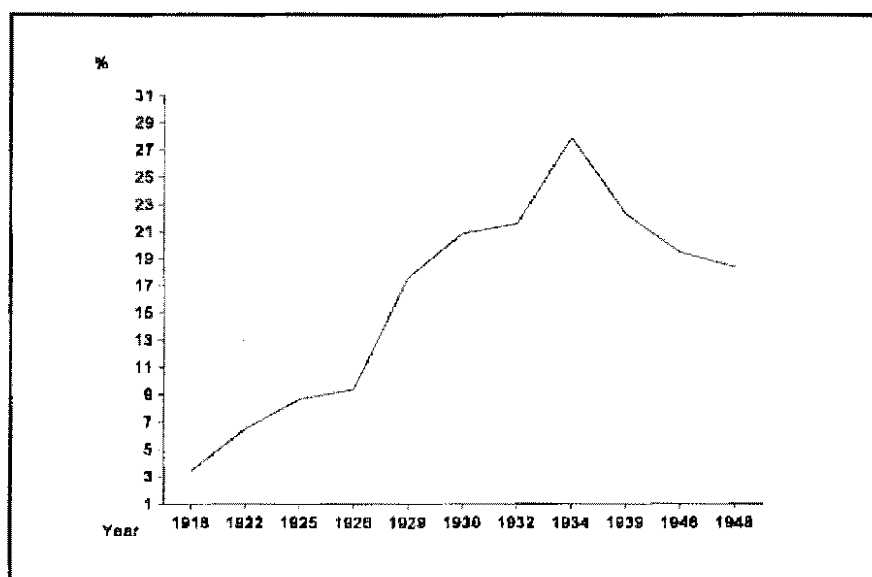
it lists the number of congregations and denominations actively involved. The static attendance figures from 1939 onwards tend to indicate that accurate records were no

longer being kept.

Table 7 shows church attendance as recorded in the Official Yearbooks and listed in Table 6, as a percentage of the total population. The rapid growth of the churches to 1932 and their subsequent decline can be clearly seen. Church attendance climaxed in 1934 and, as with the census reports, it coincided with the commencement of the second world war. The number of new congregations established also levelled off at this time. The peaking of the church at the second world war is significant. It indicates that in the forty years of the existence of the church in Swaziland, it had not firmly taken root but was still dependent on outside resources. It had not become indigenous, self-propagating nor self-sustaining.

Table 7

Church attendance from 1918 to 1952 as a percentage of the total population taken from Official Yearbooks of the Union of South Africa

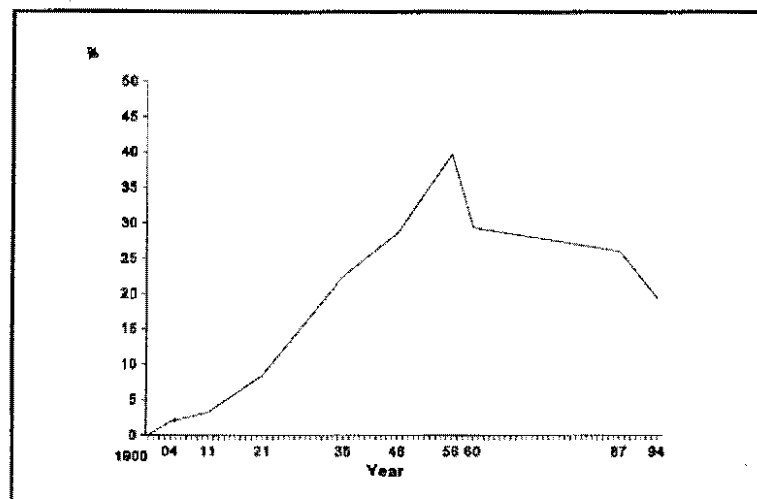


Mission-church affiliation statistics from various sources

Table 8 draws together the data from a number of sources. The statistics are given as a percentage of the total population. It will be seen that church affiliation dropped by

50% over a forty year period. Comparing the graph in Table 8 with Table 7 above, it will be seen that, while attendance started dropping during the war years, the decline in affiliation only commenced in the mid-1950's. It can be assumed that, during this period, people were still prepared to identify themselves with a church even though they did not attend.

Table 8
Church affiliation from 1904 to 1994



Notes:

1. The statistics from 1904 to 1956 are taken from the census reports. The 1956 figure has been adjusted to exclude the separatist churches to give a true reflection of the growth and decline of mission churches.
2. The 1960 figure of 29.3% is based on a sample survey conducted by the Institute of Social Research, University of Natal at the request of the Swaziland Government.
3. The 1987 figure of 26% is taken from a survey of Christianity in Swaziland conducted by MARC and published in World Christianity South Central Africa. Statistics were obtained from the different denominations, and a component was included for children under fifteen years. A consensus figure for traditionalists was sought from Swazi church leaders, and the balance of the population was assumed to belong to an indigenous church. All registered churches and many that have not yet registered were included in this total.
4. The Swaziland Christian Handbook is the source for data for the 1994 statistic. Churches responded to a questionnaire or were contacted telephonically. In instances

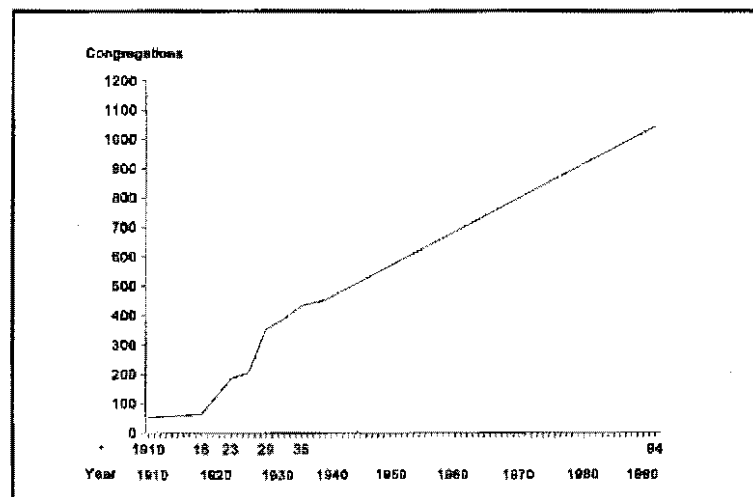
where denominations did not have membership or affiliation statistics, the average membership per church for the country was used to include data for these churches. A component for children under the age of fifteen years was also included for those denominations who count adult membership only. The total number of members or adherents of mission churches amounted to 19.5% of the total population.

From the above graph it can be seen that the church has been in slow decline since 1940 and more recently, the membership of mission-churches against the population growth rate is decreasing.

Congregational growth

The Official Yearbooks of the Union of South Africa record the number of congregations up to the year 1952. It would appear that there has been a steady growth in the number of congregations in the ninety year period from 1910 to 1994 since the beginning of Christianity in Swaziland. Table 9 lists this growth.

Table 9
Growth in congregations from 1910 to 1994



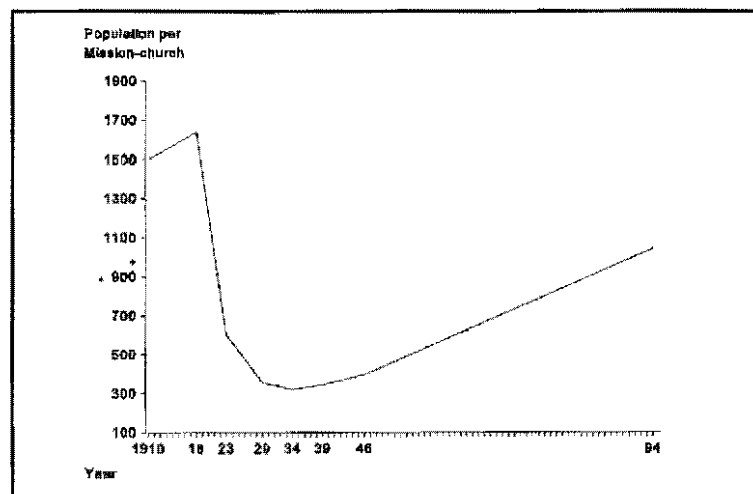
Notes:

1. The 1910 statistic is taken from Table 1 (Perkins, 1974, p. 449).
2. The number of churches recorded between the years 1941 and 1952 is listed as 452 churches. Since this figure is static it is felt that accurate records were no longer being kept during this period and for this reason statistics are excluded from this graph.
3. The figure for 1994 is taken from the Swaziland Christian Handbook and records both churches and preaching points.

Table 10 shows the population per church from 1910 to 1946. Over the first fifty years of ministry, the mission churches spread quickly and effectively. By 1934, there was one church for every 345 people in Swaziland. No records of the number of churches were available for the next sixty years, but research in 1994 (Froise, 1994) indicated a marked decline with only one church for every 1 044 people in the country. As will be seen later in this study, this rise in the ratio of population per mission-church records the move from mission-churches to indigenous churches which took place rapidly over this period. It is of interest that the number of mission-related churches did not increase between

Table 10

Population per mission church from 1910 to 1994



Notes:

1. The figure for 1910 is taken from Table 1 (Perkins, 1974, p. 449).
2. Statistics from 1918 to 1946 are drawn from the Official Yearbooks of the Union of South Africa.
3. Information gathered for the Swaziland Christian Handbook is used for the 1994 figure.

. the years 1910 and 1918. The first World War undoubtedly affected the growth of the church during this period and the reasons for the lack of growth will be discussed in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 5

CHURCH GROWTH CASE STUDIES

The Anglican Church (Church of the Province of South Africa)

Historical review

The Anglican Church established the first lasting work in Swaziland. Rev Robert Robertson, a missionary in Zululand, had set his heart on reaching the Swazis and although he was never able to work there himself, he was influential in commencing the ministry in Swazi country. In 1871, accompanied by Bishop Wilkinson, Robertson approached the royal kraal seeking permission to work in Swaziland but this was not granted:

“We will refuse to allow any missionary to settle among us. Long ago Mr. Allison ... settled among us and gave us only trouble” (Perkins 1974, p. 181).

The Anglican church then bought two farms in the Transvaal bordering Swaziland. One of them was Holy Rood and it was in this location that Father Joel Jackson, who had been sent out by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, established the Ndlozana Mission in 1871, several years after the death of Mswati II. Jackson's co-worker at this time was the Rev George Hales. A small school was established to teach the Swazis living in the area as well as those who crossed the border to attend school. One of the pupils, Ambrose Ndhlandhla, continued his schooling in Zululand and became the first Swazi to take Holy Orders.

Father Joel spent much of his time developing friendships, calling on chiefs and visiting the royal kraal to make contact with the young king. Perkins writes,;

It is apparent that this energetic missionary was using every opportunity to demonstrate to the Swazi people his true motive for his coming to them. His projected plan was to make frequent journeys on foot into the country, stay a period of time in chief's villages and return to his New Scotland base, later to

repeat the cycle (1974, p. 183).

In 1880, after nine years of relationship-building, King Mbandzeni asked Jackson to establish a school for his children and a tract of land at Usuthu was given to the church as a concession. Another nine years were to elapse before a church was built. Perkins quotes Jackson as having said, "Eighteen years seems like a long time to have done so little" (1974, p. 116). Jackson became a friend and counsellor to the king gaining the title of 'the father of the people' (Watts, 1922, p. 7), and it was he who played an important role in changing the prevailing negative attitudes towards missionaries. Jackson's success extended far beyond the establishment of the Anglican mission in Swaziland, for he had persevered against the greatest odds that a missionary might encounter. He had to combat a quarter of a century of built up animosity against Allison and his abortive missionary attempt. In 1891 Jackson retired leaving 200 members at Usuthu of whom fifty-six were regular communicants.

An unsettled period followed for the Anglican Church. Jackson was followed by a succession of ministers who served the church in Swaziland for short periods, and the Anglo Boer War at the turn of the century disrupted the area forcing the expatriate missionaries at Usuthu Mission to leave. Following the outbreak of World War I in 1914, the work was left without a resident director for the next 37 years. It was only in 1951 that expatriate help arrived and the work was revived with the arrival of Rev Donald Arden.

A letter from Bishop Wilkinson written in 1872 makes interesting reading (Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, 1972, p. 109):

It was the advice of the Bishop of Lichfield to me just before leaving England ... to make as little use of white agency in this work as possible: to have faith in and to use the very first native material: white help, they all told me, would only disappoint me in the end. I mean, therefore, to rely on native workers, for God evidently points out this system of native agency, not only by precedent in apostolic and all subsequent times in the conversion of the races of the earth, but by stern necessity compelling us to adopt, whether we like it or not, a line of action which He knows is alone capable of giving to a people that which will alone give them a healthy form of Christianity, self-contained and with power of

reproduction - a National church.

The Anglican church evidently paid little heed to the advice of Bishop Wilkinson. They regarded the period from 1914 to 1951 without expatriate clergy as the darkest period in its history, but Table 12 indicates that the Anglican Church achieved the highest percentage of members against the total population throughout its history during this period. With hindsight, it is unfortunate that the Anglican Church did not give greater acknowledgement to the ability of their black workers in those early years. Chapter will reveal that the first two workers, Jackson and Hales, did in fact “disappoint”, even though Jackson was a tireless worker.

A layman, Basil Warner, started services in Mbabane in the early 20th century which grew into a parish catering for the White and Coloured communities. Archdeacon C C Watts was appointed as the first full-time clergyman to care for this community. He commenced a school, St Marks, and also a boarding school for Coloured children at Mpolonjeni.

In the early days, the church was part of the Diocese of Zululand, but in 1950, the name of the Diocese was changed to the Diocese of Zululand and Swaziland. In 1968 it was granted independent status and became known as the Diocese of Swaziland. The first Bishop of Swaziland was Rev Anthony Hunter. At that time there were twenty-two priests of whom seven were Swazi. Hunter proved to be a man of vision for in 1975 he resigned to make way for Black leadership. In his retiring speech he stated that his real task had been to prepare the way for the appointment of a Swazi bishop and he had, therefore, delegated as much responsibility as possible to groom a Swazi priest for election. (Matsebula, 1976, p. 26). The man chosen to be Bishop was the Venerable Bernard Mkhabela and he faced the challenges ahead of him with enthusiasm,

⁵ It is acknowledged that statistics available are scanty and could be inadequate to reflect an accurate growth chart.

determined, not merely to maintain churches, but to reach out and plant new churches.

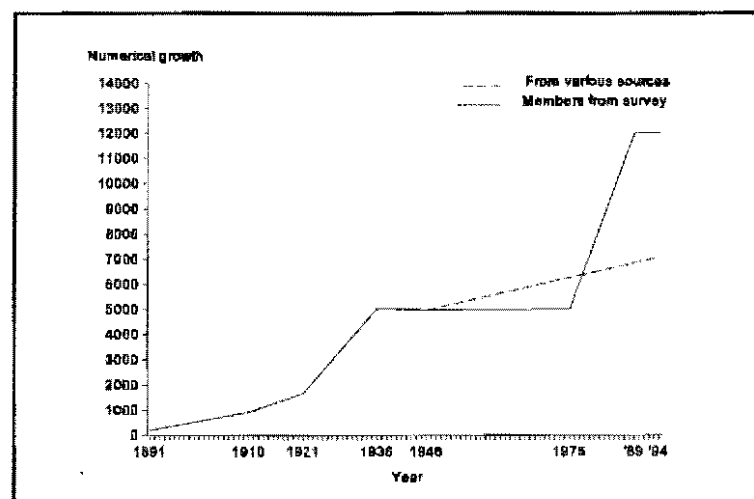
The church had nineteen parishes with seventy-seven congregations in 1994. Thirty-one clergy served the church of whom only one was an expatriate. The church has the oversight of twenty-two primary schools and two clinics.

The growth of the church statistically

The Anglican Church does not keep membership records which makes it difficult to accurately assess its growth over the years. However a combination of data sources has been used which gives some idea of the growth of this denomination. Table 11 shows the numerical growth of the church through the years, while Table 12 shows

Table 11

Numerical growth of the Anglican church from 1891 to 1994



⁶ Bruno, David (Director of the Department of Missions), *Seek*, March 1980.

⁷ This policy is confirmed by the Diocesan Secretary in Mbabane and the Archbishop's office in Capetown.

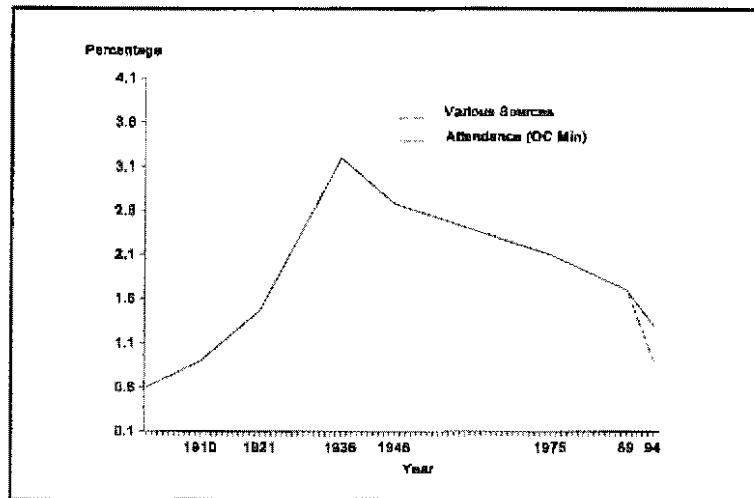
Notes:

1. 1891 and 1910 statistics taken from church records.
1891 - Usuthu 200 members of which sixty-five were communicants.
1910 - 445 members and 920 in attendance (attendance figure used).
2. 1921 - 1946 statistics come from census reports:
1921 - 1 667 of whom 974 were Black and 198 Coloured;
1936 - 5 021 of whom 4 298 were Black;
1946 - 4 968 of whom 4 044 were Black.
3. 1975 5 000 members given by the historian, Dr Matsebula (1976, p. 26).
4. 1989 figure of 12 000 members given by the Diocesan office, Mbabane (Froise, 1989, p. 114).
5. 1994 figure of 12 000 members was given by the Diocesan office, Mbabane. The church gave an additional figure of 21 000 adherents. This figure has not been included since it was unable to substantiate how they arrived at this very large increase (Froise, 1994, p. 37).
6. The dotted line on the graph represents a church by church survey conducted by OC Ministries in 1994 (unpublished records). They record a total communicant figure of 8 322 (7 078 members).

these figures as a percentage of the population. From Table 12 it can be seen that the church is in decline against population growth. It is of interest to note that the period at which the church showed the highest affiliation was at a time when the denomination felt it was at its lowest ebb. It is also significant to note that the church at that time was under black leadership (with the exception of the White parish at Mbabane).

Table 12

The Anglican Church as a percentage of the total population



The Wesleyan Church (Methodist Church of Southern Africa)

Historical review

The Swazi refugees at Indaleni and later Edenvale became prosperous under the leadership of Allison. They also grew in their faith and in 1880, five of these men were ordained, including Daniel Msimang who had fled with Allison as a young boy. With the opportunities available for learning at Indaleni and Edenvale, Msimang had become a successful and wealthy farmer. Perkins records that the Swazis in exile “often talked of a possible re-entry into their home-country. The idea of these exiled Swazi taking the gospel back to their own native land became a vision that would not die” (1974, p. 121). When the Wesleyan church asked for volunteers to re-establish the work in Swaziland, Msimang gladly responded, and in 1881, thirty six years after he had left his homeland, he returned with two of his sons and his brother to recommence the Wesleyan work (Mears, 1955, p. 9). Not only did the Edenvale settlement send its ministers, but, in gratitude to God for his prosperity and his protection through the years, it also made an offering of £500 towards re-establishing the work in Swaziland (Perkins 1974, p. 128).

In 1884 Watkins reported to his denomination that the work was slow and difficult. "We are paying the penalty of having abandoned this mission forty years ago". However, ten years later, a strong church had emerged with three circuits in Swaziland supported by nearly 300 full members and 109 probationary members (Mears, 1955, p. 9). A daughter of Daniel Msimang founded a school in 1882 which became the forerunner of an active participation in education. Msimang laboured with very little support from the denomination. Financially, the work was supported largely by Msimang himself (Perkins, 1974, p. 382), and apart from an annual visit by the superintendent when a gift towards some building project was generally given, he was on his own.

The first White worker to be appointed was a young missionary, William Underwood, but he only served a year (1896) before moving on to serve the settler community at Barberton. Fifteen years were to elapse before another white missionary was placed in Swaziland.

As Daniel Msimang aged, the pressure of the work was gradually taken over by his son, Joel Msimang, and his death in 1903 placed the leadership of the work in Joel's hands. Daniel Msimang had been a deeply respected and loved leader and to a large extent, the church had grown because of his warm personality and his own personal finances which he had invested. After his death, the Wesleyan work began to feel the effects of division. On the death of Msimang, the leadership of the Wesleyan church in the Transvaal sought to transfer Joel Msimang to what is now Mozambique and replace him with the minister who had become *persona non grata* in that country. This decision was made without reference to Joel Msimang and rather than move from Swaziland, he left the Wesleyan church to form the Independent Methodist Church, taking about half the Wesleyan church with him. Some years earlier, splits had taken place which had further added to the problem. A Methodist minister, Makoni had broken away from the Wesleyan church in 1892 to form the Ethiopian church and, although he was not working in Swaziland, he soon began to sow discontent among the people in that country. Dwane

was another minister who left the church to form a schismatic group.

It was during this unsettled time that the Wesleyan church felt a white worker was necessary to create stability. Watts went as far as to say “the Wesleyan church suffered from the scarcity of Europeans” (1922, p. 100). In 1911 an expatriate appointment was made and the Rev W Wilks served in Swaziland until the beginning of World War I. He was followed by the Rev Herbert Robinson who spent twenty years in Swaziland. The appointment of white workers saw the commencement of English speaking services and soon a work amongst the settler community was operating as a separate District alongside the black churches. The independence that the church had once experienced in its early history, diminished as it came under the authority of the South African parent body until, at independence, the church did not have any Swazi ordained ministers. Its clergy were either white or black South Africans and although this is no longer the case, the membership of the church has been declining since independence.

The Wesleyan Methodist church commenced services in the Cape in 1806. Its first missionary arrived in 1816 and it was constituted as the Wesleyan Methodist Church in 1883, independent of the British Conference. However, the Transvaal District, of which Swaziland was a part, continued to fall under the British Conference. This changed in 1931 when the different Districts of the Wesleyan church united to form the Methodist Church of South Africa. It was at this stage that the term ‘Wesleyan’ fell into disuse. Political independence did not change the status of the church in Swaziland - it continues to fall under the Transvaal District of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa.

Growth of the church statistically

The appointment of expatriate workers to oversee the church in Swaziland resulted in growth in Wesleyan witness in Swaziland and this growth can be seen in Table 13. The three census years, in which denominational statistics were recorded

Table 13

The growth of the Methodist (Wesleyan) church from 1890 to 1992

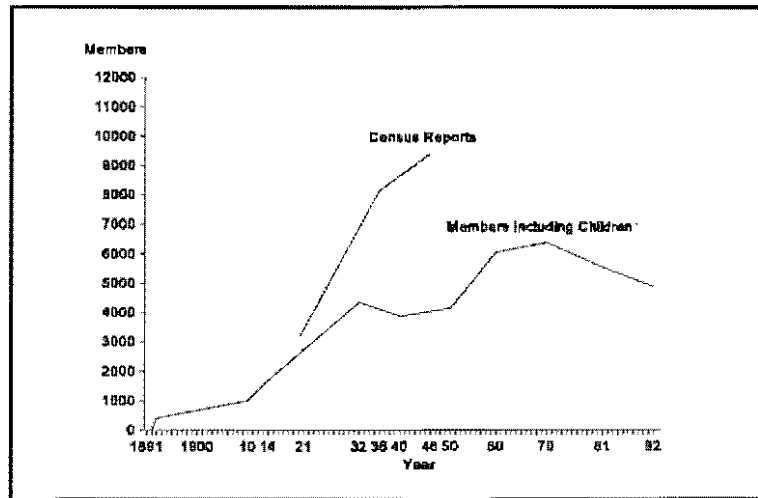
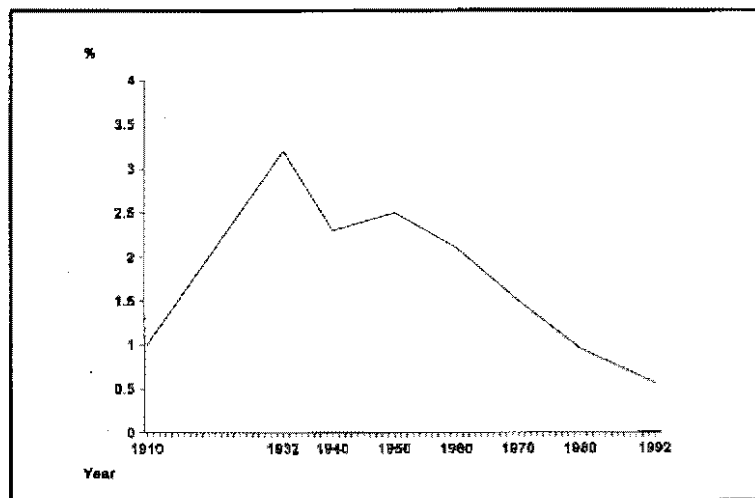


Table 14

Membership of the Methodist (Wesleyan) Church from 1910 to 1992 as a percentage of the population



are also shown on the graph indicating that many people regarded themselves as belonging to the church, probably because of the extensive education work in which the Methodist (Wesleyan) Church was involved, but they did not commit themselves to membership. Membership statistics, including children, are given.

Table 14 shows the membership of the church from 1910 to 1992 and it can be seen that the church is in steady decline when compared to the population growth rate. These statistics are drawn from the Minutes of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa.

The Roman Catholic Church

Historical review

The Mission to Swaziland was entrusted to the Tyrolese Province of the Servite order. The first two missionaries arrived in Swaziland in 1914 and soon after their arrival they purchased a piece of land in Mbabane. By the following year they had erected a church. The first missionary activity was to establish a school for small children and a night school for older boys. The two missionaries were joined by a third missionary, Father Mayr, who began a second mission station at Mzimpofu. Difficulties struck the mission. The people living around the site for the new mission were antagonistic and suspicious of white settlers, feeling that they had cheated them of their land. Father Mayr was robbed and murdered six months after his arrival in Swaziland leaving only two missionaries to care for the two mission posts that had been established. War was declared and the two priests lost their support from Europe. They resorted to farming enterprises to meet their own needs and those of the fledgling missions.

By 1920 there was little evidence of growth. Records show 150 baptised Catholics. However the end of the war brought changes and relief to the two priests who had faithfully sought to establish a work during the war years. Benedictine Sisters arrived

and they soon established schools, assisted with medical care and undertook catechetical instruction. By 1922, the church had firmly taken root with nine priests and ten sisters caring for four mission stations. Angelo Ciccone, a Catholic priest says, "Their work of Christianising began with education, health services and social assistance. These formed the main channels for conversion" (Kasenene, 1988, p. 24). Since those early days, the Catholic Church has penetrated into all the districts of Swaziland. Hilda Kuper (1947, p. 116) writes:

The expansion can be attributed to a number of reasons. The Catholic church is a wealthy organisation which could afford within a short time to build over 30 schools and churches and employ a staff of over 100 officers of both races. Not only is it well endowed but it makes a little money go a long way. The Catholics receive subsidies for schools on the same basis as missionaries, but Catholic priests and nuns are not permitted to possess private wealth; all earnings are pooled and used for the benefit of the church.

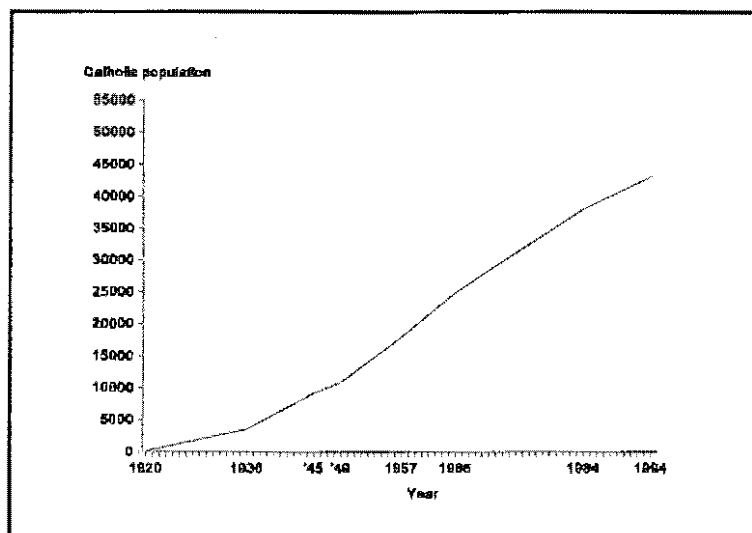
Because of the service rendered to the community, the church grew rapidly and the years between 1949 and 1960 saw a period of consolidation. During this phase the church gradually became indigenised. A congregation of Swazi Servite Sisters was established in 1935, and the first Swazi priest was ordained in 1954. In 1976, the church came of age when a Swazi Bishop was appointed.

An Apostolic Prefecture was appointed in 1923, placing it under the direct control of the Pope. In 1951 the church became the Diocese of Bremersdorp (later Manzini), which forms part of the South African Catholic Bishop's Conference.

The growth of the church statistically

The 1921 census records only 361 Catholics of all races but the picture had changed radically by 1936 when the next census was recorded. By that time the number of converts had grown to 4 431. Angelo Ciccone comments that "the policy of the missionaries to give priority to their converts in recruiting pupils in schools became missionaries to give priority to their converts in recruiting pupils in schools became

Table 15
Catholic population from 1920 to 1994
taken from church records



evident. Soon the result was obvious. Many Swazis, in order to get a place in schools, became Christians” (Kasenene 1988, p. 27). It can be assumed that much of the rapid growth in those early years can be attributed to children accepting baptism to gain school entrance. This assumption is strengthened when the church statistics against population growth rate is studied. It can be seen that the growth of the church levelled off once the country gained independence and it was no longer necessary to convert to Catholicism to gain a position in a school.

The Catholic Church does not keep membership figures but rather the estimated Catholic population is recorded. Whilst the people included in these ‘population’ figures (from Catholic Directories) would probably regard themselves as Catholic, it does not indicate the number of practising Christians nor regular church-attenders. Table 15 shows the growth in the Catholic population from 1920 to 1994 as found in the annual Catholic Directories. In Table 16, the statistics from the Census reports from 1921 to 1965 are given as a comparison with the Catholic Population figures for the same period. A wide

margin of difference is reflected between the 1966 Census figure of 7 600 Catholics compared to the Catholic Population figure of 24 922 recorded in Catholic Directory of South Africa for that year. Table 16 shows this disparity.

Table 16
Affiliation from Census reports compared with Catholic population records

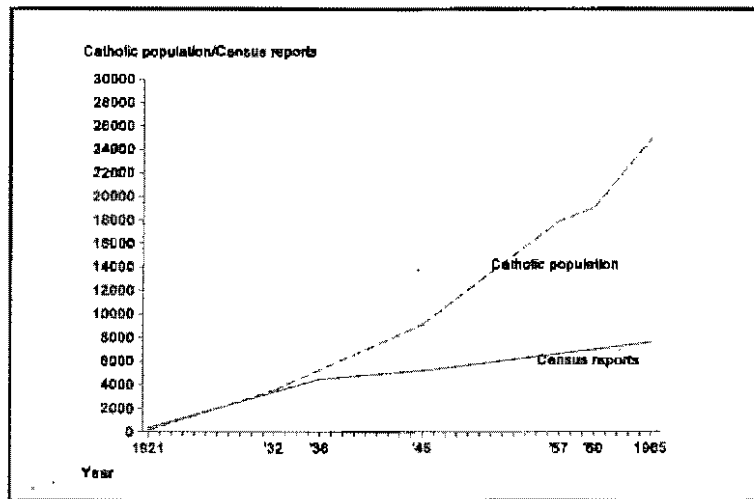
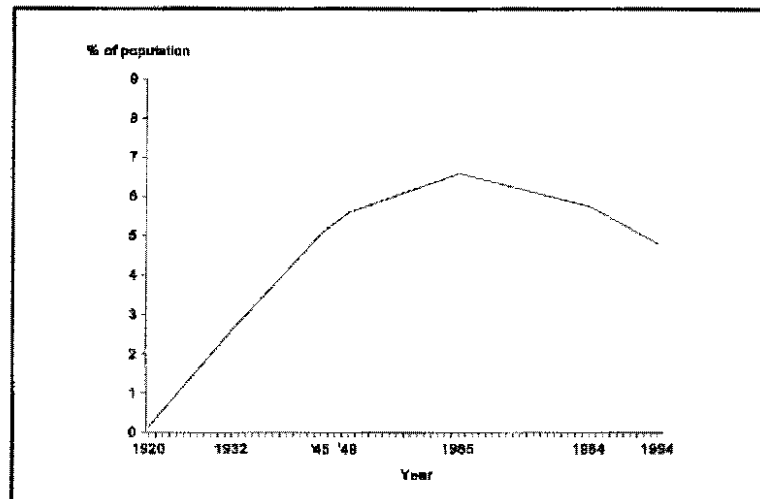


Table 17 shows the Catholic population as a percentage of the population for the country. It will be seen that the growth in the number of Catholics in the country is not keeping up with population growth.

A church-by-church survey was conducted by OC Ministries in Mbabane in 1994 (unpublished). Researchers visited fifty-seven of the ninety-six Catholic churches and preaching points, establishing a total of 6 383 church attenders. This gives an average of 112 per congregation. An estimate for the ninety-six churches would then be 10 750 people attending church or mass throughout the country. Judging by these research

Table 17

Catholic population statistics as a percentage of the population



findings, it would appear that approximately 23% of Catholics in Swaziland are practising Christians.

Church of the Nazarene

Historical review

The Church of the Nazarene entered Swaziland in 1910 as part of the second wave of missionary activity. The first missionary, Rev H Schmelzenbach, started a mission at Pigg's Peak in the north. Right from its commencement, this church's approach to mission was holistic. The first school was opened in 1911 and from that time the church's contribution to education in Swaziland grew rapidly. In 1994, no less than 10% of school-going children attended Nazarene schools. The Church of the Nazarene was the first mission to become involved in medical work professionally. A nurse was placed at Pigg's Peak and soon clinics were opened. The work was strengthened with the arrival of a doctor in 1921. Not only has this church been involved in caring for the children and the ill, but they have also spearheaded training. A nurses' training college, attached to the Raleigh Fitkin hospital in Manzini, was commenced in 1931 and a teachers' training

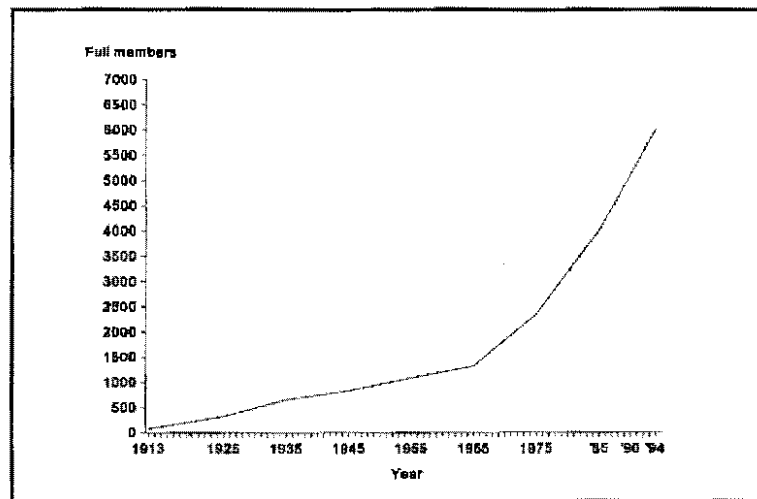
college (now under government control) was started in 1938, both of which are prestigious institutions.

Despite the strong social emphasis in their ministry, they saw the planting of churches as their main objective and since its commencement, the church has grown steadily. Unlike most of the other mission enterprises which have tended to reach the rural people, the Church of the Nazarene is targeting the upper middle class. A research study conducted by OC Ministries indicated it took twenty-nine years to pioneer and establish the church, a further twenty-three years to train leadership, and yet another twenty-seven years before the church was handed over to national leadership (OC Ministries, 1993).

Growth of the church statistically

The Church of the Nazarene has shown steady growth over the years. Table 18 shows the growth in full membership from 1913 to 1994. In addition to the

Table 18
Church membership (full members)



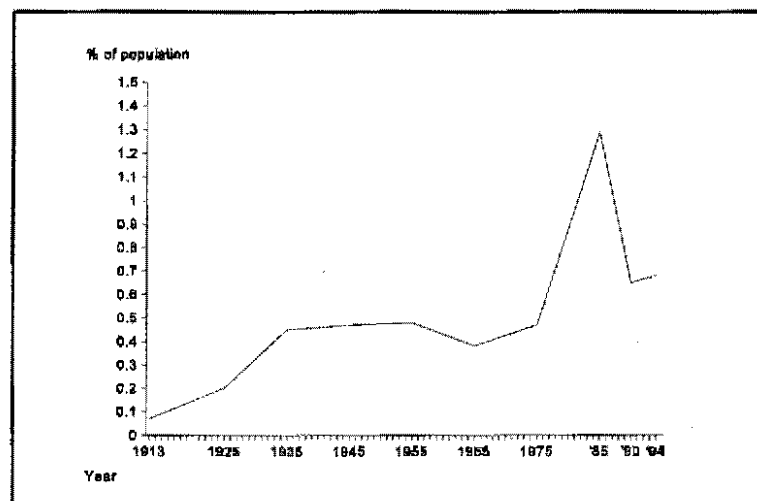
⁸ These figures were obtained from church records held at the headquarters of the Church of the Nazarene.

membership listed below, this church has an additional category of membership, namely probationary members. This category is not included in these statistics and neither is the large number of children attending their Sunday schools.

Table 18 shows the growth of the church according to church statistics. Table 19 shows the growth of the church compared to the growth of the population. Although no reason could be found for this significant peak and then decline in membership, the graph nevertheless shows a steady increase since 1965.

Table 19

Church membership compared with population growth



PART II
CHURCH GROWTH EXAMINED

CHAPTER 6
1880 - 1939 YEARS OF GROWTH IN THE CHURCH
ELITISM IN CHRISTIANITY

European contact - the beginning of modernisation

Compared to the rest of Southern Africa, Swaziland was relatively isolated geographically, and Western civilization took longer to penetrate this kingdom. Mswati II, who came to power in 1844, was the first monarch to come into contact with Europeans. Contact with Europeans brought change. It thrust Swaziland from a 'medieval' era, so to speak, into the beginnings of an enlightenment era. During the period from 1880 to the second world war, Swaziland underwent traumatic change which was more than a shift from one era to another and, by the end of the thirties, the strong nationalistic feelings in the country began to affect church affiliation.

Colonialism can be defined as a 'settlement of people in a new country who are fully or partly subject to the country from which they came'⁹. Using this definition, it is possible to look at Swaziland, and see there were a number of categories of colonisers, each of which impacted Swaziland in different ways in the process of Western civilisation. These included officials involved in the colonial takeover of Swaziland, the concessionaires and the missionaries. Other categories of people were the traders, who were not necessarily resident in Swaziland, and also the recruiters of

⁹ The Concise Oxford Dictionary

labour for the mines. Together these various groups of people impacted Swazi culture and value systems.

Traders - changing values

In earlier times, Arab and Portuguese traders occasionally visited Swaziland to barter goods, but their presence did not necessarily change the values of the people. Later traders from South Africa began to visit Swaziland either selling or exchanging skins for items such as guns or knives or other merchandise. Initial contact with Europeans was casual during the reign of Mswati. The traders came and sold their wares and left but this changed as more Westerners moved into the area. The first shop was opened in Bremersdorp (Manzini) in 1885 and by 1938, eighty trading stores were operating across Swaziland, sixty of which were in so called Native areas (Kuper, 1947, p. 3). Gradually the traders introduced a change in value systems as items such as pots and pans, blankets, ploughs and hoes, unknown in earlier years, became essential household items. Once the missionaries changed attitudes towards clothing among the Swazi people, so new attire also became items to purchase.

The traders unwittingly brought about further changes. Local skills fell into disuse, such as the blacksmith who formerly made articles such as implements for tilling. Another change which occurred was the move from community decisions to individual choices. Changes such as these assisted in the decline of a traditional way of life and eroded the authority of the community.

Recruiters introduce a cash economy

Labour recruiters from the mines in South Africa saw Swaziland as a favourable place to recruit workers for the Reef. The prospect of experiencing a different way of life appealed to the Swazi's sense of adventure. An even greater factor was the crippling taxes inflicted on the people when once the colonial powers were in control of the country forcing them to find money from sources other than raising crops or

cattle. Marwick, (1966, p. 296) states that Swazi males paid a direct tax of 35 shillings per head, and in the case of polygamists, 30 shillings per wife with a maximum of £4.10 shillings per annum, and that these taxes forced the men into the labour system.

On the completion of their contracts, it was found that these worldly-wise men had developed a new set of priorities based on what could be acquired with their earnings. The Swazi economy gradually changed from a subsistence agriculturally based economy to a cash economy. The average Swazi spent as much as a third of his life away from home working on the mines.

Concessionaires and greedy kings

In the early 1840's the Dutch colonists, commonly referred to as Boers, arrived to settle in neighbouring areas and this saw the beginning of an informal association with them. The Boers began using Swaziland for winter grazing, while still acknowledging Swazi ownership. This informal relationship began to change resulting in a gradual take-over of the land (Perkins, 1974, p. 112), and to a large extent, this was the result of a lack of understanding of each other's culture. The Swazis granted the use of land for a limited period since private ownership of land was unknown. Land belonged to the nation and it was collectively used for and by the people. Only the control of its use was negotiable. The settlers, however, understood the transaction to be a sale. This was further complicated when cattle were given as 'payment', but interpreted by the Swazis as customary tribute to the King.

Concessions during the reign of Mswati II (1840 - 1865)

Mswati was not only a powerful king - he was also shrewd. He allowed settlers to occupy the land and at times requested them to do so in order to create a buffer between himself and neighbouring tribes, particularly the Zulus. The Boers were the first to gain concessions when they obtained the use of land in the Lydenburg area. Mswati also gave concessions to settlers in the south and to the west in the Amsterdam

area. The Boers then sought to secure title to the land they occupied by asking Mswati to put a cross on documents he was unable to read and which was in fact a deed of sale.

Matsebula writes:

It must be observed here that this kind of cheating and taking advantage of the illiterate Swazi by the whites was going on right up to the end of the century (Matsebula, 1988, p. 50).

Concessions during the reign of Mbandzeni (1875 - 1889)

Concessions continued unabated during the reign of Mbandzeni. During the period of his rule, gold was discovered. In 1880, two prospectors, Tom McLachlan and Walter Carter, negotiated a concession with Mbandzeni to prospect in the mountains to the north (Jones, 1993, p 362), while two other prospectors gained concessions to prospect in the south. Gold was found and this began the mad scramble for land in Swaziland. In 1885 the 'concession boom' began or as Kuper calls it, 'The Paper Conquest' (1986, p. 11). Mbandzeni had to deal with concession applicants who gave him a piece of paper to mark with a cross which ceded them ownership of great tracts of land (Watts, 1922, p. 25). With regard to the signing of these documents, Kuper points out the long-term effects:

Though these documents had no immediate effect, they ceded virtually his entire country to the whites and were the precursors of the spate of concessions that led to the final subjugation of the people (1986, p. 12).

In addition to land concessions, Mbandzeni granted concessions for all kinds of activities for a nominal rental, including business enterprises that did not even exist (Reader's Digest, 1978 p. 448). It needs to be reiterated, however, that Mbandzeni never intended that the land be given freehold but according to Swazi custom.

Mbandzeni had a number of advisors, one of whom was Joel Jackson, the Anglican missionary. He became a close friend to the King, advised him and translated for him from time to time.

It eventually became necessary for Mbandzeni to employ a secretary to assist

him with the administration of the concessions and 'Offie' Shepstone was given the post. But between Shepstone and Mbandzeni the revenue from the concessions was used for personal enrichment (Bonner, 1983, p. 186).

Mbandeni¹⁰ stood the ordeal well. He drank the white man's spirits and accepted all their flatteries and gifts but this did not really blind his eyes to what was going on. He secured the services of a European as his secretary, thinking that if he paid him well he would be honest and guide him in his dealings in matters he did not understand. Meanwhile he and his little barbaric court "spoiled the Egyptians" or rather took from them all the money they were prepared to waste. Soon all the land was sold, but the adventurers wanted more and were prepared to pay for it. Mbandeni, the secretary and the courtiers wanted money. He determined to sell it again in such a way that the buyers would not know (Watts, 1922, p. 26, 27).

Eventually the misappropriation of funds, and rumours of collusion with the Boers by Shepstone, forced a limitation of his powers. The country gradually slid into anarchy and Mbandzeni, a broken man, signed any concessions that were handed to him and on his shoulders lies the responsibility of the plunder of the country (Bonner, 1983, p. 191).

Colonial forces seeking domination

Several groups of people sought to colonise Swaziland but it was ultimately the loss of land that brought about the bitter defeat of the nation. The first of these groups were the Boers who had few ties with their European country of origin but who identified with the Dutch *Voortrekkers*. The Great Trek, an organised exodus of Afrikaners from the Cape, began in 1834. They travelled east to the Eastern Cape and Free State, north-east to Natal and north to the Transvaal, effectively surrounding Swaziland. The Boers, who arrived in the area in the early 1940's, obtained grazing rights in 1945 and ten years later they obtained a further large tract of land. Their loyalties lay with the neighbouring Transvaal. Initially an amicable arrangement

¹⁰ The Zulu version of Mbandzeni's name is used in this quotation.

developed whereby the Boers would appeal for assistance in subduing a neighbouring tribe. At other times the Swazis would appeal to the Boers for assistance, as was the case in the time of Allison when Mswati sought Boer help to defeat his half-brother Malambule, but this informal arrangement began to change as more and more land fell into the hands of the Boer farmers.

Initially, the British came to Swaziland as traders, later as concessionaires to obtain mineral rights. They came as rivals of the Boers and not as protectors of Swazi interests against Boer exploitation (Booth, 1983, p. 612). At the time of the British takeover in 1903, Swaziland expected that land obtained through concessions would be handed back to them, but this was not to be. Under British rule, executive power was held by the British crown, and tribal traditional power by the Swazi King.

Neither the Boers nor the British were interested in developing Swaziland. The dominant aim of the British was to maintain peace rather than to develop a constructive policy (Kuper, 1947, p. 96). Kasenene, expressing the feelings of the Swazi people, states that the colonial powers were bent on exploiting and underdeveloping her economically, socially and politically (1987, p. 124). Booth confirms this notion when he writes:

Swaziland during this period can be seen as a classic example of deliberate underdevelopment by the colonial state, with the dual intent of expropriating the means of development and creating a labour force (1983, p. 21).

Later, the Union of South Africa, which had oversight of Swaziland as a Protectorate, played a colonising role. From 1913 to 1938 the question of transferring the High Commission Territories (which included Swaziland) to the Union of South Africa was raised annually.

The role of missionaries in the process of modernisation and colonisation

Did the missionaries come to Swaziland with a view to establishing Western civilisation? Did they see the Christianity and Western civilisation as going hand-in-hand? This was certainly in the mind of Livingstone when he stated, "I go to Africa to make an opening for commerce and Christianity" (Roome, 1927, p. 95). Jean and John Comaroff in their study of colonialism and Christianity write:

The study of Christianity is more than an exercise in the analysis of religious change. It is part and parcel of the historical anthropology of colonialism and consciousness, culture and power; of an anthropology concerned at once with the colonizer *and* the colonized, with the structure *and* the agency (1991, p. 11).

Early writers support the view that the missionary had a civilising and colonising role to play and generally expose their ethnocentric view of their own culture:

The redemption of Africa must be physical, as well as spiritual and moral. There must be orderly government and a permanent basis for the development of society, there must be intercourse between the peoples, and the pursuit of commerce. This is not the work of the missionary alone but of the combined forces of the upright statesman, the honest trader and the devoted Christian missionary. There must be a union of forces. Such a union involves a common ideal (Roome, 1927, p. 129).

The Roman Catholics, in a commemorative book published to celebrate the Pope's visit wrote, "The missionaries started out with the idea that civilisation must precede evangelisation" (Cicccone, 1988, p. 24).

Kasenene, the Swazi historian felt strongly on this issue. He wrote,

... the impact of missionary Christianity, and the reactions of the people to it, cannot be understood in isolation from the whole milieu of white occupation of Swaziland (1987, p. 51).

Christianity was introduced into Swaziland with Western culture. The aim of the missionaries was not only to evangelise the Swazi people but to civilise them as well (1993, p. 63).

Pope John Paul, defending Christian mission, stated, "While European

missionaries accompanied colonialists to many parts of the world, the aim of the missionaries was spiritual, not political. Historical circumstances under which the missionaries were forced to work often made it impossible for them to preach the Gospel in complete detachment from political powers" ¹¹

Did the missionaries see Christianity and Western civilization as going hand-in-hand? To a large degree they did and they became, unwittingly, colonisers. Missionaries received economic assistance from the administration for education and health work, two of the main channels for conversion. The administration they served was the organ of a "Christian" country, and the laws regulating behaviour were in accordance with Christian ethics (Kuper, 1947, p. 108). At times, the church needed to act as 'salt' to the colonial powers reminding them that the church was not there to serve their purposes. Ciccone states:

The Catholic church found in Swaziland the presence of a colonial Government which was the product of a similar culture as the missionaries had. Colonialism was already rooted. White imperialism was a reality and missionaries were aware of this situation. And so it happened that at the same time as the missionary was striving to educate the Swazi he also had frequently to educate Europeans with regard to the right of the Swazi to be educated. It was the policy of the Europeans to keep the native in his place (Ciccone, 1988, p. 28).

The missionary movement of the late 19th century which brought missionaries to South Africa and Swaziland, was born out of the evangelical awakening in Britain and later in the United States. Inherent in this movement was a strong emphasis on philanthropy. The people who arrived in Swaziland to share their faith, did have a strong holistic theology which saw the needs of the whole person. This is evident in the very successful education and health programmes embarked on throughout the country by all mission agencies and denominations entering Swaziland. However they did not see themselves as supporting the colonial takeover of Swaziland and neither did they see themselves as working in partnership with these powers. It needs to be stated that

¹¹ Southern Cross, 21/5/95.

very few of the missionaries in Swaziland were even British subjects. Perkins supports their lack of political involvement when he points out that, when a replacement was sought for Shepstone, missionaries were not considered because “they had demonstrated little if any interest in political issues” (1974, p. 317). Most of the early missionaries came from small faith missions and not the state churches of the countries they represented. Few of them were highly educated and many came from peasant or artisan classes (1974, p. 457). They brought their cultures with them and the difficulties associated with this will be discussed in a later chapter.

David Bosch puts this complexity into perspective in his study of paradigm shifts. The missionaries were people of their times and their world view was an enlightenment outlook on life. He points out that “*progress* is the element more clearly recognizable in modern theology. Sometimes it is manifested as the belief that the entire world would soon be converted to the Christian faith; at other times Christianity was regarded as an irresistible power in the reforming of the world, eradicating poverty, and restoring justice for all. The spread of ‘Christian knowledge’ would suffice in achieving these aims” (1991, p. 271).

Reasons for rapid church growth during this period:

Converts through institutional approach to missions

Early historical accounts of missionary activity in Swaziland show that caring for the needs of people was also a high priority alongside the planting of churches. Churches and missionary societies demonstrated that God’s love for people in Swaziland was holistic and this resulted in rapid church growth. Churches and missions pioneered the fields of education and health care to the extent that almost half the medical work in the country is carried out by the church. It has been involved in job creation, caring for the disabled and tending those with Aids. The church has no reason

to apologise for words and works going hand in hand, for this is the example that Jesus gave. "His works expressed his words and his words explained his works. Words are abstract, they need to be embodied in deeds of love. We are sent into the world to serve just as Jesus did" (Stott, 1995, p. 343).

Education in Swaziland was commenced by the churches and, even today, most of the schools are under the care of the churches although they are financed by the government. Notable in this field is the Church of the Nazarene which started its first school in 1911 and which now trains ten percent of Swaziland's school children. In addition they have a prestigious Teacher Training College in Manzini. The Roman Catholic church also has many schools under its care (Froise 1994, p.15). In 1938, 287 of the 290 primary schools were under the control of the church (Kuby, 1979, p. 38). A spokesman for the Roman Catholic church writes:

... the policy of the missionaries to give priority to their converts in recruiting pupils in schools became evident. Soon the result was obvious. Many Swazis, in order to get a place in school, became Christians (Ciccione, 1988, p. 27).

Formal education weakened the conservative claims that wisdom was only obtainable through the gradual experience and knowledge of living (Kuby, 1979, p. 45). This began a process whereby age-class culture in society began to be eroded.

The same is true of the health care system. The earliest record of formal medical care in Swaziland was the arrival of a nurse at the Nazarene mission station at Piggs Peak. Prior to this, simple care had been provided by missionaries on a number of mission stations. Both the Church of the Nazarene and the Roman Catholics operate hospitals and many missions and churches have clinics or health care centres (Froise, 1974, p. 14).

It is undeniable that social services were used as a means to reach the hearts of people. However, the basic motivation for missionaries leaving their home countries to labour in primitive and inhospitable conditions was the passion to share the message

of God's love and redemption for sinners, and not philanthropy. One unnamed 'Native Minister' wrote:

... the missionaries came ... without a mandate from any higher power except the one from the Saviour, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all men' (Lovedale, *sine anno*).

Nevertheless, the implementation of the social services of the church has not always reflected God's love for all people. In particular, the church has used the education system to gain converts. Preference was given to church members and their children or to those who were willing to be baptised. This was particularly true of the Catholic Church, and this is borne out in the statistics of the church as shown in Table 16. The number of people who identify themselves as Catholics in the Census reports differs vastly from the number of adherents, including school children, claimed by the Catholic church. Kasenene comments:

It was a condition for the children who entered missionary schools to adopt the faith of the mission concerned. At times this condition extended to the parents as a prerequisite for their children to be accepted into a certain school. All mission schools gave preference to the children of parents who were church members or were willing to become church members. This approach had the advantage of quickly attracting people to the church (Kasenene 1987, p. 58).

Changes in value systems

Western civilisation brought about rapid changes in Swaziland. The Swazis were acquiring possessions and moving from subsistence agriculture to a cash economy. Men working on the mines and those in other employment in South Africa were no longer willing to eke out an existence on small plots of land. The key to a better way of life was through education. It has been stated above that churches gave preference to its own church members when it came to accepting children for school,

and soon education, progress, and the church became inseparably interwoven.

The Queen Regent, Gwamile, recognised the importance of education although she herself was illiterate. At her request a school was built for her grandson Sobhuza II where he was taught by James Xaba, a lay-preacher from the Methodist Church.

Hilda Kuper makes these observations:

Education, in its widest sense, is accepted as the adaptation of the individual to the society. Adaptation takes place through specific formal, and diverse informal, channels. In countries where people are of different cultural levels, schools are potentially the most valuable medium for transmitting the culture of the more developed to the more simple people. The court, the trading shop, mine, government office, farm, all impose modes of behaviour and contribute to the education of the average Swazi, but only schools exist for the specific purpose of adaptation. There, learning is consciously directed and the traditional culture can be purposefully changed (1947, p. 72).

This boost in church membership resulting from Swazis seeking an education for their children is evident in the statistics of the church. Table 8 shows the increase in affiliation before independence followed by a decline in affiliation following independence when the government took responsibility for the running of the schools and it was no longer necessary to belong to a church to gain an education.

Christianity - the road to advancement for commoners

Rank is an important feature of Swazi culture. For a Swazi to change his status depends more on his rank than his abilities. Kuper comments, "In a society where noble birth is accepted as synonymous with leadership, there is little possibility of innovations being introduced by commoners. Few societies give much scope to individual ability; in most, people are trained to the duties and privileges of a rank ordained by birth, age or sex" (1947, p. 7). The advent of Christianity changed this. Ordinary people in Swaziland accepted Christianity and it became a leveller in society. It offered Swazis a standing in the community they would never have had previously because of the

education process that accompanied it. In the early days of Christianity in Swaziland, the church tended to attract those who had no standing in the community and all the missionaries would be relate stories of Swazis who had taken refuge at a missions station to avoid bloodshed, levirate marriages, or child marriages. Watkins relates the story of a girl of twelve years, a convert due for baptism, who fled to the mission station to avoid marriage to an old man with ten wives for ten dowry head of cattle. A brother demanded her return saying he only wanted his own property to which he was legally entitled (Mears, 1955 p. 44). Watts relates that the "Swazis that came to him (Jackson) were refugees, and had in some cases been driven away from their homes for good reasons" (Watts, 1922, p. 98). On one occasion Jackson hid the king's son under the rafters after he had incurred his father's wrath. Kuper writes,

Most converts are commoners; among them more women than men are active Christians; more children than adults attend church. It is not surprising that individual commoners respond more readily than aristocrats: they can anticipate greater freedom and equality in the church than in the traditional milieu; they are less bound by traditional obligations and if necessary can move from the area of a hostile chief and can rely on the support of the missionary when in trouble (1947, p. 118, 119).

Women, like commoners gained a new status in society. Christianity made equality and full participation in the life of the church and Christian community possible for women and gave them a dignity that was not possible in traditional society.

Later, as kinship ties loosened through migratory labour, and the power of the chiefs weakened, Christianity was more easily accepted and was seen as the way to advance in a changing culture (Ibid p. 119).

Factors in this era which created problems in the subsequent era:

Concessions and the church

The Swazis maintained that all concessions were illegal, that the land belonged

to the nation and not to the king and that he could not sell it for profit without their consent. The Anglican church was directly affected by concession scandals. The people were incensed when Joel Jackson, the priest who established the church in Swaziland, purchased a concession. As advisor to King Mbandzeni, he had even advised the king not to give way to the requests of concessionaires, openly incurring their wrath (Watts, 1922, p. 98). However, he too succumbed to the temptation to purchase a mining concession. When confronted, he stated he had purchased the concession for his brother-in-law and signed an affidavit to the effect. However, the problem would not die. Two years later, the concession appeared again in his wife's name and it was eventually sold at a large profit. The controversy affected his health and he returned to Britain (Jones, 1993 p. 297). Jackson's unhappy experience was a valuable lesson, warning Swaziland missionaries against becoming involved in concessions.

Rev George Hales, one of the pioneer missionaries and Jackson's co-worker acquired a mineral concession. He was removed from office, but he continued to live in Swaziland as a concessionaire (Jones, 1992, p. 262 - 264).

A further controversy concerning land surrounded the Anglican church. A large tract of land was granted to Jackson by Mbandzeni in the Usutu area where a church and school were developed. About 1947 the church decided to sell most of the mission land to the Swazi Nation except for about 250 acres which the church decided to retain. The Swazi Nation heard the news with the greatest shock. They felt that, if the church did not need the land that was given it free, it should have been returned to the benefactor, the Swazi nation. But the British administration allowed the sale because under their system the land now legally belonged to the church as it had occupied it for 25 years. The sale really shocked the Swazis and reminded them of the pain they had sustained at the beginning of the century (Matsebula. 1976, p. 13).

Rev Donald Arden of the Anglican church, commenting in 1951 on the sale, wrote that "The Swazi regarded us as thieves for selling back to them something that was given to us as a free gift. There are many lapsed members ... who have been alienated by what they consider as unscrupulous dealing of the church with their land" (Ibid, p.13).

Fission in the church and its effects

With the evangelical revival at the turn of the century, many mission agencies began sending representatives of their missions to Swaziland. By 1936, twenty three agencies from many countries were identified as working in Swaziland. They came from countries such as England, America, Italy, Scandinavia, Austria, Germany and South Africa, and they brought, not only their cultural differences, but local doctrinal differences (Kuper, 1947, p. 107). Marwick states that differing teachings of the various societies created confusion in the minds of the natives: "The multiplicity of the codes of religion has an unfortunate disruptive influence on Swazi society" (Marwick, 1966, p. 298).

A considerable amount of division was experienced by the Scandinavian Alliance Mission, particularly over the glossolalia issue, and this resulted in a number of break-away missions being formed. As was seen in Chapter 5, the Wesleyan church also experienced division but for different reasons. Mokoni was the first to separate to form a new church, followed by Dwane. After the death of Daniel Msimang, the Wesleyan church decided to move Joel Msimang to Portuguese East Africa (Mozambique) without consulting him and he too defected with many of the church members to form a dissident church (recorded in Chapter 5). These break-aways affected the Wesleyan Church for many years to come.

But it was more than defections within missions and churches that affected Swaziland in the early years. Problems arose with so many missions operating in such a small area. Cazziol observes, "in the early days of missionary activity, the presence of many missions caused considerable dissent and rivalry" (1985, p. 14). Kasenene writes:

The relationship among the first missionary groups which came to Swaziland was outwardly friendly but deeply antagonistic. In the early days missionaries were compelled by circumstances to keep a semblance of mutual co-operation (1987, p. 66).

He goes on to say that the need to adjust to a different geographical and social context helped to diminish differences between them and intensify the need for one another.

Mission agencies began working in areas already occupied by other missions and it became necessary to implement comity agreements which introduced geographical denominationalism and limited the people's choices. These operated satisfactorily until the second phase of missionary expansion began when agencies, such as the Roman Catholic Church, began planting churches across the country. In addition to problems of a spatial nature, problems of an ecumenical nature began to surface, presenting a disunited form of Christianity to the nation.

Language issue: Zulu or Siswati?

Swaziland is a small country. The population in 1911 was a mere 108 000 (Census report). The language spoken by the Swazi people was very close to Zulu and the missionaries decided to use publications available in Zulu rather than develop new material for this small group of people. Zulu became the language of instruction in the church and in the schools but it did not speak to the hearts of the uneducated. In effect, it isolated the people outside the church and developed a Christianised and educated Zulu-speaking elite within the Swazi nation. Kuper, writing on this topic, says "Anthropologists have long recognised the importance of language as a means of controlling behaviour and expressing ideas" (1986, p. 7). Bediako stresses the importance of Christian tradition in the indigenous language when he writes:

The extent to which a church can be said to possess a viable heritage of Christian tradition in its indigenous language is the extent of that church's ability to offer an adequate framework for African life (1995, p. 61).

The language problem did not go away. At independence, the new nation introduced Siswati as the medium of instruction in schools, and the older generation

of Christians became marginalised. The young people began to feel that Christianity belonged to an era past. This is now changing but, in the process, the church has lost ground. The population of Swaziland has increased ten-fold from the time of the earlier decision to use Zulu as the medium of instruction, and publishing in Siswati is now more viable. The New Testament in Siswati was published in 1981 and the long-awaited Bible is now ready for distribution.

Missionaries who came to stay

Early missionaries arriving in Swaziland came with a view to spending their lives amongst the people. Malla Moe of the Evangelical Alliance Mission is an example of missionaries who 'came to stay'. At the age of eighty she was still taking trips around the country sharing the Good News (Nilsen, Sheetz, 1956, p. 236). This much loved and revered lady was equally at home in a royal kraal as in a humble dwelling and her name is the first to come to mind when a Swazi thinks of a missionary who gave their all unstintingly. She was lovingly named 'Mother of all Lights in Swaziland' by the Swaziland Times.¹²

Malla Moe was not the only missionary who devoted a lifetime and then retired in Swaziland. There were many others to whom this applied. Another much loved and respected example was Dr David Hynd, the first medical doctor to Swaziland who devoted a lifetime developing health care in Swaziland. He also spent much time in establishing unity among the missions and churches in Swaziland, giving leadership to the Swaziland Missionary Conference (later the Swaziland Conference of Churches [SCC]) for forty one years. Kusel comments that Swazi pastors were "only too glad to leave the tedious business to Dr Hynd, who in turn was willing to do the extra work" (1975, p. 90). Kasenene, however, presents a different viewpoint when he states, "The

¹² March 3rd, 1949

leadership of the SCC was another major source of discontent" and cites the constitution as being drawn up by missionaries, revealing "their desire to perpetuate control over the Swazis" (p. 102, 104).

The problem with missionaries who stay, particularly in a small country such as Swaziland, is that the church never achieves adulthood. The indigenous people never assume leadership. The 'father' or 'mother' is always there to make decisions and give counsel. This dilemma carried through to the next era when the Swazis found themselves without the necessary experience to assume leadership when the churches gained their 'independence'.

Hiebert comments that one of the most difficult roles to handle is that of 'spiritual parent'. On the one hand, the missionary is often the 'father' or 'mother' who brings salvation and plants a new church. On the other hand, no one wishes to be treated like a child forever. He quotes E. Stanley Jones (1957, p. 211) who points out:

The relationship of many pioneer missionaries to their converts should go through several stages. At first it is one of *dependency*. The missionary, in fact has been the parent of the church, and as such bears much of the responsibility for the growth. In time, the new Christians must stand on their own and learn *independency*. Only after they have established their personal identities can they really move on to a relationship with the missionary characterised by *interdependency*, in which they work together as equals.

Hiebert continues to say that the danger is for missionaries to hold on to a parental role far too long because they fear things may go wrong (1985, p. 271).

Matebese, referring to Melvin, states that "the missionary realises that his removal from the oversight of the mission would bring the whole project to a stand-still unless another missionary takes over. What is the reason for this? Simply the plan he has followed. He has treated people like irresponsible children. He has led them, thought for them, and relieved them of financial responsibility for years. He has unintentionally robbed them of those processes which develop strong characters in any

walk of life" (1975, p. 202). Watts vividly describes the situation when he recalls the dilemma of an Anglican priest in Swaziland who has the following to say:

Either I remain my lifetime here and struggle with the work as best I can, or I leave it and no one will take it on. Should I take a holiday, no one can be found to take my place even for a few odd months... to leave this district unsupervised is to court disaster and to ruin the work of years (1922, p. 126).

The paternalism, which was very evident in Swazi missions and churches, was one of the major reasons for the rapid growth of the independent churches. The apostle Paul left us a model of church planting. He visited a new area, established a church, appointed overseers and then moved on to another area, returning only to disciple and encourage the new believers.

Christianity plus Western Culture

What form of Christianity did the early missionaries introduce? What was the message imparted? These are vital questions, for the answers will help us to understand much of the growth and decline of the church in Swaziland. Eitel considers this issue:

How do we recognise the essence of the gospel, the truth without Western cultural baggage? And how do Africans apply that essence to the situation? The answer is found in the concept of contextualisation. Biblical contextualisation allows the gospel to speak with full relevance to African issues without compromising the integrity of the Scriptures.

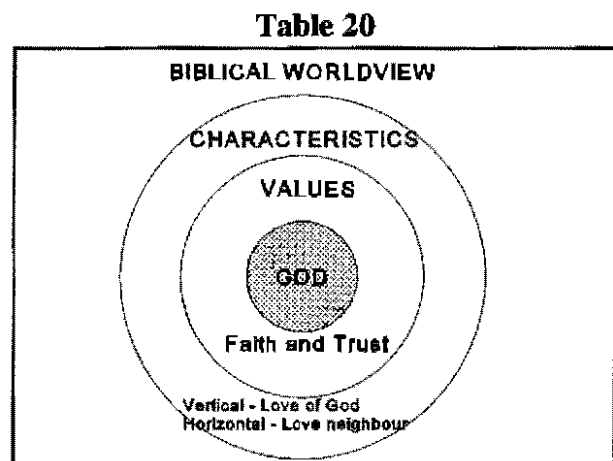
We all add cultural values to the Bible's commands. Contextualisation is the process of stripping away these added values so that the gospel can speak directly to other cultures. The goal of contextualisation is a Christianity that can form its own expression of biblical truth, or, its own theology (1987, p. 131).

Biblical world view

To try to find an answer it is necessary to examine the structure of a biblical world view and compare it with the world view imported into Swaziland. It will be seen in Table 20 that God is firmly at the centre of the life of a Christian in a biblical world view, and the values reflected are those of faith and trust in God. The characteristics of that trust in God are both horizontal, reflected in love and worship of the Almighty Creator, and horizontal as the love of God is spelt out in service to others. This is a simple childlike faith that sees God as the initiator and the reason for all of life. In essence, it has in common with an African traditionalist world view that God (or the spirit world) is central.

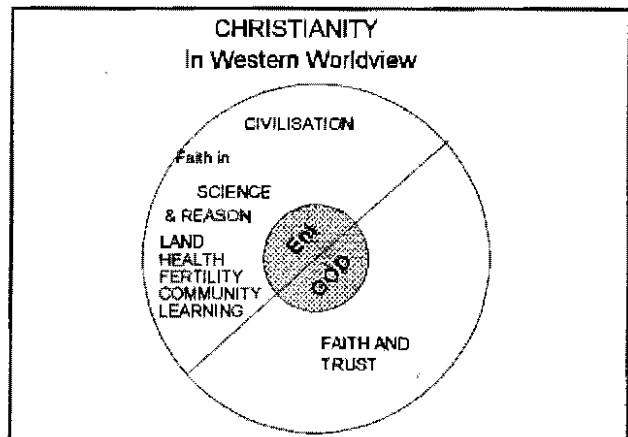
Communicating the message

Being trained in the Bible and knowing how to present the gospel message is a vital part of communicating the gospel. New missionaries tend to feel that once they have a knowledge of the language, the message they have come to present can be preached and understood. But this is not so. The differing cultures of ethnic groups is a gulf that needs to be bridged before the message of God's salvation can be effectively communicated. Generally, evangelicals emphasise a knowledge of the Bible but rarely stop to examine the contemporary historical and cultural setting. Only when both the message and the culture into which the message is being implanted is known, can bridges into a new culture be built that will make the message relevant. Christianity calls people from all nations to be part of the kingdom of God without breaking down their ethnological distinctives (Hiebert, 1985, p. 16). Furthermore, missionaries



entering a new culture need to have an understanding of the culture from which they have come to be able to effectively understand the culture in which they will be working.

Table 21



Enlightenment Christianity

Latourette, describing some of the features of the Enlightenment (most commonly associated with the Industrial Revolution), says that never before in so brief a time, had society been changed so profoundly and in such a variety of ways (1941, p. 10). Hand in hand with growth and assimilation of knowledge came mastery of the physical environment. Individualism became marked. The dominant distinction of the early 20th century was confidence and hope. Other features of the Enlightenment were rapidly increasing wealth, the expansion of trade and of colonial empires, the opening and development of new territories which brought an exhilarating sense of expectancy, and the belief that in the not too distant future the ills of society would be overcome. Learning, commerce and territorial expansion were expressions of this new era. The expansion and transformation occurring as a result of the Enlightenment gave rise to the expectancy of a new world culture (Ibid p. 16 - 19).

Since Christian people were supposedly the initial possessors of this new culture, a certain amount of prestige surrounded Christianity, particularly since Christian missionaries were those who introduced new knowledge and methods. Latourette comments:

The fact that the emerging world culture has its origins in the Occident was of advantage to Christianity. Because of the Western source of that culture and

because Christianity was traditionally the religion of the West, the way was opened for the Christian impulse to become a constituent part of that culture and to help shape it (Ibid, p. 21).

The early missionaries to Swaziland arrived at the peak of Enlightenment thinking and they were people of their time. Their biblical world view had become clouded. Because of this dominant philosophy of life, they seem to have forgotten the injunctions of Paul when he wrote, "Don't let the world squeeze you into its own mould" (Romans 12:2, Phillips). Bosch confirms this viewpoint:

Only very few of those missionaries, however, managed to escape the spell cast over them by the world view of the Enlightenment, and even then only partially. Even when they were constrained by Jesus' love, they could never communicate that love in its pristine form since it was always mixed with extraneous elements (1991, p. 344).

The Christianity imported into Swaziland, despite the courageous initiative of missionaries who dared to bring their faith to areas untouched by Christianity, was no longer a purely Biblical world view, as seen in Table 20, where faith and value systems were in God alone. This had been substituted for a faith in which the value system and faith and trust were in both Biblical Christianity and in the power of civilisation and enlightenment thinking (science and reason). The institutional approach to missions gave credence to their belief system. Table 21 shows this dichotomy.

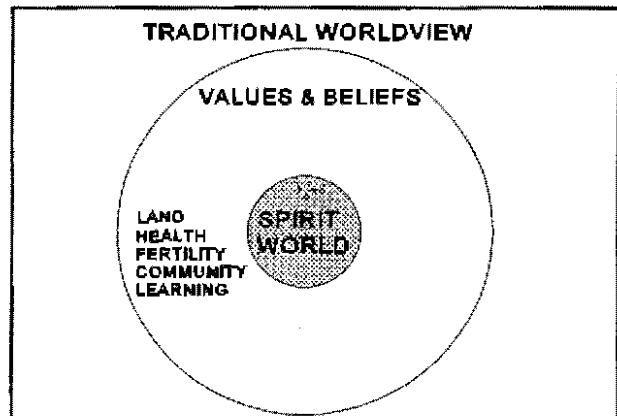
These missionaries, arriving in Swaziland from Europe and North America, had received their commission from Jesus himself when he instructed them to "Go and make disciples of all nations". But they were also infused with the message of the times, that they had only to create the right conditions and they would succeed; that Christians of the West would solve all the ills of the entire world, primarily by means of colonialism and the planting of Western-type churches all over the world (Bosch, 1991, p. 342). However, they lacked an understanding of the culture of the Swazi people and did not even acknowledge that they had a religious belief system, let alone understand it. Their world view did not recognise the reality of the spiritual

world and as a result, they were unable to meet the heart needs of the people.

Enlightenment Christianity confronts African traditional culture

The target culture into which this Westernised form of Christianity was planted was strongly traditional and totally untouched by Western civilization, let alone Enlightenment thinking. It was also earnestly religious. It believed in a supreme god, albeit distant. The people used intermediaries, their ancestors, to intercede with this distant god. Life was holistic, and all areas of life were under the control of the spirit world including fertility and the planting of crops, health and community life.

Table 22



Swazi religion had themes of sacrifice and atonement whereby offerings were poured out to the gods or intermediaries, or animals slaughtered as expiation. This redemptive analogy, existing in the religion of the Swazi, was an ideal door-opener for the message of Jesus Christ, but the missionaries failed to use this to substitute Jesus Christ as the perfect, complete and final sacrifice. Instead, the sacrifices in traditional religion were justified because of Christian teaching. Kasenene comments on this when he says:

Swazi religion prepared the way for the gospel and helped Christianity to spread rapidly and to be easily accepted. First of all, Swazi Traditional Religion produced religious concepts, beliefs, values and practices on which Christianity built and which facilitated its precipitation (1993, p. 131).

By contrast, the missionaries regarded all cultural customs as sin. As a result, the Christians became polarised from their community. Even the family structure was

changed under missionary influence, from an extended to a nuclear family. In effect, the church became the extended family.

Early Christian converts

Without a doubt, many of the early Christians were people whose lives had been transformed by the power of God, but for the majority, the faith adopted was a syncretised form of Christianity. The traditional belief systems of the people remained intact and the new religion was an overlay. Henry, describing folk Catholicism in the Philippines, notes the coexistence of two religions in the same person without inconsistencies. The Roman Catholic aspect of folk Catholicism deals with the higher or ultimate concerns, while the animistic aspect deals with concerns of everyday living. These are two separate thought and behaviour systems, each dealing with different areas of life. A similar situation existed, and still exists, in Swaziland.

Christianity, as taught by the missionaries of that era had little to say about the spirit world. It did not fit into their concept of the realm of science and reason so it was denied, or at best, ignored. Science substituted for God in the realms of health, land and fertility. For this reason, when problems of a spiritual nature occurred, they turned to the diviner. Caroline Butler, sharing her missionary experiences in Zaire, speaks of a faithful national pastor who "remarked with some bitterness, that missionaries had spent their years talking about love and giving and baptism but not one had told them how to overcome the evil spirits that hold the country in captivity". "If we cannot show evidence of a spiritual power greater than the power demonstrated in animism", she says, "there is little hope of making any headway for Christianity among these people" (1993, p. 38).

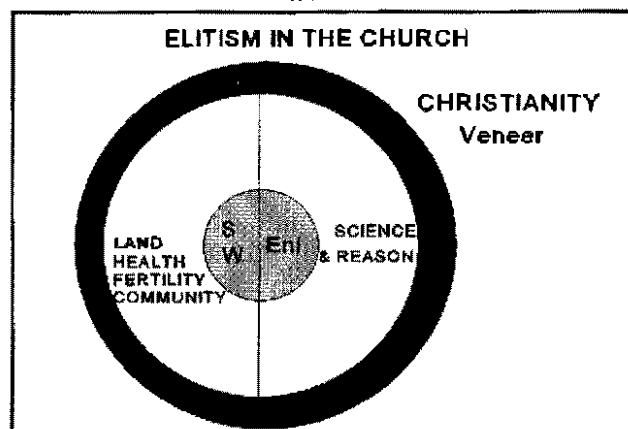
The Western model of church-going and worship service was inappropriate in Swazi culture. Western worship was a once-a-week event, and the order of service was

generally formal in its approach. This was inadequate for an African whose whole life revolved around his religion. Kasenene writing on this aspect of Christianity says:

A convert to Christianity was expected to take part in church worship for a few hours on Sundays. The other six days of the week were empty. Moreover services in mission-founded churches involved a great deal of book usage which alienated the majority who could not read. In addition, the rituals, hymn singing and hymn tunes in these churches were Western-orientated and foreign to the Swazi. The people wanted services with Swazi rhythmic dancing, hand clapping and spontaneity which is consistent with Swazi spirituality.

The other problem with missionary Christianity was that it did not cater for a person's whole life. In Swazi traditional religious spirituality there is no dichotomy between the sacred and the profane, the religious and the secular. Religion caters for the whole person; the physical, emotional, social and spiritual. When a Swazi falls sick, religion is there to help him or her; when one's crops fail, one appeals to religion for help; in the face of hostile neighbours or enemies, one appeals to religion for protection. Religion caters for all needs and enters all spheres of life (1993, p. 135).

Table 23



It is not surprising then, that the form of Christianity which resulted from the teaching of the missionaries was syncretistic. It became a blend of Swazi traditional religion, and Enlightenment thinking with a thin veneer of Christianity. The core of the Swazi world view remained intact. Motsa says, "They still cling to the value of the ancestral cult, because they were born into it. As it is a part of their culture, it is very difficult to completely break away from it. That is why you often find Christian Swazis praying

to God on the one hand and seeking advice from the diviners on the other, secretly though" (1975, p. 185). Kuper comments that "the number of converts is a superficial index to which the new religion is absorbed; the depth of conversion cannot be measured, although it can to some extent be observed from behaviour in crises such as illness and accidents" (1947, p. 107).

Table 23 shows the world view of most of the Christians in Swazi Churches. The core of their belief system is dichotomised. Education has brought about faith in reason and science (Enlightenment), but they still believe strongly in the spirit world, the core of their culture. Christianity has become a veneer which is an elitist symbol or as Matebese puts it, "Christianity came to be accepted by many as the way of least resistance to advancement in the changing culture" (1975, p. 153).

The effect on the people

Gradually through the history of the church in Swaziland, the stature of the church grew at the expense of the traditional culture. Christianity became an elitist symbol. The people were prepared to align themselves with the church and its teaching for the sake of gaining the benefits such as education and status. However the effects of Christianity cannot be discussed in isolation. The cultural milieu of Swaziland was changing due to the impact of Western culture, not Christianity alone.

Most of church members and adherents were commoners. It gave them a freedom and equality not found in traditional culture. Kuby notes that "the church was one of the freest points of entry into Western culture" (Kuby 1979, p. 25). Some of the areas in which elitism was particularly marked are dealt with separately.

The church people developed airs of superiority

The missionaries insisted that converts wear clothing which immediately distinguished them from the non-Christian people in the community. In fact, the term given to those who reverted to traditional ways was *kuklukuta* - to remove the clothes. Kuper relates that Christians laughed at the traditionalists. She recalls the story where one Swazi Christian remarked loftily, "Fancy still dressing in skin and feathers. These people are quite uncivilised" (1947, p. 121).

The status of women changed

Christianity gave Swazi women fuller participation in domestic life, higher religious status, equality with other church members regardless of rank or sex, and the promise of an individual after-life. In traditional society, women had an inferior status to men and were considered minors all their lives. Marriage did not end their lack of status. They became aliens in the patriarchal homesteads of their husbands and were subjected to the restrictions of polygamous relationships. When women became Christians the men resented the erosion of their spheres of influence (Ibid, p. 25).

Resentment of chiefs

Early in the history of the church in Swaziland the Christians began to pay allegiance to the missionaries rather than to the traditional powers. When problems arose, it was to the missionaries they went. Missionaries made decisions in cultural matters such as polygamous marriages, bride price and chastity. Soon the authority of traditional leaders was undermined and a two-tier system of authority developed. Chiefs resented the way church people would take cases to their missionary they would otherwise have taken to the chief.

CHAPTER 7

1940 - 1985 YEARS OF STAGNATION IN THE MISSION CHURCHES

ELITISM IN CULTURE

Changes in the nation in this era

Political changes

The post-war years saw an increase in the political powers of the *Ngwenyama*, (or King)¹³. In 1950, the British Government officially gave Sobhuza the right to appoint chiefs, to establish a Swazi judicial system and to set up a Swazi National Treasury (Potholm, 1977, p. 132). By 1960 it became clear that the time had arrived to make positive moves towards independence and in 1963 a new constitution was promulgated which allowed for a Legislative Council. In 1968 full independence was granted, and Swaziland entered a new phase in its history. A Westminster model of government was introduced with a parliament and senate but this was rescinded after five years and replaced with a system which incorporated both Western and traditional forms of rule. The new constitution was drawn up and presented to the people in 1978. It reintroduced a bi-cameral parliamentary structure giving the King executive authority including full legislative, executive and judicial powers. He would be assisted by a Council in this role. The Swazi nation (males only) went to the polls at traditional council level to elect four members to the Electoral College. This Electoral College

¹³ The British referred to him as the Paramount Chief.

then elected sixty members of parliament. Dr Samuel Hynd, a white missionary medical practitioner gained one of the highest number of votes, making a statement regarding the high regard the people had for him and doubtlessly other missionaries who had given of themselves to serve the nation. No provision was made for party politics (Matsebula, 1988, p. 269 - 270). These political moves reflected a shift from Western form of government to a traditional or cultural style of leadership.

Economic advance

After World War II, Swaziland began to advance economically. Havelock Asbestos Mine was expanded, large-scale agricultural, forestry enterprises and industrial projects were commenced. These increased employment opportunities within Swaziland boosted household incomes. In the sixties, the Swazi economy sprang to life. A railway line to Maputo was opened, a tarred highway was opened and a hydro-electric scheme was completed. These advances presented new opportunities for economic growth. Sugar exports increased, iron ore was exported and a wood-pulp industry developed (Johnson, 1983, p.1071-1073). Although the economy of Swaziland is inextricably tied in to the economy of its influential neighbour, South Africa, its success lay in its stable politics and the wisdom, foresight and leadership given by its hereditary and political leader, Sobhuza II. Johnson identifies another dimension to the nation's success when he states that "Swaziland's greatest asset at that time was the people themselves" (Ibid, p. 1089).

Social changes

Swazi people are traditionally agriculturalists. The economy of Swaziland was

based on agriculture¹⁴ and this sector provided employment for 80% of the population at the end of the seventies (Ibid, 1983, p. 1097). However, subsistence farming was diminishing and people were being drawn off traditional lands during this period as the formal economic sector grew. Soon demographic changes occurred as people began to move from their tribal areas to the towns and villages in high employment areas. As a result, the influence of the tribal structure of society began to decrease. In the rural setting, 'being' was important. Acceptance in society was automatic for every member of the group. In the urban setting, the emphasis was on 'becoming' as they strived to gain employment, advancement and wealth (Fleming, 1991, p. 27). However, the culture of the people was kept intact throughout this period through its annual festivals which bound the nation together and reinforces culture under the charisma of its leader. The most important of these is the *Ncwala* festival which entrenches kingship.

Independence brought other changes. It increased the range of choices. The education system was one such area. After independence, the government laid a great deal of emphasis on education, and the Third Development Plan, published by the Economic Planning Office in 1977, gave universal primary education as its goal. Although the majority of schools at that time were still under the management of the churches, they were subsidised by the government through grants-in-aid. A number of State schools were developed, making it possible to bypass the church in the quest for education. The government encouraged higher education, and scholarships were available for university education both in Swaziland and abroad.

This had implications for the spread of Christianity. It was no longer possible to exclude children from a school because they were not members of a particular church. Through the years, the schools had promoted a Christian way of life. This changed, after independence, to include a 'Swazi way of life' in addition to Christian teaching (Kuper, 1986, p. 144). New textbooks were introduced with a Swazi

¹⁴ No less than 70% of export earnings was derived from agriculture.

orientation. Even the syllabus for Religious Education was set by the Department of Education. The opportunity for using the education system to gain converts was past. The education had moved out of the direct control of the church.

Sobhuza II's powerful leadership unites the nation through culture.

At the very centre of Swaziland's traditional life is the King. Over the past 200 years the Swazi history kings had ruled their subjects, gained territory through conquest and made decisions concerning the nation. The king is the lynch-pin around which the land, the subjects, politics and the economy revolve. Kuper says:

The Swazi king is the symbol of the nation, the man who is more than 'father' and 'son' of the people. His position is vouched for by tradition and myth, and is enhanced by ritual and taboo (1947, p. 72).

Sobhuza II was crowned in 1921 and his powerful leadership soon became evident. He was a skilled diplomat and negotiator, he had the ability to unite his people, and his battles to regain his land and nation for the Swazi people enhanced his standing and brought political stability.

There is no doubt that Sobhuza will go down in history as one of the greatest Swazi kings. "He has been described as a perfect gentleman, courteous, kind and respectful even to a child of the lowest of his subjects. He is ever smiling and tolerant even under extreme provocation" (Scutt, 1966, p. 47).¹⁵ His philosophy of leadership was that "problems should be solved around a table and not by the barrel of guns". Matsebula relates a speech given by the Prime Minister at this time which reinforced the strong royalist feelings on traditionalism in which he warned against carbon-copying foreign practices and habits (1988, p. 272).

At independence, Sobhuza emerged as leader, not only of the Swazi people, but

¹⁵ Quotation by Nquku, J J. *Bayethe*, p.11).

of the whole nation. Johnson writing of him says:

Historians would say already that the vigorous, astute, seemingly ever-young octogenarian had emerged not as a colonial puppet on a protectorate throne but as the practical, though mystical, political and spiritual leader who brought his half-million utterly devoted subjects out of a stagnant backwater safely into the dangerous stream of a new world. To do this demanded rare gifts of perception, analysis, diplomacy, flexibility and implacability, tolerance and ruthlessness, humour and courage. Formidable and almost unacceptable superlative-sounding attributes. However, cool examination will show them to be justified. He out-thought his contemporaries, both black and white, who sought to control his country and manipulate his nation. Well before his Diamond Jubilee, Sobhuza was Swaziland and Swaziland was Sobhuza (1983, p. 1013).

The growth in national pride and return to culture

The monarchy's strengths were considerable and the source of its greatest power lay in its control of Swazi National Land (SNL) which comprised half of Swaziland in 1968 (Booth, 1983, p. 65). SNL was held in trust for the people by the King. The use of this land was granted to the people through the chiefs, forcing a loyalty to traditional culture.

One of Sobhuza's greatest successes, due largely to his irresistible charisma, was his leadership in reinforcing the importance of the Swazi's traditional religion in the life of the nation. The annual ceremonies, which drew the people together into a common culture, revolved around beliefs in the ancestors and the spirit world, their appeasement and tribute paid to them.

The Willowbank Report defines culture as an "integrated system of beliefs, of values, of customs, and of institutions which express these beliefs, values and customs; which binds a society together and gives it a sense of identity, dignity, security and continuity"¹⁶. Durkheim feels that religious beliefs are the force that give cohesion to

¹⁶ *The Willowbank Report - Consultation on Gospel and Culture*. Lausanne Occasional Papers No 2. Bermuda: 1978.

a culture. Writing on the function of religious beliefs he says, "The primary function of religion is the preservation of social group unity, and religious rites are the means by which a society reaffirms itself periodically" (1965 p. 257). Gehman, writing as an evangelical Westerner, affirms the role that African Traditional Religion plays in determining the culture of an African society when he says that "it is not a religion in the Western sense, something separate from the rest of life. It permeates all of life; it is a total world view with corresponding values and beliefs"¹⁷ (1993, p. 353).

However, no culture is static, and the forces of modernisation were impacting Swaziland from all quarters. Swazi historians have been quick to castigate and blame the church for the changing culture, while the nation as a whole readily embraced other aspects of modernisation such as education, employment and personal wealth. They also accepted the results of these benefits, such as the breakdown of tribal and family structures due to migrant labour, none of which can be attributed to the church.

Resurgence of Swazi traditional religion

Swaziland is not alone in its revival of traditional religion. In the face of rapid growth, Africa's churches face an acute identity crisis. Confronted by change, and rejecting Western cultural traditions, they are finding their identity in a return to traditional beliefs. Gehman, writing from his experiences in Kenya, notes that even the educated elite are looking to traditional religion for answers:

University students are taught that they have been deprived of their rich cultural traditions. The universities have spawned a renewed interest in and commitment to traditional religion.

¹⁷ The same can be said of Confucianism in the East which is a rule of life rather than a religion.

He quotes Okot P'Bitek as saying, "The study of African religions is one important way of understanding African ways of thought"¹⁸ (Gelman, 1991, p. 353).

As in Kenya, the interest in culture and Swazi traditional beliefs was evident in Swazis studying at the university. One such student, writing in 1975, articulates his feelings when he says:

The ancestors play a very important role in our customs and beliefs. The major customs are interwoven with the Swazi traditional festivals in which man's ancestors are involved. These Swazi customs are the backbone of the nation. If some of them could be dropped, it would be the end of the Swazi pride and identity as a nation (Shongwe, 1975, p. 187).

As culture began to play a unifying and consolidating role in the culture, and there was a renewed emphasis on the spirit world through ceremonies, people were made to feel they were not true Swazis unless they identified with ceremonies and ancestor veneration. Kasenene writes:

Being a Swazi is to belong, and being part of the community is of the highest value. On the other hand, to be cut off from the community means being cut off from the ancestors and it is the worst thing that can happen to a person (1993, p. 142).

Those who had been prepared to identify themselves with mission-churches found themselves in a quandary. Should they continue to claim allegiance to one of the mission churches? Could they still be Christian and yet pay respect to ancestors? For many, their Christianity was already syncretistic and they moved easily to one of the many Indigenous Churches developing over that period, where a synthesis of the two belief systems was practised. Kasenene writing on this aspect of Swazi life says:

Some people remained in mission-founded churches for the status and benefits which were attached to it, but continued secretly to practice many elements of Swazi religion and culture which were condemned by their churches. These are

¹⁸ *African Religions in Western Scholarship*. Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau (1970, p. 119).

the type of Christians who comfortably practice both religions.

Again, there were Swazi converts who, looking for a "place to feel at home", broke away from missionary-founded churches to form their own or to join an already existing indigenous church. They wanted churches where they would be respected and a type of Christianity which could cater for all their problems and where they could find spiritual satisfaction (Kasenene, 1993, p. 136).

Tite Tiénou, an evangelical theologian from Burkino Faso, has difficulty with this forsaking of mission churches on these grounds and argues against this practice. He writes "The question of identity for the African is often posed in terms of an alternative between Westernization and authentic Africanness as if these were the only possible options" (1992, p. 256). He writes:

African Christianity is doomed in the long term if it allows itself to be imprisoned either in Westernization or in indigenous cultures and religions. Both of these roads lead to irrelevance. The first will make Christianity irrelevant through foreignness, and the latter will cause it to become superfluous and thus irrelevant (1992, p. 257).

John Mbiti sees African Traditional Religion as preparing the way for the gospel of Jesus Christ. He does not anticipate Traditional Religion remaining intact, but that Christianity would judge, save and sanctify it. He presented a paper at the PACLA Conference in Nairobi in 1976 entitled 'Christianity and African Religion' in which he shared this viewpoint:

"It is African religion which generated a spirituality that finds ultimate fulfilment in the Gospel. ... The Christian faith comes, therefore, to enrich, to fulfill, and to crown and say 'yes' to African religion and not destroy it. The Gospel of Jesus Christ both judges and saves or sanctifies many elements in African religion. But, however rich African religiosity has been, it could not and did not produce that to which this religiosity pointed within the framework of its own revelation of God" (Tiénou, 1990, p. 25).

Missionaries and pastors rarely provide appropriate substitutes for the cultural elements they ask people to discard. "The result is horrifying", says Tiénou. "Much of practical evangelical Christianity in Africa is terribly syncretistic, while missionaries and pastors keep on preaching the 'pure Biblical message'! Tiénou continues:

Syncretism has many facets. There is unwitting syncretism (produced by inadequate teaching of Christian truth), there is practical syncretism (where a person will go to the specialist of traditional religion, often in secret, or will possess an amulet or talisman, while at the same time professing to be a good Christian), and there is theological syncretism.

The second form of syncretism is practised by many Christians because they have not been given clear scriptural teaching which has grappled with the realities of everyday living in Africa (1990, p. 22).

The only solution is to strip Christianity of its Western trappings and search the Scriptures to find a truly Biblical, yet African faith. God's church is composed of a mosaic of peoples. John tells us in Revelations (5:9 NIV) that Christ's sacrifice has "purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation" and this is becoming a reality. Christianity is losing its Western garb to peoples from all around the world, particularly so-called Third World nations. "We need to examine African culture very closely to see what elements are compatible or incompatible with the gospel message" says Tiénou (1990, p. 22).

Polygamy

Polygamy, is a preference in Swazi tradition. A man's social status is judged by the number of wives he has. The king is expected to have more wives than any of his subjects. But polygamy is more than status for the king, for through the choice of wives, the various tribes are given position. It also forms part of the religious belief system, whereby the power and prestige of the king as a polygamist is directly linked with the ritualisation of the king. To abandon this way of life would weaken the monarchy and the political structure (Kuper, 1961 p. 84).

Polygamy in Swazi society was possibly the most contentious aspect of culture that the missionaries in Swaziland, and later, Swazi Christians, faced. Kasenene writes,

Although there is no strong biblical reason for it¹⁹, polygamists who wanted to become Christians, had to send all their wives away, except one. Often this caused conflict between the man and the families of the dismissed wives, especially when those families had not accepted Christianity (1987, p. 59).

Marwick, writing in 1966, says that polygamy is so deeply rooted in the social economic and religious life of the people that it cannot be dismissed although, as an institution, it is on the decline. The colonial tax on wives of 30 shillings (with a maximum of £4 10 shillings) made numerous wives unaffordable. Secondly, the missionaries, without exception, enjoined their followers to practice monogamy and to marry according to Christian rites which excluded polygamy. According to the laws in force in Swaziland at the time, anyone married according to Christian or civil rites and taking a second wife, would be guilty of bigamy (1966, p. 40 - 41). Because of responsibilities to culture, men found it difficult to become Christians. Therefore the majority of church adherents were women and children.

The church in this era

Loss of education system as a means of gaining converts

It has already been stated that the church lost the benefits of the schools as a medium to recruit new converts or church members, although the management of the schools was still under their control. This dramatically affected the decline in church affiliation. People who had become Christians merely for the sake of their children, ceased to attend. Church attendance at mission-churches²⁰ as seen in Table 7, peaked

¹⁹ Kwame Bediako, a Ghanaian theologian, in his book, *Christianity as a Non-Western Religion*, states that polygamy is incapable of fostering the kind of discipleship in exclusive and sacrificial loving which Ephesians 5: 21 - 33 requires, and so cannot abide. Christ must become visible in African marriage as in every other facet which constitutes Africanness - a costly, demanding and intensely theological process (1995 p. 185).

²⁰ Official Yearbooks of the Union of South Africa.

in 1936 and then started to decline. Church affiliation according to the Census reports, (seen in Table 8) continued to rise up to the 1956 census and then started to decline. Hilda Kuper, speaking on this issue says:

The proselytising influence of all white missions virtually came to a standstill in the late 30's when the nativistic African Separatist movement boomed on an upsurge of nationalism (1986, p. 71).

It would appear that Swazi families were still retaining their mission-church affiliation up to the 1956 census for the sake of the education their children were receiving, even though they had ceased to attend services.

Mission-churches comes of age

Political changes taking place in Swaziland began to have an effect on the church and gradually the mission boards began to hand over the reins of leadership to the Swazi leaders. Until that time, the churches were heavily backed by the originating missions. Generally speaking, the pastors were poorly trained and were ill-equipped to take over leadership when churches were handed over to the nationals.

The number of members per church was low, consequently it was difficult for churches to have full-time pastors. Many of the pastors had oversight of schools in addition to clerical duties. In effect, the church had the responsibility of administration of the schools without the church growth benefits of earlier years. These factors made it difficult for pastors to involve themselves in discipling and pastoral care (Froise, 1989, p. 111). This lack of pastoral care in mission-churches contrasted sharply with the sense of community found in the rapidly increasing indigenous churches and further contributed to their decline. The church, at this time, was in poor shape to counter the overwhelming forces of the return to culture.

Rapid growth of the Independent Churches - a backlash against Western Christianity

The beginning of the Independent Church movement in Swaziland had its beginnings in South Africa when dissident church leaders moved out of their mainline churches or mission to start their own groups. One of the earliest churches to be formed in Swaziland was the Independent Methodist Church when Joel Msimang broke away from the Wesleyan Church in 1906. Zionism was introduced into Swaziland when Rev Daniel Nkonyeni of the Christian Catholic and Apostolic Holy Spirit of Zion Church arrived in 1913 and it quickly spread to areas around the country. He is regarded as the first African missionary to Swaziland (Matebese, DT, 1975, p. 137). The 1936 census listed twenty indigenous churches which accounted for thirteen percent of the Christian population. This figure is estimated to have increased to fifty percent in 1940. The growth of this movement coincided, or was directly related to the increasing nationalism and pride in culture which occurred when the country gained its independence.²¹

The Independent Churches had the strong support of King Sobhuza II. He became alarmed at the proliferation of Independent churches which arose from the strong nationalistic feelings in the country and in 1942 he called the leaders together, urging them to form a banner organisation and so the League of Churches was formed. Cazziol states this body commenced with about one hundred churches (1987, p. 36).

A study of 1 200 rural households undertaken by the Rural Development Research Project in 1981, revealed that 24.5% of the households surveyed belonged to a Zionist church, compared to 36% belonging to Protestant churches, and 7.6% Roman Catholic (Ibid, 1987, p. 37). The percentage of Zionists is considerably lower than was generally accepted at that time, particularly since it did not cover the urban areas where the mission-churches are stronger.

²¹ The Swaziland Christian Handbook (Froise, 1994) lists forty eight member churches taken from the records of the League of Churches at that time.

There are two main sub-groups within this movement. The *Ethiopian* churches arose from secession from mainline or other Independent Churches. They have generally retained the doctrinal teaching of their parent bodies, but are nationalistic in outlook. The emphasis in *Zionist* churches is the spirit, revelation, healing and baptism with purification rites. The Spirit and revelation may take precedence over the Scriptures. Some of these groups, particularly the large groups from South Africa, are messianic in which the founder/leader is seen to be the intermediary. In some groups, Jesus Christ is secondary to the Holy Spirit and at times there is a lack of distinction between the spirits of the ancestors and the Holy Spirit. In many cases good spirits (as opposed to evil spirits) are referred to as holy spirits:

The Spirit can be categorised into two types: one is that which is known as the Holy Spirit and the other one is an Evil Spirit. The two differ, not in form, but in their work. The father of all Holy Spirits is God and the father of all evil Spirits is Satan. God, his angels and other Holy creatures are Holy Spirits; Satan, with his demons and evil creatures are evil Spirits.

It is, further, my submission that dead human beings are living spirits. As to what type of Spirit they take depends on their character or their work during their lifetime. Any person who lives a holy life becomes a Holy Spirit after death and any person who lives a devilish life becomes an evil Spirit after death (Mpanza, 1993).²²

Most of the Independent Churches in Swaziland are of the Zionist tradition and their teachings vary from being close to the mission churches to being neo-traditional on the other, where it is difficult to distinguish them from traditional religious beliefs. The dominant reason for growth has been the identification with the community. In times of need they visit with the family, pray for healing when a family member is ill, and mourn with them when they face bereavement.

A common feature of all Independent churches is the desire to be free of

²² From a paper by M P Mpanza entitled *The Concept "Holy Spirit" in the Ibandla Lama-Nazaretha* presented at the Symposium on Independent/Indigenous Churches and New Religious Movements : NERMIC in 1993.

Western control, although a number of these churches are splits from existing Independent churches.

Reasons for the move from mission-churches to Independent churches:

Because of their dichotomised enlightenment world view, missionaries were very often unable to distinguish between the basic tenets of the Christian faith and their Western culture and expected converts to conform to their Western way of life rather than allowing Christianity to transform Swazi culture. The formal worship patterns of Western churches did not satisfy the needs of African society which sought a more expressive style of worship.

Western missionaries have failed to recognise the reality of the spirit world. The inherent weakness of a scientific world view is that it allows a person to believe only what can be seen or measured. Writing of her own personal road to growth, a missionary working in Zaire, writes:

Because of this lack of a ready recourse to spiritual power, we have not dealt with the genuine spiritual needs of the people to whom we have come to minister. Our contribution as missionaries has not dealt with the genuine needs - the heart and spirit needs - of the Zairians. As a result, even the Christians have been forced to continue, or turn back, to their traditional power sources. For physical, emotional and financial help, they come to us.

A faithful national pastor remarked with some bitterness that missionaries have spent years talking about love and giving and baptism, and no one has told them how to overcome the evil spirits that hold the country in captivity (Butler, 1993, p. 385).

Missionaries did not find it easy to hand over leadership to nationals, while those expecting greater responsibility became impatient and moved out to start a work of their own. This topic has been discussed earlier in the paper and it was shown that this problem arose largely because the missionaries had stayed too long. Their unwillingness to transfer responsibility was one of the reasons that gave rise to

Independent Churches.

Problems in this era

Second generation Christians - faith a veneer

Mbiti, speaking of African Traditional Religion, says it permeates into all departments of life so fully that it is not easy or possible always to isolate it from other aspects of life.²³ This is no less true of Biblical Christianity, but because a Biblical world view was apparently not taught or practised, their faith never became a costly and radical life-changing experience. Paul urged the church in Rome "not to be conformed any longer to the pattern of the world, but to be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Romans 12:2 NIV). Jesus speaking to a religious leader talks about the need for being born again into God's family or making a completely new beginning (John 3:3 NIV).

The early Christians in Swaziland were these kind of people - people such as Daniel Msimang and others, who changed their allegiance from earthly kings and ancestors to the King of Kings. But many of the Swazis who claimed to be Christians in this era had never experienced this "transformation". Their world view, the core of their beliefs, did not appear to have changed from the spirit world of traditional religion to the triune God. They had inherited a faith from their forefathers but had not experienced the cost of their faith. The acid test of where true faith lies is where or who the person turns to in time of trouble.

With the resurgence of culture following independence, Christians, whose faith was but an overlay, found no difficulty in being Christian in name only and traditional in practice. The census reports tell us that many ceased to identify themselves with

²³ Quoted by J & J Comaroff in *Of Revelation and Revolution* from African Religion and Philosophy, 1969.

Western-type churches.

Although the model of Christianity brought to Swaziland was a Western model, true Biblical Christianity rises above culture - it's God's message for everyone. "It speaks to people in all cultures, but its expression is different in every culture" (Gehman 1991 p. 353). " In practice and privately, however, all African Christians feel the tremendous burden of having to bear at least two cultural loads: the modern or so-called Western and the traditional. They feel themselves caught between two worlds, and in the words of W B Yeats and Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, the centre can hold no longer" (Tienou, 1990, p. 23).

Hilda Kuper states rightly in the following quotation that the early Christians were very sincere, and that there was a marked distinction between these Christians and later converts:

There is sometimes a marked distinction between the pioneer converts and the later members, and also between first and second generation Christians. In the early days, opposition from chief and kinsmen coupled with a background of unbroken conservatism made Christianity a difficult decision. Missionaries often stated that the first Christians were very sincere, or they would not have been able to leave the security of their kin. Later with the increasing influence of Europeans, the weakening of the powers of chiefs and the loosening of ties through migration to European employment, the new religion was more readily adopted (Kuper, 1947 p. 125).

However, her statement that the new religion was more easily adopted in later times needs to be challenged. It is contended that a syncretistic form of Christianity was more easily adopted, and that the sincere, earnest faith of the early believers would have met with the same resistance in this era as in earlier days.

In essence, because the Christian faith (or Christendom) was easily gained, there was little to hold on to when the next elitist symbol appeared.

Rulers were never reached

Despite Sobhuza I's dream, which initially introduced Christianity into Swaziland, the nation's rulers have been either antagonistic or indifferent. Initially the missionaries preached a message which the rulers did not want to hear - that of a cessation to indiscriminate killing and the existence of a power that was greater than their own (in the case of Mswati II). Joel Jackson of the Anglican church, the first missionary to establish an on-going work, gained the confidence of Mbandzeni and he was allotted a tract of land to build a school. Despite his efforts, he was not able to persuade the King to allow his children to attend.

Malla Moe was an exceptional missionary who gained the confidence of the royal court, but she was unable to persuade the royal wives to become Christians. The Queen Mother was intensely interested and she wished to be baptised, but was given the choice of becoming a Christian or losing her royal role.

Kuper, writing of the importance of winning the traditional rulers, says:

Despite close and friendly co-operation with individual missionaries, Swazi rulers have not been converted to Christianity. Missionaries made strenuous efforts, aware that in other African tribes, conversion of the hereditary leaders, led to mass conversion of the subjects.

Conversion strikes deeply at the vested interests of both male and female ruler. The power and prestige of the king is linked with his status as a polygamist (1947, p. 109, 110).

This factor played a role in the King Sobhuza II's strong support of the Independent Church movement. There was no sense of identification with the imported model of the Christian faith.

The effect on the people

This era was a difficult era in the church. The people were dismayed when the British government did not agree to return the concession-gained land to them and a strong anti-colonial feeling developed. Hand-in-hand went a rise in nationalism and

'return to culture'. The missionaries were seen to be part of the colonising of Swaziland, and Western Christianity began to be viewed negatively. This affected the church. It has been shown in Table 8 that mission-church affiliation started to decline between the 1940 and 1956 census and that the affiliation of the Independent Churches increased.

Elitism moves from mission-church Christianity to culture

In Chapter 7 it was seen that Christianity was elitist. The education system commenced by the church, developed an educated and 'civilised' elite which centred around the church. With the rise in culture, this changed. Culture became the elitist symbol, and this not only affected church growth, but effectively moved the church into a cultural model evidenced by its shift to Swazi Independent Churches.

CHAPTER 8

1986 - 1994 AN ERA OF CHANGE

ELITISM IN MODERNITY

Changes in the nation during this era

It is necessary to take a brief look at the political, economic and social changes taking place in the country at this time, so as to understand the context in which the church was operating. The forces of modernisation were impacting this country at a breathtaking rate, and its people were hard pressed to keep up with the changes. The following changes need to be mentioned:

A new monarch and constitutional changes

The period following King Sobhuza II's death in 1982 was marked by intrigue and power struggles within the royal family and top echelons of government. This continued until the eighteen year old Prince Makhosetive was crowned King Mswati III in 1986. He took over a country firmly controlled by royalty, at a time when calls for a greater democracy were increasing. He quickly moved to assert his authority and removed the dissident Princes from government, which resulted in a high treason trial.

The institutions of authority, existing from before colonial times, began to show signs they were unable to withstand the winds of change. To accommodate the calls for a greater democracy, a number of changes were made. The *tinkhundla* (Swazi

traditional councils) was reformed and in 1993, for the first time in Swazi history, the people were able to cast a secret ballot for the fifty-five *tinkhundla* districts. The hated sixty-day detention-without-trial law was repealed. However, the progressive forces felt these moves fell far short of addressing the human rights violations in the country.²⁴ By contrast, *The Times* of London, in a special 25th Anniversary brochure,²⁵ displayed a more positive view of Swazi politics when they stated that "executive power will probably pass from the king to the hands of an elected government for the first time since King Mswati's father, King Sobhuza II, overturned the independence constitution in 1973". Supporters of the monarchy say it is highly democratic, and that an individual voice is more likely to be heard in Swaziland than in a Western democracy (Ibid p. 2).

More recently (July 1996), a Constitutional Review Committee has been appointed, which includes chiefs, cabinet ministers, the business community, trade unions, churches, academia and progressive movements. Their assignment is to submit a draft constitution to the king within two years.²⁶

Even in Sobhuza II's time, secularised Swazis were beginning to question the hold that royalty had over the country. The status of the king in Swaziland is very important, but much of the support was for Sobhuza as a person and all he had achieved for the nation. Although Mswati III is regarded as charismatic and forward-looking and he is open to change, it is not possible that he should have the respect and devotion which his father had after ruling his people for more than sixty years - this takes years of devoted service in which bonding and a trust relationship develops. The forces calling for radical reform do not have the support of the rural majority, but the

²⁴ Economist Intelligence Unit Country Report 4th Quarter 1993 Swaziland and Namibia, pages 10, 44 - 51.

²⁵ *A young king court democracy*. The Times, London, Special Supplement, 18/8.96.

²⁶ Economist Intelligence Report 4th Quarter, 1996 pages 29 - 35.

question remains, will a move towards a constitutional monarchy be managed by the ruling powers or will it be forced on the country through progressive pressure and mass action?

Economic changes

As South Africa moved towards independence in 1994, the economy in Swaziland began to slow down. During the sanctions period, Swaziland had benefited from multinational companies who found it politically unacceptable to invest in South Africa but, in the period under review, it needed to gain investment in its own right. Swaziland is committed to modernising and streamlining its economy and sees job creation as a priority and is doing all in its power to gain new investment.

The economic changes that have affected Swaziland cannot be viewed in isolation from the church, since they have a profound effect on the church and the way it operates. Some of these changes are listed:

Unemployment

Unemployment is a problem and is likely to remain so for a long time because of the high birth rate (3.2% p a). Less than 14% of the population was employed in the formal sector at the end of 1993. This meant that each employee supported an average of seven dependents.

The 1986 Census Report showed that 59% of the unemployed were in the 15 - 29 year age group. Of these, 21% had no education, and 42% had primary school education only. More than 50% of the unemployed were unskilled and had never worked before. These statistics were, and remain, a cause for concern, especially since many school leavers were entering the job market each year to swell the number of jobless. The mines in South Africa are a major provider of employment for Swazis, and a source of income for the country (Froise, 1994 p. 13).

The high unemployment rate has implications for the church. Firstly, if it is to be holistic in a needy society, it will need to show concern for families without sources of income. This is the time for churches to establish day care centres to enable mothers to seek employment in the formal sector. It is also necessary for the church to establish skills training facilities for the informal sector as part of its extended ministry.

But the number of jobless has further significance for the church. It will become increasingly difficult for small congregations to support a full-time pastor. A new emphasis will need to be placed on lay ministry and it may be necessary for pastors to seek part-time employment.

Social changes

Social change has impacted Swaziland to the extent that it can never be the same again. The Minister for Labour and Public Service, A N H Shabangu, commenting in a letter to the *Star*²⁷, stated that Swaziland is "one nation, luckily devoid of divisive ethnicity or tribalism". It is, however, conceivable that the division will be neither ethnic nor tribal in origin, but between the conservatives and the modernised.

A breakdown in the traditional family structure

By 1994, nearly 30% of the population was living in an urban area and the urbanisation rate was increasing by 6% per annum. Invariably, it is the younger generation who move to the cities in search of employment leaving the older family members in the rural homesteads. Effectively, then, the younger generation tend to live in the urban areas. They are educated, employed, open to change; they question traditional values and are seeking personal advancement. This compares with rural

²⁷ *Star* 3/7/95. "Modest' Swazis want to keep tried, tested system".

areas where change has not made much impact and the older people tend to be illiterate or semi-literate and are content with the security they find in their daily routine. However, the traditional family structures no longer holds the younger generation in its power and it is in the process of disintegrating. Hilda Kuper commented a number of years ago that "urban children have little knowledge of Swazi custom unless they are sent for some years to the country" (1947 p. 23). Now a whole new generation of urbanised Swazis has emerged to which this applies.

Changing values are to be observed in statistics such as the number of children born outside of marriage, which has now risen to 50% of all births. Kuper comments on the traditional moral code when she states:

After puberty boys and girls are expected to enjoy sexual experiences, stopping short of full intercourse, before finally assuming marital responsibilities. Sexual morality is strictly defined as virginity, not chastity. Formerly, if an unmarried girl were found by her husband to have broken the law, her shame was indicated in a public ritual and the number of marriage cattle was reduced. Today the ritual is discreetly modified, but there may still be a reduction in the number of her cattle, particularly if she has already borne a child (1986, p. 54).

Social norms have now weakened, to the extent that non-marital childbearing is now tolerated if not condoned.

Health care

Health care in Swaziland has changed from a curative to a preventative health care system. A Family Health Survey, conducted in 1988/89, showed that 80% of the population lived within eight kilometres of one of the health care facilities. This gives an indication of the success of this programme (Development Plan, 1994/95 - 1996/97 p.149). The church co-operated with the government in this move to decentralise medical facilities.

The prevalence of AIDS in the country is very high indeed. It was estimated in

1993 that 22% of the population was HIV infected in that year and projections for the year 2000 are as high as 30% (Froise, 1994 p. 15).

The results of this scourge will affect the church. Already the number of people dying from AIDS is rising sharply. There will be an estimated 56 000 orphans in the country by the year 2000. Initially the extended family will care for these children but eventually the healthy aged will not be able to take the strain. At this point, the church will need, once again, to show that it cares about human need. In addition, it has the responsibility to teach morality to a generation of young people, living in an era when feelings play a greater role than responsibility. A new understanding and teaching of sexuality is a major task for the church.

Development of an educated elite

The development of an educated elite had its origins in the mission schools scattered throughout the country and, although an elitist Christian society began developing through the years from the early century, it took some years before people with an education began to develop into a separate class. Booth divides this new class of people into two categories, namely the educated elite and the petite bourgeoisie. He writes:

The educational establishment that had developed since World War II had produced school-leavers in sufficient numbers by the 1980's to have formed a new and significant class that is today in all senses an elite. It is educated, ambitious, affluent, and aware of its status and political power.

The Swazi petite bourgeoisie, whose roots lay in the beginning of the colonial era, became a discernable interest group in the years following World War II. It was the product of the government sponsored education system, the initial graduates of which became for the most part teachers, clerks, the minor civil service, to which were added a number of traders, smallholders and artisans. With the passage of years, as it both grew and matured as a differentiated class, it gradually became conscious of its interests as a differentiated class (Booth, 1983, p. 60, 65).

One of the features of this new class of Swazis was that they no longer fitted into the tribal structure but neither did they fit entirely into Western culture. They no longer upheld traditional beliefs. Most of them would label themselves 'Christian' because of some loose connection with a church. Kuby raises an important issue when he notes that the "younger generation came to discard this form of traditional morality without an adequate replacement" (1979, p. 54). This left the new generation of educated elite in a cultural vacuum and, in effect, without a moral code.

Youth - a secularised generation

Many young people are questioning the belief systems of an older generation, where both traditional religion and Christianity are being challenged. They have absorbed the world of science and reason and rationalised away their belief system. In this, they differ little from young people in any other society. Kuby writes:

Education in the mission schools made the young less accepting of the opinions of elders, and more prone to question and criticise the ways of older people (1979, p. 54).

University students considered themselves more enlightened than their parents. Although they lacked wisdom and maturity, they had gained the technical knowledge and skills to assume positions of leadership in the Western sector of commerce, the government bureaucracy, and the professions (Ibid, p. 47).

The church in this era

Kasenene, in explaining secularisation, notes it takes two routes, namely desacrilisation, or the withdrawal of awe and reverence of the mysticism and its replacement with science and reason. Or else it takes the form of rationalisation of thought, which involves the use of reason and knowledge, and not faith, in perceiving the world. He notes that the secularisation of society in Swaziland is a combination of both (1993, p. 142).

A dichotomised society

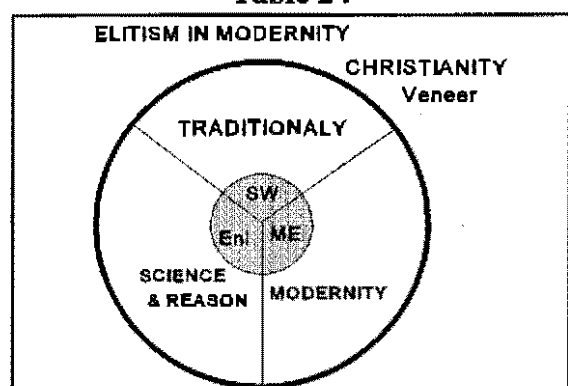
What is the culture of the Swazi people today? An enquirer would find many different answers to his query for Swaziland is no longer a mono-cultural society. Not only is religion syncretistic, but culture itself is dichotomised. For example, a Swazi spends his days managing a department in an airfreight company at Johannesburg International Airport. His children attend elite English speaking schools. One year he decides to reaffirm his Swazi cultural tradition by taking two weeks of his annual leave to attend the Ncwala ceremony. He leaves his comfortable home to drive to Swaziland in his late-model vehicle. He arrives at his traditional homestead, removes his Western clothes to don traditional gear and loses his Western identity as he becomes one of the thousands paying homage to the King. No Westernised Christianity has changed his world view - success and affluence have done that. But what is his world view?

The church finds itself with a new battlefield in this era. Secularisation, or modernity has impacted Swaziland. People, mainly the young, are moving from the rural areas to the towns at the rate of 6% a year. They leave behind their traditional structures and soon assimilate a new

Western humanistic world view that discounts the supernatural and emphasises material benefits. For most, Christianity is but 'folk Christianity' or Christendom, compared to a personal relationship with a living God. Kasenene confirms this religious dualism and overlay of one belief system on another when he says:

There are some Christians who accept Christianity in principle but retain some of the old values, beliefs and practices. Here a process of selection and mixture goes on. A person after conversion incorporates the new faith into the old one.

Table 24

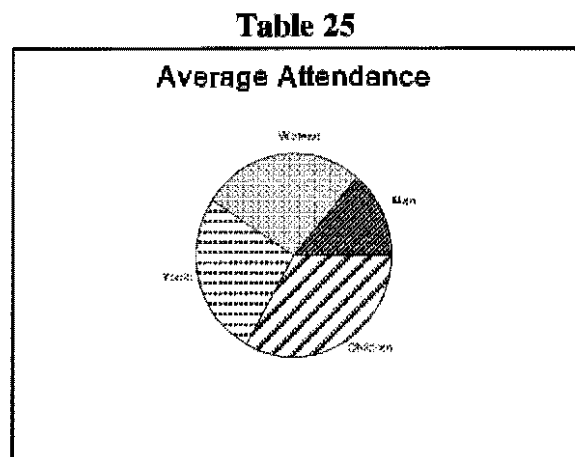


He may go to church in the morning, for example, and consult a *sangoma* [diviner] in the evening. There are also some Christians who wear a protective charm on the left arm while carrying the Bible on the right one (1993. p. 63, 64).

What would the world view of such a person look like? It would possibly be similar to Table 24 where the world view consists of some traditional beliefs, science and reason influence the world view and modernity has also impacted it. Christianity is most likely to be a facade.

This dualism in society has affected the church. Congregations in Swaziland today are small. Churches average fifty-two members, with average church attendance of seventy-six. Some 27% of church attenders are women, 14% men, 33% children and 26% young people

(SET 1994, p. 42). These statistics include African Independent Churches.



Affiliated to some church but don't attend

An inter-church survey conducted by OC Ministries²⁸ revealed interesting statistics. Teams of researchers visited the churches throughout the country, establishing membership and attendance. They found that only 19% of the population, including those affiliated to the League of African Churches, had formal church

²⁸ OC Ministries (an acronym) is an international para-church organisation which seeks to serve the church through training leadership. The Swaziland Evangelism Task (SET) is a local body that was formed following the presentation of the findings of a church survey coordinated by OC Ministries.

membership. This figure rose to 27% when the number of affiliates were included, indicating that a further 8% of the people of the country attend church, but are not members. Rev Absalom Dlamini²⁹ says that few people in the country have no church connections and estimates the number of truly traditional people to be between 10% and 20%. Those who do not attend church generally have some loose connection with one of the Zionist congregations. They could be termed nominal. "Few funerals", he states, "are conducted without a minister in attendance".

Clergy - a Western model

The churches tend to be clergy-centred, rather than people-centred. Many of the church leaders are older and are inclined to be inflexible. They feel threatened by the young elite generation and cling to power. A number of them pastor small churches and feel isolated. After a period of years, they find themselves running a maintenance ministry, and for them, there are few options and few challenges. The Swaziland Evangelism Task (SET), commenced after the country-wide church survey conducted by OC Ministries, is assisting these older undertrained ministers through seminars which introduce them to new methods and ideas. One of the Bible Schools (International Tabernacle) is offering courses to upgrade pastors and to train lay leaders (Dlamini).

The number of missionaries has declined

The number of foreign missionaries and ministers in Swaziland is decreasing. Expatriate workers listed in the Swaziland Christian Handbook numbered 174

²⁹ Pastor of the fast-growing 'International Tabernacle' and Hon. Minister of Natural Resources, Land Utilisation and Energy.

compared with 280 identified in a survey done in 1988 (Froise 1994, p. 34). The Roman Catholic Church was still heavily dependent on overseas assistance, with no less than sixty-four priests and sisters supporting the work of the church. The majority of these church workers were from Italy.

The charismatics are planting churches

Of particular note is the rise of independent Charismatic churches. In 1983, workers from Rhema Ministries in South Africa commenced a ministry with a Bible school, and although they were closed down in 1987, its vision remained alive in many small independent ministries across the country³⁰. A number of these ministries, started through evangelism campaigns, have now developed into churches, and in some cases, groups of churches. With their emphasis on the Holy Spirit, the rapid growth of these new ministries challenged the older churches to meet the spirituality needs for a changed and changing society, where these remain unmet in the more established churches (Froise, 1994, p. 30).

Swazi Independent Churches in this era

These churches continued to grow during this period. The government records show that fifty-six new Independent churches were registered since 1975, of which 40% were registered in the years from 1986 to 1994, indicating a steady growth over the period. Only three of these fifty-six were listed with the co-ordinating body, League of African Churches, which possibly indicated a desire to be free of any overruling body. Statistics and growth figures for Independent Churches are difficult

³⁰ One of their local newsletters contained a criticism of the Ncwala festival in which the kingship of the monarch is renewed each year. Since this was seen to be a censure of the king himself, a charge of sedition was laid, and the two expatriate workers were deported.

to obtain. In a traditional society where competitiveness is viewed negatively, there is little reason for record keeping.

But will these churches continue to grow or are they becoming a spent force? Judging from available statistics, it would appear that the League of African Churches is losing support and that new groups are by-passing this co-ordinating body. With the rapid urbanisation and modernisation of the people, it would appear the traditional spirit world is losing its importance, nevertheless people are likely to return to diviners for many years to come, but it is possible they will not find it necessary to be affiliated to a church group. Cazziol stated in 1987 that there were about 100 groups belonging to this organisation (1987, p. 36). The Swaziland Christian Handbook lists forty-eight member churches which comprise accurate records provided by the organising body (Froise, 1994, p. 54-61). The OC Ministries survey estimates that a little under 6% of the country's population is affiliated to this body (SET 1995, p. 30). One senior Zionist, quoted in the SET report, commented:

Our children are told at school that Zionists are uncivilised, so Zionist leaders have tried to accommodate their requests. Some are encouraging education. Some have even started schools themselves. Others have adopted music and choirs. Still others have adopted ideas of church management. Even the preaching has changed. People of today are different, so the church has felt it must accommodate. People want more preaching and teaching and less prayers for the sick. But in doing so, the church stands to lose the strength of its distinctiveness which is its spirituality. I estimate that it has already lost 50% of what I knew when I was young (Ibid, p. 68).

The report carries on to quote a church leader, whom they regard as an international authority, as having written, "If African independent churches only fit with African traditional cultures, they will be left behind in the next generation" (Ibid, p. 68).

Many of the Independent Churches are led by elderly men, and no less than three of forty-eight member churches listed in the Swaziland Christian Handbook gave leaders who were 'late' (deceased). Frequently, years of power struggles ensue over

leadership succession. Few of these churches have a ministry to children or young people who comprise the majority of the population.

The challenge to the church

Dealing with a society in "Future Shock"

"Change", says Toffler, "is the process by which the future invades our lives" (1970, p. 11). In his book *Future Shock*, Toffler describes the effects of rapid change. He says:

There are discoverable limits to the amount of change that the human organism can absorb, and that by endlessly accelerating change without first determining these limits, we may submit masses of men to demands they cannot tolerate. We run the high risk of throwing them into a peculiar state that I have called 'future shock'.

We may define future shock as the distress, both physical and psychological, that arises from an overload of the human organism's physical adaptive systems and its decision-making processes. Put more simply, future shock is the human response to overstimulation (Ibid, p. 297).

Swaziland seems to be a country in 'future shock'. Over the past decades it has been bombarded by change. The colonisers introduced change in many areas of life; urbanisation has been the force that saw the beginning of a disintegration of the family structure; the post-independence era sent out mixed messages as it sought to draw the people back into culture, while at the same time seeking to establish a modernised country; the new society has left the people without a culture in which they could feel secure or a moral code of ethics. Kenneth Fleming relates the story of a young Zulu man who found himself in 'future shock'.

Philip sat in class with a puzzled expression on his face. We had been discussing the changes in the culture of his people, the Zulus of South Africa. His frown deepened as he thought about the patterns of change. Suddenly he blurted out, "I don't have a culture." He was right. Philip was no longer secure

in his traditional culture. Nor was he able to understand the direction of the cultural changes swirling around him.

Philip was caught in the middle of three conflicting world views: traditional Zulu, colonial Christian and secular humanistic. He was, in fact, at the point where each world view clashed on one issue after another (1986, p. 25).

The church must help to provide the answers to people who are in a cultural vacuum, for it has a contribution to make in helping people work through the problems created by future shock. Values have changed, the moral code of ethics has changed, and families no longer provide the cohesiveness and close bonds previously known. The Bible teaches that the answer is to be found in the attributes of the Eternal God who is an unchanging, caring and totally trustworthy Heavenly Father. God is neither traditional nor Western. He transcends culture. The church needs to assertively proclaim this message to people who feel the pressure of clashing cultures.

The Church of the Nazarene is growing

In Chapter 5, the growth of the Church of the Nazarene was discussed and Table 18 shows the consistent growth pattern from 1913 to 1994. Why has this church grown while others are declining? A survey conducted by OC Ministries in 1993 brought out a number of factors which contributed to growth. A few of these are listed:

- The institutional services have produced a large unaccounted for number of alumni and friends throughout the country, who are sympathetic to the gospel message.
- The educational institutions have consistently produced a corps of well trained Christian workers and a generation of well educated pastors.
- Pastors and other leaders have learned to develop a proven strategy for evangelism in new areas through outreach Sunday Schools and tent campaigns. Some are faithfully applying these methods and seeing noteworthy results.
- Through training and careful practice, accurate, well kept statistical records have been maintained on many aspects of the ministry of the local churches. The ability to study, assess and modify any practical aspect of the church's ministry becomes possible because of the good statistical records (OC Ministries

1993, p. 23 - 24).

One area which has shown rapid growth is the South District. The Superintendent, Rev Samuel Dlamini, attributes the growth to the time he has spent in rural villages, planting churches, lay training and prayer. "I have no problem taking my blanket and a small tent to sleep in, and staying out there for one or two months", he says (SET, 1995, p. 76). But, even though churches are growing in rural areas, the main emphasis of the Nazarene ministry has been in reaching middle-class urban people, many of whom have gone through their educational system. This has been a successful strategy evidenced by the fact that the church grew by 30% over the period 1983 - 1993.

The Church of the Nazarene is not the only church that has shown growth over this period. The Christian Family Centre is another church that has multiplied. From its inception in 1985, it has increased to eleven churches. Its leader, Zakes Nxumalo, feels that the cell group strategy he introduced has helped his churches to grow. Each cell meets once a week and is comprised of a maximum of twenty people. This allows for more individualised attention for each member, and the caring within the group replaces the sense of community lost in the disintegrating family (SET, 1995, p. 79).

It can be seen, then, that churches which are growing are meeting felt needs within the community. This is particularly true in urban areas where the churches are replacing the extended family lost in the move away from the traditional setting.

Meeting the spiritual needs of the people

The church needs to have a Biblical understanding of the spiritual forces they are up against. The model of Christianity transferred to the Swazi church was a Western model in which the spirit world was never understood. For this reason people

return to the power sources in traditional religion in times of need. Gehman poses the question, "Why do Christians fall back to traditional religion in times of need? Is it merely a relapse by weak Christians, or are there some needs the church is not meeting?" (1991, p. 352).

Rodney Henry, a missionary to the Philippines says the church needs to "stop ignoring the existence of a *this-worldly* spirit-world, provide clear teaching on the subject, and provide alternative responses to those whose needs are now being met by *out-of-church* practitioners" (1971 p. 128).

CONCLUSION

This dissertation has sought to examine the growth and decline of mission-churches over a period of 150 years. The initial attempt to plant churches in Swaziland was aborted after two years, and thirty-six years were to elapse before the door reopened to missionary enterprise. This study of the growth and decline of the church identifies three distinct eras, each of which is related to elitism. The following eras have been identified:

1. The era of cultivating elitism in the church

This period was one of growth in mission-churches. It began with the return of the churches to Swaziland in 1880 after a long absence. In this era we see forces at work that led to some prestige in being associated with mission-churches. From its early beginnings, institutions were used as a means of church growth. Generally, churches gave preference to members and children of members of their own church in their selection of those who would attend school. This can legitimately be explained as being necessary for converts to read the scriptures in order to grow in a knowledge of God, but, in effect, it developed an elitist Christian sub-culture distinct from the traditional culture. To a lesser degree, medical care assisted in establishing this elite society, as Western scientific care came into conflict, and sometimes competition, with the traditional medicine men and women. It also removed healing from the spiritual realm to the secular, forcing an identification with the Western-style churches. Official

statistics show that the mission-churches grew rapidly during this period as people readily identified themselves with a growing Christian elite.

2. The era of developing elitism in culture

In this second era the status symbol shifts from association with mission churches to identification with culture. This came about through King Sobhuza II's call for a return to culture. Other factors added to the momentum: a disenchantment with Western colonialism with which the Christian church in Swaziland was identified; a rising nationalism as the people found themselves landless and powerless, and a strong and wise leader in the person of Sobhuza, who was able to drag his people and country from insignificance and obscurity to cultural and national pride. All these factors contributed to a return to Swazi traditional culture. Because the church was so closely identified with a Westernised culture and consequently a Westernised form of Christianity, it showed a rapid decline during this era.

3. The era of modernised elitism

With the arrival of modernity, another paradigm shift can be identified. Colonialism, migrant labour, growth in the economy, personal wealth, and the move from the traditional homestead to the towns, all played their part in the growth of a modernised elite. Neither the church nor culture was relevant in this era. It was the accumulation of personal possessions; an education that ensured a good job together with the status that this brought, that counted. The church seemed to have little to offer the newly modernised who felt their achievements were the results of their own efforts and consequently the overall decline of the church continued. During this period of decline, some hopeful signs began to emerge as newer churches, led by well educated Swazis, reached out to the urbanised elite.

What is the future of the church in Swaziland?

It has passed through waves of growth and decline and now stands at the crossroads. Will it be a relevant force in a new era of modernity and secularisation, or will it become increasingly irrelevant? Even now, yet another era has already begun to impact Swaziland, that of post-modernity, with its lack of permanence, and strong emphasis on individuality.

After a long history of missionary presence in Swaziland, the bulk of the expatriate missionaries have now left and most of those remaining are involved in institutional work. Swazis are firmly in control of the church with the exception of the Roman Catholics who rely heavily on expatriate support.

A number of observations can be made and challenges issued:

- Swaziland is in the process of modernisation which is affecting all aspects of life. Culture, an element which is never static, is changing rapidly despite the strong calls for a 'return to culture' of past decades. The modernisation of society is causing culture clashes at every turn. The forces calling for democracy hit right at the heart of Swazi culture itself, the monarchy, and its right to rule absolutely. This presents a powerful challenge to all earlier value systems, including the church. The church will need to find ways to penetrate the barriers of modernisation with, what it claims, is an ever relevant gospel.
- As the old traditional culture of the society disintegrates, and a new culture is in the process of formation, Swaziland finds itself to be a society with a declining set of values and code of ethics. This is evident in the high number of births outside of marriage, and the very high incidence of AIDS particularly in the urban areas. Swaziland is already suffering from a lack of trained and skilled workers and the demise of those with AIDS could affect the economy of

the country adversely. With a holistic ministry, a visionary church can demonstrate its relevance by ministering to those needs.

- Swaziland regards itself as a 'Christian' country, although, less than half the people are affiliated to a Christian church. The older generation of Swazis generally practice their beliefs through traditional religion, one of the Swazi Independent Churches, or in the older more established mission-churches. Both mission-churches and Swazi Independent Churches will need to examine the realities of a 'new' Swaziland and adjust to meet the needs of the people if they are to remain relevant.
- Swaziland has a very high birth rate and this is reflected in the youthfulness of the population. Some 60% of the population of the country is under the age of twenty, yet the churches continue to see their major area of ministry to the middle-aged and older. This is particularly true of the Independent Churches who have little ministry to children or young people. If the church in Swaziland is to survive, the major part of its ministry will need to address children and the youth.
- There is a need to develop a Biblical, yet Swazi, theology that will claim Christianity as its own. "Christianity has made a real claim on Africa", challenges Mbiti, "but has Africa made a real claim on Christianity" (1970 p. 430 - 440)? This is the issue at stake. There are healthy signs that the newer urban churches have begun to work through this issue, and that they are dealing with both traditionalism and modernism in a way that will enable the church to survive and grow.
- There is a need for confession. Representatives of mission agencies and church groups have worked in Swaziland for many years and have introduced a form of Christianity that is not truly Biblical but carries with it much of Western

culture. Although the missionaries who came to Swaziland imparted the only form of Christianity they knew, it is acknowledged, with hindsight, that they were in error. The past cannot be changed, but acknowledgement of these errors on the part of mission agencies would go a long way towards rectifying the wrongs of the past. Kasenene agrees with this conclusion when he says:

- It may be argued that it is unfair to criticise missionaries for what they did fifty or a hundred years ago when they did not have the insights which are now available to us. There is some truth in this view, but it should also be remembered that missionaries instilled these ideas into some Christians and have made no effort to correct them. Besides, some missionaries still propagate the same ideas today. The same attitudes which were inherited from the missionaries continue to affect the church and the ecumenical movement in particular (1987, p. 91).

Despite difficulties experienced in growth through the years, the legacy the church has left behind has resulted in deep respect for the church in the lives of many Swazis of note. The church has trained people to take their place in society and in the service of their country and Swaziland is not only indebted, but grateful to those from foreign shores who came to devote their lives and assist, not only in the development of the church, but in the development of the nation.

ADDENDUM 1

SWAZILAND IN BRIEF

Natural features: Land area: 17 364 square kilometres. Smallest country in Africa south of the Sahara. It is surrounded by South Africa except for the north eastern corner where it adjoins Mozambique. About 10% of the country is arable.

Terrain: Divided into four geographical regions running east to west. The western Highveld is mountainous, comprises 29% of the land area of which 3% is arable, and has an average altitude of 1 863 metres. The Middleveld is good farming land, comprises 26% of the land area of which 20% is arable, and has an average altitude of 940 metres. The Lowveld is sub-tropical, comprises 37% of the land area of which 12% is arable, and has an average altitude of 200 metres. The Lubombo region forms an escarpment between Swaziland and Mozambique, has an average altitude of 600 metres and comprises 8% of the land area.

Land settlement:

Swaziland has three different types of land settlement. Urban land constitutes only 1.4% of the total land area but accommodates 23% of the country's population (1986 figures). Individual Land Tenure Farms are held on title deed and large privately owned farms

cultivate this land. Most of the country's land area (60%) is held in trust by the king for the Swazi people as Swazi National Land and this is administered by tribal chiefs through a land tenure system.

Climate: The Highveld is near-temperate with an annual average rainfall of 1 270 mm per annum; The Middleveld records an average annual rainfall of 940 mm per annum, the Lowveld 780mm, and Lubombo, 787 mm (Bowen, 1992, p. 34)

Population: The 1986 census recorded a resident population of 681 059. The population estimate for 1995 was 908 000. Some 47% of the population was under the age of 15 years, and the population density for the country was 48 per km² (1986 figures). The fertility rate is 6,36 (children per women).

Urbanisation is currently estimated to be 30% and shows a growth rate of 6% per annum over the period 1976 - 1986. The major cities are the capital, Mbabane (pop. 92,000 in 1986) and Manzini which is the commercial centre.

Population settlement: 32% of the people of Swaziland live in the Highveld, 37% in the Middleveld, 24% in the Lowveld and 6% in Lebombo. The last indication of racial breakdown in the population was the 1976 Census which stated that 2,4% of the population was non-African (1,6% European). (Bowen, 1992, p.119.)

Government: Consists of a dualistic monarchy shared by King Mswati III as Head of State and the Queen Mother, who plays an important role in traditional custom. The Queen-mother, or *Ndlovukazi* (she-elephant), may be the King's actual mother or an appointed family member. At times the Queen Mother has acted as regent for a young king until he is old enough to take power.

Government is dualistic incorporating Western and traditional forms of government. Prime Minister, Prince Mphilini was appointed in 1993. The constitution provides for a bicameral legislature (libandla) comprised of a national assembly and a senate. The national assembly consists of fifty elected members and ten appointed by the King, and the senate, of whom twenty are appointed by the King and ten elected by the national assembly. Changes to the constitution assisted in delaying but not shelving the calls for a more democratic rule. International relations are pro-Western.

Economy: ³¹ Currency 100 cents = 1 lilangeni (plural emalangeni) is on a par with the South African rand and is linked to the South African economy through the Rand Monetary Area and the Common Customs Area/ GDP in 1991/92 totalled E1,245m. Agriculture accounted for 14% of GDP in 1991/92. It plays a major but declining role in the economy. It is estimated that 75% of the country's population depend on the land for an income, either totally or partially.

The number of industries is increasing. Manufacturing contributed 36% to the GDP in 1990/91 and accounted for 16% of formal employment. With a per capita income of E1 600, Swaziland is classified as a middle income country. However, less than 14% of the people were in paid employment and no less than 59% of the unemployed were in the fifteen to twenty-nine age bracket in 1986, many of whom had no education. The economic growth rate from 1965 to 1990 averaged 2.2% per annum. The inflation rate for 1993 was 10%. Imports in 1992 (mainly from RSA) totalled \$602 million and exports \$699 million.

³¹ The statistics in this paragraph are taken from the 1986 Census report.

Social:

The health care system is moving from a curative to a preventative system and now 80% of the people live within eight kilometres of a health care facility. Infant mortality rate is 99 per 1000. Malaria is a problem in the Lowveld. It is estimated that 22% of the population is affected by AIDS and this is expected to absorb a large proportion of the health budget in years to come and is also expected to affect social structures. Life expectancy at birth is sixty years for females and fifty-three years for males.

Education: Literacy rate was 63% in 1986. Every child has access to education, but education is neither free nor compulsory. Over 74% of the population over sixty years have received no schooling. In 1991 there were 523 primary schools with 180 285 pupils and 153 secondary schools with 51 514 pupils. 1 705 students were registered at the national university.

Family Life: Traditionally, Swaziland is a polygamous society, but, despite the strong cultural heritage surrounding marriage, family life is being eroded and no less than 50% of women have borne children outside of marriage (Census 1986 Report No. 4). Traditional marriages far outweigh church or civil marriages.

Communications: At the end of 1990, Swaziland had 13 524 telephones. There were an estimated 122 000 radios and 16 000 television sets in use. Three newspapers are published daily.

ADDENDUM 2

CHURCH GROUPS LISTED IN THE SWAZILAND CHRISTIAN HANDBOOK³²

Protestant and Catholic Churches

Abundant Life Centre
Africa Evangelical Church
African Apostolic Faith Mission
African Congregational Church
African Gospel Church
African Methodist Episcopal Church
The Alliance Church in Swaziland
Anglican Church - Diocese of Swaziland
Apostolic Assemblies of God
Apostolic Faith Mission International
Assemblies of God
Assemblies of God - Siteki
Baptist Mission of Swaziland
Believers in Christ
Big Bend Christian Fellowship
Christ Gospel Revival Ministry
Christian Church of Swaziland
Christian Family Centre
Church of God of Prophecy
Church of the Nazarene

³² Froise, 1994, p. 35-53

Deeper Life Bible Church
Emmanuel Assemblies of Swaziland
Emmanuel Church of Africa
Ethembeni Christian Church
Evangelical Bible Church
Evangelical Church
Evangelical Disciples Church
Evangelical Lutheran Church in SA - Eastern Diocese
Faith Assemblies of SA
Faith Christian Fellowship
Forward in Faith Ministries
Free Evangelical Assemblies Church
Free Evangelical Assemblies Church
Free Gospel Church
Full Gospel Church of God
Go-Out Ministries
Gospel Evangelistic Ministry
Growing Faith Ministries
Holiness Union Church
Hope Christian Fellowship
Independent Methodist Church
International Ministries Assemblies of God
International Pentecostal Holiness Church
Kalon Bible Church
Kukhanyokhusha Church
Libandla Lenkhululeko
Lobamba Assemblies of God
Lobamba Christian Centre
Lutheran Church in Southern Africa
Malkerns Church

Mbabane Chapel
Methodist Church of Southern Africa
Metropolitan Church Association
National Baptist Church
National Evangelical Church
Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk
New Apostolic Church
The New Fountain of God 'Khayelisha'
New Life Christian Fellowship
The New Methodist Church in South Africa
Norwegian Evangelical Mission
Pentecostal Assemblies of Africa
Portuguese Assemblies of God
Presbyterian Church of Africa
Revival Life Ministry
Roman Catholics
Salvation Army
Seventh Day Adventists
Sidla Umculu Ministries
Simunye Believer's Fellowship
Swazi National Assemblies of God
Swaziland Christian Brethren Ministries
Swaziland Evangelical Brethren Ministries
Swaziland Reformed Church
Swedish Alliance Church of Christ
Swedish Free Church
United Apostolic Faith Church
United Pentecostal Church of Swaziland
Welcome Back to God Ministry
Wesleyan Church

World Revival Tabernacle

League of African Churches

The African Apostolic Holy Church in Zion of SA

The Apostolic Church of Christ

The Apostolic Jerusalem Church in Sabbath

The Apostolic Jerusalem Christ Church in Zion Thesalonica of South Africa

The Bantu Strong Badelwa Apostolic Church in Zion

Bethsaida Zion Apostolic Church

The Christ Apostolic Bethsaida Church in Zion

Christian Apostolic Church in Zion of South Africa

The Christian Apostolic Faith Church in Zion

The Christian Catholic Apostolic Church in Zion (Nyaweni)

The Christian Catholic Apostolic Church in Zion

The Christian Catholic Apostolic Church in Zion of South Africa

The Christian Catholic Apostolic Holy Spirit Church in Zion

The Christian Holy Spirit Apostolic Church in Zion of Africa

The Christian National Apostolic Church in Zion

Church of Christ © O C

Church of Christ Itshe Legumbe

Cornerstone Apostolic Bethlehem Church in Zion (eMseni)

Ethiopian Baptist Church of Africa

The Ethiopian Holy Baptist Church in Zion Izikhova Ezimquini

Ethiopian Star Church of God in Holy Spirit of Swaziland

The Holy Apostolic Church in Zion of Africa

The Holy Catholic Apostolic Church in Zion

The Impumalanga Holy Church in Zion

The International Brethren Church in Zion

The Jerusalem Bethsaida Church of Christ in Zion of SA
 The Jerusalem Brethren Church of Christ in South Africa
 The Messenger Holy Apostolic Church in Zion of SA
 The New Apostolic Church of Christ
 New Fashioned Christian Apostolic Church in Zion of Swaziland
 The New Holy Christian Apostolic Church in Zion
 The New Jerusalem Apostolic Church in Zion
 The New Pentecostal Apostolic Church of Christ
 The New United Christian Apostolic Church of SA
 Pentecost East Star Jerusalem Church in Sabbath
 St John's Apostolic Faith Mission of SA
 Swazi Christian Church in Zion (KaLushaba)
 Swazi Christian Church in Zion (KaMavimbela)
 Swazi Christian Church in Zion of SA (kaHandolo)
 The Third Bethsaida Zion Apostolic Church of South Africa
 The Triumvirate Council of the Gospel Mission Christian Bantu Church
 United Christian Church of Africa
 The Zion Apostolic Baptist Church of SA
 Zion Apostolic New Jerusalem Church of South Africa
 The Zion Apostolic Swaziland Church of South Africa
 Zion Apostolic Swaziland Church of South Africa
 Zion Christian Church (The Star)
 Zion Church of God

African Indigenous Churches not Affiliated to the League of African Churches

Apostoli Jerusalem Christ Church in Zion
 Apostolic Church of Southern Africa

Apostolic Faith Assemblies Of God
Apostolic Faith Mission of Africa in Swaziland
Chambers Believers
Christian Apostolic Church in Zion of Southern Africa
Christian Apostolic Holy Spirit Church in Zion
Christian Catholic Amajuba Church in Zion of South Africa
Church of God and Saints of Christ
The Church of God and Son Jesus Christ
The Church of the Holy Ghost
The Church of the Peace of God of Prophecy in the World
Ecanana Zion Church
Ecclesia Intercontinental Prayers & Evangelism Ministries
The Ecclesiastical Executive Council in the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church in
Southern Africa
Edwaleni Christian Holy Spirit Apostolic Church in Zion Ekusindisweni
Enkosi Apostolic Church of Zion of Africa
Hlane Apostol Church in Zion
Holy Christian Apostolic Church in Zion
Holy Fountain of God Genesis Mission
The Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity
Independence Christian Church
Indigenous African Christian Church
Inhlanganselo Church of Zion
Inhlangano Church of Zion
International Brethren Church in Zion of Southern Africa
Isambulo Christian Church in Zion
Isethembiso S I K Ajehova Church in Zion
The Jerusalem Bethesda Church of Christ in South Africa
The Jerusalem Church of Christ in Zion
Jesus Ministry Church

Logos Christian Spiritual Service
Mhlumi Zion Apostolic Church
Mthonjeni Apostoli Pentecoste Church
Mthunzini Christian Church in Zion of Africa
Nazarene Baptist Church
Ngamandla Redeeming Church Ministry
Ntokozweni Church in Zion
Nyamane Apostolic Church
Orthodox Apostolic Faith Mission Church of Southern Africa
Pentecost Fire Church
Qwamile Apostolic World Faith Church
St Luke's Apostolic Church
Swaziland Alliance Church of Christ
Swaziland Apostolic Samaria Church in Zion
The Swaziland Christian Church in Zion of Southern Africa
Swaziland Miracle Church Centre Pool of Bethesda
The Three Apostles Church in Southern Africa
The Twelve Apostles Church of Swaziland
Ukubuya Kwenkosi Church in Zion
Umbiko Westkhatsi Fellowship
The World Revival Crusade from the Kingdom of Swaziland
Zion Christian Church - Engenas

ADDENDUM 3

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION IN THE CENSUS REPORTS

RESULTS OF A CENSUS OF THE TRANSVAAL COLONY

17th April 1904

Total Population of Swaziland in 1904 was 85 491.

Table 26
Religious affiliation of the various ethnic groups

	Christian	Non-Christian	Indefinite	No religion	Object to state
White	878	3	2	1	6
Mixed race	62	1		6	
Swazi	492			81 356	
Basotho	54			8	
Bechuana	1				
Cape Colony Kaffirs	2			1	
Portuguese	3			64	
Rhodesian	1			1	
Zulu	129			2 416	
Venda				1	
Total black	683			83 847	
TOTAL	1622	4	2	83 854	6

Notes:

- 1 The 878 white Christians are comprised of 475 (54%) claiming adherence to Dutch Churches and 403 affiliated to English churches. This gives an indication of the settler composition of the population.
- 2 The Swazi Christians comprise 0.6% of the total Swazi population. This compares with 5% of the Zulus who claimed to be Christian. The greater number of Zulu Christians could be the result of freedom of missionary activity in Zululand over a longer period.

CENSUS 1911 SWAZILAND ADMINISTRATION

Total population, 99 959 composed of:

Whites	1 083
Coloured	143
Black	99 019

Religious affiliation

Whites	296
Coloured	20
Natives	2 925

Notes:

1. The White and Coloured religious affiliation appears to be incorrect. Only 27% of the White population and 14% of the Coloured population claimed to be Christian. This compares to 98% Whites and 89% Coloureds in the 1904 Census. The criteria for affiliation was "belonging to a congregation" which could have some bearing on the issue.
2. Many more women attended church than men. The ratio was sixty-two women to thirty-nine men.
3. There were fifty-two places of worship.
4. Average church attendance for all population groups during the year was 2 411.

CENSUS OF SWAZILAND 3RD MAY 1921

Total population, 112 951, composed of:

European	2 205
Coloured	451
Bantu	110 295

Table 27
Religious affiliation of the different population groups
1921

Religion	Europeans	Coloured or Asian	Bantu	Total
Dutch churches	1 441	23	405	1 869
Anglican	495	198	974	1 667
Presbyterian	64			64
Independent or Congregational	8	1		9
Wesleyan/Methodist	56	74	2 522	2 652
Lutheran	26	15		41
Roman Catholic	36	21	304	361
Greek Church	2			2
Baptist	3			3
Seventh Day Adventists	10			10
Society of Friends	2			2
French Protestants			9	9
African Methodist Episcopal			390	390
Other Christian			2 447	2 447
Various other Christian Sects	19	7		26
Hebrew	14	3		17
Mohammedan		2		2
Parsce		2		2
Other religions	2	2	32	36
No religion		5		5
Object to State	7	1		8
Unknown or unspecified	20	97		108
Heathen			103 212	103 212
TOTAL	2,205	451	110 295	112 951

Notes:

1. Some 66% of the European population attended Dutch churches giving an indication of the English and Afrikaans/Dutch composition of the population. This compares with 54% in 1904.
2. The ratio of Black men to women in the different denominations is of interest. The English church was able to attract more men than the other church groups and had a 48% male membership. This compared with 42% in the Roman Catholic church, 35% in the Wesleyan and only 28% in the 'other church' category which would include the mission agency churches. There seems to be some distortion in the Dutch Reformed Church data where the membership was 388 male and only 17 female. This could be accounted for if the ministry had been in mine hostels or some other male oriented place of employment. This discrepancy is confirmed in the 1936 census which lists twenty Native affiliates of the Dutch Reformed Church.
3. The greatest number of Coloured and Asian people (43%) were affiliated to the Anglican church.

SWAZILAND CENSUS 1936

Total population of Swaziland in 1936 was 156 715. This is comprised of:

Europeans	2 740
Coloured	705
Bantu	153 270

Table 28
Religious affiliation of the different population groups

Religion	Europeans	Coloured	Natives	Total
NG Kerk Gereformeerde Kerk	1 427	18	20	1 465
Hervormde Kerk	247			247
Anglican	34		2	36
Methodist	475	248	4 298	5 021
Lutheran	73	67	7 986	8 126
Presbyterian	56	168	1 943	2 167
Congregationalist	69	11		80
Roman Catholic	18	3		21
Baptist	148	125	4 158	4 431
Seventh Day Adventist	9	4	636	649
Greek Church			5 541	5 541
Christian Science	2			2
Society of Friends	8			8
Other Christian Sects	2			2
Hebrew	118	28		146
Mohammedan	38			38
Native separatist churches		5		5
Object to stating religion			20 191	20 191
Other Christian	271		9	280
Other non-Christian	260		869	1 129
Unknown and unspecified		1	18	19
Heathen	11	14	2 127	2 152
No religion		12	105 472	105 592
	5	1		6
Total Christian		644	45 644	
TOTAL	2 740	705	153 270	

Notes:

1. The increase in the number of Black Christians shows an incredible jump from 7 051 in 1921 to 45 644 or 30% of the Native population in 1936.
2. The category 'Native Separatist Churches' accounts for 44% of Christians and cannot imply Zionist-type churches alone. With an 'Other' category of only 869 it can be assumed that the mission agencies churches and the African Methodist Episcopal church are listed in the 'Native Separatist Churches' category. Some 13% of the Black population or 44% of Black Christians fall into this category. In the 1946 Census, the number of Zionists is listed as 12 000 and it can be assumed that Zionists would be considerably less than this figure a decade earlier.
3. The church with the greatest support is still the Methodist church, followed by the Seventh Day Adventists, Anglican and Roman Catholic churches.
4. The Afrikaans Reformed churches account for 62% of the White population.
5. The census report states that seven Clergymen, fifty-eight unordained workers and twenty nuns as well as seventy-seven Bantu teachers and ministers were engaged in full-time Christian activity.

SWAZILAND CENSUS 1946

The total population of Swaziland in 1956 was 185 215. This is comprised of:

European	3 201
Coloured	745
African	181 269

Table 29
Religious affiliation of the different population groups

Religion	European	Coloured	African	Total
Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk	1 462	76		1 538
Gereformeerde Kerk	278	6		284
Hervormde Kerk	68			68
Anglican	636	288	4 044	4 968
Presbyterian	145	9		154
Congregational	18	10		28
Methodist	225	74	9 093	9 392
Lutheran	44	115		159
Berlin Lutheran Mission			1 702	1 702
Roman Catholic	311	160	4 827	5 298
African Methodist Episcopal Church			2 368	2 368
Church of the Nazarene			2 537	2 537
Full Gospel Mission			301	301
Norwegian Free Evangelical			1 471	1 471
Pilgrim Holiness Mission			890	890
Scandinavian Alliance Mission			8 678	8 678
Seventh Day Adventists			205	205
South African General Mission			2 365	2 365
Swedish Zulu Mission			588	588
Zionist Church			11 958	11 958
Swedish Alliance Mission			3 343	3 343
Apostolic Faith Mission			5 485	5 485
Metropolitan Mission			51	51
African Congregational Mission			1 056	1 056
Church of Christ			660	660
Any other denomination			3 300	3 300
Various other Christian Sects	4	1		5
Unknown or unspecified	10	6		16
Heathen			116 347	116 347
Total Christian	3 187	738	64 922	68 852
TOTAL	3 201	745	181 269	185 215

Notes:

1. This is the first Census report that gives an accurate reflection of the rise in affiliation in Zionist churches. No less than 6.5% of the population claim adherence to these church groups.
2. The percentage of Afrikaans Reformed churches members has decreased from 62% of the European population in 1936 to 56% in 1946. This could indicate an increase of English settlers and a return of Afrikaners to South Africa.
3. The Anglican church affiliation has decreased against population growth rate in the Black community. In 1936, the percentage of Anglicans amounted to 2.8%. By 1946 this figure had decreased to 2.2%
4. The Methodist church remains the largest of the churches and membership constitutes 5% of the Black population. This church has a decadal growth rate of 10%.

SWAZILAND CENSUS 1956

The total population of Swaziland was 237 041. This is comprised of:

European	5 919
African	229 744
Eurafrican	1 378

Table 30

Religions of the African Population in each district

Religion	Piggs Peak	Mbabane	Marzini	Mankaiana	Stegi	Hlatikulu	Total
Christian	7 382	16 932	30 343	23 832	7 839	51 238	137 565
Heathen	18 006	10 391	12 794	8 746	15 860	26 381	92 178
TOTAL	25 388	27 323	43 137	32 578	23 699	77 619	229 744
% Christian	29,0%	61,9%	70,3%	73,1%	33,0%	66%	59,8%

Note:

1. No denominational details are given for the African population in this Census report.
2. Compared to the rest of the country, the Piggs Peak and Siteki areas have a low percentage of Christians.

Table 31
Religious affiliation of the European and Coloured population groups
1956

Religions	Europeans	Eurafricans
Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk	2 015	7
Gereformeerde Kerk	286	3
Hervormde Kerk	287	2
Anglican Church	1 499	465
Presbyterian	212	7
Congregationalist	16	16
Methodist	508	41
Lutheran	68	128
Roman Catholic	535	451
Greek Church	10	
Baptist	56	
Christian Brethren	1	
Christian Scientist	7	
French Protestant	1	
Plymouth Brethren	1	
Seventh Day Adventist	7	8
Apostolic Faith Mission Church	45	7
Church of Christ	12	
Full Gospel Church	19	1
Pentecostal	6	1
SAGM	8	11
Swiss Church or Reformed	1	1
Various Christian Sects	156	182
Apostolic Sects	8	
No church	20	10
Hebrew	62	
Hindu		2
Spiritualist		19
Heathen (so returned)		1
No religion	11	
Object to State	1	
Other beliefs	12	1
Unknown or unspecified	49	14
TOTAL	5 919	1 378

Notes:

1. The Afrikaans Reformed churches still comprise the largest affiliation (44 %) in the European population.

2. The Eurafrican population has almost doubled over the last decade (745 in 1946) and it is assumed that the growth is by immigration. The new settlers have increased the Catholic component of the population from 21 % in 1946 to 32 % in 1956. The Anglican percentage of the population remained the largest group (33 % of the population in 1956 compared with 30 % in 1946)

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