

University of Cape Town

Faculty of Education

**TRADITIONAL AND COLONIAL EDUCATION: THE
EXPERIENCE OF THE PEOPLE LIVING IN THE
KAVANGO REGION OF NAMIBIA (1900-1966)**

A dissertation presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of

Master of Philosophy

by

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INTRODUCTION

Although western education was introduced among the Kavango people in 1910 by missionaries, the study does not begin there. It goes back to pre-colonial times and incorporates an investigation into pre-colonial Kavango education in order to shed light on the nature of a society that existed before the advent of missionaries and western education. The study ends in 1966, because that was when missionary

education came to its end and the state was to take over in 1968.

The study attempts to trace the roots of the educational influences which were at work during the colonial period of education to contrast them with the norms and values of traditional education, to seek to rediscover and preserve through oral-testimony the nature of this education, and to provide the historical context from which education in Kavango is now emerging in an independent Namibia.

There is an existing study of education in Kavango, Lategan, M. (1980): Sending- en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango. 'n Histories- pedagogiese besinning, written by an Afrikaans-speaking White South African woman who taught Biology at the Rundu Secondary School from 1970-1980, who interpreted education within the paradigm of historical pedagogics, in the framework of the Verwoerdian ideal of White Christian National Education. Her study hypothesises that the:

educational activity of the Roman Catholic, the Finnish, the Dutch Reformed Church Societies and the state had played an important and decisive role in the general, political and educational development of the Kavango region and its people¹

(My translation)

It begins with the arrival of White adventurers and missionaries and the introduction of western education in the Kavango region and concludes with the taking over of education by the colonial state. The study describes education from the point of view of the colonialist and regards the Kavango people as objects of historical and educational investigation. It concentrates on the development of colonial education, to the exclusion of the Kavango response. Lategan's thesis is principally a narrative appraisal of European handling of education in the Kavango region and does not evaluate critically the contribution of missionary and colonial education.

The present writer, born and bred in the Kavango region of Namibia and a product of missionary and colonial state education, holds the view that the history of education in

the Kavango region is broader and goes back much further than the narrow colonial perspective would indicate. A brief indication of earlier Kavango and Namibian history is required to rebut claims that colonial rule and missionaries brought peace, justice and prosperity to a region previously engaged in barbarism, savagery and heathenism.² In addition, education in Kavango is placed within the context of Africa in order to throw light on the relationship between African societies and their educational systems with reference to both the pre-colonial and the colonial period. Unlike Lategan's study, this study treats the Kavango region as an integral part of Namibia.

It is in this light that this study has been written. It should be seen not so much as a definitive history of education, but as an attempt to demonstrate the superiority of an alternative perspective which helps to explain the contemporary Kavango education in a way orthodox theories cannot.

AIM AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The broad aim of the study is to examine the nature of traditional education and the impact of western education and its norms and values on the Kavango people. For comparative purposes, the experiences of other Africans in Namibia are briefly considered. The Kavango response to this western cultural invasion, in the form of Christianity and education, is also examined. Within this general aim the study describes the role of traditional education in preparing individuals to meet the requirements of their membership of a functioning community. It considered the socio-political and economic effects of western education within the Kavango society, including the undermining of traditional norms and values, and the impact of the penetration of western culture on its traditional counterparts.

The influence of missionary and colonial education on the Kavango people was pervasive in both its positive and negative aspects. Missionaries aimed at evangelization, but this process was inextricably linked with western values.

Mission education introduced western notions of social life, material goods, economy and politics which eventually permeated Kavango culture. New skills such as literacy and numeracy which were to open up new possibilities for self-advancement in the administration structures were introduced. Mission efforts to instill literacy and numeracy were generally accepted by the people, including the chiefs, but 'work education' as well as missionaries' cultural arrogance and scant regard for Kavango culture was rejected. Initiation ceremonies, respect for vadimu (ancestral spirits) and traditional dances were disdained by missionaries as unacceptable and heathenistic. They promulgated a whole set of values which suited their cause. Thus, the hypotheses explored in this study are the following:

- a) that Kavango traditional education played a vital and effective role in ensuring the cohesion of the Kavango society long before mission education was introduced in 1910. Kavango traditional education was present and its features can be identified;
- b) that mission education contended with traditional norms and values and the social, political and economic structures of the people;
- c) that mission education was used by the colonial administration of South Africa to control and limit the socio-economic advancement of the African people in Namibia. In Kavango and other northern regions (Ovambo, Kaoko and Caprivi), specifically, the colonial administration did not support education because the people living in these areas were regarded as little more than useful migrant labourers.

The main purpose is to determine the extent to which the above hypotheses are true.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The methods used in the study are historical and, to a certain extent, comparative. The procedures used include description, critical evaluation, interpretation and explanation.

To test the hypotheses of the study, oral testimony from the Kavango people, statements of purpose from missionaries, government education ordinances from reports and statements by government officials were examined. The curricula of

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colonial education programs for African schools were studied to see the extent to which African youths were being given an education inferior to and more limited than that given to Whites in the country. Statistics on education expenditures were also examined for evidence of disparities in the amount and quality of education between Africans and Whites.

The analysis of the data revealed that through the formal training for professions and the day-by-day informal education of youths, the Kavango people passed on the skills, knowledge and behaviour patterns necessary to reproduce their society. It also revealed that the system of Kavango traditional education worked reasonably well, given the limits imposed by the society within which it has to operate. Concerning western education, it revealed that some of the missionaries and other Whites were generally against the idea of giving advanced literary education to Africans in the country. Their general attitude stemmed from such nineteenth century European and American beliefs as the inferiority and ineducability of the African people. Coupled with such attitudes was the fear among some Whites that if Africans were given some advanced literary education, they might compete with them and perhaps threaten their privileged positions. The colonial administration also deliberately underfinanced educational programs for Africans in order to limit educational opportunities for them.

METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

Oral data was collected through oral interviews with elder members of the Kavango society who were born before the arrival of missionaries, academics of the Windhoek Academy and Kavango traditional chiefs. Their information was invaluable regarding traditional education and its survival. Retired teachers, religious leaders and former scholars who went to school during the 1930s and 1940s contributed information on the understanding of the nature of missionary education. School inspectors, principals, teachers, former members of the school committees and school controlling boards and some parents whose children are now in schools gave insight as to why Kavango people accepted colonial

education. The interviews were tape recorded and all, except a few questionnaires sent to foreigners, were conducted in the Kavango dialects and translated into English.

This study would not have been possible without the collection of oral data. Although the testimonies given lack a fixed structure, especially those concerning the remote past, and suffer from problems as the manipulation of historical information, the romanticization of the past, and the absence of dependable chronology, they are useful in filling the gaps where written records were absent. The pitfalls of oral evidence were minimised by the comparison of conflicting testimonies and the careful assessment of the interviewee's discernible biases. Thus the judicious use of oral data together with written records enabled the author to attempt a reconstruction of the Kavango past and education.

People interviewed included ex-scholars and teachers, inspectors and an ex-director of education, former members of the Executive Council of the Kavango Administration, chiefs, former members of the school committee and school controlling board, community and religious leaders, academics in the departments of African Studies and Education, graduates of South African homeland Universities and elders in the society, including traditional healers, craftsmen and fishermen. Except for academics and church leaders who were interviewed individually, and some interviewees who made individual comments, people were interviewed collectively in groups, every group consisting of five or more members. After a question like "Why did you send your child to school?" was put to members of every group, they were left for a while to consider the question. After ten to twenty minutes of consultation, one member emerged as a spokesperson for every group.

Among the questions put to the interviewees are the following:

- a) What can you remember best about your years at school?
- b) Did you enjoy school?

- c) Why did you go to school?
- d) Were Kavango Christians allowed to keep their traditions at school? Did they keep them after school?
- e) What was life like before the arrival of missionaries?

Several problems were encountered during the interviewing. These included the influence informants held upon each other, all group informants answering a question in the same manner as the first person in the group; not wanting to be identified when questioned about colonial education; rewarding poorer informants with some money, small packets of sugar, tins of food and boxes of matches; contacting isolated villages in the interior and on the Angolan side of the border. Despite these setbacks, ample cooperation from villagers and village heads, chiefs and community elders facilitated adequate collection of information.

Besides field research in the villages and at Rundu, a week or two of every December/January holiday (since 1986) was spent in the National Archive of Namibia in Windhoek going through files containing correspondence between missionaries and the colonial administration. This information was particularly useful regarding the initial educational endeavours of the missionaries and their cooperation with the colonial administration concerning what is to be taught in African schools. Annual reports in education were to be particularly helpful for the 1950s and 1960s. Information regarding the control of mission education by the colonial administration was found in Commission reports and administration official statements which are also to be found in the Archive. For the period 1951 to 1966 the writer relied on Commission reports, annual reports and interviews, as secondary sources were not readily available.

A major problem of the study stems from the absence of written records by missionaries, Kavango people as well as organisers of education for the northern regions. So far, written reports by missionaries operating in the Kavango area have tended to be preoccupied with religious issues, but not with education and the Kavango past. As far as the author is aware this study is among the first attempts to

reconstruct the pre-colonial past of the Kavango region and its education. Personal interviews, archival material, Commission reports, these have constituted the principal source of material. Other sources have been anthropological works of Bosch, Van Tonder, Gibson, McGurck and Larson on the people of Kavango. It should be stressed clearly that the current accounts of these anthropologists were based on historical facts gathered from early missionaries and colonial officials' sources which are available. It should, however, be pointed out that although the sources were written after the formal colonisation of Namibia, the detailed accounts, if compared with the oral information obtained from the older members of the contemporary Kavango society, leaves one in no doubt that it concerns the past, i.e. that is how Kavango people lived and educated their youths long before Western education was introduced in the region in 1910. Without written sources there can be little or no comparative study worthy of the name.

CONCLUSION

It is hoped that this work will give a contrasting view of education in the Kavango, one which will reflect more accurately and emphatically the experiences of its people during the period studied.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

1. Lategan, M. (1980): Sending- en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango. 'n Histories-pedagogiese besinning, p.7,
2. Information obtained from the answer (in the form of a letter, dated 18 May 1987) on a questionnaire sent to L. Burger.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	i
INTRODUCTION	i
AIM AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY	iii
METHODS AND PROCEDURES	iv
METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION	v
CONCLUSION	viii
NOTES TO INTRODUCTION	viii
CHAPTER ONE	
BACKGROUND OF KAVANGO SOCIETY IN NAMIBIA	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 THE GEOGRAPHICAL ENVIRONMENT	1
1.3 POPULATION	6
1.4 THE HISTORY OF KAVANGO AND NAMIBIA	7
1.4.1 Pre-Colonial Communities in Namibia	7
1.4.2 Origins and Settlement of the Kavango People	9
1.4.3 The pre-colonial Kavango Society ...	10
1.4.4 Colonisation: Namibia during the German Colonial Rule.....	21
1.4.5 "Informal Colonialism" and Cultural Change in Kavango	24
1.4.5.1 Early European contract and New Trade	31
1.4.5.2 Migrant Labour and the Colonial Economy	34
NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE	42
CHAPTER TWO	
KAVANGO TRADITIONAL EDUCATION	58
2.1 INTRODUCTION	58
2.2 KAVANGO SOCIETY	58
2.3 THE TERM "EDUCATION"	60
2.4 FEATURES AND AIMS OF KAVANGO TRADITIONAL EDUCATION	64
2.5 THE CONTENT OF KAVANGO TRADITIONAL EDUCATION	72
2.6 CHILDHOOD IN THE KAVANGO COMMUNITY	75
2.7 THE ORGANISATION OF KAVANGO TRADITIONAL EDUCATION	82

2.7.1 Character Training 82

2.7.2 Physical Training 92

2.7.3 Intellectual Training: The
Transmission of Adequate Knowledge . 94

2.7.4 Participation in Family and Commu-
nity Life and the Promotion of
the Cultural Heritage..... 98

2.7.5 Specialized Training/Job Orientation 100

2.7.5.1 Agricultural Education 100

2.7.5.2 Trades and Crafts 109

2.7.5.3 Professions 119

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO 126

APPENDIX 1: Moral Tales/Fables 137

APPENDIX 2: Proverbs and Riddles 143

CHAPTER THREE

MISSION EDUCATION AMONG THE KAVANGO PEOPLE (1910 - 1960) 146

3.1 INTRODUCTION OF WESTERN EDUCATION AND
ESTABLISHMENT OF SCHOOLS IN KAVANGO 146

3.2 FEATURES OF MISSION SCHOOLING IN KAVANGO 153

3.3 ATTITUDES AND AIMS: THE CURRICULUM AND
THE IDEOLOGICAL CONTENT OF MISSION
SCHOOLING 161

3.4 KAVANGO RESPONSE TO MISSIONARY EDUCATION 182

3.5 DENOMINATIONAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN
CATHOLIC AND FINNISH LUTHERAN MISSIONS... 191

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE 199

CHAPTER FOUR

MISSION EDUCATION AND STATE CONTROL (1884 - 1948)... 217

4.1 INVOLVEMENT OF THE STATE IN AFRICAN
EDUCATION 217

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR 231

CHAPTER FIVE

MISSION EDUCATION AND STATE CONTROL (1949 - 1966).. 238

NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE 272

CHAPTER SIX

**THE SURVIVAL OF KAVANGO TRADITIONAL EDUCATION FROM
1910 ONWARDS 282**

6.1	CHILDREN'S PLAY TO CULTIVATE TRADITIONAL SOCIAL LIFE	286
6.2	PHYSICAL TRAINING	287
6.3	CHARACTER TRAINING	288
6.4	INTELLECTUAL TRAINING	290
6.5	SPECIALIZED TRAINING (OR JOB ORIENTATION)	290
6.5.1	Agricultural Education	290
6.5.2	Hunting and Fishing	291
6.5.3	Animal Husbandry	292
6.6	TRADES AND CRAFTS	294
6.6.1	Wood-working	294
6.6.2	Basketry and Matting	295
6.6.3	Pottery and Leathermaking	295
6.6.4	Hairdressing	296
6.6.5	Ironworking	297
6.7	PROFESSIONS	297
6.8	CONCLUSION	300
	NOTES TO CHAPTER SIX	302

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SOURCE LIST

1.	ORAL SOURCES	304
2.	ARCHIVAL SOURCES	309
2.1	ARCHIVAL MATERIAL ON FILES	309
2.2	REPORTS OF THE ADMINISTRATOR AND GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS	310
3.	SECONDARY SOURCES AND LIST OF REFERENCES	311

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND OF KAVANGO SOCIETY IN NAMIBIA: AN INTRODUCTION

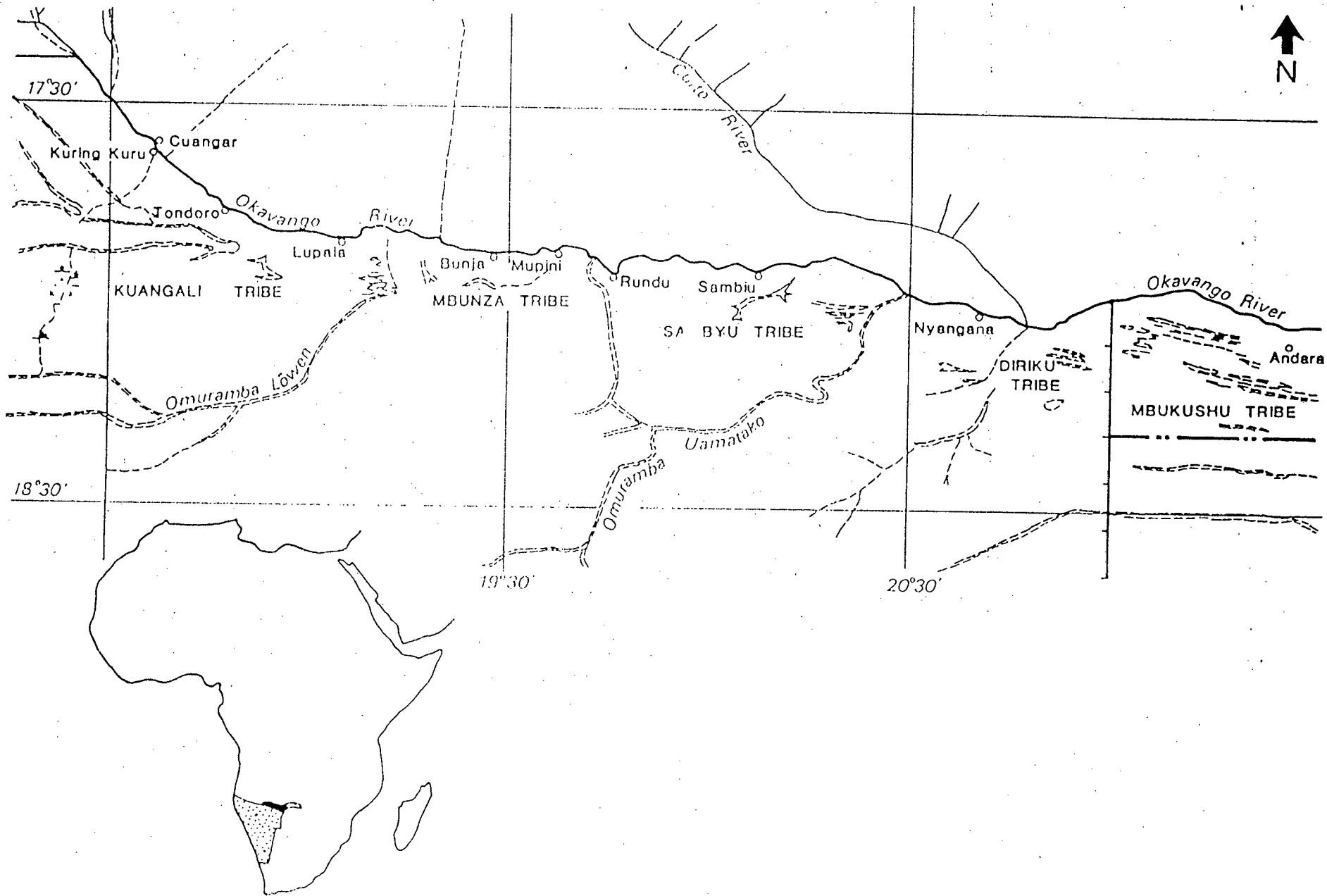
1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an introduction to pre-colonial Kavango and is the basis for understanding the political and socio-economic formation of pre-colonial Kavango in Namibia. It explains how the Kavango people lived before the arrival of the first Europeans in the Region and the impact of colonisation on their way of life. Apart from the political and socio-economic background, the chapter also attempts to trace the history of colonisation and cultural change in order to make the contemporary social formation understandable. In addition a brief review of Kavango's geography and ecology is given in order to explain pre-colonial economy and its dependence on nature.

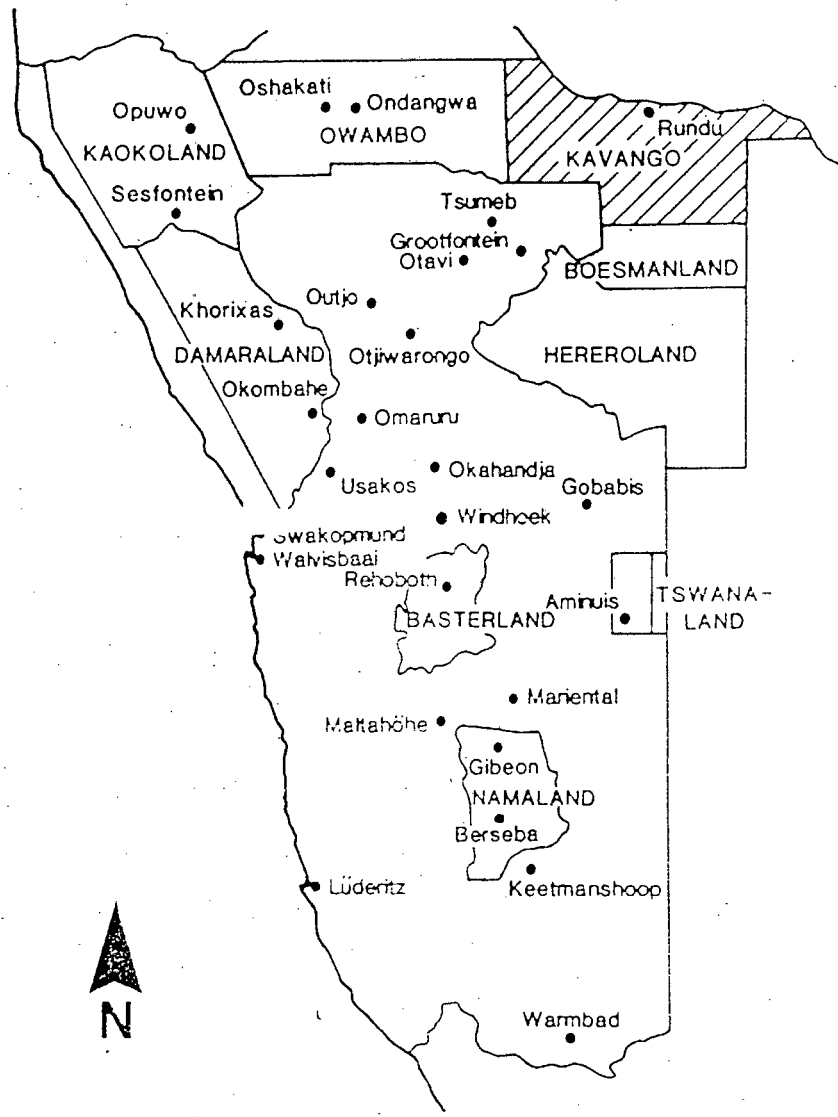
1.2 THE GEOGRAPHICAL ENVIRONMENT

Present-day Kavango is an area of 41 700km in extent, roughly the size of Switzerland. It is situated in the north eastern corner of Namibia with the Kavango River separating it from Angola. The area has Ovamboland on its Western border, Botswana and Caprivi in the East and the Grootfontein district and "Bushmanland" in the South.

The perennially flowing Kavango River is the dominant physical feature of this remarkably flat area. The basin of the Kavango River stretches across 800km and fertile plains lie at an altitude of 1 100 to 1 500 metres above sea. The river rises on the well watered plateau of Angola, and from there follows a south-easterly course to the Kavango swamps in Botswana. It flows through a broad plain that is annually inundated and, as a result, provides good grazing during the dry season. A narrow strip of fertile soil, seldom more than 3km wide, stretches along the banks of the Kavango. Numerous islands are to be found in the eastern part of the river, particularly between Mukwe and Bagani in the Mbukushu district.



SUIDWES - AFRIKA
KOMMUNALE GEBIEDE
SOUTH WEST AFRICA
COMMUNAL AREAS



At 18° latitude the climate is hot with an average temperature of 33° C (from September to December), but the altitude has a moderating influence. Kavango has a subtropical climate with an average rainfall of 600mm per annum, the highest in Namibia. Spring rainfall occurs from September until October, but most of the rain falls in summer between the months October and April.¹ The annual floods reach the area towards the end of March when the Kavango river overflows into its flood valleys.

The most significant water resource in Kavango is the Kavango river with its swamps and its tributary, the Quito.

The Kavango river, the fourth longest river in Southern Africa, runs 1 600km from Angola, where it is known as the Cubango, to the Kalahari. Flowing generally south eastward from the point it rises, it forms part of the Angolan-Namibian border before it crosses Namibia's narrow strip to enter Botswana, where it empties into the vast Kavango Swamp in the desert. The river derives its name from the Kavango people of Namibia of whom most live upon its banks.

Although the Kavango River often brings water to a parched land, its resources remain largely unused. In the 1970's various plans for the utilization of its immense water resources were considered with the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme. They included irrigation schemes for the middle course of the river, the diversion of water from the swamps for industrial development and the establishment of the Kavango swamps as a wildlife sanctuary and tourist attraction. The plans were, however, not realized due to the political situation of the country. In 1973 the state introduced agricultural schemes for the first time along the river, but up to now only four places have been developed for agricultural purposes.²

With such a large proportion of available land within the rainfall of 500-650mm, agriculture has great potential. The basin of the Kavango presents opportunities for irrigation. **Mahangu** (pearl millet), the major crop in Kavango is the

staple food. Other agricultural products, besides vegetables, are African varieties of maize, beans, watermelons, groundnuts, peanuts, gourds and pumpkins.³

Agriculture in Kavango is closely dependent on the rainy season. In earlier times the soil was prepared by slash and burn techniques, cutting down trees and bushes and raking them together in piles before burning them. Shifting agriculture was practised to ensure fertility. Cultivation began just after the first rainfall, generally at the beginning of October, but nowadays in November or even December, due to a change in climate.⁴ The digging was done with a hoe (litemo) or a small hoe (shikuru) before the seeds were planted in the soil. Since ploughing with oxen pulling the plough and ploughing with tractors were introduced by missionaries,⁵ the work of cultivation has become easier.

The combination of the flood waters, the Kavango river itself and the seasonal rains also favour stock-raising. Cattle were the most favoured domestic animals kept by the Kavango people. They were kept in big kraals approximately 10 m from the villages. During the crop growing season, cattle were dispatched to temporary posts (dimuraka) in the surrounding sandveld, along the uninhabited section of the permanent Kavango river, which included sections on the Angolan side, and on islands. After harvest they returned to graze off the stubble and the winter grasses in the dried-out beds and the narrow flood plain of the Kavango river.⁶

Cattle played an important role in a Kavango individual's economic and social life. In pre-colonial Kavango community an individual who owned no cattle had no status at all and was the gossip of the villagers. People of pre-conquest Kavango were not willing to slaughter their cattle for meat, and relied on meat from hunting. However, in emergency situations such as funerals and famine, cattle were slaughtered or sold in order to buy MAHANGU (pearl millet).

Gibson notes that in later times "cattle were sometimes sold to obtain tax money or to buy food in times of famine. If an important visitor came from a distance, he would be given an ox to be killed for a feast."⁷ Writing about the people of Namibia and referring to Kavango people specifically, Malan has the following to say:

Cattle are kept for their milk, meat and hides; they are harnessed for ploughing and have a very high social value as a status symbol. Animal sacrifices to the ancestral spirits feature strongly in the performance of various rituals. Men are mostly responsible for the care of cattle. The enhancement of the economic position and status of men has important implications in a matrilineal society as it stimulates the development of patrilineal ties between a man and his wife and children.⁸

1.3 POPULATION

The total population of the Kavango region is estimated at 110 000,⁹ making it the second largest regional group of people in Namibia. It is composed of five subgroups: Hambukushu, Vagciriku, Vasambyu, vambunza and Vakwangali. Vambunza and Vakwangali reside in the western part of Kavango and share the same dialect known as Rukwangali. The Hambukushu, Vagciriku and Vasambyu are to be found in the eastern part, and each has its own dialect, namely Thimbukushu, Rugciriku and Rusambyu. The dialects Rugciriku and Rusambyu are so closely related, and the variations so little, that it is difficult to distinguish between them. Kampungu, an expert on Kavango dialects, views that the Rukwangali, Rugciriku and Rusambyu dialects are linguistically similar and that Thimbukushu differs from them, though it has many words in common with the former three.¹⁰ However, Schapera and Van der Merwe's comparison of the Rugciriku and Thimbukushu dialects reveals many close lexical and grammatical similarities.¹¹ Crabb places the Kavango dialects along with those spoken by the Herero and Ovambo peoples, although there is an absence of the pre-prefix O-in Kavango dialects.¹²

Despite variations in their dialects Kavango people share

the same custom and cultural traditions. Each Kavango subgroup is divided into clans and sub-clans. The hompa's¹³ position is hereditary in the female line, the maternal uncle being given precedence over the biological father of the child.

1.4 THE HISTORY OF KAVANGO AND NAMIBIA

Very little has been written about the history of Namibia and Kavango. The most important literature about the early history has been written by Germans. Among the best known histories of Namibia are Eveleigh (1915), Calvet (1915), First (1963), Drechsler (1966), Bley (1968), Goldblatt (1971) and Bridgman (1981). Then there is a P.H.D. - thesis dealing with pre-colonial communities of Namibia, written by Williams, F.N. (1991).

As far as Kavango is concerned, no substantial literature on the early history of Kavango is available. Most of what has been written about the history of Kavango is either in private possession of Kavango people who are interested in their past or in private collections at mission centres. Among the unpublished research and writing which deal with the history of Kavango are Kampungu, R. (1966): 'The Concept and Aim of Okavango Marriages' and Ausiku, H. (1980): 'The history of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kavango.'¹⁴

1.4.1 Pre-Colonial communities in Namibia

Before the arrival of the earliest European missionaries in 1830, Namibia was inhabited by a number of groupings in separate areas which may be referred to as 'states' (that operated independently). Bley, one of the historians who considers the earliest communities of Namibia, writes that the Ovambo/Kavango group, which he believes migrated (around the 15th century) from the north through present Angola and Zambia, lived in the northern part of the territory. This was an area which extended far into present-day Angola. This group lived independently and peacefully in large communities and practised both agriculture and pastoralism. South of the Ovambo lived the Herero people who had immi-

grated in the 16th Century through the Kaokoveld into the central part of the territory and occupied the best grazing lands of the Damara people, who became their servants. The Herero people were exclusively pastoralists. The Nama groups, who were nomadic pastoralists, had entered the territory from South Africa and occupied the pasture lands of the Damara people in the extreme south of the country.

South of Kavango and in the east of the territory lived the !Kung Bushmen, the earliest inhabitants of Namibia, and the San, who migrated from the Cape in South Africa.¹⁵

The arrival of Nama and Afrikaner people from South Africa into Namibia worsened the imbalance of power that already existed between the south and north of the territory. The break of wars between the Nama and the Herero peoples in 1840 and again in 1861 and the arrival of Basters, Coloureds and Trek-boers in Namibia from South Africa in the 1870s increased tension and instability in Namibia.

At the same time European influence through the missionaries, traders, hunters and adventurers had penetrated the country. The presence of Europeans in a pre-colonial Namibia played a considerable role in the destruction of the political, social and economic structures of the indigenous people. In his account of European missionary activities in the territory Bley notes that German Rhenish missionaries became increasingly more and more involved in the inter-tribal wars of 1867, 1880 and 1884 between the Herero and Nama peoples, and in the 1894 war between these people and the German colonial government. The object of the struggle between Nama and Herero peoples was the establishment of an early feuda¹ state.¹⁶

This meant, among other things, that the mission became involved in intertribal rivalries. The Nama, for instance, were extremely angry with the mission over the help it gave to the Herero, and the advice on the protection treaties. Having intervened in the intertribal wars in 1867, 1880 and 1884, the mission went so far as to advise the

Germans to attack Hendrik Witbooi in Hornkranz in 1894.¹⁷

R.H. Green points out that pre-colonial agriculture on the whole produced food surplus. With the arrival of European traders "trade" between Africans and Europeans was established. Trade goods such as fire-arms contributed to the pasture and cattle wars, with the consequence that the power structures of the different African societies was changed and their cattle economy was destroyed. Despite this, cattle farming remained to constitute the main economic activity of the African people.¹⁸

1.4.2 Origins and Settlement of the Kavango People

Migration legends recorded by R.C. missionaries among all five subgroups in the Kavango, the Vakwangali, Vambunza, Vasambyu, Vagciriku and Hambukushu, agree with one another in tracing their origin to the region known as Mashi which lies near the Kwandu river, a western tributary of the Zambezi.

Tradition says that before entering the Mashi region, Kavango people descended from a big rock, known as "The Rock of Nkumbi", which is to be found in an area known as Urwa. In which country Urwa is situated, is unknown, but some oral sources suggest that the area is in Zambia while others say that it is in Zimbabwe. From "The Rock of Nkumbi" they descended and came to live on earth in the Mashi area which is not far from the rock itself. It is also alleged that footprints are still to be found on this rock.¹⁹ The tradition of all five Kavango subgroups indicates that at this time the Kavango people consisted only of a single group with its leader known as Nampoko. As they began to increase in numbers, they broke up into five subgroups and scattered themselves along the Kavango river.²⁰

According to the legends of the Kavango people, some hunters from their group had gone out in search of areas richer in game than those close by and had later returned with news of

an uninhabited river lying to the-west that had game. This was by this time occupied by the San, mostly !Kung who were smaller in number than the Kavango people.²¹

The five Kavango subgroups then settled on both sides of the river, with the result that their area was later bisected by the international boundary between Namibia and Angola. In addition to this division, a part of the Hambukushu and some Vagciriku subgroups were and remain located in neighbouring Botswana and the Caprivi region. 20% of the total Kavango population later moved away from their river and settled along some of the dimuramba (valleys) where conditions favourable for agriculture exist.

The route of immigration from the Mashi to the Kavango area, was according to some legends, through the Caprivi Strip. When the Mashi River is in flood, it is connected by water with the Kavango Swamp in Botswana and through it with the Kavango River. Despite this water connection, one of the original legends collected among the Vakwangali subgroup by Kampungu refers to the crossing of a vast prairie abounding with wild fruits.²² Gibson's suggestion is that the migration must have taken place across the region now known as the Caprivi Strip where the distance between the Mashi and the Kavango River is less than 200km.²³

1.4.3 The pre-colonial Kavango Society

The early political, economic and social institutions of the Kavango society are important for the understanding of the educational system in pre-colonial Kavango, as there is a correspondence between the structure of a society and specific features of its educational system. The structure of the society and the educational system were all, in the long run, affected by the introduction of western religion and education.

The Kavango community was traditionally organized along a matrilineal pattern. Groups were divided into clans (makoro) and these were subdivided into matrilineages (mara).

All the major political, social, economic and religious functions of society were performed within the framework of the matrilineal kin groups which has evolved from this pattern of descent reckoning. According to Van Tonder, who studied the Hambukushu subgroup, the clans in Kavango did not possess a residential unity or social integration. Usually their abodes were widely scattered, and members of different clans lived together regardless of their clan adherence. Yet clan members would help one another and settle their differences peacefully.²⁴ Gibson, McGurck and Larson who studied all five Kavango subgroups have this to say:

Members of the same clan, however, do have certain obligations to one another. Destitute or impoverished people seek help and refuge with clan-mates. If a man is sick, he will seek out the village of a clan member (even one so distant that the exact relationship cannot be traced) to ask for help. Then, if he dies, he will be buried by his clan-mates, with the one who cared for him reporting his death to his relatives In old age every man seeks to go to the village of a clan-mate, preferably to the home of a sister's son. An old woman remains with her son or daughter, again a clan-mate.²⁵

A clan composed of people who claim to be descended from a common ancestress. These included the living and the deceased, since Kavango people believed that their relationship did not cease at death.²⁶ Because of this kinship bond, all people of the same generation regarded one another as brothers and sisters. The clan names were derived from animals, a bird of prey and other natural phenomena, but they had no totemic significance. Each of the Kavango subgroups consists of a limited number of clans, the Vakwangali and Hambukushu have nine, the Vambunza and Vasambiu eight and the Vagciriku seven.²⁷

J.S. Malan notes that the matrilineages (mara) were the corporate segments of the clans, and were the social groups within which the clan functions were performed. The relative importance of the maternal uncle in relation to that of the biological father was clearly demonstrated. The

maternal uncle has extensive social, economic and religious obligations towards the children of his sisters and held a hereditary political position. The tie with his sister's eldest son became even more significant.²⁸

Kavango settlements were permanent, remaining at one location for more than 40 years. Polygamy was not widely practised. Bierfert states that it was restricted to rich and noble persons,²⁹ while Gibson records that a common man might take a second wife if his first was barren, or he might take a second wife who was barren if his first wife was difficult to get along with, and if, for economic reasons he did not wish any more children. Kampungu (1966) wrote that monogamous marriages outnumbered polygamous ones. The word polygamy is *masupareko*, from *esupa*, "sexual jealousy".³⁰ Kampungu also claimed that in pre-colonial times, it was a privilege of the *homba* (king) to have as many wives as he wished, but the first one was considered his *mugolikadi* ("queen", "king consort"). The *homba* could marry any female he chose whether she was already married or not. Though the choice was usually made at the time the girl reached marriage age, sometimes a girl would be chosen and betrothed for a *mumbanda* (secondary wife) before puberty, and cohabitation would then occur after her nubility rites.

A typical Kavango household would thus have consisted of the family head, his wife and children, his married or unmarried adult sons and several other relatives or clan members of the family head. A typical homestead consisted of several dwelling places and granaries depending on the number of family members.³¹ Division of labour within the family was according to gender. A woman's main chores consisted of caring for children, preparing food, fetching water from the river and weaving small baskets. Hunting, caring for animals, building houses and making large baskets in which grain were stored, were a man's responsibility. Field cultivation, weeding, harvesting and threshing, fishing, woodgathering and wild food collecting were done by both men

and women.³² Specialization of labour within the society as a whole was limited to iron-smithing, pottery, woodworking, leatherworking, hairdressing and medicine. All other activities such as trading, basketry and matwork were done in the spare time allowed by the prior demands of the agricultural cycle.

Moorsom describes the division of labour according to gender as the most systematic inequality in pre-colonial peasant society. He argues, however, that although male authority was predominant, women nevertheless possessed considerable managerial autonomy in field and household labour, and had the right to the produce of private plots of their own. They played a more equal part in cultivating and fishing and also undertook much of the craftwork (pottery, basketry, hairdressing) and organised the herding of goats and poultry.³³

In his troubles and difficulties a Kavango person turned to the **nganga** (medicine man), who cured his illness, explained the will of spirits and protected him against physical, spiritual and environmental threats. The system of honouring age, wealth and also the living dead played an important role in the daily life of the Kavango people.³⁴

Concerning **religion**, every society has its own way of acknowledging the existence of what it considers a Supreme Being or God. It is, thus, important to discuss religion among the Kavango people because of the Christian missionary impact. The Kavango people believed in **Karunga** as a transcendent god, who was above all, powerful, had created everything and owned everything. **Karunga** was the Supreme Being controlling men's destiny.³⁵ The Kavango people also believed in the active existence of their **vadimu** (ancestral spirits), who were the only intermediaries between men and the high god, **Karunga**. The **vadimu** had attributed to the people the powers of intermediation, divination and healing, and they were the public guardians of the whole society.

Vadimu were believed to control fortunes and misfortunes of their living descendants. To succeed in various undertakings, particularly hunting, and to a lesser degree, agriculture and fishing, a person should observe a great number of ritual practice to appease the spirits. A spirit retained the status of the person it inhabited in life. Generally only **vadimu** in a person's own lineages can influence him or her, not the **vadimu** of other lineages. However, the **vadimu** of the royal clan, particularly of former rulers, were in many respects considered responsible for the welfare of the people as a whole. At religious ceremonies the matrilineal ancestors of both men and women were involved and sacrificed to.³⁶

Kavango people made offerings of food to their **vadimu** before undertaking journeys, hunting expeditions or before starting new projects or ceremonies, to cure illness, and to ensure the welfare of lineage members. The senior man or woman of the lineage officiated these ceremonies. Members of a family in the same lineage made prayers and offerings at their **shinako** (shrine), where no work, play or anything else was done. This could be in or near their homestead. All other prayers, offerings and sacrifices were made at the place where blessings and aid were most needed.³⁷ Before a man left for a hunt, for instance, he rested his weapon or weapons against the **shinako** and threw tobacco on a live coal there. When the tobacco began to smoke, the man spat on the weapon and the smoking coal, praying: "Karunga help me and give me meat." Ashes were then rubbed between the man's eyes, on his forearms, and on the hunting weapon. He might also spit on his chest as he arose, while asking for the help of the **vadimu**.³⁸

Kavango people believed that all people who die, excluding infants, regardless of the manner of death, become **vadimu**. When a person dies, his **monyó** (soul) was thought to go and live with **Karunga** in heaven. Once the **monyó** had reached the heaven, it became a **mudimu** (singular). **Vadimu** received all their necessities (food, beads, etc.) from their descendants;

if these descendants should neglect them, the **vadimu** would punish them with illnesses, hunger, famine and drought.³⁹

Religion indeed played a vital role in the general politics of the lifestyle of the Kavango people. The **homba**, for example, was revered because of the powers he held that linked him to the ancestors. He could communicate with them in times of danger and desperation, such as epidemics, famine and drought. The lifestyle of the Kavango people was, to a great extent influenced by their beliefs in **vadimu**. They could not eat the first crop during harvest time before authorization from the **homba** who would give part of it to the **vadimu**. Before drinking **marovu** (pearl millet beer) or eating meals during important occasions like wedding days or installation ceremonies, **vadimu** were given a bit of everything people ate as a gesture of thanks. Bierfert stated that every fifth year a big thanksgiving ceremony was conducted in the **homba's** royal village. An ox to be offered to the **vadimu** was first salved by the **homba** by marking a cross on its back with oil and red colouring. In a prayer the **homba** would call the **vadimu** by blowing an ox horn whistle and asking them to come and sit on the poles (**ruzo**) which were raised for them outside the **homba's** village. He would then thank them for the protection they had provided during the past four years. After the prayer of thanksgiving the ox was slaughtered and offered with **vitima** (a stiff porridge) to the **vadimu**.⁴⁰

Politically, Kavango was divided into five small kingdoms, which consisted of settlements on both sides of the Kavango river. The kingdoms, more or less independent (every king governing his own people and area) lived in some kind of balance with each other. At the head of the structure was a hereditary king whose position was transmitted matrilinearly within the ruling line of the royal clan, first in line being his brothers, then the eldest son of his eldest sister. If all male were minors, or if there was no eligible man, a woman (the king's eldest sister) would be named the ruler.⁴¹

Kavango people speak of a male **homba** and a female **homba**. In pre-colonial times a male **homba's** children were commoners and were called "children of the **homba**" in contrast to the children of a female **homba** who were members of a royal lineage. However, the male **homba's** children had high status in the kingdom and invariably became important headmen, councillors or administrators.⁴²

The **homba** was accorded divine status but not divine powers. He was the religious leader or high priest, acting as intermediary between his people and his royal ancestors and as the representative of the Supreme Being. The king's political authority was closely linked with religious status and personal wealth. He was the supreme judge, settling disputes, determining penalties and seeing that sentences were carried out. In this task he was supervised and advised by members of his cabinet, such as the **matimbi** (councillors), the **marenga** (advisors), district headpersons, administrators, village heads and community elders. The cabinet members, particularly the **marenga** and **matimbi** who gathered daily at his royal court played such a prominent role that they reduced the king's ruling powers. McGurck notes that the king's assistants and supervisors could either be male or female.⁴³ There was, thus, no discrimination against women being chosen as headwomen, district heads, village heads, councillors, administrators or advisers. Gibson mentions that the king was assisted in arriving at the decision by his councillors and other important people in the vicinity, and that most cases were brought to him only after the litigants had failed to reach a settlement among themselves:

The litigants are allowed to bring their relatives who sit in the court and many attempt to influence the course of justice. Often there is a large gathering, and the chief may even convene all the people in the area to listen to a case.⁴⁴

Clarence-Smith and Moorsom sum up the power of the pre-colonial king in Ovambo (which is similar⁴⁵ to that in

Kavango) as follows:

Supreme administrative and judicial power was exercised by him, but under the supervision of a powerful council of commoners. District headmen were appointed and revocable at will by the king, but in fact exercised considerable local power. Headmen of the royal clan were particularly independent and often much resented by the people of the districts The formal political powers of the king do not, however, in themselves give any precise indication on the extent of state and class formation.⁴⁶

Another important feature in the political system of the Kavango people was the community structure. The families composing a village were always closely related. The average village housed a population of approximately 50 people.⁴⁷ The king's household and *mbara* (royal village), usually larger than those of his subjects, housed more than 30 families. Gibson quotes Kampungu (1965) as noting that as recently as 1930 about 30 families lived with the Vakwangali king. Other non-ruling members of the royal clan customarily had their own separate villages.⁴⁸

The king had the first choice of land for building and ploughing, and his *mayandya* (royal fields) were very large. Villagers paid tribute to their king by taking turns in ploughing, weeding, harvesting his royal fields. It was the king's prerogative not to do any manual labour (like building and repairing his village, ploughing, weeding, harvesting, etc.), although some kings, among them the Vakwangali king, Himarwa, made an exception to the rule by joining their subjects in hoeing or weeding and participating in village building and other duties. During the ploughing, weeding and harvesting seasons, the king usually slaughtered a few head of cattle and arranged a beer party for his subjects to enjoy after the manual work.⁴⁹

The economy of pre-colonial Kavango was a mixture of subsistence agriculture and animal husbandry, with the addition of hunting, fishing and gathering, organized on the basis of a division of labour, by gender. Handicrafts such

as basketry, pottery, woodworking, leatherworking and metal working in iron, copper and brass also made an important contribution to the economy of the Kavango people.

Most Kavango people were settled along the river where they practised agriculture on the narrow strip of fertile soil and grazed their cattle on the flood plains. The few (20%) were to be found settled in the hinterland along the *dimuramba* (watercourses) where conditions favourable for agriculture existed.

Agriculture was one of the primary economic activities. By using hoes (*matemo*) and small hoes (*vikuru*) Kavango people were able to work on big fields. In order to overcome the low soil fertility and waterlogged conditions during the rainy season, manure was first worked into the earth before sowing.⁵⁰ The 'slash and burn' method combined with the grazing of cattle in harvest stubble contributed to the long term fertility of the soil. The most important crops were *mahangu* (pearl millet), *vilya* (sorghum) and *lipungu* (maize). The product of the two main crops, meal from pearl millet and a nutritious beer from sorghum and pearl millet were supplemented by a range of vegetables and spices, by cow's milk, eggs, meat, fish, by game and the fruit bearing trees, which were protected. African varieties of beans, pumpkins, peanuts, groundnuts, watermelons, sweet potatoes, sugar cane and calabashes were also cultivated in big fields. The success of the crops was mainly dependent on the annual rainfall. In times of drought, which were frequent, crops were grown on the narrow terraces of the Kavango valley, whose slightly better drainage and soil fertility gave a limited degree of insurance against drought and floods.

The principal handicrafts were basketry, pottery, woodworking, leatherworking and metalworking in iron, copper and brass, the iron being used to make blades for ploughs and knives, hoes, axes, adzes and spears, and the latter two for arm-, neck- and leg ornaments.

To vary their diet, hunting animals and wild fowl (was practised by men) and gathering of wild fruit and vegetables was practised by both men and women, since the rich variety of wild life and vegetation rendered the exploitation of such resources quite rewarding. Another important activity was fishing which was a substantial part of the diet of the Kavango people. For fishing in the Kavango river and its tributaries and the seasonal *madiwa* people used canoes and built weirs in the water. Different types of fishing baskets were also used by both men and women. Fish were sometimes shot with bow and arrows, or even speared where the water was shallow.⁵¹ Andersson notes that Kavango people employed simple, but highly effective methods for catching fish. He notes further that the Kavango river abounds in great variety of fish. During his limited stay on the river banks he collected 20 distinct species of fish which were not only edible but also highly palatable. Andersson states that if there was sufficient time the number of discovered species of fish could have been doubled.⁵²

Animal husbandry was widely practised and played an important role in the economic and social life of the Kavango people. In pre-colonial times Kavango people kept cattle, goats and domestic fowl. Eedes, writing about Kavango specifically, observed that cattle were a sign of wealth and were required for certain rituals and ceremonies, and were slaughtered frequently for cleansing and propitiatory rites. Cattle were also used for riding and for pulling ploughs and sledges. Goats were chiefly used for their meat and were not milked.⁵³ Children of both sexes acquired cattle as gifts, usually from their fathers, but sometimes from their maternal uncles. Large herds were desired by every Kavango individual. People who individually possessed large herds had distant cattle posts where they hired herders to look after their cattle. By *ushita* a poor man could borrow cattle from a wealthy man. As payment for taking care of the borrowed

cattle, the borrower could use the oxen for ploughing and draught work and he could also use the cows's milk. After five years, when the herd became larger, the borrower might be rewarded with one head of cattle.⁵⁴ The reward was usually mostly in female cattle that could yield offspring. In ten years, therefore, the herder could own his own small herd and start life on his own. The *ushita* system was considered a way of improving the lives of the poor and was designed to close the gap between the rich and the poor and cultivate mutual understanding and cooperation between the advantaged and disadvantaged members of society.⁵⁵

As far as pre-colonial trade is concerned, evidence concerning it is not readily available. However, some oral testimony suggests that some kinds of trade existed among the Kavango people. The Kavango people traded cattle, grain, and to some extent, agricultural implements. Some hard-working families harvested more *mahangu* than others so that in times of famine (which were frequent) or during ploughing season they could sell to those who fell short. The rate of exchange ranged from two big baskets of *mahangu* for a goat and two bags of *mahangu* for an ox. A family that wished to own a bull gave four of its cows in exchange for the bull.⁵⁶

During the pre-colonial era Kavango craftsmen often went through the villages of neighbouring areas from door to door selling wares. Kavango traders made long journeys through the delta streams to Maun and Shakawe in Botswana to trade. It would seem that itinerant smiths in Kavango formed a nucleus group of full time traders and visited their neighbours the Ovambo and Herero peoples.⁵⁷ Moorsom writes that Kavango people sometimes visited Ovambo to buy copper and salt which were collected by the Ovambo people from Otavi and Etosha pan. Sometimes Ovambo people visited Kavango to barter the two commodities for cows.⁵⁸

Hoes and axes that were so useful in cultivating and

clearing the fields were exchanged by the smiths for goats, cattle and mahangu. Since the items were important in people's daily lives, one could assume that there was great demand for these implements and that smiths who fashioned them comprise a prosperous group within society. There was however, no organised system of markets for trade in pre-colonial Kavango. Exchanges was by barter, although tendencies to use certain commodities as currency were apparent. The !Kung (Bushmen) people also came into the villages of the Kavango people to trade ostrich eggs, wild animals skins and wild animal meat, honey, roots, wild fruit and other wild foods for tobacco, beans and iron implements. The wild fruit and other wild foods were dried in the sun and later were eaten as snacks.⁵⁹ In addition, collecting provided a number of commodities for consumption and trading purposes, such as red-dyed wood (rukura), cannabis, arrow poison, bees wax and rubber.

1.4.4 Colonisation: Namibia during the German Colonial Rule

The German Colonial period of 1884 to 1915 was marked by what amounted to land theft by Adolf Lüderitz. Lüderitz who was under the German Government protection, made a series of so-called land purchases in 1883 and 1884⁶⁰ from African chiefs on behalf of the Imperial Government, thus laying the basis for the German colonial rule. His first purchase from a Nama chief Josef Fredericks was Angra Pequena. He dreamed that Angra Pequena was a land of gold and diamonds. The second was the coastal strip from Orange River to a point 26° south and stretching inland for 20 miles. These two contracts provided the basis for Bismarck's declaration of protection on the 24th April 1884. A German Rhenish missionary by the name of Bam helped to arrange both of them. The price was £500 plus English rifles. Resuming the arm trade begun by the Missions-Handel-AG, Lüderitz now began to deliver weapons on a large scale.⁶¹ The German colonial strategy⁶² was mercantile and marginal with the aim to extract the territory's mineral resources and to confiscate as much land as possible. As has been pointed

out by Green, the colonial economy of Namibia included the merchant-missionary-market mechanisms (which eroded the self-sufficiency, the socio-political structures and ultimately the economic viability of the pre-colonial African states) and the military-settler merchantilist mechanisms of the German colonial period.⁶³ Green further posits that the colonial economy of Namibia had a dual nature: it had been led and dominated by a rapidly growing, technologically modern, relatively high productivity European import and export support sector, while the residual African sector accounted for almost half of the labour force and up to three-quarters of the population while generating only 21% of territorial product.⁶⁴

Primitive accumulation to built the European economy meant theft from the African population of sovereignty to give colonial control, of land to give room for ranchers and miners, of life (especially in the German wars which gave the world the word 'genocide'), of more land to force the Africans to seek jobs in the European sector, of freedom to organize to prevent political or economic mobilization for change. The creation of European economy required the destruction of the traditional African economy and society and its reduction to the grotesque parody which is the residual economy, and the deformed society it carries with it.⁶⁵

Peasant agriculture which was the mainstay of African economy was undermined through the confiscation of more land and the expanding network of individual land rights. For the majority the steady, and sometimes sudden, erosion of their mode of subsistence meant either impoverishment or wage labour in the capitalist sector.

While more and more land was confiscated in the southern part of the territory during German times, no land was allocated to white settlers in Kavango and other northern areas. The people living in these areas remained outside direct colonial administration. These areas were instead recognised as future labour reservoirs for the farms of new White settlers. Native Commissioners were appointed in 1912 and the areas were to be ruled indirectly. The colonial administration issued a "Recruitment Order" on the 1st of

March 1912 to regulate the recruitment of African workers from Ovambo and Kavango.⁶⁶ Since 1912 the two regions have become the major sources of contract labourers. This system came to effect the social organisation of these people. As has been noted by Goldblatt, the disadvantage of this system was the long separation of husband and father from his wife and child. In addition all these men had also to bear pass permits.⁶⁷ Goldblatt's statement that Ovambo and Kavango people's tribal culture was not interfered with⁶⁸ is wrong for several reasons. First, many of these people's families were broken down as the result of the long separation between husband and wife through contract labour. Secondly, their culture was being interfered with by missionaries who dissuaded them from using their own religion, having their own traditional dances, etc.

Regarding the geographical isolation of Ovambo and Kavango, Bley notes that these regions were in the tropics and extended into Portuguese Angola. The regions were outside the 'Police Zone'⁶⁹, and European access to it was forbidden by the colonial government, because:

- 1) the groups were armed and organised with a much tighter social framework than the Herero or Nama had ever had and
- 2) the climate made European settlement impossible because of the tropical weather.⁷⁰

The isolation of the northern regions such as Ovambo and Kavango was contradictory. A fundamental contradiction lay in the fact that the colonial policy enforced the isolation and preservation of 'traditional' political and economic structures, while at the same time migrant labour was contracted, colonial authority was enforced (indirect rule with chiefs) and the Christianisation of these regions was allowed.

By the end of the period of German colonial rule in 1915 the indigenous political, social and economic organisations were

already in the first stage of evolution. The South African regime would take advantage of the situation in the efforts to establish its colonial rule in Namibia after 1915.

1.4.5 "Informal Colonialism" and Cultural Change in Kavango

The agents of what may be called "informal colonialism" came from three directions: From the South came White traders of different nationalities (Germans, Swedes, Boers), usually seeking ivory and ostrich feathers, and sometimes also bringing out cattle for the Cape market. Many travelled to Kavango as merchants, traders, hunters, adventurers, military officers and missionaries. With the exception of some hunters and traders who were operating in the Quito region, a Swedish hunter and merchant, Charles John Andersson, was the first European to reach the Kavango region in the Ukwangali district in 1859. Another European traveller, Frederick Green, also travelled from Lake Ngami and reached Mbukushu in 1855 before he visited Ukwangali in 1865. By 1864 Palgrave and Hartley had visited Kavango, followed by the first boers from the Transvaal who arrived in Kavango in 1875.⁷¹

The second source of White interlopers was the Boer trekkers who migrated across the Kalahari from 1870 and secured settlement rights on the Humpata plateau from the Portuguese. The main route was via Ngami and the lower Kavango. A number passed through Kavango from the South and also via Grootfontein where several temporary settlements were started. These trekkers were still primarily waggoners and professional hunters, but the extent of their activities in Kavango is still unclear.⁷²

In September 1884 when the Germans declared South West Africa a protectorate, no attempts were made by the government to bring Kavango and other northern regions under its direct control. After 1885 German hunters began to penetrate Kavango, and some lost their lives at the hands of the Kavango people. This was a consequence of their practice of abusing people and plundering their villages.

One German hunter who was crossing the Gciriku district on his way to Grootfontein was murdered by Kavango men in the Sambiu district and his eight year old daughter abducted. His death, though tragic, reflects the power of Kavango chiefs, and their desire to defend their region from the outside powers rather than what the Whites labelled as barbarism and bloodthirstiness. According to Bosch (1964) reprisals were carried out against Kavango men following some of these incidents.⁷³

After the war of 1904-1907 many German traders, prospectors, government officials and missionaries travelled to Kavango to gather information about the region and to have meetings with some chiefs. In 1908 Governor Schuckman appointed Captain Streitwolf as Imperial Resident for the Caprivi region and ordered him to investigate conditions in the region. He travelled from Windhoek to Caprivi by ox cart. On his return from Caprivi to Windhoek, he trekked via the Zambezi, passing the Kavango river where he found settlements of the Hambukushu and other Kavango people and some bands of San especially !Kung. His account is more of an adventure story of some geographical and historical value, with few ethnographic details on the people he came across.⁷⁴

The third major part to penetrate the Kavango from the north was based at the port Mossamedes, Port Alexandre, Humpata and Sa da Bandeira in Angola. After the Berlin conference (1884-1885) and the succeeding disputes with Britain concerning sovereignty over the lands of southern central Africa, the Portuguese government began to explore and establish its presence in the lower Kavango region. This was done by means of a military expedition of 140 men in 1890, led by a junior military officer, Henrique de Paiva Conceiro. The aim of his trip was to make Kavango chiefs vassals of the Portuguese and to investigate the navigability of the Kavango river. His report in 1892 was the first to provide substantial ethnographic information about the Kavango region and its people. In the same year

he published a brief account of the people with a sketch map showing their locations.⁷⁵

Fear of German colonial expansion prompted a second expedition to establish a line of forts at major population centres. The forts established were divided between two military commands, those at Quangar and Bunya falling within the Baixo Cubango unit with headquarters at Caiundo in Ngalela territory, and those at Sambiu, Gciriku and Mbukushu falling within the Baixo Quito unit with headquarters at Dirico. In 1910 the first were garrisoned by some 227 men, with officers in charge at Quangar, Dirico and Mbukushu. The purpose seems to have been to secure the border as well as to exercise control over the Kavango population. During the period of German supremacy, a police post was established at Nkure-Nkuru in 1910, to counter the increasing Portuguese influence in the Kavango region. In 1914 hostilities broke out at Quangar between Portuguese and German colonial forces, a distant reflection of the Great War going on in Europe. Angolan administrative officers were, in general, charged with collecting taxes, compiling census data and resolving disputes among the Kavango population. These duties were performed with the assistance of a few policemen, interpreters and some clerks. Details concerning administrative matters were, according to Gibson, lacking in the literature examined.⁷⁶

From 1915 to 1920 the post at Nkure-Nkuru was manned by the South African police. During this period an effort was made to restrict the entry of Whites in the Kavango area. In 1920 a civil government replaced the military government in Namibia and a Sub-Native Commissioner was posted in the Kavango area. Only Missionaries and state officials were granted permission to enter the region.⁷⁷

From the South also came German Catholic and Finnish Lutheran missionaries. In his account of the history of the Catholic Mission in South West Africa, Bishop Gotthardt records that the Catholic Order of the Oblates of Mary

Immaculate (OMI) was given permission by the Government of the German Protectorate to commence missionary work in the northern part of the territory in 1894. Between 1894 and 1903 the Catholics established mission stations among the Coloureds in Windhoek, the Tswana people in Epukiro and Aminius and the Herero people in Omaruru, Gobabis, Grootfontein.⁷⁸ The attempt in 1903 to establish mission stations in Ukwangali and Mbunza districts in Kavango was strongly rejected by two chiefs, Himarwa of the Vakwangali and Nampadi of the Vambunza subgroups. Military aid was sent from the central part of the territory, known as the "Police Zone", to protect the missionaries. Despite this, the missionaries (Fathers Filliung and Biegner and Brothers Hermandung and Bast) withdrew due to the fact that they were being harassed by chief Himarwa and his people.

Gotthardt gives the main reason for Himarwa's rejection as being the fear of the widespread slavery in the neighbouring Angola.⁷⁹ Goldblatt on the other hand, regards that reason as a minor one. His two major reasons for Himarwa and Nampadi's rejection agree with those given by people interviewed in Kavango.⁸⁰ When the Catholic missionaries arrived in 1903 in the Kwangali district, they were driven out, because Himarwa and his cousin Mampadi were aware of the plight of their "brothers", the Herero and Nama peoples who lost their land and were massacred by Germans. They were also the forerunners of traders and government soldiers, who would take their might away from them. As Himarwa himself put it: "If once missionaries are here, more German soldiers will come and I shall lose my rule."⁸¹

Driven away from the western part of Kavango, they went back to Grootfontein (the nearest town situated in the Police Zone) from where they set out for the eastern part of Kavango, where they attempted to establish a mission station in the Mbukushu district under Chief Libebe. With the agreement of Libebe a mission station was set up. Two missionaries, Father Franz Lauer and Brother Kurz, were left to maintain the mission station, but soon afterwards, in

1907, they died of fever.⁸²

Chief Libebe was subsequently influenced by Chief Mathiba of the Tswana, the dominant tribe in Ngami, who was strongly opposed to the entry of German missionaries in the district. The two chiefs' resistance, together with the hardship of travel by ox cart, the tropical climate and the death of their colleagues led to the abandonment of the mission station in the Mbukushu district.

An examination of this period by interview with Fathers M. Baetsen and B. Hartmann reveals that missionaries knew of the power of Kavango chiefs and their people, because their activities during this pioneer period reflected this power, and the hopelessness of missionaries before the Kavango people. Missionaries and other Europeans who travelled to Kavango during this period complained of the "barbarism" of the Kavango people and condemned the treatment they suffered at the hands of the Kavango people, labelling their rejection and opposition as heathenism and savagery.⁸³ Although the missionaries were later to pose as superior human beings under the strong arm of the colonial power, they were hopeless in defending or protecting themselves in the beginning and they were only able to survive in the region when they were treated well by the Kavango people, as shown by Chief Nyangana.

In 1908 when the Government of the Protectorate established a police post on the Kavango in an unsuccessful effort to bring the region within the "Police Zone" of South West Africa, the Oblates of Mary Immaculate missionaries feared that the Finnish Lutheran missionaries would be given preference in the Kavango region now coming under governmental control. In order to prevent this, they hastened their attempt to establish a mission station in the Gciriku district under the chieftainship of Nyangana. In his account, Father Bierfert indicates that they had better fortune this time. They were accepted and given permission by Chief Nyangana to built a mission station in his

district. Their acceptance was due to the influence of his son, Mbambo Wanyangana. Gotthardt relates that Mbambo had gone to school in former Bechuanaland and had been impressed by some of the good deeds of the English missionaries. In April 1910 the Roman Catholic chapel Nyangana mission station was ready, and Chief Nyangana himself was persuaded to attend church services on Sundays. He attended the Sunday services occasionally, but he refused to be baptized. At the request of the missionaries, Nyangana influenced some of his people to settle near the mission station.

In 1912 the Catholic missionaries attempted to establish a mission station in the Mbukushu district for the second time, but were not successful in doing so. It was only (after Libebe's death) in 1913 that they succeeded in establishing a mission station, Andara, which was named after Chief Ndara, Libebe's follower.

Gotthardt reports that it was, again, only after Himarwa's death that the Catholic missionaries were successful in establishing a mission station in the Ukwangali district in 1925. A station in Mbunza district followed in 1927 and one in Sambiu district in 1929.⁸⁴

The missionaries of the Congregation of the Holy Redeemer, also known as the Redemptorist Fathers, established a mission station at Quangar in 1959 under the Kavango people residing in Southern Angola at the other side of the Kavango river. Silva Rego indicates that this was the only mission station established on the Angolan side of the Kavango river by 1961.⁸⁵

As far as the Protestant missions are concerned, the only Protestants active in Kavango before 1962 were the missionaries of the Finnish Lutheran Society. The Finnish Lutheran missionaries had settled in Ovambo by 1880.⁸⁶ In 1920 they toured the Ukwangali district in hopes of establishing a mission, but they were refused permission to do so by the Vakwangali chief, Shikongo. They returned in

1926 and the decision to build a church in the Ukwangali district was approved by Himarwa's successor.

Abisai Shejavali, Secretary General of the Council of Churches in Namibia, sums up the movement of the Finnish Lutheran missionaries to Kavango as follows:

It was a long time before the Finnish missionaries journeyed to Kavango, but knowledge of the heathen living there made them pray that the Gospel would spread there, too. Some missionaries on holiday in Hereroland met some Kavango. The German missionaries had already baptized some of them. These men asked the Finns to come and teach the Kavango people. Emil Nähri promised to visit them. In 1926 he fulfilled his promise; with him were several Ovambo Christians. They crossed the waterless stretches on horseback and arrived on the tenth day. There was a crowd waiting to be baptized. The men baptized by the Germans had acted as teachers. As their textbooks they used Ndonga books. Among the teachers was even one man who had not yet been baptized himself. Nähri examined the candidates and approved twenty of them, who were then baptized on April the 30th, 1926. Thus, a congregation of forty members was founded in Kavango. It included also those already baptized in Hereroland. Nähri had to return to Ovamboland and to commend that small flock, which was surrounded by the heathen, to God's mercy and guidance.⁸⁷

Shejavali adds that some Finnish missionaries moved to Kavango in 1929 and built a mission station at Nkure-Nkuru. Gradually more missionaries followed the others to Kavango. The last Finnish mission to be established in Kavango was the Mpungu mission station which was founded in 1954.

The growth of the two churches in Kavango can be seen from the following statistics:

Years (1954-1960)

Years	1954	1958	1959	1960
Total population	?	?	?	27 871
Catholic Mission	4 362	8 661	11 264	10 767
Lutheran	2 711	3 939	2 646	4 624
Total	7 073	12 600	13 910	15 391

Source: Gibson, McGurck and Larson (1980): The Kavango Peoples, pp. 27 & 17.

Figures for the total population before 1960 as well as those before 1954 are not readily available. As can be seen from the statistics for the year 1960, out of a population of 27 871, 15 391 were christianized.

The only western education provided until 1962 in Kavango was that offered in mission schools. At this time the Finnish mission ran schools in 12 places in western Kavango (Mbunza and Ukwangali districts). The Catholic missions had schools in 27 places distributed in the eastern (Mbukushu, Gciriku, Sambiu) as well as in the western part of Kavango. The total number of mission schools in 1962 is given as 46 with 3 444 students and 91 teachers.⁸⁸

1.4.5.1 Early European contract and New Trade

Capitalists penetration⁸⁹ of the pre-colonial subsistence society of Kavango had long preceded formal colonisation. This means that Kavango people were already somewhat familiar with European goods before the arrival of missionaries in 1903. The Portuguese were the first people to introduce direct European trade to the Kavango people by 1850.⁹⁰ Writing about the Kavango river and the people, Andersson who visited the region in 1859, observed:

At Chikongo's weft I encountered several Mambari,

i.e. Black traders from the confines of the kingdom of Benguela They brought with them slaves and ivory, for which they received in exchange the usual African commodities, beads, guns, ammunition the Mambari visit these people once a year; and afterwards, push their excursions as far eastward as Libebe.⁹¹

Portuguese goods like guns, gunpowder, alcohol, beads, tobacco, sugar, salt, mirrors, buttons, knives, blankets and horses reached Kavango from Portuguese trading posts along the Angolan coast as early as 1850. The trade route went from the west coast (Benguela) via Northern Namibia and Andara (in Kavango) to Bulozhi where it linked up with trade routes from the East African coasts. The well-known Ovimbundu or Vimbali (Mambari) traders, who have been identified by Clarence-Smith as acculturated detribalized Black Angolans living near White settlements such as Mossamedes, Porto, Alexandre, Humpata, and along the railway from Mossamedes to Lubango (Sa da Bandeira), were used as messengers or middlemen traders by the Portuguese.⁹²

Until 1909 Portuguese slave dealers came yearly from the North offering the above mentioned goods in exchange for slaves. The Kavango people were selective in what they bought, concentrating largely on goods they could not manufacture themselves or for which there were no substitutes. Thus, firearms, ammunition, beads and horses were in great demand. In contrast there was not much demand for European food (sugar, tea, coffee, alcohol), cloth and iron goods in the early days, because Kavango people preferred their food (mahangu stiff porridge with meat or vegetables, mahangu beer), skin clothing, and iron implements were manufactured locally. Changes in fashion and tastes could also stimulate the demand for a particular commodity. Beadwork, for instance, had evolved into a highly developed decorative art, and beads of all sizes and colours were in great demand for making a variety of bracelets, necklaces and for decorating women and girl's leather skirts.⁹³

Kavango exports consisted mainly of ivory, ostrich feathers, karosses and to a lesser extent slaves. The major import was arms and ammunition, supplemented by horses. The king exercised great control over the inter-group bartering-trading and established a bargaining position of some strength. No trader could enter an area without the king's prior permission, and, when he did, his every activity was subjected to close supervision.⁹⁴ The king and his officials could and did demand substantial "gifts" in appropriate commodities as the price of their cooperation. Alternatively, the king and his officials would restrict the trade to those goods in which they were interested. Kavango kings did this shortly after 1900 by refusing to sell their stock-piled ivory except for arms.⁹⁵

In order to obtain trade goods the king relied heavily on the existing traditional institutions. He sent professional hunters on hunting expeditions to provide ivory, ostrich feathers and hippo teeth. The hunters became indispensable to the king and they benefitted from the occupation because they were allowed the meat of the hunted animals to feed their families and they were also allowed to keep a portion of the trade goods. For every elephant, hippo or ostrich killed, only the tusk, the teeth and the feathers of the wings belonged to the king as tribute. The remainder could be traded by the hunter directly.

The tribute system was the source of most traded goods. The king's officials travelled throughout his territory to collect tribute, and communities paid in whatever trade commodity they produced, such as animals skins, ivory, ostrich feathers, hippo teeth or even cattle and mahangu.

The new trade elevated expert hunters to a high status in society. It enhanced the power and prestige of the king, giving him immense wealth because he was able to control production throughout the extended tribute system.

In the earlier colonial times some surplus mahangu and

cattle were purchased by WENELA (the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association) for the mine recruits quartered at the WENELA depot at Shakawe in former Bechuanaland. In addition trade in Kavango was largely carried on through SWANLA (the South West African Labour Association) which operated shops at Nkure-Nkuru, Rundu and Mukwe. SWANLA was a semi-government body which was instructed by the government to arrange for stores to be opened at the above-mentioned places in Kavango in the hope that this will stimulate contract labour recruiting.⁹⁶

1.4.5.2 Migrant Labour and the Colonial Economy

From German times⁹⁷ to the time shortly before independence it has been the policy of the successive White Administration to encourage young Kavango males to engage in migrant labour on a contract basis in the "Police Zone", working on White owned farms, in the copper mines at Tsumeb and Abenab, in the diamond mines at Oranjemund, or in the fishing industry on the coast at levels of unskilled and semi-skilled labour.⁹⁸ Recruiting was carried out by SWANLA which first established an office at Nkure-Nkuru in 1920. Kavango and Ovambo men were to supply the White farmers with labour and were relegated to an inferior status when they were required to carry an identification card, which was the colonial government device for pinning down Africans (in Ovambo, Kavango and Southern Angola) to working for European farmers.⁹⁹ According to the Report of the Administration for 1918-1927, 7 000 Ovambo males were recruited in 1920, while only a small supply was obtained from the Kavango region.¹⁰⁰ In 1923 "Native" taxation known as Tribal Funds was introduced by the colonial government in order to drive Kavango and Ovambo males from the north to earn money.¹⁰¹

At a conference held in Windhoek in December 1925, it was decided that two organisations should be created, viz. the SLO (the Southern Labour Organisation) which would cater for the labour needs of the diamond mines and the NLO (the Northern Labour organisation) which would provide labourers to the Northern mines and farmers. While the SLO would

recruit labourers from Ovamboland, the NLO would recruit from Kavango. By agreeing to the creation of two labour organisations, the administration was able to get rid of some of the problems of labour recruiting, while at the same time it was keeping control over the activities of recruiters.¹⁰²

Emmet points out that the labour force settlement instructed government officials, chiefs, headmen to recruit labour for private employers. In their excessive zeal to please the German and later the South African officials, who were after all their employers, the chiefs often carried their powers to extremes in forcing young men to leave their villages and work for wages on the farms and mines.¹⁰³ In Kavango 'Native' Commissioner H. Eedes, Chief Shampapi Mashika and a Catholic priest A. Bierfert worked together in recruiting labourers for the NLO.¹⁰⁴

The following table shows a comparative return of people recruited in Ovambo and Kavango for the years 1926 and 1927. (It should be borne in mind that people recruited in Kavango include those from Angola and former Rhodesia):

Year	Recruited in Ovambo		Recruited in Kavango		
	Ovambo	Angolans	Kavango	Angolans	Rhodesians
1926	4 033	1 134	358	703	90
1927	4 211	1 403	591	585	3

These figures show that Ovamboland was the major source of labour supply, and that most of the men recruited in the Kavango area (in 1926) were those from Southern Angola. Even the number of the Ovambo men recruited during 1926 is very low (against official expectations) compared with a population figure given by the Administrator's report at 125 000. The administration expected that there would have been a large number of young men fit and free to be away from home for labour at any time. It was, therefore, considering

other means of inducing labourers to come out.¹⁰⁵

Bosch states that in 1937 a number of 736 young men were recruited in Kavango, but most of these young men were from Angola. He argues that it was always difficult to get labourers from Kavango and quotes the 'Native' Commissioner responsible for the Kavango area as saying in 1939:

Very few of the Okavango will consider a two year's contract. Many of them have cattle there and others do not wish to leave their wives and families for such a long period. There is no necessity for Okavango natives to go out for work. They have stock, plentiful water supply, sufficient grain and veldkos, etc. Many come out to work out of curiosity and also to get a little money to buy luxuries. They have to pay a Tribal Trust Fund levy, but the majority can obtain money from local sources. The levy is not the real reason forcing these boys to go out to work. Since 1932 there has been no drought which might be a factor for the Okavangos going out to work.¹⁰⁶

The Odendaal Report of 1963 confirmed that only approximately 4% of the people of the Kavango were absorbed into the economy of the Southern Sector.¹⁰⁷ For example in 1960 out of a total population number of 27 871, only 1 019 men were involved in migrant labour. No mention was, however, made of labourers who travelled to Shakawe and later transported to the Witwatersrand gold mine. From the government's point of view Kavango people were not strongly involved in migrant labour compared to their neighbours, the Ovambo people.¹⁰⁸

The origins of the migrant labour system in Kavango may thus be related to the growing need of labour in the colonial economy with its methods of seeking supplies of labour, and to the internal factors in the Kavango society, like the material stimulus provided by a cash economy, the westernization of living habits, or the traditional division of labour, the men being previously responsible for cattle raising and trading. Labour migration has similarities with long-distance trading, because in both cases the men had to travel long distances through inhabitable stretches in order to bring back specific material prices. However, those

former movements were of a different nature from the modern emigration of male Africans to supply labour for economic enterprises. The independence and initiative which drove the Kavango male to trade his goods, and the evident preference for free and voluntary forms of labour in spite of all their risks and insecurity differs from the modern binding forms of recruited contract labour. Emmet points out that climatic conditions combined with the disruptions caused by the colonial penetration and the constraints imposed by colonial policies, gradually transformed labour migration into a necessity. For example, from 1925/26 the rainfall in the northern Namibia was consistently below average, and by 1928 had precipitated a drought, with chronic food shortage and stocks losses.¹⁰⁹ Emmet argues further that both political and economic structures were undermined in the process and that the northern areas lost the ability to feed themselves even under favourable climatic conditions. At the same time changes in the colonial economy played a vital role in transforming the system of migrant labour.¹¹⁰

In Kavango, for instance, the delineation of boundaries, in particular that between Namibia and Angola, restricted the range of pasture land available for the seasonal migrations and forced many Kavango people living in Southern Angola to move with their stock to Kavango where there were not enough pasture land for their stocks. This resulted in stock diseases and many stock losses. Many young men who relied on their stock for paying Trust Fund levies were forced to seek jobs in the Police Zone. Secondly, the activities and ideologies of the missions, which by the 1940s had a network of centres, outposts and schools had a considerable impact on levels of "necessary" depends, for instance the purchase of European clothing. By 1945 SWANLA was running a store at Rundu with two branches, Nkure-Nkuru and Mukwe in the hope that this would stimulate recruiting in Kavango. Almost all the labourers yearly earning were spent in these company-owned shops.¹¹¹

Before 1950 Kavango men who did contract labour travelled to NLO (later SWANLA) depots in the "Police Zone" in parties under a leader, and returned home in a similar manner after the completion of the period of service, which was not less than twelve months. This was done in order to maintain cohesion and discipline in cases of attack from San raiding groups. The Administration reported in 1924 that San people who inhabited the dry stretches between the Kavango area and the "Police Zone" had attacked parties of returning labourers, wounding several and taking their possessions.¹¹² Many of the recruits did not even survive that hardship of the march from their native locality to their intended place of work. On their marches they were exposed to a variety of illnesses, such as influenza and other infectious diseases. Those who survived arrived in a state of complete exhaustion, and the conditions they met were in general not suited to help them back on to their feet.

The Administration reported in 1923 that complaints had been received from farm servants of ill-treatment, insufficiency or not-payment of wages and want of food. Wages on farms varied from 10s to 20s a month. In town the rate was higher with wages commencing at 9d rising to 1s 3d per shift according to efficiency.¹¹³ From 1923 till 1939 a shortage of recruits was experienced and the Administration was requested in the next year to use every endeavour to obtain labourers from the Union. Permission was granted to obtain 2 500 men from Basutoland which apparently afforded substantial relief.¹¹⁴

The Kavango chiefs never seriously opposed the growth of migrant labour system, although they tried to limit its disruptive effects as far as possible by trying to allow only unmarried young men to leave their areas and trying to maintain that these men should adhere to their laws and customs and that they were directly under the authority of their chiefs. Traditionally, Kavango chiefs had had great privileges by enjoying the surplus of economic production. They controlled trade and levied new taxes during decreasing

production. The colonial administration, on the other hand, used the chieftaincy to implement its government because it was economical, and convenient to rely on persons holding a position of authority within the Kavango community. To give the necessary authority in dealing with their people, the colonial administration allowed them to hire village policemen and to share in the exercise of judicial powers, and thus the collection of court fees and taxes.¹¹⁵

Emmet points out that contract labourers were more or less in conflict with their chiefs. The tough experience the labourers had on the farms of settlers and colonisers had a radicalizing effect on them. The experiences included low wages, appalling working conditions and underlying violence of farm labour. When the contract labourers returned home, they experienced inherent conservation of the chiefs and elders. Those who broke contract were severely punished by the chiefs who were no more chiefs of the pre-colonial societies, but rather employees of the administration.¹¹⁶

Fundamentally, these abuses were a result of the policy of migrant labour which the missionaries were supporting. Missionaries were required to actively support the policy of the Administration and use their moral influence to assist in recruiting labour. Father A. Bierfert, a Catholic priest who worked among the Kavango people was one of the recruiters in the Kavango region.¹¹⁷ The missionaries' support seemed to stem from their conviction that their work was based on the belief that every African ought to work and that work was a necessary part of Christianity. To christianize an African, to educate him and to make him work where complementary principles. For the Kavango people these missionaries failed to recognise that it was "unchristian" to force some to work for the benefit of others, and that the policy of migrant labour they were religiously supporting was aimed at exploiting the labour of Africans for the benefit of settlers and Germany, and later South Africa.

The "Native Commissioner as well as missionaries had argued for compulsion on the mistaken ground that Kavango males or any African male was not accustomed to do any hard work and spent most of his time in idleness.

The men do not come up to the standard of labourers as required by the mines and are lazy, shiftless, and indolent he is, by nature, a lazy and indifferent worker.¹¹⁸

These people, however, were entirely ignorant of the division of labour inherent in Kavango or any other African society. Informants pointed out that the only time that missionaries saw Kavango people at leisure was probably either immediately after harvest when they were enjoying the fruits of their hard work, or during the rainy season when they had long finished breaking the ground up and the women had also finished putting the seeds into the ground. But, even at this time, Kavango men had their homes to attend to, repair or to built new ones while women had to repair old baskets or weave new ones for the purpose of collecting wild fruit and vegetables.¹¹⁹

Owing to all these developments, certain broad changes had occurred in the Kavango people's economic life. It can be argued that from 1940 the Kavango society has changed in varying degrees, from a subsistence peasant farming economy to a cash economy. Money became established as the principal medium of exchange and people were now depended on cash. The imposition of Trust Fund levies and taxes by both the Administration and the chiefs¹²⁰ has made the acquisition of money a universal necessity. According to Banghart taxes and levies were now collected in cash rather than kind. Prestige and status were still based on wealth, but in later days wealth was no longer purely based on the possession of cattle. Money, European goods and cattle all came to play roles in determining positions. Where previously the number of cattle was basically the sole determinate, and usually limited to the upper and ruling classes, this was no longer so.¹²¹

Regarding the correlation of migrant labour and western education, it could be said that in general the standard of the education of labourers was low. People interviewed stated that those who went on contract labour were mostly illiterate and a few had only attended school for either one year (Sub.A) or two years (Sub.B). Only one third of the labourers were semi literate and none has gone beyond Std 1. One informant stated that the low standard of education the labourers received in mission schools was "useful" in the sense that it enabled them to read and write their names, sign documents, count the cattle and sheep on farms as well as to understand and follow the orders of their masters.¹²² Banghart, considering labourers in Northern Namibia, gives the following breakdown:

Regarding the education of labourers, 90% of the informants had been to school for at least one year, with the largest group (28%) having only attended one year of school. However, 83% of my informants were able to speak or understand one or more European languages, with 36% of the sample speaking Afrikaans, followed by English (5%), German (2%) and Portuguese (1%). In additions 14% were able to speak English and Afrikaans. Only 17% of the samples were unable to speak or understand any European language Generally, the informants attended either Finnish (52%), Anglican(23%) or Catholic (16%) mission schools.¹²³

In Kavango, in particular, a majority of the illiterate and poorly educated men went away to work in the "Police Zone", while those who were better qualified, mostly teachers, remained at home to a much greater extent. Some poorly educated men also worked for missionaries and the few other Whites who were in the region. Labour of this kind was restricted mainly to herding cattle or domestic service.

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1. Gibson, G., McGurck, C. and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.10.
2. See Moorsom, R. (1982): Agriculture: transforming a wasteland, p.55.
3. Ibid. p.11. Moorsom adds that drought resistant fleshy varieties such as melons and pumpkins were also cultivated. See also Emmet, T. (1984): The Rise of African Nationalism in Namibia, pp.11-12. The American crops (maize, peanuts, pumpkin, tobacco) which are different from the African varieties were introduced by Portuguese traders by 1850.
4. Gibson, G., McGurck, C. and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.217. In later days the rain started later than the usual time of October. The first rain was only recorded in Mid-December.
5. See Gotthardt, P. (1964): Geschichte der Katholischen Mission in Südwestafrika 1896-1946 p.78.
6. See Moorsom, R. (1982): Agriculture: transforming a wasteland, p.16.
7. Gibson, G., McGurck, C. and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.167.
8. Malan, J.S. (1980): Peoples of South West Africa/Namibia, pp.99-100. The Herero people, too, regarded cattle "more than just a material possession" and little value was attached to other goods. See also Emmet, T. (1984): The Rise of African Nationalism in Namibia, pp.13-14.
9. It should be mentioned that the total population of Kavango includes Angolan refugees. Lategan M. (1980) estimates the Kavango population as 123 000, in Sending- en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango, p.18, while Heikki Ausiku's estimation for the same year is 120 000. Compare the census in Namibian Brief, 1988 no. 10, (Namibia Foundation).
10. Interview with T. Likoro and S. Shiyave for the Language Bureau at Rundu and Windhoek, respectively, (5 December, 1987).

11. Schapera, I and Van der Merwe, D.J. (1942): Notes on the noun-classes of some Bantu languages of Ngamiland quoted by Gibson, G., McGurck, C. and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.19.
12. Crabb, D. (1962): Nasal and Nasalized roots in Proto Southwest Bantu quoted by Gibson, G., McGurck, C. and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.19.
13. The word **homp**a is equivalent to the English word king. The Kavango kings were reduced to chiefs and they sold their power to the colonial administration. See also Kampungu, R. (1965): Okavango Marriage Customs, p.399, quoted by Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981) The Kavango Peoples, p.19.
14. Kampungu's thesis is an analysis of Kavango traditional marriages. Ausiku's article traces the history of the Kavango people from the pre-colonial period until the introduction of Christianization.
15. Bley, H. (1968) describes how the different communities entered Namibia, pp.xxi-xxii. See also Green, R.H. (1981): Namibia; The Last Colony, pp.26-29. In a paper delivered at the Staff Orientation Symposium of the Windhoek Academy on the 12th April 1983, Prof. E.S.P. Stals proposed the thesis that the African groups of Namibia, excluding the Damara people, originated from Eastern Africa. This group of people later formed smaller groups and apparently settled north of Etosha, along the Kavango River and north of the Zambezi before the split, whereby some of them moved southwards and the rest remained at the same place. Stals added that when the Herero people entered South West Africa they moved in three groups. The major group came into the country via the Kunene and Kavango Rivers before settling in the Kaokoveld, whereby the other group moved southwards in search of good pastures for their cattle. The third group, the Mbanderu, came from the North East and settled in the Sandveld north of Gobabis.
Frey, C. (1924) suggested that the Herero people came from the vicinity of the Great Lakes in East Africa,

travelled through Angola and entered Namibia between the Kunene and the Kavango Rivers. Frey, C. (1924): A Regional Geography of South West Africa, Windhoek, p.9.

16. See Drechsler, H. (1980): "Let Us Die Fighting", p.18 and First, R. (1963): South West Africa, pp.65-66.
17. Bley, H. (1968): South West Africa under German Rule 1894-1914, p. xxiv.
18. Green, R.H. (1979): A Political Economic Survey, DP. no. 144, p. xxiv.
19. Ausiku, H. (1980): History of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kavango, p.4.
20. Ibid. p.4.
21. Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.22.
22. Kampungu, R. (1966): Concept and Aim of Okavango Marriages, p.188.
23. Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.122.
24. Van Tonder, L.L. (1966): The Hambukushu of Okavangoland, pp.156-166. See also Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, pp.62, 129, 192.
25. McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.192.
26. Ibid. p.63.
27. In summary the Kavango clans are the following:

Vakafuma:	Those of the Toad or Frog
Vakanyime:	Those of the Lion
Vakwashipika:	Those of the Hyena (servant people)
Vakayovu:	Those of the Elephant
Vakanyatyti:	Those of the Buffalo
Vakandyadi:	Those of the Hawk (Rain people)
Vakangombe:	Those of the Cattle
Vakwambahu:	Those of the Locust
Vakwanangandu:	Those of the Crocodile
Vakankora:	Those of Hunger/People of the Parrot
28. Malan, J.S. (1980): Peoples of South West Africa/Namibia, p.98.

29. Bierfert, P.A. (1938): 25 Jahre bei den Wadiriku am Okavango, Hünfeld, p.66.
30. Kampungu, R. (1966): Concept and Aim of Okavango Marriages, p.66.
31. Interview with N. Libebe, A. Hashipara, S. Kandere and J. Hikerwa, Rundu, 28 December 1987.
32. Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.122.
33. Moorsom, R. (1982): A future for Namibia 2: Agriculture, Transforming a Wasteland, pp.19 and 20.
34. See Van Tonder, L.L. (1966): The Hambukushu of Okavangoland, pp.87-166.
35. Ibid. pp.240, 307-311.
36. Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.148.
37. Van Tonder, L.L. (1966): The Hambukushu of Okavangoland, pp.240, 313-316.
38. Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.150. Should a man have poor luck hunting, he took this as a sign of his vadimu's displeasure and consulted the nganga to make an offering. The nganga would then use his divination ability or power to determine which kind of offering vadimu wished.
39. Ibid. p.149.
40. Bierfert, P.A. (1938): 25 Jahre bei den Wadiriku am Okavango, Hünfeld, pp.27-28.
41. Hompa can either be male or female. The male hompa's wife is known as mumbanda while the female hompa's husband is shitenya. See Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.197. In the literature the Kavango male and female hompa are referred to as chief and chieftainness, respectively.
42. Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.68, quoted from Kampungu, R. (1965): Okavango Marriage Customs, Roma, pp. 364, 417-418, 423-424.
43. Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.142.

44. Ibid. p.208.
45. The author regards the Ovambo and Kavango societies as similar because they are both matrilineal and the custom of the Ovambo people resemble that of the Kavango people in a way. Andersson, C.J. (1968), writing about the Kavango people has noted:

"It was evident I was once again among an intelligent race of men on a par in this respect, with their western neighbours, the Ovambo, whom they so closely resemble in language, habits, costume and domestic customs, that any separate description of them would be superfluous."

See Andersson, C.J. (1968): The Okavango River: A Narrative of Travel, Exploration and Adventure, p.198.

46. Clarence-Smith and Moorsom, R. (1977): Underdevelopment and Class Formation in Ovamboland, 1844-1917, in Palmer, R. and Parsons, N. (ed) (1977): The Roots of Rural Poverty in Central and Southern Africa, pp.98 and 99.
47. Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.196.
48. Kampungu, R. (1966): Okavango Marriage Customs, Roma, Basutoland, p.435, quoted by Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.69.
49. Ibid. quoted by Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.69. The chief was responsible for making rain and thus providing good harvest, and for assuring the general welfare of his people, p.358.
50. Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.10.
51. Ibid pp.43, 104, 67.
52. Andersson, C.J. (1968): The Okavango River: A Narrative of Travel, Exploration and Adventure, pp.214-215.
53. Eedes, H.L.P., 'Native' Commissioner at Nkure-Nkure in 1932, (1933): "Customs of the Okavango Natives", Report presented by the Government of the Union of South Africa to the Council of the League of Nations concerning the Administration of South West Africa for

the year 1932: 58-59, quoted by Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.45.

54. Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, pp.103, 167.
55. Interview with C. Haushiku, M. Shitarara and R. Ukuyu, Nyangana, 30 December 1987. It should be stated very clearly that private ownership of cattle is as old as man himself in Kavango. Cattle were possessed individually, while the meat and milk were shared with family members and neighbours.
56. Andersson C.J. (1968) says that Kavango people engaged themselves in smithing and manufactured all the ornaments, household utensils, farming implements, weapons in use among their own people and for export. Iron and copper which were locally available, were used. They chartered some of these commodities to their neighbours.
- Andersson, C.J. (1968): The Okavango River: A Narrative of Travel, Exploration and Adventure, p.199.
57. Interview with C. Haushiku, M. Shitarara and R. Ukuyu, Nyangana, 30 December 1987.
58. See Africa Perspective, No. 3 February 1976, quoted by Moorsom, R.: Migrant Labour in Namibia, pp.20 and 21.
59. Interview with C. Haushiku, M. Shitarara and R. Ukuyu, Nyangana, 30 December 1987.
60. Drechsler points out that it would seem that Lüderitz had other things in mind than land for middle-class colonisers to settle on. Lüderitz hoped to find mineral wealth, above all diamonds, gold and silver. His letter to Richard Lesser dated 1 December 1884, published in "die Erschliessung", p. 105 ff explains:
- I should be pleased if it turned out that the entire soil (of the territory he had acquired in South West Africa - H.D) is a colossal mineral deposit which, once it is mined, will leave the whole area one gaping hole.
- See Drechsler, H. (1980): "Let Us Die Fighting", p.22. Lüderitz's intention was, thus, not to establish

settlements in the territory, but to seek mineral wealth.

They were so-called land purchases, because Lüderitz and other Germans used cunning methods in dispossessing Africans of their lands. As Ngavirue explains German methods of dispossessing Africans of their lands varied from cunning trading deals to the imposition of boundary agreements and resort to firearms to subjugate Africans. One of the most serious German land claims, into signing of which they successfully coaxed and bullied Chief Samuel Maharero, is the agreement of 6 December 1894 under which the good grazing lands of Gobabis were ceded to a German land settlement syndicate. The Germans not only cheated but they used firearms where other pressures fail, in order to force people in giving up their land. See Ngavirue, Z.: The Land Theft, in Segal, R. and First, R. (1967): South West Africa: Travesty of Trust, pp.179-184. See also Green, R.H. (1983): From Südwestafrika to Namibia: The Political Economy of Transition, Research Report No. 58. Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, p.7.

61. Ibid p.23.
62. Green, R.H. (1979): A Political Economic Survey, DP No. 144, p19.
63. Green, R.H. and Kiljunen, K. (1980): Namibia: The Last Colony, p.30. The number of settlers grew from the early 1890's onwards and the activities of traders in the subsistence sector grew. Mercantile firms controlled the latter, distributing trade goods on commission in return for cattle.
64. Ibid.p32.
65. Ibid. p.33. See also Simon, D. and Moorsom R. (ed) (1986): Namibia's Political Economy: A contemporary Perspective Conference Paper, 29th September - 2nd October, University of York. Centre for Southern African Studies, p.10. Africans in the South and Centre of Namibia were situated on marginal land to White farm zone and were intended to supply its

additional labour needs. The far more populous northern regions were partitioned off as though a foreign country, and a rigid contract labour regime was enforced to supply the mines and the government. In order to build the White economy, the government had first to break down the indigenous economy. Mechanisms used by the government and White settlers to disrupt the indigenous economy are: the progressive alienation of land, large scale of expropriations of cattle, the execution of 'fines', the imposition of levies as well as the introduction of cash economy.

66. Green, R.H. (1979): A Political Economic Survey, DP. no. 144, p.12. The recruiting of workmen from Ovambo and Kavango was regulated by the labour protection and recruitment order, which was a system of getting cheap labour, used by both the German colonial regime and the South African regime as the key to making their colony viable. This was a system of getting individual workers for term contracts during which they are separated from their families and live in compounds. Green points out further that contract had economically allowed paying wages below family subsistence.
67. Goldblatt, I. (1970): South West Africa from the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century, p.228. Africans in the North were not allowed to leave the Northern Sector, except for the purpose of taking up employment under the contract labour system. See International Labour Office (1977): Labour and Discrimination in Namibia, Geneva, p.55. Also First, R, (1963): South West Africa, for the year 1927, p. 105. Proclamation No. 11 of 1927, Section 3 read that any African who desired to travel within the 'Police Zone' did so upon a pass issued by his European employer or, where he had no European employer, by a magistrate, an officer in charge of African Affairs, a superintendent of African location, a superintendent of African reserve, a member of the South West African Police in charge of the police post, or any other person appointed for the purpose by the Administrator.

68. Goldblatt, I. (1971): South West Africa from the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century, p.182.
69. Two areas had been created by the colonial regime. The area known as the 'Police Zone' was the area occupied by Whites south of a line West-East about 90km north of Tsumeb. Inside the 'Police Zone' every White had the right to check the papers of African Namibian and contest his right to be there. The other area was of African settlement 'governed' by traditional chiefs.

The Northern Sector which consisted of areas such as Ovambo, Kavango, Kaokoveld and Caprivi, stretched from about 90km north of Tsumeb northward to the border with Angola. This part of Namibia came under direct colonial administration by South African Native Commissioners, only after the German surrender and the beginning of South African takeover. The districts of the Northern Sector were separated from the central and southern part of Namibia by the 'red line' which marked the border with the 'Police Zone', the White area of German times wherein the application of the colonial legislation after the Herero-Nama uprising (1904-1909) was enforced. In South African times the line marked the demarcation between the 'pacified' White core of the 'Police Zone' and the 'operational area' of the guerilla war with SADF against Namibian resistance.

The majority of the Namibian population (approximately 70%) live in the Northern Sector of Ovambo, Kavango, Caprivi and Kaokoveld. Under both the German and South African Administration (until 1960 in the latter case) they were placed beyond direct administrative control. The South African authorities continued with this arrangement in order to reserve the peoples for the South African separate development of ethnic 'homelands'. Ovambo was the first to be declared a 'homeland' in 1970, followed by Kavango in 1973. Between these dates and 1977, the people of the two areas had been isolated from the people living in

Central and Southern Namibia.

See Hunke, H. (1980): Namibia: The Strength of the Powerless, pp.147 and 157.

70. Bley, H. (1968): South West Africa under German Rule 1894-1914, p.273. Andersson states that Kavango people were armed and well organised. See Andersson, C.J. (1968): The Okavango River: A Narrative of Travel, Exploration and Adventure, p. 185. Gotthardt mentions that the region was malarial and very hot. See Gotthardt, J. (1946): Geschichte der Katholischen Mission in Südwestafrika 1896-1946, pp.77 and 78. Moorsom notes that the northern regions were isolated for fear of provoking a clash with the well-armed and well-organised "tribes" and of disrupting the high existing rate of migration. See Moorsom, R. (1973): Colonisation and Proletarianisation: An exploratory investigation of the formation of the working class under German and South African colonial rule to 1945. p.83.
71. Andersson makes reference to the attack on the Vakwangali subgroup and the taking away of cattle. Although he states that the culprits were Makololo (Tswana people), informants say that they were Boers from the Cape. See Andersson, C.J. (1968): The Okavango River, p.194. Interview with G. Mukoya, 4th December, 1989. Andersson was one of the organisers of the Cape mercantile bourgeois in the early 1860's. Others were Erikson and Ohlsson. The route to Mid-Kavango became well-established in the 1870's. See Leutwein, J. (1906): Elf Jahre Gouverneur in Deutsch Südwestafrika, p.92.
72. Johnston, H. (1903): Pioneers in South Africa, p.314-315, quoted from Stals, E. (1969): Die aanraking tussen Blankes en Ovambo in Suidwes Afrika, 1850-1915, p.243.
73. Trümpelmann, G.P. (1918): Die Boer in Suidwes Afrika, p.26.
74. See Bosch, J.L. (1964): Die Shambiu van die Okavango, p.22. Bosch does not corroborate what kind of

reprisals were carried out.

75. Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.25.
76. Ibid. p.24.
77. Ibid. p.28.
78. Ibid. p.30.
79. Gotthardt, J. (1946): Geschichte der Katholischen Mission in Südwestafrika 1896-1946, pp.29 and 39.
80. Ibid. p.9.
81. On the question why Himarwa and Nampadi rejected the missionaries, Chief S. Mipasi of Ukwangali and I. Shikukumwa (Rundu, 28 December 1988) were in one that the two chiefs were afraid that they would loose their might and they thought that the Germans would do the same to them and to their people as that had been done to the Herero and Nama peoples.
82. Goldblatt, I. (1971): South West Africa from the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century, p.194.
83. Gotthardt, J. (1946): Geschichte der Katholischen Mission in Südwestafrika 1896-1946, p.43 and Goldblatt, I. (1971): South West Africa from the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century, p.171.
84. Goldblatt, I. (1971): South West Africa from the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century, pp.27 and 44.
85. Ibid. pp.39-48.
86. Silva Rego, A., Eduardo dos Santos (1964): Atlas of the Portuguese missionaries, 2nd edition, p.79, quoted by Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.27.
87. See Shejavali, A. (1970): The Ovambo-Kavango Church, p.24.
88. Ibid. pp.26-27.
89. Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, pp.27 and 28.
90. European trade penetrated Kavango via barter carried on by MAMBARI (Black Angolans) and were organised and controlled by Portuguese merchants. The MAMBARI were middlemen traders between the Portuguese on the

Angolan coast and the Kavango people. They were usually mullatos.

91. Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.131.
92. Andersson, C.J. (1968): The Okavango River: A Narrative of Travel, Exploration and Adventure, pp.196-197, also 236.
93. Clarence-Smith notes that Vimbali (Mambari of Vimbundu) spoke a modified form of Ki-Mbundu, the language of Luanda and its hinterland, and their culture was a syncretic mixture of Portuguese and Mbundu elements. They were essentially integrated into European forms of social and political organisation, and had no recognisable form of tribal organisation.
94. Interview with Chief S. Kamwanga, Nyangana, 28th December 1988.
95. See Andersson, C.J. (1968): The Okavango River: A Narrative of Travel, Exploration and Adventure, p.186. A message was sent to Chief Shikongo to let him know that strangers had arrived in his area.
96. Leutwein, J. (1906): Elf Jahre Gouverneur in Deutsch Südwestafrika, p.205.
97. Moorsom, R. (1973): Colonisation and Proletarianisation: An exploratory investigation of the formation of the working class in Namibia under German and South African colonial rule to 1945, p.100.
98. In a letter to the "Bantu" High Commissioner the "Bantu" Commissioner at Rundu (14/12/1949) pointed out that he was reliably informed that in German times Kavango chiefs sent forced gangs to labour markets in the "Police Zone". See Olivier, M.J. (1961): Inoorlingbeleid en Administrasie in die Mandaatgebied van Suidwes Afrika, p.253.
99. A new regulation of enforcing contract labour was promulgated as early as 1917, and the Northern Sector was effectively shut off from the South with the Government securing a monopoly of recruitment under 1922 pass law and the power to supervise contracts in 1925. See Moorsom, R. (1973): Colonisation and

Proletarianisation: An exploratory investigation of the formation of the working class in Namibia under German and South African colonial rule to 1945, p.100.

100. The recruits (men and boys) appeared with labels or identity discs tied around their necks. See First, R. (1963): South West Africa, p.129. Once a recruit had an identity card, he was registered and was required to do contract labour on a regular basis (after three to six months leave) until he was of no use for the employer.
101. UG26- '21 South West African report of the Administrator for the year 1920.p.13.
102. In 1925 a total of R6 361 and R588 were collected in the reserves of the Southern Sector as grazing fees and dog tax, respectively. In 1930, R14 427 and R537; in 1945, R25 619 and R329. In 1955 a total of R25 692 was collected in Ovamboland for the Reserve Trust Fund and an additional outstanding amount of R197 742 was expected to be collected for the same year. A total of R1 154 was collected in Kavango and an outstanding amount of R864 was still to be collected for the same year. See Olivier, M.J. (1961): Inboorlingbeleid en Administrasie in die Mandaatgebied van Suidwes Afrika, P.H.D. thesis, University of Stellenbosch, pp. 395 and 402.
103. Union of South Africa, the Administrator's report, 1926, U.G. 2- '27, 1927, p.36. Also Emmet, T. (1984): The Rise of African Nationalism in Namibia, p.331. According to Emmet the Administration was strongly opposed to allowing individual employers to do their own recruiting, because it was felt that recruiters might have "a distributing effect on the Black population beyond the "Police Zone" and that competition between different groups of employers "might have the effect of unduly increasing the cost of labour."
104. See File No. 17/1 and 11/7 Permits and "Native" Labour (employment): The Northern Labour Organisation Limited, p.1. It should also be borne in mind that

- although the northern regions were not conquered the Germans had initiated the collaborative relationship between traditional leaders and colonial authorities by entering into labour treaties with the Ovambo and Kavango chiefs. Under the South African Rule, the whole basis of power in Ovambo and Kavango was changed. By the combination of a system of indirect rule which incorporated the chiefs, the marenga and matimbi into the colonial administration apparatus, the occasional use of military force (like those used on Ipumbu and Mandume) the South African authorities gradually undermined the power and prestige of the Ovambo and Kavango ruling class.
105. See File 11/1/2 Illegal Recruiting, Assistant "Native" Commissioner, Rundu, 1944.
 106. U.G. 22- '27 Report of the Administrator for the year 1928, p.38.
 107. Bosch, J.L. (1964): Die Shambiu van die Okavango, p.49. The comment of the "Native" Affair Commissioner, H.L.P. Eedes.
 108. Report of the Commission of Inquiry into South West African Affairs 1962-1963, (Pretoria 1964), pp.35-37. The Administration did not provide statistics for Kavango people who worked in the "Police Zone" from 1928 onwards.
 109. People (Chief S. Kamwanga, N. Libebe, Nyangana, 28th December 1988) interviewed stated that Kavango people were as strongly or less involved in migrant labour as Ovambo people if one were to consider that the number of the Ovambo population has always been higher than the number of other Namibian groups added together. The Administration report for 1924 states that considering that the Kavango region was exceedingly fertile and that people who lived there could easily grow an abundance of food, and considering further the distance they had to travel to Grootfontein over a very trying and waterless stretch, it was considered that the number of men coming down for work was entirely satisfactory. See U.G. 33- '25 Report of the

- Administrator for 1924, p.31.
110. See Wellington, J.H. (1967): South West Africa and its human issues, p.43. Statistics for labourers who went on contract in the "Police Zone" is not available for the year 1928.
 111. See Emmet, T. (1984): The Rise of African Nationalism in Namibia, p.206. See also International Labour Organisation (1977): Labour and Discrimination in Namibia, p.86. Without adequate employment in the Northern Sector, there was almost no alternative for the majority of their inhabitants but to seek work beyond their confines.
 112. Moorsom, R. (1973): Colonisation and Proletarianisation: An exploratory investigation of the formation of the working class in Namibia under German and South African colonial rule to 1945, p.87.
 113. U.G. 22- '27 Report of the Administrator for the year 1928, p.29. Also U.G. 31- '28 Report of the Administrator for the year 1927, p.47.
 114. U.G. 21- '23 Report of the Administrator for the year 1924, p.21. The contract labour system allowed employers to pay lower than family subsistence wages, because the contract employee's family remained in a homeland/reserve and scratched some food and shelter (not full subsistence) there. For the ranching sector, low wages have always been essential Thus, cheap labour, housed in compounds, was the foundation on which the colonial political economy was built. See Africa Bureau Sheet No. 69 (September/October 1982) Namibia's Political Economy, p.1. Given the CPI-Index for 1939 of 18.66 (Dept. of Statistics, Pretoria) the poverty lines are P1 = R2.60 and P2 = R12.92 per month. While the average income of migrant farm labourers and household workers was below P1, all other occupations lay below p2. See Von Kleist, K.E.B. (1984): Aspects of Poverty and Education in Namibia, Carnegie Conference Paper No.104, p.9. In 1924, for instance, Ovambo and Kavango peoples who worked on mines each received a salary which ranged from 9d to 1s.3d per

- month, while farmworkers received less. See the Report of the Administrator for the year 1924, pp.21 and 22.
115. U.G. 21- '24 Report of the Administrator for the year 1925, p.14. See also Moorsom, R. (1973): Colonisation and Proletarianisation: An exploratory investigation of the formation of the working class in Namibia under German and South African colonial rule to 1945, p.90.
 116. Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, pp.30 and 140.
 117. See Emmet, T. (1984): The Rise of African Nationalism in Namibia, p.317.
 118. See the Report of the Administrator for 1928: Fifth meeting held on Monday, October 29th 1928 between the Mandate Commission and the Union Government, p.108.
 119. U.G. 4/1/7 Report of the Administrator of South West Africa for 1932, pp.59 and 61. See also Bosch, J.L. (1964): Die Shambiu van die Okavango, p.49.
 120. Interview with A. Hashipara and G. Mukoya, Rundu, 4th December 1989.
 121. See Official Yearbook of the Union of South Africa, No.28, 1954-1955, p.745.
 122. Banghart, P.O. (1975): Migrant Labour in South West Africa and its effects on Ovambo tribal life, p.11.
 123. Interview with G. Mukoya and A. Hashipara, 4th December 1989.
 124. Banghart, P.O. (1975): Migrant Labour in South West Africa and its effects on Ovambo tribal life, p.68.

CHAPTER 2

KAVANGO TRADITIONAL EDUCATION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The broad aim of this chapter is to describe the role traditional education played in the life of the Kavango people during the pre-colonial and the early phase of the colonial era. Within this general aim the chapter describes the importance of traditional education in preparing individuals to meet the requirements of their existence as members of a functioning community. Although Kavango traditional education is highlighted in this chapter, it is incorporated within the wider matrix of the society at large in order to enhance an understanding of the changes brought by western education. Thus, the account of Kavango traditional education (and traditional Kavango history before it) is a necessary and important background to the understanding of the educational institutions that evolved when Europeans came into the area. It should be noted that although the past tense has been used, the system described persists even now, to a limited extent, in the remote areas.

The following aspects are considered: It is argued that traditional education had played a vital and effective role in preserving the cohesion of the Kavango society long before mission education was introduced into Kavango in 1910. Though traditional education was not always completely adequate, it aimed at fitting children into their families, clans, religions and traditions. In this way individuals were prepared to play their full part in maintaining the cohesion, stability survival and well-being of the group.

2.2 KAVANGO SOCIETY

The early political, economic and social institutions of the Kavango society are important for the understanding of the educational system in pre-colonial Kavango.

The Kavango society was traditionally organised along a

matrilinear pattern and the groups were divided into clans. The clans did not possess a residential unity or social integration. Usually their homesteads were widely scattered, and members of different clans lived together regardless of their clan adherence. The system of honouring age, wealth and also the living dead played an important role in the daily life of the Kavango people.

Politically, Kavango was divided into five small kingdoms, which consisted of settlements on both sides of the Kavango river. The king, who was the head of each kingdom was accorded a divine status but not divine powers. His chief advisers, the *marenga* and his councillors, the *matimbi* as well as the district headmen and headwomen who gathered daily at his royal court, played such a prominent role in the daily affairs of the Kavango "state" that they reduced the king's ruling powers. Every king's reign was characterised by a reciprocal flow of information amongst the five kings, their *marenga* and *matimbi* and male and female society at large, although final decision - making lay exclusively with the king.

Economically, Kavango people practised a mixture of subsistence agriculture and animal husbandry with the addition of hunting, fishing and gathering, organised on the basis of a sexual division of labour. Handicrafts such as basketry, pottery, woodworking, leatherworking and metal working in iron, copper and brass also made an important contribution to the economy of the Kavango people.

Kavango people believed in *Karunga* as a transcendent god, who was above all, powerful and had created everything and owned everything. He was the Supreme Being controlling men's destiny. Kavango people also believed in the active existence of the ancestral spirits (*vadimu*), who were the only intermediaries between men and the high god *Karunga*. The *vadimu* had attributed to the people the powers of intermediation, divination and healing, and they were the public guardians of the whole society.

In his troubles and difficulties the Kavango individual turned to the *nganga* (medicine man), who cured his illness, explained the will of the *vadimu* and protected him against physical, spiritual and environmental threats.

Kavango people were related to each other by extended ties of kinship which bound them to such unilineal kinship groups as the lineage and the clan. These ties supported a network reciprocal ritual, social and economic obligations. Despite differences in status, emphasized by formal etiquette and ritual behaviour, there was a general uniformity in the standard of living. Although the society was stratified between the rich and the poor, the major aim of the former was to gain followers by giving poor people land, for which they themselves had no use, and surplus stocks of cattle and *mahangu* (pearl millet). An individual in such a society spent much of his time in the production of food. There was a simple division of labour based on gender and age. People lived in close relationship with nature (land, vegetation, animals) because of limited technological development. In the Kavango traditional society there was great social homogeneity in that its members belonged to the same group and did not demonstrate much difference in wealth, privilege and power. In such a society, as compared to a modern industrial society, there was less room for social tension and conflict. Consequently, the educational system was little pressurized by demands of contending strata and groups. Under such circumstances, the social structure shaped the pattern of education over a long time.

2.3 THE TERM "EDUCATION"

Education can be viewed as the transmission of cultural values and the accumulated knowledge of a society to its uninitiated members. In this definition, the process is equivalent to enculturation or socialization. Every child, whether conceived among African San or Pygmies, American Indians, Australian Aborigines, European Gypsies or the middle classes of New York, is born without culture. Education is designed to guide every child in learning a

culture, moulding its behaviour towards adulthood, and guiding it towards an eventual role in a society. Neville Alexander expresses the purpose of education as follows:

Education is the name we give to those formal and informal ways in which the older generations of a society pass on their accumulated knowledge to the new generations of young people. This knowledge does not simply refer to know-how, but also to the ways in which people are supposed to live their lives. It refers to knowledge about sums, reading, writing, history, science, etc, but also to modes of behaviour, to beliefs about what is wrong or bad. In this way education prepares the youth to take their 'place' in a society in more ways than one.¹

Alexander further notes that education does not only prepare the youth to become workers, doctors, lawyers and teachers, but they are also taught to behave as others have done before them. In this way the youth acquire the knowledge and the attitudes that are necessary to fill their allotted place in the society. He concludes by saying that education is a process by means of which a society reproduces itself more or less as it exists.

Emil Durkheim defined education as:

the systematic socialisation of the younger generation by which the latter learn religious and moral beliefs, feelings of nationality and collective opinions of all kinds. In other words, education serves to integrate the individual into the wider community in which he or she is born.²

Malinowski described education as follows:

Education is bigger than schooling. In every society, however simple or complex, the child has to acquire not only skills and ideas, he has also to be taught the moral values, the social attitudes, the religious beliefs of his community. The integral process of education in every society consists in the formation of mind character and a sense of citizenship. This process exists in the lowest levels of development among Bushmen, Australian Aborigines or Firelanders, as well as in Chicago, Cape Town or London.³

Education, in its broadest sense, can then be said to

include the whole process of development through which a human being passes from infancy to maturity. During the process the individual adapts to his/her physical and social environment. In a more specific sense the term education denotes those influences which are designedly brought to bear upon the young by the adult section of the community for the purpose of maintaining and, if possible, of raising the level of culture attained. This is the sense in which the term is used in this chapter.

Unlike other creatures human species have culture. Culture cannot be acquired instinctively as other creatures acquire habits and adapts instinctively. Malinowski viewed the situation as follows:

There is one imperative imposed by culture upon all human groups. Since culture is the cumulative achievement of generations, there must be ways and means by which this common heritage is handed over from one generation to another. The need of such systems we may call educational imperative. Here again, the functional approach leads us to investigate through the exact study of early life histories how the family and the group of playmates, the initiation ceremonies, and apprenticeship, how the entry into club, clan, village, community and the tribe, are accompanied by training and teaching, by the inculcation of techniques, rules of craftsmanship, the principles of knowledge, social norms, and moral maxims.⁴

Malinowski added that man can be distinguished from other creatures by means of his greater potential for learning, his possession of memory and foresight, constructive thought and anticipation as well as knowledge. Knowledge, described by Malinowski, as the capacity to distinguish imperial fact and sound reasoning, and to follow their biddings integrally, is a distinctive human characteristic which establishes his final superiority over other creatures.⁵

Transmission of culture in the past and today occurs mainly by means of one or another form of education. In the earliest stage of development of mankind, the training given to the young was of a purely incidental character; manners and customs were first acquired by a process of observing

and imitation rather than by any consciously designed instruction. The term education in Kavango embraces all aspects of the social structure, such as political activity, family life and all ways of transmitting knowledge and shaping of values. During most of human history deliberate instruction has been incidental and sporadic unlike modern societies. This should, however, not be seen as a defect. Such form of education were sufficient to those people and their needs.

It is also useful to note that the goal and method of education may differ from continent to continent, from nation to nation, or even from community to community. In this regard Babs Fafunwa notes that in Roman times oratorical and military training was regarded as the best education. In Greece, the best educated man was the one who was mentally and physically well balanced. During the Middle Ages in England the knight, the lord and the priest were examples of a well educated elite; in France, the best educated man was the scholar and in Germany, it was the Patriot. Fafunwa concludes that in Africa, the well-educated and well integrated citizen was the warrior, the hunter, the noblemen, the man of character and the man with a specific skill.⁶ Solon Kimball observed:

Despite the great variety of their cultural forms, the communities of mankind have, throughout time, possessed in common the need to transmit their cultural heritage to each oncoming generation. It is thus that societies ensure their continuity and establish the conditions necessary for further cultural growth.

Although the methods, procedures, and organisations that are used to educate the young may vary greatly from one society or epoch to another, there is one aspect common to all: the young must pass through an extended stage of dependency during which physical maturity is reached and the skills and knowledge necessary for adulthood are acquired.⁷

From this point of view, education takes place in every human society. Pre-colonial Kavango is no exception. In fact, detailed accounts of Kavango people by anthropologists

leave one in no doubt that the Kavango society did possess a kind of customary education, a system which worked reasonably well.

2.4 FEATURES AND AIMS OF KAVANGO TRADITIONAL EDUCATION

Africa consists of many nations and language groups. Despite historical, political and language differences, pre-colonial or traditional education in many parts of Africa, as far as its characteristics were concerned, was to an extent common and pre-colonial societies in Africa were marked by distinctive traits. The major aim of African traditional education is to prepare an individual for adulthood, to produce an individual who will be a useful member of society. African education particularly emphasized social responsibility, job orientation, political participation and spiritual and moral values.⁸ One common feature in African education was the process of learning by doing, whereby through imitation, identification and co-operation a child learned how to behave and work as an adult. Associated with this process was the principle that what a child learned was related to his immediate environment. Commonly in Africa was also the body of knowledge which the child should learn and remember through an intellectual process, for instance, the legends, folk tales, riddles and proverbs and the traditions which were transmitted orally.

This does not, however, mean that there is only one single traditional form of education in the whole African continent or the whole tropical Africa. On the contrary, Africa consists of different societies, and each society has thus developed a different system suited to its natural environment in order to transmit its own particular knowledge and skills to its youngsters. In writing on 'Indigenous Education in Yoruba Society', Helen Callaway noted:

The understanding of indigenous education has been hindered by writers giving generalised accounts throughout tropical Africa with the assumption that because these societies were non-literate, traditional learning was everywhere much the same, with only minor variations. Although certain

characteristics may have been universal in Africa, as indeed in all societies, it is devious that indigenous education varied to the same extent that societies differed from each other. A child growing up in a hunting band of Mbuti Pygmies learned a different set of skills from a child of the agricultural politically centralised kingdom of the Ganda.⁹

There were, for example, "stateless" societies who were nomadic, hunting and gathering over a large area with a relatively low density of population. These societies were culturally homogenous and had a low level of technology and a simple material culture. The San of the Kalahari Desert and the Pygmies of north-eastern Zaire are two prominent examples of the type of societies. A child growing up in this society's education would mostly centre around hunting and tracking wild animals as well as identifying edible fruits in the forest or jungle.

Then there were also communities in Africa where craftsmen and women reached a high level of mastery of crafts and artistic accomplishments, communities with complex social organisations, intricate centralized political systems and a high level of technology. The centralised communities had a relatively high population density and were usually sedentary, being engaged in agriculture and herding. Examples of these societies are the Ashanti and Yoruba peoples of Nigeria, the Akan peoples of West Africa, the Ganda, the Swazi people, the Zulu people.

There were also middle-sized societies in which political groupings shared cultural similarities with surrounding groups but were really quite independent and no group dominated the other. They were also sedentary like the Masai in East Africa, the Nuer in Sudan and the Tiv of Nigeria. They had higher population densities and higher levels of technology. There was specialization of labour, and social differentiation, based on wealth, was not uncommon.

It may be suggested that the Kavango people belonged to the second type of communities, for they were also centralised, had a high level of technology, were sedentary and engaged in agriculture and herding.

Traditional education obviously varied from community to community in terms of the content and the methods used. This was dictated by the nature of the physical environment of the specific community. In Namibia, traditional education among the Kavango people in the North and Ovaherero in Central Namibia differed in content and method. Although the difference might not be great, it is quite obvious that the education of a boy growing up in an exclusively pastoral Herero community could centre on herding cattle. On the other hand, a Kavango boy growing up along the river and in an environment with a higher rainfall could combine this with other skills such as making fish traps and canoes for fishing as well as making hoes and ploughs for agricultural purposes. The methods of fishing and hunting learned by a Kavango child could also differ from those learned by an Ovambo child, because their environments differ in nature. While the Ovambo child could catch its fish in the **Oshanas** (water plains), the Kavango child could catch its fish in the river. The Kavango is covered with big trees, shrubs and high grass and many wild animals roam the natural forests. The physical environment of Ovambo is plain-like with few trees (mostly palm trees), which makes it difficult for wild animals, particularly big animals, to live and roam there. Therefore, the fishing and hunting methods learned by children were determined by their physical environment. A !Khu or Khoé (Bushman) who live in the interior of the Kavango territory could learn craft techniques such as smithing, pottery, basketry, woodworking and hair plaiting and hairdressing from a Kavango child, while a Kavango child could learn effective methods of tracking wild animals from a Khu or Khoé child. A child growing up in a pastoral but nomadic Nama society of Namibia could learn initiation procedures from a child growing up in East Africa where societies had higher degrees of

centralisation of political authority. The same Nama child could also learn the techniques of manufacturing metal tools and weapons from a child growing up in the Mashona society of Zimbabwe.

Kavango traditional education had three major aims: The first aim was the inculcation of good character and good health in the youth. The second was the transmission of adequate knowledge of the history, culture, religion of the people in order to enable the youth to participate fully in social life. The third was the training of youngsters for certain functions and professions, such as fisherman, hunter, farmer, craftsman, smith, traditional doctor, etc. These professions were hereditary, which meant that the parent (father or mother) handed down the techniques and secrets of the trade to the oldest child. In the case of rainmaking the secrets were handed down from the female chief to her oldest child and from a male chief to the oldest child of his oldest sister. The occupation required a specialized and long period of training which could take approximately ten years.¹⁰ Apart from the three major aims which Kavango traditional education seems to have shared with African traditional education, three additional main objectives of Kavango traditional education may be identified:

- 1) to adapt members of the new generation to their physical environment and teach them how to control and use it;
- 2) to preserve the cultural heritage of the extended family, the clan and the community;
- 3) to explain to them that their own future, and that of their community, depends on the understanding and perpetuation of the institutions, law, language and values inherited from the past.

Kavango traditional education had other important features

of education as it has been described in other African countries. In evidence, which was corroborated by everyone interviewed, all five chiefs of the Kavango region¹¹ identified the features of the Kavango traditional education. It may be said that Kavango traditional education had the following features:

The Kavango society was collective/communal and decision-making systems tended to be egalitarian, each member of the community or clan making his contribution. The concepts of altruism and equality guided the social practises of the Kavango people, for instance, members belonging to the same community had an obligation to help each other. The security and survival of the group depended upon harmonious cooperation between all members of the group. Such practices, therefore, tended to reduce strife among the Kavango people who were characterised as a very peace loving people by both missionaries and colonial officials as well as the first Europeans who visited Kavango in the 19th century.¹² Since the society was communal and collective, Kavango traditional education has tended to be communal and democratic. This meant that it placed emphasis on the whole community as educators. In addition, children had complete freedom to attend many adult activities, eg meetings, celebrations, ceremonies. Children were allowed to be present at the activities of adults in order to enable them to know ordinary skills and interests of daily life. Some of the comments made by the Kavango chiefs were as follows:

Chief S. Kamwanga: "Every adult in the community was a teacher and had the responsibility of contributing to the education of a child. A child did not only belong to the parents, but also to the whole community as well. Every child was considered 'the child of the community', and the education of the child was shared by parents and their neighbours."

Chief A. Mayavero: "Parents in collaboration with their grown-up children and close relatives were responsible for educating the child during the early years. As the child

became older, the whole community took part in its education."

Chief L. Hakusembe: "Not only parents and relatives, but also every adult, even the chief was responsible for the education of every child."

Chief S. Mipasi: "Social problems such as loneliness, orphanage, single parenthood and old age were unimaginable in Kavango pre-colonial society. Every problem was shared and solved by the whole community and every member of the community bore the responsibility of taking care of and of educating the growing child."¹³

It could be said that individualism was taboo, since this would put at risk the stability of the group. The individual had to be prepared to fit comfortably into the existing pattern of his society, to fulfil roles as a member of that society which were largely ascribed to him by custom and which were clearly understood by those around him.

Kavango traditional education was intimately tied to the practical tasks of day-to-day living. It also involved learning social relations and spiritual concerns. Kavango traditional education was essentially practical training designed to enable the individual member to play a useful role in society, in other words, its function was to prepare the child for integration into society. New members of society had to learn cultural symbols, values, beliefs and sanction upon which personal relationships, patterns of conduct and customs were based. They also had to learn the technical and vocational skills of the society.

Traditional education in the Kavango was a life-long experience. The crowning achievement was the title of 'wise person' given to elders. One of the major principles of life-long education was that many important learning influences were part of the experiences an individual had during the course of his life. Important education

influences included the environment as well as other people such as parents, brothers, sisters, playmates, friends and the community as a whole. Although pre-colonial education was mostly directed towards the child, it was a continuing process throughout the lifetime of an individual.

The methods of Kavango traditional education included peer-group game playing, observation of adults, and then the gradual assumption of adult activities, with more and more autonomy. The following is Abdou Moumouni's description of pre-colonial African methods of learning:

The children learned by observing and imitating adult behaviour and work, and by playing many different group games. They also learned by listening to older friends and elders, questioning them in the course of daily activities or during evenings spent in conversations, telling stories, legends, riddles and proverbs. They learned by doing, it is by learning an occupation or apprenticeship and by helping parents in their daily duties.¹⁴

Both formal and informal processes were utilized for the transmission of knowledge, skills, ideas, attitudes and patterns of behaviour. This education which was mostly active participation of the children to what was necessary to be known, was, as the chiefs explained, valuable, because it met the needs of the society. Children learned and acquired knowledge by doing things as well as through passive or theoretical acquisition of knowledge. Before reaching puberty, Kavango children learned by doing and observing basic technical practices which meant that children actually participated in the social processes of adult activities through ceremonies, recitation and demonstration. Some examples of these activities were that boys and girls sometimes played 'husband' and 'wife', demonstrating the activities of childcare, housekeeping, parental responsibility and imitating the activities of hunting, fishing and farming.

Education in pre-colonial Kavango may be compared in some respects to that provided in the early days of the Roman

Republic. In both systems the community - individual or parent-child relationship was strongly emphasized. Referring to the early days of the Roman Republic, Pliny wrote:

It was the ancient custom that we should learn from our elders, not only through the eye, those things that we should soon have to do, and in our turn hand them down to our successors. Each one was instructed by his own father and to the person who had no father, the oldest and most distinguished citizens stood in place of one.¹⁵

During the pre-colonial era in Kavango there was little of what one might call formal learning and there were no institutions such as schools and no fixed venues such as classrooms or lecture halls. In contrast to other parts of Africa where initiation of boys was practised, institutions such as initiation schools did not exist in Kavango. In order to attend these schools or to be initiated, Angolan immigrants (known as Vanyemba) living in Kavango had to travel to Angola. As far as girls were concerned, they were initiated individually by the time they reached puberty. The 'school' in Kavango was, thus, the home, the farm and the environment, and the teachers were the parents, the brothers, sisters, elders in the family as well as every adult in the community. The Kavango traditional society attached considerable importance to the sanctity of traditions. The culture transmitted in such a society remained largely unchanged and consequently the education system tended to be conservative.

Compared to modern Western education, traditional education in Kavango was marked by limited specialized training and there was no distinct category of professional, full-time teachers for purposes of general education. Instruction was imparted through oral communication. It was practical and geared to specific situations with little use for abstract theories and generalization.

An attempt may now be made to look at the correspondence between this type of education and some essential features

of pre-colonial Kavango society. A society with this type of education was technologically backward, without a literary language, and in most cases with a low level of scientific knowledge. Its economy was marked by limited specialization and simple division of labour. In such a society traditions were regarded as sanctified. A society of this type was a well-integrated society in which religion and ethics were inextricably bound with social life.

2.5 THE CONTENT OF KAVANGO TRADITIONAL EDUCATION

The content of Kavango traditional education was related to the environment and the real life experience of the Kavango people. It included environmental skills such as farming, hunting, fishing; intellectual themes such as local history and geography, law, politics, philosophy, religion; physical skills such as jumping, swimming; artistic skills such as singing, dancing, drumming; and handicrafts such as basketweaving, woodworking, leatherworking, hairplaiting, etc. The content provided general instruction to equip all people for basic economic self-sufficiency as well as specialized training in specific areas for those who were talented and showed interest.

The content of Kavango traditional education also involved the transmission of certain secrets of one's family or secret society. Secrets such as craft techniques, divination, rainmaking or the preparation of medicine were transmitted from the parent to the child. The secret of rainmaking, for instance, which was only practised by the Hambukushu royal family, was transmitted from the male chief to the sister's oldest son or daughter. Gibson notes that a rainmaker lived on a large island where he practised his craft in secrecy and that it was common for the rainmaker to sacrifice one of his own children or that of a relative.¹⁶

Kavango children were taught practically and theoretically. On the practical level the youth acquired knowledge by observing and imitating adult work and behaviour, and by playing different group games. On the theoretical level the

youth learned by listening to older friends, elder brothers and sisters as well as elders in the whole community, questioning them in the course of daily activities and during evenings spent on conversation, story-telling etc. The child's intellectual ability was then tested by asking it questions concerning what had been learned the previous day. Writing on traditional education in Namibia, Ellis observes:

....the role and skills of adults were learned through stories, riddles, poetry and memory tests, as well as through traditions of song, dance and games.¹⁷

The stories, legends and riddles enriched the imagination of the child and contributed to the development of the child's understanding and intellect. There must, necessarily, have been differences between the stories, songs and games of different people, language groups and families, but their use was widespread.

Kavango traditional education included more than a narrow program of formal learning. The inculcation and understanding of cultural symbols, moral values and cosmological beliefs were not separated from the education process, but formed part of it. The three important aspects in Kavango pre-colonial education, intellectual training, character training and physical training, were combined together. In addition, the goals, the content and the method of pre-colonial education were also combined to form a single whole. The subject matter was related to the environment and the social life of the Kavango people. Kavango pre-colonial education from this point of view, was an active process of learning and teaching, by which individuals acquired the full outfit of culturally defined and adapted behaviour. When asked to comment on the content of Kavango traditional education, the response of some of those interviewed was as follows.

J. Hikerwa: "It is ironical enough that the so-called educated Kavango youths later become frustrated and turn to alcohol in order to

run away from reality. The reason for this state of affair is obvious: the children's brains were being propped with knowledge that is not related to their environment and the social context in which they are living."

R. Ngondo: "The main objective of education in our schools should be to provide Kavango children with the means for understanding their society and its structures as well as opening up for them a way of exploiting their environment."

A. Hashipara: "The content of traditional education was aimed at teaching the children and encouraging them to learn in order to enrich their experience and to acquire knowledge which they could use in their occupational lives."

S. Kandere: "The content of any type of education should always be related to the social milieu and experience of the children, otherwise the education received would be meaningless and lead to frustration."¹⁸

In Kavango traditional education three stages of learning could be identified: Pre-puberty education, which was spontaneous and more or less unregulated and puberty and post-puberty education which was strictly specialized and regulated. The three stages of learning can be illustrated in play, which is the paramount educational exercise for Kavango and African children in general.

During infancy small boys and girls should run about and chase each other, play drums by using calabashes, 'ride cattle or horses' by using long sticks, reeds or millet stalks and grass as whips, etc. for the pleasure of it.

These activities took place in an unorganised way. Between the ages of six and ten, i.e. the period when the child was beginning to co-operate in real economic activities and was acquiring a knowledge of his social space, the play became more social and more complex. During the last stage of childhood, i.e. between 13 and 14 years for girls and 16 and

17 years for boys,¹⁹ the imaginative play was gradually given up and altogether abandoned when puberty was established. An adolescent youth could already apply skills acquired in juvenile play or in the arts and crafts of his boyhood to practical ends. He took active part in building huts, manufacturing hunting tools or weapons, practising crafts such as leatherworking, pottery, basketry, etc. The following is Otto Raum's description of the education of a child in a Chagga community, which to some extent seems to be similar to Kavango traditional education:²⁰

It is possible to classify play activities under three headings; first, the playful exercise of sensory and motor apparatus resulting in the adaptation of the organism to its physical environment, secondly, imitative play consisting of representation of adult life to fit the social needs of childhood; and, thirdly, competitive games which test the physical, intellectual, and social qualities of the individual. It might be suggested that these three types of play activity follow one another in time, the first falling into infancy, the second into childhood and the third into adolescence.²¹

In the Kavango community the infant's play activity was spontaneous and took the form of testing the limbs and getting acquainted with the physical environment. During childhood adult life was imitated by playing "chief" or "husband and wife", and during adolescence competitive games like *wera* and *Tamburamo* were played. In Kavango traditional education the teachers in puberty and post-puberty were no longer parents and relatives, but rather fully initiated men or women who were often unknown to the initiate. The initiation curriculum itself did not usually include practical subjects, but rather consisted of a whole set of cultural values, religion, history, myths, rituals, philosophy and other knowledge. The knowledge acquired from this curriculum, especially in the religious instruction, law, history and rituals was most essential in Kavango traditional education.

2.6 CHILDHOOD IN THE KAVANGO COMMUNITY

The Kavango child spent the first five years of its life in a close relationship with its mother. From the day of its

birth it remained confined to the house under the care of its mother, who protected it from any harm and danger, ministered to all its needs, breastfed and reared it and put it on her back where ever she went. To show his love and affection, the father might sometimes hold it, cuddle it when it cried and even clean it. In the feeding process of the child, no strict timetable was exercised; there was little supervision of what it ate. The baby was given food regularly. The mother would nurse it at any time of the day when she felt that the baby was hungry or thirsty. Children were normally breastfed until they were three years old. In addition to the mother's milk, the child was fed on mahangu porridge and cow milk. Van Tonder notes that in traditional Kavango the child started getting solid foods in the form of porridge and cow's milk when it was four months old.²²

At the age of three to four, when it was beginning to play with objects and other children and talk fluently, it started to notice other people around it and watch their activities. Between the ages of 4 and 6 other family members such as grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins started to contribute to the child's education by telling it stories, teaching it obedience and respect for elders, and teaching it the history of their community and their clan.

At the age of six the Kavango child was taken to its maternal uncle's house in order to incorporate into its relationship with its maternal relatives and their settlement. Van Tonder describes this process as follows:

At six the child is taken and shown to his more important relatives whom he must obey and listen to, like the mother's brother and mother's sister, and the grandparents of both spouses. He is instructed not to steal food from other people, but to ask first whenever he is hungry. The child is also sent to spend a certain amount of time, usually about two to three weeks with his different close relatives. On his return a full account of his behaviour is demanded from these relatives by the father. If he behaved himself, he is given a little present by his father. If, however, he was naughty he is sent back and the relatives are instructed to give him a hiding whenever he is naughty and misbehaves.²³

Van Tonder further notes that in the Kavango community the people who were called father and mother were not only the biological parents, but the mother's sisters, and father's sisters and brothers. The parents' sisters were normally called 'small mothers' and the father's brothers 'small fathers'. The mother's brothers were, however, called uncles. Terms such as 'father', 'mother', 'brother' and 'sister' were used widely, and in some cases they were titles given to members of the child's extended family.²⁴

The Kavango society had a complicated family structure. A family, from the Kavango's point of view, was not the husband, wife and children, but all people who could trace their descent from the same ancestors. The Kavango clan was an extended family, whose members shared a common clan name. Van Tonder states that the clan names were derived from animals such as the lion, the elephant, the buffalo, the zebra, the hyena and cattle; from a bird of prey such as the eagle and from an occupation for which members of a specific clan were famous or well known, such as the copper people or the copper workers.²⁵ Hospitality and respect to other members of the clan was obligatory. There was only one basic system of clan organisation in Kavango, a matrilineal one. The children took the mother's clan name.

The family structure should be understood by the child from the age of six and elders in the extended family had the responsibility of bringing it to its attention. At this stage there was no distinction between sexes. Small boys and girls played together and always went together in mixed groups.

From the age of twelve the recognition of sex roles became publicly apparent. Boys started herding their parents' cattle independently and assisting their fathers with building huts, working in the fields as well as accompanying the fathers on hunting - and fishing trips. The girls on the other hand were now seriously involved in assisting their mothers with the preparation of food, fetching water

from the nearest stream, pounding **mahangu**, gathering firewood and vegetable, sweeping the compound and caring for small brothers and sisters. A boy was, for example, ridiculed if he dabbled in something which was supposed to be the preserve of girls, but was encouraged when he tried to take part in operations considered appropriate for boys.

Another aspect of the educational development of Kavango children was connected with their social play. Certain games played by Kavango children between the ages of 6 to 14 had a significant role for their educational and social development. At this stage children spent a great deal of their leisure playing games associated with themes deriving from everyday life, such as sacrificing, hunting and fishing, family life, housekeeping, farming and many others.²⁶

These games were traditional and served a socialising function as apparent in a game called **mantambo**, a popular game among Kavango children. Both boys and girls from 6 to about 14 years of age participated. They went out into the veld or plain to play the game. The girls each took water, fire, utensils, **mahangu** meal, raw meat or fish, home-made butter, milk and some wild vegetable collected from the banks of the river or in the veld. The differentiation of sex roles was pointedly brought to the fore in this game. In the make-believe game children built themselves houses to form a small village. In the building process, boys did the work that was generally done by grown-up men in hut-building. They went to the bush and cut poles and long grass and constructed huts. When the huts were complete, the boys pretended to herd cattle or hunt small birds or catch fish to be cooked by girls. Usually, in such plays, older boys and girls paired off as 'husband' and 'wife', while the smaller ones took the role of their children. In some cases dolls made of clay were used as children while the younger children acted as dogs and wild animals. In this play girls undertook women's work, involving pounding **mahangu**, brewing **mahangu** beer, preparing food for the

working men and caring for small children while boys either went into the veld to shoot birds with their small bows and arrows, or went to the river to fish, using spears. These were done to imitate hunting and fishing trips made by grown-up men.

After a while the boys returned from the hunting or fishing trip carrying their meat or fish to the shrine,²⁷ known in Kavango as *shinako*. While the boys were approaching the shrine, the girls also approached to meet them, singing a specific song which had a connection with hunting or fishing. This song had the meaning of welcoming and praising those 'husbands' who had shot the birds or who had speared the fish.

At the shrine the birds or fish were fried on fire and the boy who shot the first bird or who speared the first fish took a piece of meat and put it on a stick while praying: "Karunga (God), please help us whenever we go out hunting in the veld or fishing in the river to get enough meat/fish to feed our families."²⁸ What happens after the prayer was described by Van Tonder as follows:

The girls are also called to the shrine and each is given a piece of meat distributed by the eldest one present. The girls then return to their huts where they have their separate meals while the boys stay at the shrine to have their meat. They say that it is taboo to eat the meat they have hunted with the women. After the meals the boys return to the huts where the girls are waiting.²⁹

While the 'husbands' and 'wives' and their children were pretending to sleep, small boys and girls of 6-9 years of age divided themselves into two groups, one group acting as lions and hyenas and the other group acting as dogs. The 'husbands' then went out and practised how to defend their families and cattle when a dangerous wild animal approached their settlement. This imaginative or imitative play could take 6 or more hours. In the evening the girls and boys packed all their belongings and returned to the village where their parents were waiting for them. The girls would bring food to their mothers to taste. The girls would be

praised if the food was well cooked and would be teased if not.

It is difficult to establish how old some of these "traditional" games and rituals are, and to what extent they might have changed over the course of time. Interviews with Kavango chiefs and some elders, though limited by recollection of the informants, confirmed that the socialization through the game was common and important among all five groups of Kavango and that the games were fully approved of by the parents. They felt that these games gave the children the opportunity not only to train themselves as future husbands and wives, but also as good organisers, administrators, kings, chiefs, village heads and shrinekeepers as well. In answer to a question as to whether these games had any educational importance, some of their comments are as follows:

R. Ngondo: "The children in their play identified themselves with adults and tried out what it felt like to be a man or woman. At the same time boys practised all the skills used in hunting and fishing which would be of great use in his future life as husband and father."

L. Hakusembe: "In this play boys tested their knowledge, skills and alertness in hunting and fishing, while girls engaged themselves in testing their knowledge in cooking and housekeeping."

A. Mayavero: "As the weapons bows and arrows as well as spears were the symbol of manhood and pounding blocks and pots were the symbol of womanhood in Kavango in the past, boys using these weapons felt like men while girls pounding mahangu, cooking porridge and caring for small children felt like women."

S. Kamwanga: "There were cases when boys were engaged in building miniature huts for this game. This work could take some days to complete and needed planning and organisation. Through this game boys were engaged in a great competition in which they were able to test which of the boys could build the nicest hut."

Through hunting birds and hares and fishing boys practised marksmanship."

A. Hashipara: "Every adult encouraged his children to take part in this game. Children could now practise and imitate what they have seen from adults. This had great educational importance in the sense that they were learning and practising adult activities. Traditional education was thus more concerned with practical learning than with theoretical learning."

S. Mipasi: "This game should be seen as a preparation for future life. The boy prepared himself for the role he would play in his community as husband, father, protector, defender, hunter or fisherman, housebuilder, chief, headman, village head, etc. The girl prepared herself of her future role as wife, mother, housekeeper, cook and also as chief, headwoman, village head, etc."

Apart from **mantambo**, children between the ages of 6 and 14 also engaged in other educative role play such as 'agricultural play' which involved a child in making a miniature field for himself/herself, cutting the bushes and grass in the field, planting the seeds, chasing birds from the newly planted field, hoeing the field, harvesting, etc. 'Arts and craft play' involved plaiting miniature baskets, mats and bangles by using palm leaves, reeds and a specific type of grass known as 'rutinda-tinde' that grows on the banks of the river or in the veld. Children also made small pots, dishes and food containers out of clay. Boys engaged themselves in manufacturing small bows and arrows as well as in practising leather work and wood-carving. 'Cattle keeping' or 'animal husbandry' play was also prominent amongst the boys. This fantasy and inventive play involved making people and cattle figures out of clay, constructing 'houses' and 'villages' to which cattle pens were attached and moving the people and cattle figures about in the villages and cattle pens, while talking to each other. According to the information collected by interview, these games ceased with the onset of puberty, i.e. at the age of 15. At this stage girls were already married or were being

courted, while boys were now taking active part in men's duties such as building houses, making tools and weapons, farming, etc. At a later stage, at approximately the age of 18 a boy could also start looking for a wife, because he was now considered a grown up man capable of starting a family. Van Tonder describes the puberty stage amongst the Hambukushu, which is characteristic of all five groups as follows:

Physical puberty marks an important stage in the social and physical development of a boy or girl. Puberty is the beginning of adulthood which is formally recognised at the first menstrual period with girls and the first seed flow with boys. For both sexes puberty marks their admission into adult life. With boys this is almost granted automatically, but with girls a special individual initiation ceremony is customary.³¹

2.7 THE ORGANISATION OF KAVANGO TRADITIONAL EDUCATION

Education in Kavango encompassed both formal and informal learning and teaching, i.e. both formal and informal processes were utilized for the transmission of knowledge, skills, ideas, attitudes and patterns of behaviour. Youths of the society learned the expectations of society informally from parents, guardians and elders and received formal training in skills and professions which were necessary to support a lifestyle. The following are important aspects in the informal process of learning and teaching:

- 1) Character training
- 2) Physical training
- 3) Intellectual training
- 4) Promotion of cultural heritage and participation in family and community life.
- 5) Job orientation

2.7.1 Character Training

Kavango children received informal education from association with their parents and elders. The first thing taught to the children was proper behaviour, respect to elders and relatives and to be submissive towards elders,

irrespective of kith and kin. A person without character was despised by the whole community and had no future in the Kavango traditional society. Sometimes an offender could be condemned to corporal punishment by the community. To have a child without character was according to the late Chief Maria Mwengere a curse and punishment from God and from the ancestors. Mwengere was not exaggerating in her assertion that sometimes a person who brought shame and dishonour to his family was doomed to die by his own family. The offender was then executed by tying a heavy stone around his neck and drowning him in the deep side of the river.³²

The emphasis on character training was shared with and characterised by other Africans. Writing on African traditional education in general Babs Fafunwa notes:

Undoubtedly, traditional education in the area of character training is severe, to say the least, but this is because African society as a whole attaches the greatest importance to character-training The absence of any other aspect of education is tolerable as long as good character prevails, but the absence of 'good character' on the part of an individual is the most shameful thing that he can inflict on his own immediate and extended family.³³

Among the Ovimbundu of Angola the moulding of character was also considered one of the most important aspect in the education of the child. Writing on standards of conduct, manners and salutations in the education of the Ovimbundu, Wilfrid Hambly observed:

The parents of a child, also his maternal uncle, assume responsibility for training in the percepts and standards given here. The maternal uncle, who is the mother's oldest brother, is particularly interested because he has to pay fines should his sister's children commit thefts. The evidence indicates that the home and restricted family have informative influences over the conduct of children One cannot fail to notice the quiet and unobtrusive way in which children sit in the presence of their elders both in the home and in the council house.³⁴

According to the information gathered, the Kavango community considered a child who showed or demonstrated politeness,

respect, hospitality, obedience and honest or truthfulness to his parents and elders, including strangers, a well-behaved child. Character training was important because the behaviour of the child was to be formed according to the ethics of the community. In the olden days an individual was judged by the content of his character. A good character was considered the most valuable "possession". In answer to a question on to how they would describe a "bad" child, some of the answers given by the informants were as follows:

R. Kambundu: "A bad child is one who steals, refuses to perform household tasks, disobeys or insults elders."

J. Hikerwa: "A child who lies, who is always in company with the opposite sex at the age of 14 and older, who ignores his parent's orders is considered a bad child."

N. Libebe: "A bad child is one who argues with his parents or elders, who fights with his siblings or friends, who does not share his food with others."

A. Kudumo: " A bad child is the one who neglects his assignments and ignores commands."³⁵

A boy or girl falling in this category would receive punishment from his parents or his maternal uncle. The type of punishment administered to children included beating the child with a stick until bruises appeared, holding the child's face against smoke coming from a fire place, putting the child's head and face in the water for several minutes, repeating this while the child was crying, putting nose-drops in the child's nostrils and refusing the child food.

N. Libebe, supported by three other informants mentioned that the disciplinary measure mostly used among Kavango parents was withholding food from the child for a few hours, until the evening meal. This technique was used throughout childhood in order to inculcate good character and

behaviour. From the Kavango parent's point of view this disciplinary measure was safe and could not cause accidents. The other measures were painful, and most Kavango parents did not want to hurt or ill treat their children.³⁶

From early childhood parents encouraged their children to help others, respect and obey parents and elders, share meals with others, etc. To swear at an old age, to lie, to break a promise, to cheat and to hit an elderly person were considered gross impoliteness and an offence in view of Kavango belief that elders should be respected and obeyed. Van Tonder mentions that these were unforgivable crimes which could cause the offender to be sentenced to pay a fine of three to five head of cattle. In the case of a youth a severe hiding was given by the headman or chief. Van Tonder also mentions that to assist an old person was considered an honourable deed which could result that the young helper was blessed by the old person who called on Nyambi (the Lord) to protect, guide and show the youngster the right way.³⁷

According to informant Chris Haushiku, "the first thing we taught our children was proper behaviour and respect to elders."³⁸ Thus, Kavango youth soon learned that respect for elders irrespective of kith and kin was obligatory. Youths were expected to greet elders whenever they met them, but they could not enquire about the elders health as that was a prerogative reserved for elders.

Boys and girls also learned to be receptive and kind to strangers. In general, strangers and aliens received good treatment at the hands of the Kavango people. Pater Bierfert who lived and worked in Kavango for 25 years confirmed in his report that missionaries working among them had been honoured and protected from harm if not attempting to interfere negatively with their customs.³⁹

Kavango people have complicated greeting systems and forms of address of which children were expected to learn. Children started to receive instruction in these from the

age of three. Some of the instructions were in the proper conduct and the form of address which were used in daily village contact. An example is when a child or youth talked to elders. In this situation the younger person had to use words such as granny, daddy, mummy, brother, sister, etc. To a stranger who was also a youth the words *hewa* (peer, friend), 'brother' and 'sister' were applied. These terms were used in many African societies. In an introductory note to their (1975) book Brown and Hiskett mention that in African traditional society "family terms like 'father' and 'brother' were used much more widely than is the case with the nuclear family, and in some cases they were titles given to members of the community who did not belong even to the child's extended family." They add that Westerman found that the Bemba child's 'fathers' were those before whom he knelt when presenting water.⁴⁰

Together with the forms of address the younger person had to use the body language or physical gestures. Some of the signs which applied when talking to older and respected persons were as follows: to fold hands, bow the head and look down, to bend the knee before speaking, girls knelt when handing something to the father or any older man, to clutch hands and many other signs. These methods of addresses were not used when talking to peers or friends.

Chief S. Kamwanga, supported by the other four chiefs and some elders, noted that in the times gone by, a youth was not allowed to look straight in the eyes of an adult. If this happened the youth would be considered an offender and could be brought to the headman or chief to receive punishment. The chiefs added that a chief who was considered the fire of the community, was always to be shown respect and honour.⁴¹ Van Tonder describes the honour and respect shown to the chief in this way:

If a man meets the chief in the road, he steps aside as the chief approaches and kneels, bows his head and claps his hands. The man accompanying the chief then usually inquires from this man where he is going. After his explanation the chief gives consent or disapproval and carries on

.... No man is allowed to overtake the chief, even if he is in great hurry, without first showing the necessary respect. When they go out in a canoe and one of the oarsmen wets the chief by accident, he apologises profoundly⁴²

Van Tonder further also mentions that the wife of a chief, known as **mumbanda** was also greeted with respect by the clapping of both hands.

Moral education also received much attention among the people of Kavango. Elders informally educated children around the fire in the evening through tales. Although story-telling was a form of relaxation to pass the time after a long day's work, the stories always had morals. They were designed to inculcate in the youth obedience, faithfulness, honesty, truthfulness, self-respect, self-reliance and respect for others. According to Van Tonder a part of most fable stories and legends of the Kavango people is a central mythological figure known as **Likiti**. **Likiti** is portrayed as a mean and extremely greedy person always in search of food, but also as a very good hunter.⁴³ Many times parents would warn their children not to be a **likiti**, meaning not to be mean and greedy. According to some stories told to children a **likiti** could swallow the whole village with its content and he could also drink up all water in the Kavango river when he was hungry and thirsty.

The character of a **Kakurukadi** (equivalent to sympathetic old woman in English) was portrayed in Kavango moral fables as a sympathetic, helpful, 'good Samaritan' who rescues people from danger, helps dejected and lonely people, gives refuge to homeless people and helps lost children in trying to find their parents. One such Kavango tale ran that a young boy travelling a long distance from his grandparents could not reach his destination before dusk. Seeing a big village along the road, he thought he would stop to spend the night. Apparently the village belonged to **makiti** (plural) who were renowned for cannibalism and greediness. The boy was well received, well fed and a bed prepared for him to rest. The

makiti made every effort not to display any sign of cannibalism and greediness, their aim to catch the boy in the dead of the night. Hardly had the boy gone to bed than a sympathetic **Kakurukadi** came to warn him that he must escape since he was in the home of cannibals who plotted to devour him in the dead of the night. **Kakurukadi** helped the boy to escape before the cannibals could execute their plan.

Another story ran that a tall and good looking young man who came to visit relatives, courted one of the most beautiful girls in the village. The young man introduced himself to his future bride's parents as a hunter who specialized in hunting elephants, rhinos and hippos. The girl's parents were honoured to have him as a future son-in-law, and they immediately gave consent that the two should marry. After the marriage the young people moved to the bridegrooms' parent's village which was miles and miles away from the girl's village. The bride spent the first night at her in-law's village alone, because the husband went hunting that night. Soon a sympathetic **Kakurukadi** came to warn her that her husband was a cannibal who hunted !Kung Bushmen at night. The bride heard that her husband was actually a good looking young man by day and **likiti** by night, and that he had plotted to kill her on the night of the third day. **Kakurukadi** offered to rescue her before that time. During the day the husband made every effort not to display any sign of cannibalism and greediness, lest his wife noticed. His plan was to catch her while she was asleep. On the evening of the third day, while the husband was having supper with his father, **Kakurukadi** came, swallowed the girl and took her safely back to her parents. The moral of the two stories were not to trust strangers easily and not to associate with greedy people. The first story also taught children to complete their long distance errands and return to their destinations, otherwise they too could find themselves in the situation described in the story. The second story taught girls to be careful not to marry strangers before finding out about their backgrounds. It

was also a warning to girls that even good looking men could be mean and evil.⁴⁴

Many moral tales also dealt with wild animals and birds of prey such as jackals, lions, hyenas, crocodiles, elephants, hawks, eagles, etc. In these stories the characters were portrayed differently. The jackal, for example, was portrayed as a thief, liar, criminal, also a cunning, unreliable and adulterous person who could put a person in temptation and danger. The hyena was portrayed as stupid, ugly and greedy as well as a scavenger. Animals such as the lion, elephant, hippopotamus and giraffe were portrayed as the chief while the eagle was connected with intelligence, wisdom and divinity.

Among the Kavango people, many moral tales dealing with animals were those of the cunning jackal and the stupid hyena. In these tales the animals would talk and behave like human beings (see appendix for examples of the stories). Animals were used in order to make the stories interesting to children who would start wondering and asking themselves how it was possible that an animal could talk and behave like a human being. Children and other listeners could either identify themselves with or dissociate themselves from the characters in the stories. Writing on Namibia, her people, myths and legends, Jan Knappert noted:

In Africa there is a close association between stories, songs and proverbs; many stories contain songs, sometimes with refrain to be sung by the audience. If the story is well-known, the audience joins in as a matter of course; otherwise the narrator will teach them the lines when he reaches the song. Almost all African stories carry a moral which is often in proverb form. The story-teller is in some ways a teacher of his people since he recounts the traditional lore of their group, much of it being concerned with the savoir vivre of that society.⁴⁵

Knappert notes that the fable of the dove, the jackal and the heron, which is found with variations in many languages in South Africa and Namibia contains many lessons (see appendix). The fable taught children never to disclose

one's source of information and never to let intimidation made one talk. Other lessons were that there was a limit to the success of either bluffing or intimidation. The jackal symbolized the ruthless criminal who wanted to rob the dove her children, while the dove was the symbol of a house mother who had to fend for herself and her children. The heron was a good and reliable friend who gave advice to the dove.⁴⁶

Truthfulness and honesty in a child or youth could sometimes be tested by putting temptation in its way. This happened if a youngster was not allowed to eat for the whole day. The grandmother or mother might put food nearby and pretend that she was going to work in the field for the whole day. The child would then be secretly watched by the grandmother or mother. If it took the food, then this child would receive corporal punishment from the maternal uncle.

N. Libebe stated that a child or an individual who stole, like one who committed adultery, was considered a criminal. A child who stole could expect a severe beating from either its mother or its maternal uncle.⁴⁷ Theft was immoral as well as criminal. An individual who committed the above-mentioned offenses would be brought to the chief to receive punishment and to be fined. If he persevered with his wrong doing, he would then receive a death sentence from the chief. His death sentence would be carried out by putting a big stone around his neck and letting him drown while his relatives, friends and other members of the community would be called to watch the event. This was intended to teach the children to refrain from wrong deeds and to have high moral standards in future.

Lessons of morality and good manners were also absorbed unconsciously through the proverbs and riddles in daily use. Through them children learned how to behave themselves and to respect other people. Some of the proverbs were, however, meant as a warning that an individual should always stay on guard against evil and trickery. The proverb,

Livoko limwe kapi lya panduranga udano - "One hand does not 'thank' the dance," means that just as a dance requires many people to perform it, so also does work need many hands. This proverb taught the child to be sympathetic towards others, to help others and to work as a party. The English equivalent of this proverb may be "Many hands make light work."⁴⁸ An example of the riddles is "**Ndi nsho sha kaliro na lighonga ndi shatu mana**" - "Because it has no spear, otherwise we would all be dead". The answer to this is a door. (Further examples of riddles are given in the discussion on Intellectual training below.)

There were also taboos, omens and prohibitions which needed to be observed from infancy.

Shidira was a taboo which caused illness or misfortune, if it was broken. Examples of a **shidira** were: whistling at night, throwing a basket at someone, throwing food at someone, cohabiting with a menstruating woman, pointing at a grave without bending the fingers.⁴⁹

A **shiyovo** was an omen which was believed to portend the death of an individual. Examples of a **shiyovo** were: if a mole was seen outside showing its teeth, the one who saw the mole would soon mourn. If an owl was heard hooting at night, one of the villagers would die. If an individual observed certain phenomena, such as a chameleon or a snake losing its skin or a fish eagle screeching above the village, it was also called a **shiyovo** and symbolized the death of a relative in the near future. Nothing could be done to prevent a **shiyovo** and the observer had to simply accept it and await the event.

Tama was a harmful influence on a person caused by actions committed by the person, his relatives or his spouse. The influences always manifested themselves while someone was hunting big animals (elephants, rhinos, hippopotamus) or in a boat on the water. Should a man die on a hunting expedition or on a boat trip, his wife was blamed for his

death. If one person affected by **tama** was in a boat with other people, the boat would be attacked by a hippo, but only the person affected would die.⁵⁰

From early childhood it was brought to the child's attention not to break the taboos, omens and prohibitions and never to commit actions that could cause **tama**. The child's character had to be moulded in such a way, that he had to become a good citizen who had to abide to these prohibitions and rules. He had to make great effort not to cause harm to other people as well as to be on alert against certain phenomena which would cause a **shiyovo**.

2.7.2 Physical Training

Children's games were always full of action during the pre-colonial era as is today in Kavango. Some of the games played by children were devoted to gymnastics and athletics. According to A. Hashipara children participated in high-jumping, long-jumping, walking long distances, climbing tree, racing, acrobatic dancing, etc. Children later on also pretended horse racing by using long sticks, reeds and millet stalks. Different styles of swimming were also learned by children. They learned and practised diving, swimming on the back, on the sides, etc. Children also took swimming and canoe races from one side of the Kavango river and stream to the other side. Hashipara noted that "A Kavango individual who could not swim was unimaginable, it was like a missionary who could neither read nor write."⁵¹ Physical education combined with recreation seems to have been a matter of course among the Kavango people due to the fact that they spent most of their time in out-of-doors occupations. Carrying loads, buckets, calabashes or claypots full of water on the head, which was done by women and girls, and carrying the same objects on the shoulders by men and by boys was also part of physical training on the part of the children. The most important aspect of physical education among the Kavango people was dancing and playing musical instruments. Dancing played an educative role in the life of a child or adolescent. Dancing was learnt from

early childhood, usually very soon after walking, and this continued through life as long as an individual was able to use his feet and legs. It was, however, not unusual to see toddlers, who were still unable to walk or grey-haired old individuals trying a few steps of dancing. The dance in Kavango society is much more than physical exercise or mere recreation, it was also a means of expressing solidarity among the clans and tribal groups of the Kavango people. The dance was also of great importance for the social, educational and ceremonial life of the Kavango people. T.J. Larson had noted the following about Mbukushu dancing:

There are numerous Mbukushu dances, some, like the children's **thiwingi** dance, being purely recreational while others, such as those performed during girls' puberty rites, are more strictly ceremonial. **Hathimo**, a dance driving away evil spirits, and **mandengure**, for driving away madness, are led by a magician. Their purpose is to appease the ancestral spirits, and they serve as a kind of group therapy. Many dances are performed in connection with the **rengo** (harvest festival).⁵²

Among the other Kavango groups there were dances such as **shiperu**, **lipera**, **liware**, **shikavedi** and many others. A **thiwingi** dance was performed by all Kavango children. A **shiperu** dance was prominent among the Vagciriku, Vasambyu and Hambukushu groups, while a **lipera** dance was performed by all Kavango groups. A **shikavedi** dance was prominent among the Vagciriku group. **Shiperu** and **lipera** dances were recreational in nature and were also performed by children on their playgrounds in the evenings. In corroborating a statement made by other chiefs and some council members before, Chief S. Kamwanga confirmed that a dance known as **kambembe** was the most important dance among the Kavango people and was usually performed at the enthronement of a new chief. This dance was repeated yearly for the commemoration of the day of the enthronement.⁵³

The singing and dancing were always accompanied by the playing of musical instruments. Among the musical instruments used by Kavango people were mentioned by T.J. Larson as long drums, friction drums, hand pianos played

with a gourd or metal can resonator, musical bows, musical rasps, clapping boards, castanets, rattles, thumped hoe blades and whistles. Larson relates further that only men and boys played drums, hand pianos, musical rasps and rattles while girls and women used board clappers and thump hoe blades to accentuate dance rhythms.⁵⁴

2.7.3 Intellectual Training: The Transmission of Adequate Knowledge

In the past the Kavango society relied on historical stories and legends to provide accounts of its clans, families migrations, wars and famines. Kavango stories and legends dealing with animals and geographical features were either sung or recited. The recitation of these stories, riddles and proverbs created shared cultural attitudes, beliefs and values. The oral historian was responsible for recounting the great events of the Kavango people's ancestors. Through oral tradition, a sense of history and continuity as well as appreciation and respect for ancestors were realized by the Kavango people.

Boys and girls learned about history and recitation of stories, proverbs and riddles in the evening around the fire. During an interview the late Chief M. Mwengere explained:

In our traditional Kavango education, children learned about the history, expressions, proverbs, poetry, etc, orally around the fire in the evening. An elderly man or woman like myself would then call all children of one or more villages together and teach them the proverbs, expressions, riddles, etc. The next evening it was testing lessons. This happened by letting one of the children to repeat the whole range of what was learned the previous night. The other children participated actively by helping the one questioned. Such lessons were repeated for several evenings till all the children have learned the whole range of proverbs, riddles and their meanings.⁵⁶

Only those stories which were considered important were learned, for example, stories about African heroes such as warriors and those who fought with dangerous wild animals.

These were mainly meant for boys, because they were regarded as the future saviours of their community. By listening to these stories boys were encouraged to be brave in order to protect the community against approaching dangers and difficulties.

Girls were also invited to listen to these heroic stories and poems. Through these stories young girls were taught how to greet and cheer a hero or a hunter when approaching the village. Heroism for Kavango people was not only connected to war, but also to safety and protection against wild animals. People who risked their lives in protection and safety of others were considered heroes. The chiefs of the five Kavango groups agreed that war in Kavango was almost out of the question in the period before the arrival of the first Europeans in the Namibian territory. They stated that there were only clashes with the Botswana people of Bechuanaland in Eastern Kavango and with the Ovambo people in Western Kavango.⁵⁷ Despite the fact that there was no real war, children were taught how to defend themselves and their community against enemies entering their territories.

The chiefs added that children in the past were taught how to adapt themselves to their real environment and to the real climate. Both boys and girls were allowed to roam the countryside and were acquainted with every type of vegetation and animals surrounding them. Children were also taught how to distinguish between barren and fertile soil and they also knew which type of soil was suitable for which type of seed. Sandy soil was, eg, suitable for beans and peanuts, porous soil was suitable for mahangu, maize, pumpkins, sugar cane, etc. and sweet potatoes⁵⁸ were planted around anthills.

The months and seasons were learned by children of both sexes. The Kavango people recognise twelve months,⁵⁹ but they distinguish between five seasons.

- 1) **Mangenyena** (early Spring) lasts from the middle of August to the middle of September.
- 2) **Kwenye** (late Spring) starts at the end of August and lasts until the end of October.
- 3) **Kurombo** (Summer) includes the whole November, December, January and lasts till the end of February.
- 4) **Lipemba** (Autumn) lasts from March till the middle of May.
- 5) **Kufu** (Winter) from the middle of May to Mid-August.

The special functions and duties which should be performed in every season had to be learned by every child. Those who were interested in farming benefitted from this knowledge.

Children had also to learn to count. Among the Kavango people a base 5 is used together with base 10, eg **Shimwe** = 1, **Viviri** = 2, **Vitatu** = 3, **Vine** = 4, **Vitano** = 5, and **Murongo** = 10. From 5 upwards, except ten, compound numerals are used, eg. five and one is six. Five and four is nine, two tens and five and one is twenty six and ten and five and one is sixteen. A figure like 100 is expressed as **lifere** and 1 000 as **liyovi**, 500 as **mafere matano** which means five hundreds and 5 000 as **mayovi matano** which means five thousands. Fractions such as $\frac{1}{2}$ is expressed as **ukahe** and $\frac{1}{4}$ is expressed as **ukahe wa ukahe** which means the half of a half. The numerals were learned for mathematical purposes as well as for playing games, because there were a number of games in the traditional education that require skill in counting. Games such as **wera**, **kukughumba**, etc. are real exercises in mathematics which involves multiplication, division, addition and subtraction. The numbers and games in fact helped people to count.

Measurement of capacity were also learned. Van Tonder mentions that a handful was used for small quantities and a basket for larger quantities. The baskets were divided into three groups according to their sizes. Van Tonder states that there were the big basket known as **shikumba sha pa rupare**, the medium-size basket known as **shikumba sha utura**

and the small basket known as **shikumba sha kuduwira**. These baskets were used for measuring meal, **mahangu** and any other type of grain or wild fruits. The quantities of meat, fish, beer, honey and any other type of beverage were measured in clay pots which were also divided into three sizes.⁶⁰

Length, breadth, width and depth were always measured with a stick, reed or a string. Distance between two places was explained according to the time it would take a person to cover the distance on foot without stopping. Time was measured according to the position of the sun.⁶¹

The month was calculated not according to the full moon, but according to the new moon. The month was divided into four periods (weeks): The time when the moon makes its first appearance was called **Materameno**; the time it takes the moon to appear above the peoples's heads was called **Kumwedi**; from the time when it starts appearing in the east to full moon and a week after was called **Kumundema** and the time from then on including the days when the moon is not visible was known as **Maghandero**.

In addition to the measurement of the time, different stars were also learned by children eg. the morning star was known as **Ntunguru** and the evening star was **Kashungida Murarero**. A constellation of three stars which always appear in the evening was known as **Mukongo** (hunter), **mbwa** (dog) and **shikorama** (wild animal). A star which appears when it is approaching daybreak was known as a **Muraraviri** (the Southern Cross).⁶²

The cosmological phenomena needed to be studied by children. Those who wanted to become hunters and fishermen benefitted from cosmological knowledge. The knowledge of the stars would enable them to predict the movement of game and fish.

Riddles and proverbs comprised another type of informal traditional education in the form of mental exercises. The learning of the riddles also forms part of intellectual

training. They encouraged children to think quickly and challenge their counterparts with more thought - provoking riddles. Like tales, the riddles were told at night around a fire. **Tamburamo** is a game of riddles played in the evening around the fire. It is a game to sharpen the intellect of the child, because it does not only depend on memory, but also on understanding what the riddle is trying to tell the people. A riddle was posed by an elderly person and had to be answered by a youth, or sometimes it was said by a youth and had to be answered by his companions. The elderly man or woman said **Tamburamo** ("Take it out"). From the children one answered **Tambu** ("I take it" or "Let it come"). If he knew the answer he would give the solution. If he did not know, he said **natirwa** which means 'I am defeated'. Then one of the other children would help him to find the solution. The following are common riddles among the Kavango people: **Osho va dira kumona vamama** (What my grandmother has never seen). The answer to it is **her own birth**; **Ndye a piro mpuma maghano ghaku tima makwina ashi va fange mo varutemambu** (He gave the leguan the idea of digging traps for those who dare to cut reeds from the river banks): The answer is **a mongoose**; **mo shina piti naku shi varera shi** (It cannot be tracked): The answer is **a boat or canoe**; **kapi sha kara na livero** (It does not have a door): The answer is **an egg** (see appendix for other riddles).

Riddles (**Matambu**) and tales (**matimo**) were thus an informal way of learning. The children learned the riddles from their parents and in turn repeated them to their children so that the whole process went on for generations. Inter-marriage between clans and groups enriched this informal learning, introducing different and new riddles. In some cases, these tales and riddles were purposely frightening to enhance their impact on children, thus helping them stay on guard against evil and trickery.

2.7.4 Participation in Family and Community Life and the Promotion of the Cultural Heritage

In the Kavango traditional education every child was taught

to appreciate his role as a member of his extended family and the whole community. In the teaching process he was made aware of the relationship which bound the family or group together, so that he could be able to identify his relationship with other members of the family or community.⁶³ It was believed that the child was not only the possession of his parents, but he also belonged to his uncles, aunts, grandparents and the whole community. The education of the child was, thus, not only the responsibility of the parents, but of the relatives and the community. On the other hand, the child had the responsibility to show respect to his family, clan and community and should assist them whenever necessary.⁶⁴

A Kavango child learned to appreciate and promote his cultural heritage. The Kavango culture was so highly valued that mastery by members of the younger generation was considered to be so essential, and that the adults took care to play as prominent a part as possible in its transmission. From early childhood, children were introduced to a wide range of oral literature such as myths, legends, folk-tales, local history, poems, proverbs and riddles through evening sessions. Seniors in the community had the responsibility to do this and to educate the child for a sense of heritage and of belonging to a group or community with a proud past. In this regard, the child had to know who he was, who his ancestors were, what his clan name was and to which community he belonged. A Kavango youth was taught to respect and appreciate his country, people and language wherever he went. A Kavango proverb **Tuka ko una kuyenda, washa tuka ko una kutunda** "Curse the place where you are going, do not curse the place you are coming from" was meant as advice to the youths not to forget their home country, people as well as their cultural heritage when leaving their territory.

Thus through the informal process legends and proverbs were told and retold by the evening fireside, and through them much of the cultural heritage of the people was kept alive

and passed on to the children. Such oral tradition, narrated with care and repetition, additionally constituted the Kavango child's training in what was often a complicated linguistic system without script. A major part of the cultural heritage of the Kavango people was transmitted to children and adolescents through the informal activities.

2.7.5. Specialized Training/Job Orientation

Traditional vocational education in Kavango can be divided into three areas: The first area is **agricultural education**, including farming, fishing, hunting and animal husbandry. The second area is trades and crafts such as basketry, pottery, leather-working, hairplaiting, blacksmithing, etc. The third group is professions including diviners, medicine men, rainmakers, shrine-keepers and many others.

With the exception of training in agriculture, young people were not trained by their parents, but were sent away from parents to relatives, friends and mastercraftsmen/women where they could learn their vocations. This had the purpose of ensuring self-discipline, endurance and self-reliance.

2.7.5.1 Agricultural Education

Before the colonial time Kavango people were dependent on farming, fishing, hunting and animal husbandry as these were the mainstay of their economy.

Children of both sexes were taught how to produce good crops. First of all they had to distinguish between fertile and barren soil by investigating the type of bushes, grass and trees which were on that soil. Then they would have to know which type of soil was suitable for which type of seed or plant.

C. Haushiku stated that both boys and girls were taught how to work in the fields. The preparation of the field consisted in men and boys cutting the trees and women and girls hoeing the grass and low bushes. All these were raked

together with a forked stick and then burned. The ashes were then used as fertilizer.

The cultivation itself began just after the first rainfall, generally at the beginning of November in good years. Women and girls dug holes with hoes and planted the seed. A small section of ground was first dug up, and then the sowing began, and this alternation of digging and sowing continued until the whole field was under cultivation. When ploughing, however, men showed their sons how to manage a plough while women and girls followed behind sowing or planting the seed.⁶⁵

Three cereals were cultivated by the Kavango people: **mahangu** (pearl millet), **vilya** (sorghum) and **lipungu** (maize). They planted maize in the regions of higher elevation, then followed sorghum, and later on millet in lands at lower altitudes.

Once the seed had sprouted and was growing rapidly, the hard labour of weeding followed immediately. The weeding was done by both men and women with hoes, and children also helped with small hoes. Because this work was more urgent and pressing than the digging, and in order to overcome the invading grasses, Kavango people sometimes organised team efforts. In an interview with traditional farmers, C. Haushiku and others, it was stated that parties of men and women worked together to save the young plants from the invading grass. The team work or hoeing party was called **ndyambi**. When the day's work was done and the owner of the field was satisfied **mahangu** beer was distributed to the participants in addition to the usual meal. Sometimes a hoeing party for children only was organised, and they had to be watched by an adult. As a reward at the end of the day, the children received **mahangu** pap and meat.⁶⁶

After all the fields were weeded, there was no relaxation at all. Both adults and children had to look after the fields and protect them against birds. From the morning till the

evening they worked in the fields driving birds. Other animals for the growing crops were troops of monkeys and baboons, bush-pigs, porcupines, wart hogs, spring hares and even various antelope such as kudu, and other animals including elephants.

From the beginning of April when the grain began to ripen till the end of May adults and children prepared for the harvest. Boys helped their fathers in cutting bamboo and reeds at the river banks. The reeds were flattened and huge baskets were made out of them for storing grain. Fathers and sons also prepared sledges for the transportation of grain from the fields to the villages. Girls helped their mothers by cutting palm leaves to make smaller baskets which would be used for winnowing. Harvesting itself was done after the rainy season, from June. After harvesting, threshing would proceed. This work was also done through team effort or all men, women and children of the household may gather in the threshing ground to do this work. The grain that had been threshed was then winnowed with the aid of the wind. According to C. Haushiku women and girls then took the winnowed grain home and kept it in huge baskets (vishete) that traditionally served for storage.

After the storage of grain followed the gathering of beans, pumpkins, maize, watermelons, and the digging up of peanuts and groundnuts which did not require as hard labour as weeding, harvesting and threshing. This agricultural process had an educational value, for during it children acquired skills through active learning or through practice. However, children were not forced to do as much as adults. When asked why children participated in agricultural work, those interviewed gave the following comments:

"That was how they learned. Children learned by following adults to the fields and then participating in what the adults were doing."

"Children were not forced to work, but they were encouraged to observe what the adults were doing and then to give it a try. They were also encouraged to help adults where and whenever necessary."

"The whole agricultural process was learned by children through participation in that process with the help of adults."

"Parents wanted their children to follow them to the fields and to the threshing grounds in order to show them how the work was done. This gave the children the opportunity to learn all the stages of the agricultural process in chronological order."⁶⁷

Fishing and hunting

Fishing was practised by both men and women, and from the early childhood boys and girls learned different methods of fishing. The best time for fishing was from September to January when the water of the rivers and lagoons was at a low level and the crocodiles were fewer. Crocodiles usually prefer places where the river is on its deepest in order to make themselves invisible to their victims. From September to January was the time for trapping fish which was done by men and boys. R. Ukuyu explained that even during this time the river was full of crocodiles. Fishermen and their sons had to watch their fish traps (dimuduwa) closely if they did not want the crocodiles to steal the fish from them. Other methods used by men and boys for catching fish were by spearing the fish while they were moving and by using basket traps (marunkinda) which were set in weirs in the shallow parts of the river.⁶⁸

G. Gibson mentions two methods used by women and girls in trapping fish: The first method was by plunging a conical basket (shididi) mouth down in pools left by the receding river in the flood plain. The second method was by laying down another type of conical basket (shikuku) side by side in shallow flood pools or at the riverbanks, and driving the fish into it.⁶⁹ A third method used by women and girls was setting small fish traps (vintunga) in shallow waters and putting some bait into them.

Various species of fish could be caught easily. The tiger fish with its sharp teeth and high jump was very difficult

to catch, because it could damage the fishing basket. For this type of fish short spears (dimusho) and bows and arrows were used. Children and adults both found joy and excitement in catching them. Referring to the catching of the tiger fish as well as hunting. Lawrence Green observed:

Fishing in the rivers of tropical Africa can be as exciting as hunting in the bush. I refer, of course, to that voracious and dashing fighter, the tiger fish. Size for size the tiger fish puts up a more determined struggle for liberty than any other fish of inland waters or the wide oceans of the world. This is confirmed by many naturalists and sportsmen who have played the savage tiger fish in African lakes and rivers.⁷⁰

Another method of catching fish was the poisoning of the water in a pool or lagoon. A plant known in Kavango as *rushungu* was used for this purpose. The roots of the plant were softened and put in the pool overnight. The next morning women and girls could pick up the fish easily, as more than 50% of the fish in the pool would either be dead or unconscious. Boys received instructions from older men about how to prepare this poison. All the fishermen interviewed said that no women or girls were allowed to join or watch the men and boys, as this preparation was always accompanied by a ceremony which forbade the sight of a woman or girl. Married men had to refrain from having any contact with their spouses a day before the ceremony. The ceremony was performed deep in the bush, far away from the villages.

The fish which were caught were cooked fresh and eaten. Some were given to cats or exchanged for other food products like meat, milk, butter or even *mahangu*. Sometimes the fish might be dried by women and girls and be stored for the rainy season, when the rivers and streams were flooded.⁷¹

With reference to hunting, it is necessary to distinguish between professional hunters, who engaged in their activity after being properly initiated and were under the special protection of the spirit of an ancestor, and simple amateurs.

Nearly every man and adolescent boy in Kavango knew how to hunt, as hunting was one of the principal occupations and sports of the Kavango people. Hunting took place in groups, but there were professional hunters who were regarded as specialists in this occupation. Nowadays conditions have become unfavourable for hunting due to the fact that animals are less numerous.⁷²

According to G. Mukoya every father in Kavango had the responsibility for teaching his son how to hunt. Sometimes the grandfather would instruct his grandson in all the hunting methods. Hunting methods which were learned by boys included spearing and using traps, pits and snares. Among the animals hunted were elephants, giraffes, rhinoceroses, hippopotamus, ostriches, antelope, porcupines, bush-pigs, hares and springhares and leguans.

Bierfert described how hunters using spears and accompanied by dogs joined together in communal hunts. This took place particularly on islands where the hunters who arrived by canoes could surround the island. Three to four men with some boys remained in each canoe while the rest beat the bushes or waited quietly in clearings until the animals appeared. One of the hunters would then stab the animal to death with a spear. Sometimes ten or more animals would be killed and the meat would be divided among the hunters' and non-hunters' families.⁷³

Sometimes individual hunters pursued game in the bush or animals were taken in pits and snares. Boys helped their fathers in erecting thorn branch fences which could be up to 4km in length with the purpose of leading animals to gaps in fences. At some of the gaps men and boys dug pits 3 to 5m deep, tapering inward toward the bottom and covered them with branches, earth and grass. Snares were set over shallow pits at other gaps in the fence. They were fastened to branches which the caught animal would drag behind him leaving a trail that could be easily followed by hunters.⁷⁴

In his spare time every man was a hunter or fisherman. Hunting was, however, more important and difficult than fishing. Hunting was not only productive of meat, it was a full time career requiring professional training and experience. The man who was considered the real hunter in the Kavango was usually one who was well known for having killed larger animals. The profession of hunting needed a training lasting up to ten years. A young man began his training by following his experienced master through the bush.

The future hunter would then learn the use of hunting weapons such as the bow and arrow and the spear. He was expected to prove his ability as a first-class shot by killing a hawk, an eagle or any other wild bird in flight.

George Mukoya, an experienced hunter and master in his time stated that it was expected of the learner to acquire the knowledge of edible fruits and the names of important useful herbal plants. Experienced hunters were always good herbalists. According to Mukoya, the future hunter used this knowledge of different herbs in order to help himself because Kavango people believed that some fierce animals such as elephants, hippos, giraffes and rhinos possessed souls who could bring evil influences to a hunter. Therefore, when the hunter succeeded in killing one of these animals, he had to wash himself in herbal medicine to dispel the evil influences likely to be conveyed by the soul of the big animal.⁷⁵

Other things mentioned by Mukoya and others which should be studied by the future hunter were the stars, the clouds and the weather. The changes in the climate and their effects on vegetation should be studied by the learner carefully. This knowledge would enable him to predict the movement of the game and the right time to go hunting. In addition to the knowledge of the weather and the stars, the road signs (the type of trees, bushes, grass, etc. which are to be found along the road) in the woods should be understood by

the hunter. The understanding of the road signs would enable him to find his way back to the village after a long stay in the bush lasting a month or even longer. Mukoya added that some hunters like himself stayed for three months or longer in the bush without going back to the village. He and his companions were engaged in hunting animals and making biltong for the villagers.

By the time this training was completed the hunter was not only to be courageous and a good herbalist, but he was also to have a sense of leadership, as he might be chosen by his people as their headman, village head or even administrator. Experienced hunters in Kavango were well respected by villagers, and they have nearly the same status as headmen, village heads or even chiefs.

Animal husbandry

As far as animal husbandry was concerned, cattle were the primary live-stock. Goats, pigs, sheep (and later donkeys and horses) were regarded as of minor importance. The great ambition of every adult man was to be the owner of large herds of cattle.

Most adults and some children possessed at least two head of cattle, but there were those who had more than a hundred head of cattle.⁷⁶ Herding cattle was a major occupation. A man with a large herd of cattle, whose household lacked sufficient members to carry out this task, might employ a herdsman at the cattle posts (settlements for large herds of cattle). The herdsman might be paid in livestock or in any other way agreed upon.

From the evidence obtained, boys were also taught how to select the best pastures for a herd of cattle. They should choose a place where there was an abundance of at least one of the three kinds of grass that were of nutritive value. The grass should have special power to fatten the cattle. It was an obligation that boys should also take care to lead the cattle to thickets and woods containing bushes which

could provide good fodder.

In normal years cattle posts were set up in plains and forests where there was abundant nutritive grass. An adult male with his wife and all the boys of the village were sent with the cattle. A settlement was erected for the couple and the boys who would care for the cattle. The settlements were far away from the villages. Dangerous animals such as lion, hyenas, leopards and cheetahs roamed in the plains and forests. In the evenings the adult man would teach the boys all the ways of identifying the dangers of an approaching wild animals. C. Haushiku observed that the boys would always be taught to watch the noses, ears, eyes and the behaviour or expression of the cattle, especially bulls and oxen. Cattle behave differently if the smell of a carnivore penetrates their nostrils. The direction from which such an animal could approach the cattle, could easily be determined by watching the movement of the cattle.⁷⁷

During this period boys learned to be responsible, self-reliant and to fend for themselves. They might take home-made butter, buttermilk and fresh milk to the villages, but they might have to return immediately to the cattle posts in the forest or plain. After the herding period the boys knew many things in connection with cattle rearing:

- * effective herding
- * castration of young bulls
- * nursing the sick and injured cattle
- * storage and making of butter
- * training of young oxen as riding and draught animals.

In addition to the herding of cattle, the methods of slaughtering cattle were learned by the boys. The methods mentioned by Gibson included spearing through the heart as well as hitting on the back of the head with an axe. Another method used in times of famine was by strangling the cattle in order to prevent relatives and friends from hearing the noise and coming to ask for meat.⁷⁸

Certain taboos connected with cattle-rearing were also learned by the boys. The most important taboo was that of counting the cattle. From the information received, the cattle were never counted, as counting was considered *shidira* which would bring bad-luck to the animals. It could be argued that there is a similarity with the Gikuyu of Kenya concerning this practice. Jomo Kenyatta observed that a man with a hundred head of cattle, sheep and goats trained his son to know them by their colour or by their size and type of horns only, while every one of them had a special name.⁷⁹

In pre-colonial Kavango every beast was given a special name by its owner. The children were taught to know the cattle by their names, their gender, their types of horn and their colour.

2.7.5.2 Trades and Crafts

Trades and crafts in Kavango were in most cases hereditary and restricted to certain specific families. The children of these families were apprenticed by their parents to their relatives or to other craftsmen. Most parents preferred to place their children under the tutorage of other competent craftsmen, because they did better than children who were placed under the guidance of relatives and friends. Interviewees mentioned that children who were under guidance of friends and relatives received the best treatment in the sense that they got enough food and they were offered comfortable sleeping places. Due to this fact, the parents felt that their children were spoilt and could not take their learning seriously.⁸⁰ While learning the trades and crafts, it was also expected from the children to do other services and to receive other education that would prepare them for the future.

The craft of basketry included basket making and matting. Basket making was restricted to women and girls whereas matting was for men and boys. A man might, for instance, collect palm leaves for his mother or wife to make a basket,

but it was taboo for him to make a basket as it was for a woman to plait a mat.

Boys were taught by their fathers or elders how to plait mats of different sizes. Van Tonder mentions that the size of the mat was always determined by the length and thickness of the reeds, which means that the longer and thicker the reeds, the bigger and larger the size of the mat. From early childhood boys accompanied their fathers to the riverbanks and assisted them with the cutting of reeds. The boys were then taught how to split and flatten the reeds before plaiting them into a mat. The splitting was done with a dagger or club and the flattening with a heavy flattening stick known as *shighughu* while the reed was placed on a wooden block.⁸¹

The mats were used for different purposes, namely, they were used for storing grain, as village walls, as temporary shelters when collecting wild fruits and vegetables, in times when protecting one's crops against wild animals, and they were used as mattresses on traditional beds as well as temporary shelters for girls during initiation period and for women when giving birth.⁸² It was, thus, expected of the boys to know the different purposes mats were used for as well as the different sizes and shapes required.

Girls learned how to weave coiled baskets of different sizes and shapes by using grass and palm leaf strips or palm tree roots. These baskets were used for storing millet meal, for gathering wild fruits and vegetables in times of poor crops and were also used when pounding *mahangu*. They also learned how to weave flat meal sieves by using grass and palm leaf strips and beer sieves by using palm leaf shreds.⁸³

Apart from specialists and their trainees who were devoted to this profession, most women and girls who weaved baskets considered it as a spare-time job which could be undertaken during leisure time.

Woodworking also received much attention in the Kavango traditional education, as nearly every tool, utensil or weapon was made of wood, or had wooden parts.

Woodworking was only learned by boys. Those who specialised in woodworking were trained how to hollow dug out canoes and boats of different shapes and sizes from the trunks of the dolfwood tree (*Baikiaea plurijuga*). The oars by which the canoe or boat was propelled, were made from the same tree. The canoes, which were made in different sizes according to what was required, were used for transport and fishing.

The making of a canoe or boat was accompanied by a ceremony conducted by a craftsman after the tree from which the canoe would be made had been selected. During the ceremony the craftsmen made an offering and a prayer while the would-be canoemakers were watching attentively.⁸⁴

When the canoe or boat had been completed, one of the learners was sent to tell the people in the village which day the canoe would be brought to the river, so that they could prepare beer for the festival. Oxen were used to pull the canoe from the woods down to the river. Women and girls who waited in the village would join the men and boys. At the river *mahangu* beer was poured from a wooden jug or calabash on the front and back of the canoe, and two portions of *mahangu* porridge were also put on both sides of the canoe, and would-be canoemakers assisted the craftsman in doing the work. Gibson mentions that ritual chalk was then used to decorate the canoe and the village head and the craftsman used and tested the canoe for the first time while all the villagers were singing and dancing. In this way the canoe was purified from any harm which would cause accidents. The canoe would then be named by these two people or its private owner. After the ceremony all people went back to the village to celebrate the event.⁸⁵ A couple of days after the festival, the canoe was again shaped in order to give it the final form before it could be used by villagers.

All details concerning the making and naming as well as the decorating of a canoe were to be well learned and understood by the future canoemakers, as they were tested from time to time to see whether they understood everything. Future woodworkers also learned how to make weapons out of certain types of wood. Weapon-handles and shafts such as long and short spears, bows and arrows for fishing and hunting, as well as daggers and club sheathes were made.

Craftsmen taught their learners how to make eating utensils such as shaped spoons and ladles, plates, porridge mixers and wooden bowls which varied in sizes and shapes, out of wood. Other tools made of wood included the pounding block and stick, traditional beds, drums, triangular containers for storing water and beer, chair, walking-sticks, knob-sticks, pipes, etc. In addition to making tools the boys were taught how to cut posts for building houses and huts, for village fences, shed and shades.⁸⁶

Pottery was practised by both men and women. There was no differentiation between boys and girls in the making of cooking pots, beer pots and water pots from clay. Clay was obtained from the riverbanks in summer when the water level was low. While in Kavango both sexes practised this craft, in other African societies the practice was restricted to women only. Writing about the various groups of Kenya, i.e. the Gikuyu, Embu, Meru, Mbere, Chuka, Mwimbi, Tharaka and the Kamba, John Middleton observed:

Pottery (used only for cooking) is made by women specialists; there is one clan whose women are prohibited from pot-making Pottery is made by women specialists, men being debarred from any contact with the process.⁸⁷

Pottery required a considerable amount of work. Boys and girls who wanted to specialize in this craft were first tested in making toys such as cattle and human figurines out of clay before being accepted as learners by the craftsmen and craftswomen. Those who could not succeed in doing this were sent back to their parents to prepare them before returning.

In showing the learners how to prepare the clay for potmaking, the craftsman or craftswoman would first mix clay with sand or pieces of an old clay pot and then grind them together to a fine and smooth substance, before moulding it in a desired shape. The digging of the clay, the beating and softening as well as the moulding and drying and finally the burning of the pots were all done by learners under the strict supervision of the master or mistress.⁸⁸

After a pot had been made, the learners would be tested in making small clay pots, whereby every individual learner would be given a big portion of clay. The master/mistress would check them from time to time, in order to determine how far they were in qualifying for the craft. Those who succeeded, proceeded with the making of big clay pots, while the unsuccessful ones were taught as from the beginning.

Van Tonder states that four different pots were made and that the pots varied in sizes and shapes. There was, eg. a large beer pot known as **kandimbe**, the general cooking and meat pot known as **kanyungu**, the middle sized pot for keeping water cool in Summer, known as **kawaya** and a small pot for keeping food or toiletries known as **kanyungwena**.⁸⁹

Leatherworking is another craft which involved only boys. It has been one of the most important crafts among the Kavango people due to the fact that the people of Africa have been dependent on animal skins for clothing, footwear, bedding, containers, bags, etc. In order to meet the demand it was necessary for every male to involve himself in hunting wild animals and for every family to keep a number of cattle and goats. Kavango people, however, favoured skins of animals such as duiker, cheetah and zebra.

Boys were encouraged to specialize in leather-working in order to supply their families with clothing and blankets. Those who did so were first trained how to prepare a skin of an animal for any purpose. In their presence the craftsperson first dried the skin in the sun before all hair

was scraped off with a knife and all fat traces were removed inside. The skin was then smeared on both sides with a pulp of wild fruit known as **nshivi** and beaten with sticks until it was soft. With the assistance of the trainees the skin was platted with hands to become extra soft.⁹⁰ The skin (or skins) was then cut into shapes for making aprons or skirts.

The tanning and decorating of the skins were done by women and girls. After the skin had been cut, women and girls would then mix fat with a perfumed powder - like ointment known as **munde** and daub the skin with the mixture. To tan the skin another ointment known as **rukura** was rubbed on both sides of the skin.

In preparing a skin for an apron or a tussled skirt, the craftsman would cut the skin according to the desired shape and size and then knitted together. The owner of the apron or skirt (in this case a woman or girl) would decorate it with beads of different colours.

Boys were also taught that a skin for a drum was to be used while it was still wet. Animal skins were also cut into strips and used for building huts or as ropes for pulling oxen.⁹¹

Kavango people who specialized in leatherworking were able to produce soft and supple clothing, blankets, shawls, baby carriers, aprons, footwear as well as decorated bags and sandals.

A craft in which Kavango girls could specialize was hairplaiting. A mother who specialized in this craft could hand it on to her daughter, or sometimes girls from other ordinary families would also learn this craft if arranged with the parents and the craftswoman.

Hairplaiting was a way of decorating the heads of women. It was a complicated process which took a long time. Women used to decorate their heads by using fat mixed with

perfumes such as **munde**, **rukura** and **katira** and strings made out of roots of **mugoro** tree. Their hair was plaited with these strings till the strings hung down to the waists of women. The hair with the strings was rubbed with the perfumes mixed with fat to give it a shiny look and a fresh smell. On top of the head and down the forehead the hair was piled together by continuous rubbing of a mixture of **mono** fat and **rukura** on to the hair. Five or six beads were attached to the loose ends of the strings. From the middle of the head down to the back head, the hair was plaited together in a similar way.

Writing about hairplaiting in Kavango, Van Tonder describes that in the case of a wealthy woman or the wife of a chief, the back head piece was decorated and studded with pearls known as **mbamba**. The forehead piece was decorated with a big button-like ornament made of copper which was known as **lincenu**. The hairdressing, when it was completed, was known as **vihho**, the forehead piece was known as **nyanka** and the middle- and back head piece was known as **shikoka**.⁹²

There was another form of initiation into crafts such as basketry, pottery and hairplaiting. This happened 'supernaturally' when a spirit possessed a person. In the case of hairplaiting or hairdressing Chief Mwengere stated that before being initiated in the craft of hairdressing, the Kavango girl destined to serve as the abode of an ancestral spirit would first become ill. She would then consult a diviner who would diagnose her disease as the presence of a spirit who in life had devoted herself to this craft. On hearing the pronouncement, the patient would become absolutely convinced of her condition and would then have no other alternative of freeing herself from the disease than to submit to initiation into the practice of the profession. The candidate would then consult a spirit mistress, who, in five or more sessions, would try to teach the candidate the rules of the art. The sessions would be accompanied by the impressive beating of drums.⁹³

When a Kavango girl was to be initiated into hairdressing in this way, a woman relative was selected to serve as a 'guinea-pig' for the learner during her apprenticeship. When the mistress and her candidate were arranging a coiffure, the candidate whose arms were guarded by her initiator, fell into a trance due to the suggestive power of the mistress, reinforced and assisted by the atmosphere of the rhythmic dancing, the beating of drums and the singing of people present. When this supernatural phenomenon manifested itself for the first time, the mistress would take up a big needle and made a little scratch with it on the middle of the candidate's forehead. While she was doing this, she called upon the spirit to deign to take possession of the protegee. Both would then continue to work excitedly until the first attempt was finished. When this was done the mistress gave her new colleague a little round stick with a sharp point known as *ntungo* which was used in taking down and unplaiting an old coiffure before proceeding to the construction of a new one. This was probably the only instrument needed by her hands, which were now guided by a friendly spirit.

The craft which was considered the most esteemed occupation was ironworking (smithing). People who devoted themselves to the practice of this art could do so by either having learned it or by having been initiated when the person was possessed by a spirit.

Centuries before the first Europeans arrived in Africa, Kavango people together with other African communities had learned to smelt iron. Referring to Africans in Southern Africa, P.E.N. Tindall noticed:

Certain tribes were noted for their fine iron work; they included the Venda and Lemba in Mashonaland, the Lala and Loli north of the Zambezi, and the Tumbuka and Nyanja in the Malawi area. The smiths were often a privileged group, and the secrets of their art were jealously guarded from women's eyes. Smelting iron is a difficult process, and the smiths prepared themselves with rituals to remove uncleanness and ensure success in their work.⁹⁴

Archaeological evidence of iron-smelting in Kavango is discussed in B.H. Sandelowsky's Prehistoric Metal-Working in South West Africa. Describing the process of iron-smelting Sandelowsky observed:

The most generally held view contends that the knowledge of working copper and iron was introduced into Southern Africa from Central Africa. Clay furnaces have been found into which the air was fed through cylindrical mouthpieces, so called tuyeres, which were attached bellows of skin and wood. Tuyeres can be made by baking moist clay around a thick branch, which would burn up during firing while the clay would harden. In the course of being used in the furnace, the tuyere would become increasingly more durable as molten metal and slag would start adhering to it Cultural features associated with early metal-working in Southern Africa are distinctive ceramic vases, domesticated plants and animals, and larger settlements of a more permanent type.⁹⁵

Concerning Kavango in particular Sandelowsky noted:

A combination of these features was observed at three sites along the Okavango River in South West Africa. These sites represent the most south westerly occurrence of their kind so far reported. The oldest, at Kapako (17° 55'S 19° 40'E), east of Rundu dates back to 840 ± 50 A.D. (PTA 234)[†]. A most recent occupation was found at Uvungu-vungu (18° 05'S 19° 50'E) at 1 650 ± 45 A.D. (PTA 236), and an iron-smelting furnace at Dikundu (18° 05'S 21° 30'E) may still have been in use during the early part of this century. A charcoal sample from here was dated to 120 ± 50 years before present (PTA 235). The present-day Bantu-speaking inhabitants of the Okavango territory are probably descended from the occupants of these early sites. Together with the Ovambo peoples, they represented the most southerly extension of agricultural Bantu-speaking communities in South West Africa.⁹⁶

Ironworking is still practised among the people who live in the interior of Kavango and those who cannot afford to buy articles such as ploughs, hoes, axes, etc. This craft was exclusively for men and only boys could learn it. All people interviewed agreed that smithing was, with a few exceptions, hereditary and was practised only by special families who transmitted both the technical skills and the magical techniques that were thought to be necessary. Iron

smelting required a long training. The boy started learning at the age of seven first by watching his father or grandfather doing the work and handing tools to his father or grandfather. At the age of fifteen the boy would be sent to a competent craftsman chosen by his father. The boy would then become an assistant to the craftsman for several years before qualifying as a smith. As has been noted by Gibson, smiths in Kavango were sometimes persons who had chosen to learn the craft after they had been assistants to skilled iron workers who were not related to them. After several years apprenticeship, the assistant was given some iron to see whether he knew how to handle it or whether he needed more training. Three specialized processes and roles were recognised in this craft: the smith, who was the master directed all operations, the first assistant, known as "mudukuti" worked with the bellows and the second assistant, known as "mushambuli" hammered the iron. The assistants were automatically his trainees or learners, and were checked from time to time, in order to find out whether they were making progress or not.⁹⁷

The Kavango smiths formerly smelted iron from native iron ore or ironbearing sandstones which was extracted in Kavango riverbeds. Bierfert noted the presence of iron ore in Lower Quito region. According to his account, a European visitor to the Quito Region in 1935 (Schönfelder, E.) stated that at several locations he found slag heaps which were an indication that Kavango people belong to those African communities who practised iron smelting. Bierfert further noted that up until 1935, Gciriku smiths smelted iron from ores, for which purpose a charcoal fire was used with an air blast created with four or five sets of bellows.⁹⁸ This work was done in the presence of the future smiths so that they could learn from their fathers and grandfathers before going to specialize under the supervision and guidance of a master.

In later years Kavango smiths and their assistants used copper and brass for making bracelets, anklets, neck-, arm-

and legbands, bangles as well as the lonus shells (mpande) which were also used as necklaces by wealthy women and chiefs' wives. All these objects were ornamented with geometrical engravings.

It can now be asked where these artisans got their material, especially the copper and brass, before it came into their hands through European traders. The answer would be that one cannot rule out the hypothesis that copper and brass came from the mines of Damaraland, where Africans devoted themselves to the extraction of the metal long before the arrival of Whites in Namibia. Writers Schulz (1897) and Passarge, S. (1905) suggested that up to 1910 Kavango people have obtained copper, iron and brass from the Tsumeb region of Namibia. Copper was received from the Ovambo and Damara speaking Namibians. They suggested further that Kavango young men who visited friends in the Tsumeb Region could bring with them copper which could be exchanged for cattle.⁹⁹

2.7.5.3 Professions

In Kavango traditional education formal education most strongly manifested itself in the initiation ceremony. This ceremony marked the transition from adolescence to adulthood and often consisted of the transmission of professions (which were practised under the dominion of an ancestral spirit) such as that of medicine man, herbalist, diviners and rainmakers. In most cases training for such occupations was organised through a kind of apprenticeship system.

Traditional doctors and diviners were usually men, although women could also practice this craft. Medicine men and women were well respected by the Kavango community, because, as one informant put it:

They were always in close contact with our deceased ancestors and were possessed by a spirit which enabled them to reach one's thoughts and dreams or even predict one's future. They could also cure some diseases which were declared by modern doctors as incurable. The most important thing about them was that they protected our people from evil spirits who wanted to harm them.¹⁰⁰

Bosch (1964) adds that a competent medicine man was respected and obeyed by ordinary people as well as less well-known medicine men. According to Bosch's account, people claim that a competent and well qualified medicine man would only have one look at a patient and would already make the right diagnosis. Such a medicine man's services were always in great demand and the chief would see that the offices of such a man were always at his disposal. A chief would be given the strongest medicine, which would protect him from evil spirits. Bosch states further that a competent medicine man wore a string of beads mixed with herbal medicine in his neck. This necklace was apparently feared by evil spirits and less qualified medicine men who only wore a red copper band on their arms.¹⁰¹

In the case of serious and prolonged illness or a relative's sudden death, most Kavango people, including Christians, always turn to the good services of a traditional doctor known as nganga. All traditional doctors were possessed by a spirit which manifested itself during an initiation ceremony. The presence of a spirit might first be discovered prior to this, by a diviner during an illness with which the future medicine man was protected.

In order to acquire his power, it was expected from a future diviner to kill a relative in order to obtain a familiar spirit. This relative might be his own child, his sister's child, his own sister or brother or even one of his parents. Gibson states that the killing of the victim was done magically, whereby the victim as well as all other villagers were unaware of the fact that he or she was going to die. When it happened, only the future diviner and his master knew who was responsible for the victim's death. The killing was done for the purpose of his divining career: it was the spirit of the dead relative that would help the would-be diviner and answer his questions when he would throw lots, or when he looked into a cup of water or a mirror for the answer to a question. Gibson stated further that it was possible that such a captive spirit might become

lonely and ask for a companion. When this happened, the wish of the captive spirit should be granted, which means that the future diviner was forced to kill another relative so that his spirit could join the first one. In order to spare the lives of his remaining relatives, the future diviner who was married would prefer to take the spirit of his unborn child, whereby his wife might have a miscarriage. It was believed that an unborn child would never ask for a companion, as it had not yet learned the value of friendship.¹⁰²

In becoming a traditional doctor, a person would either first become ill or he might have a dream in which one of his ancestors who was a **nganga** in his lifetime might approach him and request him to take the profession of **nganga**.¹⁰³ In the case of the person who first became ill, this person would consult a diviner who might declare that the cause of the illness was an ancestor of whom in his lifetime practised the profession of **nganga**. The patient would then go and deal with a medicine man or woman. The initiation would then take place in the following manner:

The patient possessed by a spirit who was now a learner would be seated on a mat in the patio of the master's or mistress's house. Many people would sing and dance to the sound of drums. While people were singing and dancing, the patient would go into a trance. He would hear and understand everything what was being said, but would not be able to utter a single word. A cattle would be killed, so that the patient could drink warm fresh blood while the master was meditating.¹⁰⁴

The next day the learner/candidate would be tested in the art of divining by hiding any object in a hut and letting him try to locate it. This would be repeated for a couple of weeks. If the candidate discovered it without difficulty or hesitation, than it was believed that he was assisted by his spirit and that the treatment was a success.

In the next step the master would take the future **nganga** to the forest where he would be trained as a herbalist. It must, however, be understood that often a man or woman was

both a doctor and diviner, and was trained in both professions by the same master or mistress. In this case, training in herbal medicine would be given first, so that the candidate could have elaborate and sophisticated knowledge of medicinal plants. This knowledge would enable him to construct medicine in the form of infusions, powder, tinctures, etc. Although one may find ordinary people in Kavango who have a good working knowledge which allows to cure simple ailments such as headaches, cold and flu, wounds, nosebleeding, skin allergy, mental illness, infertility, etc, a future doctor was trained to be a specialist in herbal medicines, which means that he was to have a very extensive knowledge of thousands of plants.

Bosch (1964) describes how the future traditional doctor would leave his parents and move to the home of his master, where he would be thoroughly instructed in the methods of divination, cure, explanation of things as well as the treatment of people. Bosch adds that during his training the would-be doctor should fulfil certain taboo requirements: He should refrain from sexual intercourse, he should not eat the meat of any animal killed by a lion and he should avoid the meat of a hippo. When he was receiving training in the forest, he should always remember to sit with his face turned to the direction of the village, otherwise he might not find his way back to the village.¹⁰⁵

Towards the end of the training period, the master would take his learner to a certain specific plant. The master would then ask the would-be doctor to dig up the root of the plant which was in front of him at the time. The would-be doctor would not see the plant at this stage, as the plant cannot be seen with ordinary eyes. The master would then rub some medicine in the learner's eyes, and then the learner would see and dig up the plant. To the learner's astonishment, the root would be breathing and bleeding a red liquid. Looking in his master's eyes the learner would automatically know that the blood was that of a relative

who had been chosen to die in order to provide a familiar spirit. Arriving at the village, the future doctor and the master would find that the relative had indeed died. The future doctor should, however, not feel guilty and should not regret his deeds, otherwise his master would be disappointed and this would lead to the failure of his training. Gibson states that when the future **nganga** arrived at the village, all villagers might suspect him as responsible for the death of his relative. He would, however, deny his guilt, till later on when he was qualified as a real **nganga**. When treating a patient he would freely admit it to his patient and in front of other people as the basis for demanding a high fee. He might say something like: "I have taken the life of my own mother, therefore you cannot expect me to divine for a goat only or to cure you for one head of cattle only."¹⁰⁶

Before specializing in his profession, it was expected from the future doctor to learn all theories of disease and misfortune. The master had the responsibility to bring this to his attention. The candidate should have to learn that two kinds of traditional theories of disease were to be found in Kavango. There were theories of natural causation and theories which supposed that a human or supernatural being had inflicted the disease. A would-be doctor would learn that some illnesses were caused by the activity of 'insects' known as **upuka** and worms known as **mavinyo**. The **upuka** were said to be so small that one cannot see them. It was, thus, believed that by eating too much of the wrong food and drinking beer, one would encourage the **upuka** and **mavinyo** to be overactive and would then cause an ailment. The **upuka** and **mavinyo** were believed to attack mostly children, although adults could also have ailments caused by them. It was, however, believed that most illnesses were caused by human or super natural beings. Human beings who caused disease were known as **varodi**. In most literature they are called distinctively as 'sorcerers' or 'witches'.¹⁰⁷ Supernatural beings that might bring misfortune or even

death upon an individual were evil spirits or ghosts known as *urumba*, ancestors (*vadimu*) and the High God (*Karunga*). An illness caused in this way might be regarded as a punishment for evil deeds.

A would-be doctor cum diviner would also learn all the techniques of diagnosing the disease, prescribing the treatment and administering it himself. He would learn how to discover the cause of the illness or a misfortune as well as how to discover lost or stolen property and to seek out the thief. For searching out a thief, he was taught to use a mirror which would lead him, while continuously consulting his familiar spirit. The diviner was also trained how to determine the source of one's difficulties and the treatment necessary. In this case, the master taught him how to use a clay pot and a prepared animal skin in order to discover which ancestor was responsible for a person's illness or misfortune.

Gibson describes how the qualified diviner would spread the skin on the ground and turn the clay pot upside down upon the skin. While sitting on the ground, the diviner would then grasp the pot with both hands and turn it around in the same spot. While doing this he would pronounce the names of his patient's deceased ancestors. When pronouncing the name of his ancestor who was responsible for the difficulty or illness, the pot would appear to become fixed without moving. The diviner would then kneel down and place both arms on the pot in trying to turn it by force of main, but the pot would not move. When this happened, then it was believed to be the indication that the ancestor named was responsible for the illness. The diviner would then determine which type of offering the ancestor wished.¹⁰⁸

A different apparatus and procedure might, however, be used, if an illness or misfortune was believed to result from a living enemy. Bosch mentions that one of the most necessary instruments used by a qualified traditional doctor cum diviner when practising his profession was a divination

bowl, known as **katemba** for diagnosing diseases and determining their causations.¹⁰⁹

Apart from formal training for a number of professions, puberty rites for girls also belonged to a structured form of education. A puberty ceremony was organised when a girl reached the age of 15. A very important part of it was the confinement of the girl in a hut 3 metres away from the village. The period of confinement varied from a month to two months, during which the girl attaining maturity was subjected to an intensive training given by senior women of the community. This part of girl's education was entirely controlled by women. The puberty ceremony had scope for physiological, social and moral education. The physiological education comprised the teaching of healthy sex habits and the knowledge of the procreation process. The social part of the training dealt with the rights and obligations of women in relation to the whole community, while moral education involved instructions in the art of self-discipline and control and trials of courage. In this way senior women tried to reform the girl of the defects they had observed when the girl was a child. If the girl had been impolite and abusive, she was rebuked and punished. She was reminded that as a married woman she had to work hard, keep her home clean, her husband and children well looked after and her field in order.

The puberty ceremony came to an end at the completion of the confinement period for the girl, when a public function was held, attended by all villagers in the neighbourhood, to celebrate her adulthood. From the day of the celebration, she was expected to behave in a different way. The long separation, the training she received and the different role expectation of society had such a psychological impact on the girl that she really felt and behaved as a grown-up woman.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. Abrahams, K. (1983): Wither Education in Namibia?, p.14, A paper titled "What is Education" delivered by Dr Neville Alexander at the Ecumenical Conference for students at Döbra High School on the 11th July 1983.
2. Blakemore, K. and Cooksey, B. (1981): A Sociology of Education for Africa, p16.
3. Malinowski, B. (1976): "Native Education and Culture Contact", in Roberts, J.I. and Akisanya, S.K.: Educational Patterns and Cultural Configurations, p.42.
4. Malinowski, B. (1985): The Dynamics of Culture Change, pp.45-46..
5. Ibid. p.47.
6. Fafunwa, B.A. (1974): History of education in Nigeria, p.15.
7. Kimball, S.J. (1974): Culture and the Educative Process. An Anthropological Perspective, p.7.
8. Fafunwa, B.A. and Aisiku, J.U. (1982): Education in Africa: A comparative survey, p.9.
9. Brown, G.N. and Hiskett, M. (1975): Conflict and Harmony in Education in Tropical Africa, p.26.
10. Interview with Chiefs A. Mayavero, S. Kamwanga, G. Haininga, L. Hakusembe and S. Mipasi (20 December 1987) Rundu.
11. Interview with the five Kavango chiefs, Rundu (20 December (1987)).
12. See Mertens, A. (1974): Kavango. Introductory notes, p.15. Interview with the former Secretary for Kavango ethnic Administration, F. Enslin (2 April 1987, Rundu), confirmed that Kavango people were indeed very peaceful.
13. Interview with the five Kavango chiefs, Rundu (20 December (1987)).
14. Moumouni, A. (1968): Education in Africa, p.26.
15. Bonner, S.J. (1977): Education in Ancient Rome. From the elder Cato to the younger Pliny, p.17. See also Curtis, S.J. and Boulwood, M.E.A. 1964: A Short History of Educational Ideas, U.T.P. London, p.47

- referring to Pliny's letters viii, 4-6.
16. Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.74.
 17. Ellis, J. (1984): Education, Repression and Liberation: Namibia, London, p.13.
 18. Interview with A. Hashipara, R. Ngondo, J. Hikerwa and S. Kandere, Rundu (25 January 1988).
 19. Ibid. See also Van Tonder, L.L. (1966): The Hambukushu of Okavangoland. An anthropological Study of a South Western Bantu People in Africa, p.343.
 20. The play activities of Chagga children which were described by Raum seems to be similar to those of Kavango children. Kavango children's play activities may also be divided into three categories. The playful exercises which takes place during infancy, the imitative play which comes during childhood and competitive play or games which were played during the time of adolescence.
 21. Raum, D. (1940): Chagga Childhood. A description of an East African Tribe, London, p. 350.
 22. Van Tonder, L.L. (1966): The Hambukushu of Okavangoland, p.340.
 23. Ibid. pp.340-341. Although van Tonder's thesis was written in the 1960's, some of his sources are early missionaries' recorded history.
 24. Ibid. p.341.
 25. Ibid. pp.162-163.
 26. Ibid. pp.288-291.
 27. Ibid. A shrine (shinako) was an official place where prayers, offerings and sacrifices took place. See Van Tonder, L.L. (1966): The Hambukushu of Okavangoland, p.316. And Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, pp.264 and 265.
 28. Compare the prayer with that in Van Tonder's thesis, p. 342. The account of the game comes from the interview with chiefs (20 December 1987), Rundu. Chieftainness M. Mwengere who gave some of the accounts was a young girl (15 years) when the first missionaries arrived in Kavango. In her account of the game she recollected

her childhood during the olden days. Chief Kamwanga's grandmother (Shiromba) was present at the time of the interview, but could not speak due to old age. By using sign language she recollected how they played the games during their youth. Mwengere and Shiromba witnessed the arrival of missionaries in Kavango in 1903. Other elders interviewed were the first boarders at Nyangana school.

29. Van Tonder, L.L. (1966): The Hambukushu of Okavangoland, p.342.
30. Interview with Chiefs A. Mayavero, S. Kamwanga, G. Haininga, L. Hakusembe and S. Mipasi (20 December 1987) Rundu.
31. Van Tonder, L.L. (1966): The Hambukushu of Okavangoland, p.343.
32. Interview with the Chief Maria Mwengere (20 December 1986), Kayengona. This information was supported by other Chiefs A. Mayavero, S. Kamwanga, G. Haininga, L. Hakusembe and S. Mipasi (20 December 1987) Rundu.
33. Fafunwa, B.A. (1974): History of education in Nigeria, p.24.
34. Hambly, W.D. (1934): The Ovimbundu of Angola, Chicago, p.213.
35. Comments made by informants R. Kambundu, J. Hikerwa, N. Libebe, A. Kudumo (25 January 1988), Rundu.
36. Interview with N. Libebe, I. Muyeghu, V. Matamu and M. Mukoya (24 January 1988), Rundu.
37. Van Tonder, L.L. (1966): The Hambukushu of Okavangoland, p.374.
38. Interview with Chris Haushiku, (24 January 1988), Gumma.
39. Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.195.
40. Brown, G.N. and Hiskett, M. (1975): Conflict and Harmony in Education in Tropical Africa, London, pp.22-23.
41. Interview with Kavango chiefs (20 December 1987), Rundu. The information was supported by N. Libebe, J. Hikerwa and S. Kandere (24 January 1988), Rundu.

42. Van Tonder, L.L. (1966): The Hambukushu of Okavangoland, pp.174-175.
43. Ibid. p.293. In some stories in Kavango "likiti" is portrayed as a man-eating spirit.
44. Interview with the five Kavango chiefs (20 December 1987), Rundu. The information was supported by N. Libebe, J. Hikerwa and S. Kandere (24 January 1988), Rundu.
45. Knappert, J. (1981): Namibia; land and peoples, myths and fables, p.11.
46. Knappert, J. (1985): Myths and legends of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, p.49.
47. Interview with N. Libebe, J. Hikerwa and S. Kandere (24 January 1988), Rundu.
48. Kampungu, R. (1966): Concept and Aim of Okavango Marriages, Rome, p.28.
49. Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.77.
50. Ibid. p.156. In his account Wüst (p.49) mentions the omens and taboos observed by the people.
51. Interview with A. Hashipara (25 January 1988): This information was supported by teachers V. Matamu, J. Kangaji and U. Haikera (25 January 1988), Rundu.
52. Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.241. See also Van Tonder, L.L. (1966): The Hambukushu of Okavangoland, pp.272-287.
53. Interview with Kavango chiefs (20 December 1987), Rundu.
54. Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.241. See also Van Tonder, L.L. (1966): The Hambukushu of Okavangoland, pp.304-305.
55. Praise poems were also sung and recited, but there is no publication of Kavango praise poems available.
56. Interview with the late Chief Maria Mwengere (20 December 1986), Kayengona. This information was supported by A. Hashipara, I. Shikukumwa and S. Mbambo (4 January 1988), Rundu.
57. Interview with Kavango chiefs (20 December 1987), Rundu. All five chiefs agreed that the fights which

took place in Eastern Kavango were organised by Whites living at Lake Ngami in former Bechuanaland. Gibson quotes Bierfert reporting that Whites living at Lake Ngami in 1896 encouraged the Tswana Chief, Sekgoma, to send a punitive expedition against the Gciriku for murdering a Boer trader in 1894 or 1895. In the fight Chief Nyangana's village was sacked, some of his people were killed, many were taken as captives to the Tswana capital at Tsau and Nyangana himself was brought to trial there. See Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.164.

58. Even today millet and sorghum, and not maize or other foodstuffs, are the staples. Maize, peanuts, pumpkins and sugar cane were not brought with the Kavango people during their migrations. The date of the introduction of these foodstuffs is yet unknown, but what seems certain is that they reached Kavango before the arrival of missionaries. They might have been brought by Mambari traders who traded at Andara around 1850.
59. The twelve months are known as Murongona (January); Nkuru-Muronga (February); Nshinano (March); Kudumo (April); Nkuru-Kudumo (May); Pemba (June); Nkuru-Pemba (July); Shivoyedi (August); Shitarara (September); Shikukutu (October); Mangundu (November); Shindimba (December).
60. Van Tonder, L.L. (1966): The Hambukushu of Okavangoland, p.245.
61. Ibid. p.245. The times of the day are known as:
- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| ruvindhira | (daybreak) |
| kaghundu-ghundu | (before sunrise) |
| ngura-ngura | (sunrise) |
| mutwekatyi | (midday) |
| shitenguko | (afternoon) |
| kaghombeyuva | (before sunset) |
| kangurovedi | (sunset) |
| ngurova | (evening, after sunset) |
| matiku | (night) |
62. Van Tonder, L.L. (1966): The Hambukushu of Okavangoland, p.247.

63. The education given to Kavango children and other African children was in a sense culturally orientated. Writing about education in Kenya, J.R. Sheffield noted that young men and women "were given the basic knowledge necessary to assure that the identity of the tribal community would persist from one generation to the next Sheffield, J.R. (1973): Education in Kenya: An Historical Study, p.2.
64. The belief that each member of the community has the responsibility to educate the child was not peculiar to Kavango. It was typical of African societies. Sierra Leone is an example of this:
Each one in this extended hierarchy, assumes responsibility for the upbringing of the child. In order to do this, certain social and cultural mechanisms are applied and these are designed to regulate the child's behavioural patterns and to initiate him into an acceptable mode of conduct which conforms to the norms of behaviour within the tribe:
- See Forde, T.J.L.: Indigenous education in Sierra Leone, in Brown, N. and Hiskett M. (1975): Conflict and Harmony in Education in Tropical Africa, London, p.72.
65. Interview with C. Haushiku, A. Hashipara, N. Libebe, G. Mukoya (24 January 1988), Rundu. The informants stated that ploughs known as **kanyondo** made by Kavango people themselves were used before the colonial times. The first iron ploughs were, however, introduced by Portuguese living in Angola. (According to the informants Portuguese exchanged the ploughs for cattle. One plough was exchanged for 10 heads of cattle). By the arrival of German missionaries in Kavango there were already some few peasant farmers with iron ploughs in their possession.
66. Interview with farmers C. Haushiku and S. Ukuvi and councillor H. Kannyinga, supported by Chief S. Kamwanga (25 January 1988), Gumma.
67. The first comment was made by C. Haushiku, the second

- by S. Ukuvi, the third by H. Kannyinga and the last by S. Kamwanga. (The same date and place as above).
68. Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.167. Fishermen R. Ukuyu and H. Monyo, supported by G. Mukoya noted the difference between fish traps (mashasha) and fish baskets (marunkinda). The former were bigger and were made from reeds while the latter were smaller and were made out of sticks weaved together with palm leaves.
 69. Ibid. p.167.
 70. Green, S. (1952): Lords of the Last Frontier, p.255.
 71. Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.167. It is useful to note that Kavango People kept domestic cats in pre-colonial times.
 72. In the interview conducted on the 12th December 1987, G. Mukoya and K. Makova, well-known professional hunters in their youth, mentioned that the few animals to be found are frightened because of the intensifying motorized traffic and the large number of White hunters coming from South Africa and from overseas.
 73. Bierfert, P.A. (1925): 'Rechtsanschauungen der Eingeborenen der Oblaten der Unbefleckten Jungfrau Maria' 32(1), pp.291-295, quoted by Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.166.
 74. Ibid. p.166.
 75. Interview with G. Mukoya, K. Makova, N. Libebe, A. Hashipara, C. Haushiku (16 January 1988), Rundu. Compare with Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, pp.94-150.
 76. Any man of standing owned 15 or 18 heads of goats, and a considerable number of cattle. To own a cow or two was the first sign of being a wealthy person, and to be called a rich person one must own a hundred head of cattle. Tradition says that cattle were owned privately, but their products (meat, milk) and services (pulling and ploughing) were shared with other members of the community. The first missionaries who came to

Kavango reported of private ownership of cattle. See Wüst, J.G.: Die religiöse Anschauungen der Okavangostämme (the religious approach of the Kavango tribes), p.19. Private ownership existed in the Kavango long before the arrival of missionaries. Cattle, boats and fields were owned privately, but the meat and milk, the use of the boat and the grain and other food crops were shared with relatives and neighbours.

77. Interview with C. Haushiku, R. Ukuyu, S. Ukuvi and A. Munkanda, all herdsmen in their youth. At present they are all farmers, Gumma (16 January 1988).
78. See Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, pp.169.
79. Kenyatta, J. (1968): Facing Mount Kenya, The tribal life of the Gikuyu, pp.102-103.
80. Interview with craftsmen L. Shamahongo, K. Nyangana, A. Kantana and M. Tame, Nyangana (16 January 1988). Compare with Fafunwa, (1973): History of Education in Nigeria, p.35.
81. See Van Tonder, L.L. (1966): The Hambukushu of Okavangoland. An anthropological Study of a South Western Bantu People in Africa, p.263.
82. Ibid. p.263.
83. Ibid. p.263.
84. Van Tonder, L.L. (1966): The Hambukushu of Okavangoland, p.262. Van Tonder states that in his prayer the craftsmen might ask the following: Firstly, that no accident should happen, in other words, that nobody should get hurt while chopping the tree and while the canoe was being made. Secondly, he might ask that the tree was not hollow inside and that the canoe would not break when nearing completion and thirdly, that the canoe must be sturdy, safe and will not sink. Another prayer and offering was needed before the canoe was put to use in order to ensure success, safety and luck.
85. Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, pp.109. Boats were owned privately,

- but the owner had an obligation to share it with other members of the community.
86. Ibid. pp.108, 171, 226 and 227.
 87. Middleton, J. (1953): The Central Tribes of the North-Eastern Bantu, London, pp.23 and 77.
 88. See Van Tonder, L.L. (1966): The Hambukushu of Okavangoland, pp.259-260 for information concerning the process of pot-making.
 89. Ibid. p.260.
 90. From the information obtained from the interview with C. Haushiku, R. Muyeghu and N. Shamwaka (16 January 1988, Nyangana), it was clear that the skin for a woman, girl or baby's skirt, dress or apron had to be made extra soft. In his book about The Tribal life of the Gikuyu Kenyatta also stated that a skin for a woman's skirt, dress or apron has to be made extra soft as the woman's body is made of a delicate soft texture and needed a smooth material to cover it. Kenyatta, J. (1968): Facing Mount Kenya. The tribal life of the Gikuyu, p.91.
 91. Van Tonder, L.L. (1966): The Hambukushu of Okavangoland, p.266.
 92. Ibid. p.269.
 93. Interview with the late Chief Maria Mwendere, Kayengona (20 December 1986). The information obtained from the interview was supported by the well-known traditional doctor and herbalist Kamangu, Nyondo (26 January 1988).
 94. Tindall, P.E.N. (1968): History of Central Africa, p.74.
 95. Sandelowsky, B.H. (1974): Prehistoric Metal-Working in South West Africa, in Journal of the South African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy, 74, pp.363-366.
 96. Ibid. pp.363-366.
 97. Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, pp.172.
 98. Schönfelder, E. (1935): "Süd-Ost Angola und der Westliche Caprivi Zipfel", Petermanns Mitteilungen, Bd 81, pp.49-52; Bierfert, P.A. (1938): 25 Jahre bei den Wadiriku am Okavango, p.15, quoted by Gibson, G.,

- McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, pp.171. It is important to note that smelting itself must be understood as the burning of charcoal mixed with iron ore, which when combined with charcoal would leave a metallic iron. The clay furnaces used for smelting were constructed by the smelters themselves who often made their own charcoal and who were usually the iron ore miners. The metal was then reheated and beaten on stone anvils to remove impurities from the iron and to manufacture the required implements such as blades for hoes, axes, hatchets, knives, adzes, scrapers, awls, harness pieces for oxen, horses and donkeys, hammers and other pieces for the repair of guns, ploughs and chains.
99. Schulz (1897): The New Africa, London and Passarge, S. (1905): Die Mambukushu, Globus 87, pp.229-334, quoted by Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, pp.227.
100. Interview with Chief Maria Mwengere (20 December 1986), Kayengona. The information was supported by G. Mukoya, C. Haushiku and B. Shindimba (24 January 1988), Nyangana.
101. Bosch, J.L. (1964): Die Shambiu van die Okavango. 'n Volkekundige Studie, p.285. Bosch's statement that a witchdoctor is known as **nganga** in Kavango dialects is untrue. The word **nganga** is equivalent to the English word medical doctor or medicine man. A **nganga** is there to cure people from diseases, not to harm them. A witchdoctor known as **ngangami** is the one who practises witchcraft to harm people and he is the one who trains people to become witches (**varodi**). Sometimes a person who has a grudge against his fellowman can approach a witchdoctor in helping him to eliminate his fellowman.
102. Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, pp.208.
103. An informant (Kamangu, a medicine man and herbalist), who had the dream in his youth and at the moment a qualified **nganga**, explained that his deceased maternal grandfather appeared before him in the dream and

uttered the following words: "The craft of **nganga** has been in our family for centuries. I am telling you that this craft is in your blood. It is now your turn to take it as a profession so that it must stay in the family. Remember not to ignore my advice." The informant noted that from that moment he decided to take the profession of **nganga**. According to him, his grandfather is fully satisfied with his decision, and he received his grandfather's blessings in another dream on the day after his qualification. This information was supported by G. Mukoya and B. Shindimba (26 January 1988), Nyangana. Compare the information with Bosch, J.L. (1964): Die Shambiu van die Okavango. 'n Volkekundige Studie, p.266, where he makes reference to ancestors and dreams.

104. Interview with Kamangu and the above-mentioned people (26 January 1988), Nyangana.
105. Bosch, J.L. (1964): Die Shambiu van die Okavango. 'n Volkekundige Studie, p.284.
106. Interview with G. Mukoya, R. Ukuyu and the well-known traditional doctor cum diviner (26 January 1988), Nyangana. See also Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.208.
107. Compare Gibson, G., McGurck, C., and Larson, T.J. (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.266.
108. Ibid. p.209.
109. Bosch, J.L. (1964): Die Shambiu van die Okavango. 'n Volkekundige Studie, pp.285-286.

APPENDICES FOR CHAPTER TWO

APPENDIX 1

Moral Tales/FablesA. The Fable of The Dove, The Jackal and The Heron

A dove lived happily with her three young in her nest in the top of a tree. One day a jackal looking for food came along, saw the mother dove with her three chicks and thought of a plan how to get them. The jackal then shouted to the dove: "Throw down one of your young to me, otherwise I will fly up and eat all of them." The dove replied: "No, you cannot come here, because you have no wings." The jackal then bluffed: "No, but I can climb trees just like a leopard." This frightened the dove so much so that she decided to give up one young than to let the jackal climb up and eat up all four of them. She took one and dropped it outside the nest. The young fell into the jackal's greedy mouth and was swallowed. Immediately the jackal went on bluffing: "If you don't throw the other one, I will climb up and get it myself." The dove, not willing to sacrifice her second young, then started crying and agonizing over the dilemma. The jackal waited and thought of a reason why he would not carry out his threat. He said: "Oh, well, I am not really hungry any longer. I will come back tomorrow for it." The jackal then ran away. A little while later the heron flew past and heard her friend crying. She stopped and asked her friend what the matter was. After the dove had told her everything, the heron said: "Jackals are liars, my friend. Didn't you know that jackals can't climb trees? He just bluffed to intimidate you. Next time he comes, keep your nerves and ignore him. You will see, he will do nothing." The heron then flew back, leaving the dove a little more comforted and reassured. Soon the jackal came back and was very hungry. He started shouting at once: "Throw me down your next young, or else I will come up and eat it." The dove replied: "But, you jackals cannot climb trees." The jackal then demanded from the dove to name the

one that gave her that information. The dove, afraid to take responsibility for it herself, told the jackal that it was the heron. The jackal thanked the dove and ran in the direction where the heron lived. Soon he stalked the heron and caught her by the leg. The heron then began to fight and hit the jackal on the head with its long bill and nearly pierced the jackal's eyes. The jackal then let go and retreat. The heron then asked the jackal: "Why did you attack me? Did you think you could kill me? You have to get up early for that! The jackal then barked at her: "You must never tell anybody that I can't fly!" The heron then flew up and attacked the jackal until he fled.

B. The Tale of The Jackal and The Hyena

One day the zebras went to the riverbanks to drink some water. They had just finished drinking and were ready to go back to the forest, when the crocodile noticed their presence. The crocodile then began to move towards them in order to catch one of them for lunch. By the time he reached the riverbanks, the zebras were gone. The crocodile then came out of the water and started to follow the tracks of the zebras. It was a very hot day and soon the crocodile began to walk slowly. His skin began to get dry and had to seek shelter in the shade of a big tree and he lay there fainting from the heat. A jackal who was on his way to visit some friends saw the crocodile lying under the tree. He said to himself: "I had better go and tell the greedy hyena about this." So he went and called the hyena: "Grandfather, hyena, come with me and have a look! I found tasty meat under a tree." The jackal then took the hyena to the tree. The hyena saw the fainted crocodile and wanted to start eating it straight away, but the crocodile was hard and dry. The jackal then said: "Grandfather, hyena, let us take our meat to the river and soak it for a while before we can eat it. I am sure our meat will get softer and juicy." The hyena immediately picked up the crocodile and put it on his back. While they were walking towards the river, the jackal who was walking behind was singing: "Stupid hyena is carrying a dangerous load to the river." The hyena dropped the crocodile and asked: "What are you singing?" The jackal hugged and kissed the hyena and replied: "Oh, dear grandfather, I am singing that my darling grandfather and I are taking our meat to the river for soaking." The hyena, satisfied with the jackal's answer, put the crocodile on his back and walked further. When they reached the river, the jackal said: "Grandfather, take the crocodile and put it in the river." The hyena did as he was told, but the crocodile was still hard. The jackal then commanded: "Grandfather, our meat will never soak in this shallow water. It would be better if grandfather can move to the deeper side of the river." So the hyena took hold of the crocodile's tail and dragged him to the deeper side. He then plunged the

crocodile in the middle of the river hoping to soften up the dry skin. Alas, the crocodile immediately regained his consciousness, woke up, seized the hyena and devoured him. The jackal, satisfied with what happened ran away singing: "Thank your stupidity, hyena!"

C. The Tale of The Lion and The Vulture

The lion and the vulture were two best friends who lived happily in the forest together. They were so close to each other that they did everything together: they hunted together, ate together and slept together. One day, while they were resting, the lion asked the vulture: "What will you do if I die, will you eat me up?" The vulture answered: "I will never eat up my best friend." He then asked the lion the same question, to which the lion answered that he never will do such a thing. They then shook hands and promised each other that no one of them will eat up his best friend. One night while the two were sleeping, the lion played dead. When the vulture woke up in the morning and tried to wake up his friend, the lion could not move. His eyelids did not move, his mouth was widely open and dry and everything indicated that the lion was dead. The vulture waited for six hours for his friend to wake up. Later on he decided to go and look for food. When he came back towards evening, the situation had not changed. He thought his friend was dead and decided that he will have to wait for three days to make sure whether his friend was really dead. After the third day he saw a colony of ants moving in and out of the lion's ears, eyes, nose and mouth. He stood close to his friend and inspected carefully, and was now positive that his friend was dead. He decided to wait again. On the fifth day he decided to eat up his friend, because he thought that the friend will not wake up from the dead and remind him of his promise. As soon as the vulture opened its bill to start devouring the lion's eyes, the lion jumped up and got hold of the vulture's neck and asked: "You thought that I was dead? What happened to your promise?" The lion told the vulture that he played dead to test whether the vulture was committed to their friendship as he himself was. He told the vulture: "Now that you have showed me your real colour, I do not want anything to do with you. From now on we go our separate ways and are not friends any more." The vulture was so ashamed of his deed that he ran away crying nonstop. Since then the vulture avoided hunting during the day because of fear that he will

meet the lion and feel embarrassed. The only time he came out of hiding was at night when he went to look for leftovers from lions and hyenas. While the vulture lived in loneliness, the lion lived happily with another friend who came to live with the lion.

APPENDIX 2

Proverbs and Riddles

Proverbs were used in argument and conversation. They had the function of avoiding direct answers to questions and brought out clearly the meaning of what was being said. Proverbs were also inimitable expressions of the Kavango people's poetic thinking and wisdom. Examples of proverbs are:

1. "Kwarera ndimba washa mu tema matwi"
(If your in-laws are the hares, do not mock them over their ears) = One must never criticise one's in-laws.
2. "Nkore kunshi, mayegho pa ntunda"
(Grudge is inside, but teeth are outside) = A smile is sometimes misleading. It may happen that a person who bears a grudge against his fellow-man can smile at him.
3. "Ukwavo wa ndi pa karonda"
(Friendship with a fly is when one had a wound) = People will favour a person who has always something to offer.
4. "Rera vanyime, yona ngava kulye"
(Rear small lions (cubs), tomorrow they are going to eat you up) = Today you help a person, tomorrow the person is going to turn against you.
5. "Kashuta mukokera mbanga"
(Bad tobacco/snuff can only be used if there is no good tobacco/snuff) = A bad woman can only be taken as a wife if one is in need.
6. "Poto waku tungauka, naye kuwana rushwiko"
(A crooked pot can also have a lid) = An ugly person can also get a wedding mate.
7. "Washa ndita litudi lya muramba-ramba"

(Do not feed me on a big piece of fresh dung) = Do not prosecute me for something I have never done/for a crime I have never committed.

8. "Mutyima wa unyoye shikoverero"

(Another person's heart is a cloth) = One is not able to read someone else's thoughts.

9. "Kagoma mbeta kuviri"

(A drum that can be beaten on both sides) - Somebody who wants to please both sides/One who pretends to be friend with both parties.

10. "Katana ka horo ngwena"

(A beautiful calf that has a fancy for "kweekgras") - A prince or princess who loves rich food.

11. "Kufa kwa nkuru hupa, vitemba kuharagana"

(If the largest calabash is broken, its pieces will scatter) = The death of a leader will cause a split among his followers/The death of a village head will cause a split among the villagers/The death of a parent will lead to estrangement among the children.

Apart from the fact that riddle games were played to sharpen the intellect of the child, the riddles were also used to test the guessing ability of children. Here are a few examples of riddles:

1. "Osho va dira kumona vamama"

(What my grandparent had never experienced) = his/her own birth.

2. "Rumigha rwa taghuro litende lya ndyovu"

(A thorn that spit an elephant's foot) = a mushroom

3. "Twa yendire na vamama ku ugenda ava katu yumbura ngombe ya matako-tako"

(When my grandfather/mother and I visited people, they

offered us a tailless cow) = a bullfrog

4. "Mpo shina tu piti pano"

(It passed us here) = The sun

5. "Sha yenda sha yapauka"

(It walks in and out of the path) = a dog

6. "Furukutu pa lirenge"

(Movement in the grass) = a louse

7. "Wamu lire ushi wa mwene"

(His own honey caused his death/He died from his own honey) = a honey bear

8. "A tantirire mpuma a teghe varu tema mbu"

(He advised the leguan to dig pitfalls for reedcutters)
= a mongoose

9. "A rondire na ngoma yendi ku unyondo"

(He climbed with his drum on a tree) = Moyo (name)

CHAPTER THREE

MISSION EDUCATION AMONG THE KAVANGO PEOPLE

(1910 - 1966)

This chapter concerns the early impact of western education on the traditional educational practices and Kavango society in general. It tries to analyze how Christianity and Western education have contributed to the change of the social, political and economic structure of the Kavango people. The methods used by the German Roman Catholic and the Finnish Lutheran missionaries to introduce Christianity and western education and their attitudes and initial labours among the Kavango people are to be investigated. The chapter also examines the response of the Kavango people to the new faith and teaching of the Christian missionaries. Versions of Kavango people themselves are considered to rebut the colonial perspective on education in Namibia and Kavango.

3.1 INTRODUCTION OF WESTERN EDUCATION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF SCHOOLS IN KAVANGO

Western education was first introduced in Kavango in 1910 with the establishment of the first station at Nyangana by the German Catholic missionaries of the Oblate of Mary Immaculate. Of the two missions which were to lay the foundations of the present school system in Kavango, the Roman Catholics were the pioneers. By 1930 the Catholic Mission had begun five schools at the five locations where they had established mission stations. The Finnish Lutheran Mission followed. In 1926 it established its first school at Nkure-Nkuru.¹ The two missionary societies founded schools wherever they established mission stations. They established central stations in which they built central schools. From the central schools they established many out-schools. The Chronicles of the Roman Catholic Mission (1978) state that there was a church and a school on every central mission station. The church and the school served as venues where the converts received lessons in Catechism and where they learned how to read and write.²



Until 1962 the only education provided in Kavango was that offered in missionary schools. At this time the Lutheran mission ran schools in 12 places, all located in Western Kavango in the Ukwangali and Mbunza districts. The Catholic mission ran schools in 27 places, distributed in the Eastern and Western Kavango, i.e. in the Mbukushu, Gciriku, Sambiu, Mbunza and Ukwangali districts.³

The first school in Kavango was established in the Gciriku district on the mission station Nyangana in 1910. At the time there was no teacher in Kavango, therefore the head of the mission station, Father Bierfert took responsibility for teaching the attendants. When the mission station began to grow and Father Bierfert became rector of the mission station, Father Wüst took over as teacher, in 1913.⁴ The second school was established at Andara in the Mbukushu district in 1913 with Father Gotthardt as the only teacher. A year later Father Gotthardt retired from teaching and became rector of the mission station.

At these schools attendance was initially very low and missionaries had to face possible failure. Missionaries were not discouraged by this development, on the contrary, they decided to build lodgings for children who attended their schools. A request was sent to their headquarters in Windhoek to send them nuns who could help in teaching the children and be in charge of lodgings. In 1919 they had four male boarders at Nyangana mission station. By the year 1922 there were ten male boarders at Nyangana and in the same year the nuns who had been requested in 1916 arrived, accompanied by Father Koch.⁵ These nuns included Sisters Coelestine, Rhabana Stehle and Chrysantha Jakob.

With the arrival of the nuns, school attendance began to improve, because they could do the work better than the priests who had many other responsibilities. In 1924 there were 20 children attending school at Andara, a figure which was influenced by the famine of that year.

Between 1930 and 1936 Sr Rhabana Stehle was principal of the school at Andara and Sr Chrysantha Jakob was principal at Nyangana. In 1937 the two nuns changed places. Sr Rhabana Stehle became the principal of Nyangana School in the same year while Sr Chrysantha Jakob became the principal of Andara School in 1946. Up to 1946 the classes taught were Sub. A to Std. 2. The subjects taught were the three R's, the vernacular, Afrikaans and Catechism.⁶

Between 1910 and 1926 there were only two mission stations and schools in Kavango.⁷ Missionaries had started establishing out-schools in the districts where they had established central schools. On the establishment of the mission station Tondoro in 1927, they also established a new school which was the third central school. The fourth mission and school were established at Mbunza in 1929. Father Weilhöfer was the teacher at Tondoro school while Father Lochsfelder was the teacher at Mbunza school. After the arrival of other nuns in Kavango, they were sent to these two schools. Sr Irene Steffens became the principal of the school at Mbunza. Their pupils were all boarders, and the subjects taught were the same as those taught in schools at Nyangana and Andara, except for the vernacular language.⁸ The fifth and last central school was begun at Sambiu on the establishment of the mission station in 1930. Father Max was the first teacher for the Sambiu school, but when Sr Leopoldine arrived in 1937 she took over from Father Max and became the teacher for the school. In 1946 she became the principal of the school, assisted by two Kavango teachers. One of these assistant teachers, Aloys Hashipara, received his teacher training at Döbra and returned to Kavango as a qualified teacher in 1940.⁹

Once the first central schools had been established, the Catholic missionaries began to pay more attention to establishing out-schools. The first out-schools to be established are as follows:

- * Mbambi in the Gciriku district
- * Mayara and Bagani in the Mbukushu district
- * Katara in Ukwangali district.
- * Mashare in Sambiu district.¹⁰

The following table shows the numbers of Catholic missionaries and their followers in each of the five districts.

OMI Mission in 1946

Station and District	Fathers	Brothers	Nuns	Nursing Sisters	Teachers		Members	Students
					M	F		
Andara (Mbuku-shu)	1	1	3	1	4	1	566	210
Bunja (Mbunza)	1	1	4	1	-	-	471	211
Nyangana (Gcirikuku)	1	1	3	2	3	1	765	617
Sambyu (Sambyu)	1	1	4	1	6	-	344	182
Tondoro (Ukwangali)	1	3	3	1	6	1	564	100
Total	5	7	17	6	19	3	2 710	1 320

Source: Gibson, Gordon (1981): The Kavango Peoples, p.26.

The Finnish Lutheran Church

As was the case with the Roman Catholic society, the Finnish Lutheran Mission, too, considered it its duty, not only to convert but also to teach the Kavango people the techniques of reading and writing. Young men and small boys were attracted to mission stations in order to be taught to read and write, and also to ask for jobs.¹¹

The first school to be established by the Finnish Lutheran Church was the one at Nkure-Nkuru on the 30th April 1926. This school started as a convert school for young ones and adults. The main aim of the school was to teach the people the Gospel, and in order to do this, it was necessary to introduce the alphabet into a primary school for children only. According to I. Shikukumwa, it always happened that children received school lessons in the morning, and in the afternoon they were prepared for conversion.¹²

The second Finnish Lutheran school was established at Mupini in 1934. Attendance at this school was very low, due to the fact that those who attended were too old for Sub standards A and B and Std 1, as their ages varied from 15 to 30.¹³

The third school was established at Rupara in 1935. The school started with three girls and five boys who were taught the three R's. After two years of attending school in Kavango, all five boys were sent to Oniipa, another Finnish Lutheran school to receive teacher training for three years.¹⁴

In 1940 a special school for girls was established at Nkure-Nkuru. To be accepted in this school, a girl had already have the ability to read and write. The school building was built by the pupils themselves.¹⁵ It started with 23 girls and the classes were from Sub A to Std 2. The principal, Miss Markhanen, was responsible for all the teaching. Subjects taught included Religion, Arithmetic, Writing, Singing, Vernacular, Afrikaans, Housekeeping and handicrafts. This school was the only girl's school in Kavango.

After these schools had been established, the Finnish missionaries began developing out-schools. In the out-schools teaching concentrated on the Bible, while reading, writing and arithmetic were added. By 1946 the Finnish missionaries had six out-schools. Some of these schools were later closed due to the shortage of teachers and the fact that parents rejected them.¹⁶

Till 1950 all schools in Kavango were lower primary schools, i.e. the education offered was from Sub A to Std 2. There was no possibility of further education, except for pupils who were to become teachers. For this purpose there were two Roman Catholic schools outside Kavango where Kavango pupils could be sent. These schools were Döbra which is situated near Windhoek, and Waldfrieden near Omaruru.

Döbra was established in 1924.¹⁷ Before then there was no

school in Namibia where Africans could receive teacher training. The school was a boarding school and till 1950, the pupils were exclusively boys.¹⁸ In 1951 the first four girls were allowed in a separate hostel from the boys. In 1952 four Kavango girls enrolled at the Döbra Boarding school.

The girls were all from Nyangana Primary School in the Gciriku district. After 1954 more girls and boys from Catholic schools in Kavango were sent to Döbra.

From 1924 a scholar who had finished Std. 2 could complete his teacher training with a Std 4 certificate, which meant that he/she began with what was known as school methodics in Std 3. In 1938 it was decided to improve the qualification of African teachers. A teacher could then only qualify after completing Std 6. After the completion of Std 4, those who wanted to become teachers proceeded to Std 5 and 6 for methodics courses. In 1954 the decision to introduce the two years teachers training course was realized. This meant that a scholar had to finish Std 6 before he/she could proceed with the two years teachers training course. In the same year 9 male boarders qualified as teachers, among which 4 were Kavango, 2 were Tswana, 1 Herero, 1 Nama and 1 Tjimbundu (Angolan). In this year female pupils were removed from Döbra Boarding School and taken to Waldfrieden Girl's School due to the fact that Catholics always wanted to separate girls from boys. Until the 1970's the majority of pupils who attended Döbra school have been those from Kavango.¹⁹

Waldfrieden was established in 1943 as a Roman Catholic mission station and school for children living in the Omaruru area. In 1954 when missionaries experienced problems with girls attending school together with boys, Waldfrieden became a Girls Boarding school. The school was officially opened in 1955, and in 1960 the school offered Std 6 for the first time.²⁰

As far as the Lutheran mission was concerned, they too, sent

some of their pupils to two different schools outside Kavango. One was a Finnish Lutheran school, Oniipa, in Ovamboland and the other one was a school established by the Rhenish Church mission, which was known as Augustineum. The main aim of these schools was to prepare scholars for teaching. In 1935 the first five scholars were sent by the Finnish Lutheran Church to Oniipa where three of them were to be trained as teachers while the other two were to be trained as builders.

3.2 FEATURES OF MISSION SCHOOLING IN KAVANGO

The earliest schools in Kavango were generally in the form of Sunday schools or charity schools, in which Catechism, reading, writing and arithmetic were learned. From the time of the earliest German and Finnish missionaries, Christianity and education went together, thanks to the general belief that the most rudimentary knowledge of the 3 R's was necessary for conversion to Christianity. In addition a considerable amount of manual work was done. The central feature of mission schooling was, thus, to propagate the gospel to convert Kavango pagans to Christianity. O'Callaghan reflects on mission education in Namibia generally:

Schools were established in order to supplement the work of Christianization, to give (at least at first) a rudimentary education to Catechists and, at least as important, to change cultural patterns that were considered to be pagan.²¹

The two missions in Kavango began their schools in order to provide the children in the areas where they worked, with specifically religious education: to bring them up in the traditions of the churches. The idea was not to provide an academic education, but to provide spiritual and doctrinal understanding, so that the children could be baptized and accepted into the religious body. Education in those schools consisted of the three R's: The children were taught to read, write and reckon. The rest of the time was given to religious education. The teacher, in both the German Catholic and Finnish Lutheran missions, was also the preacher on Sundays. Some teachers were trained as catechists or evangelists, who then performed these duties

on Sundays. To both missions it was essential that a good Christian should have the knowledge of the Bible. The Catholics in addition emphasized the knowledge of Catechism. A good Christian should have the ability to communicate not only orally, but in writing as well. This could be realised only if the two Holy Scriptures were read and understood.²²

In the schools the principles and duties of the Christian religion were emphasized in order to make the children faithful servants of God and loyal members of the church. In the case of the Roman Catholic Church, Bierfert noted that Baptismal-instruction was part of mission education. Those to be baptized had to learn the Catechism as well as the main teaching of the Old and New Testaments. In addition they were to be given a thorough explanation about the functions of the Holy Mass and the Holy Communion. Bierfert points out that, after the child had been baptized, it was allowed to attend school for a longer period in order to put the Christian life into practice as well as to strengthen it. The children were later to become trustworthy and reliable Christians.²³

The aspects were made clear in a letter from Helsinki to the Administrator of South West Africa. The Mission Director of the Finnish Mission Society, Dr. U. Paunu wrote in 1936:

First when our missionaries founded schools, they had only that aim, that the natives would learn the most important religious truths and become Christians. The first schools were exclusively "baptismal schools", giving a necessary instruction before the heathen could be baptized. And as far as the heathen, especially the grown ones, are pupils of our schools, the schools still are "baptismal schools." One must remember that their aim is to serve the mission work, i.e. to bring people to Christ. The native must if possible learn the art of reading for being able to study their Bible and through that get on in their Christianity and grow up to Christian characters.²⁴

Referring to the second major aim of missionary education, Dr Paunu wrote:

The mission schools have however also another wider aim: they intend to give the elements of the civilization to the children of the Christians and also to other children who will be their pupils. In so far the program of these schools has been enlarged, comprising now in addition to the Bible history, catechism, singing of hymns and reading also writing, the elements of arithmetic and geography, and further handiwork as much as possible. The mission schools which originally had to their only aim the teaching of the word of God thus have been advanced to proper primary schools, which now in addition to religious subjects also contain general civilisatory matters.²⁵

This conception was common amongst mission institutions in Africa. P.X. Shilubane states:

The basic aim of the missionaries was to convert the Natives to Christianity. In pursuing this policy they sought also to instil a new system of morals and general behaviour conforming to Christian ideals, and used education as an instrument through which the Natives could learn to read the Gospels. Consequently mission schools were established. Because of the identity of church and school, a community accepting a school also accepted the church and in principle the things that the church stood for.²⁶

As an illustration of this Father Gotthardt, Rector of the Roman Catholic mission station at Nyangana, was once in conversation with Chief Nyangana of the Vagciriku group.

During their discussion, he showed the chief the picture of God in the Bible and explained how human beings were in relation to God. He also explained to Chief Nyangana that the letters beneath the picture were words that explained the whole content of the picture. At the end of their conversation he told Nyangana: "Schicke die Kinder nur fleisig zur Schule, damit sie diese Worte lesen lernen."²⁷

Up to 1950 the mission school's activities were not officially supervised and the missions bore the financial burden for the schools themselves. Mission education was always short of teachers. In addition the missionary teachers had, at first, no knowledge of Kavango dialects.

At a conference held in Windhoek from 23-27 October 1923, the then Director of Education in Namibia said:

The great difficulty at present is the lack of suitable teachers. Most of our present teachers have suffered much as the result of the turmoil and wars of the last decade, and are not as highly qualified and experienced as we might wish them to be. But these and other difficulties must not be made too much of. Missionaries are men who are prepared to face and overcome difficulties otherwise they would not be where they are and I feel that they will succeed in overcoming the numerous obstacles in the way of progress in our native education.²⁸

In a letter (dated 19th February 1923) to the Organiser of Education in Windhoek, the Prefect Apostolic of the Roman Catholic Mission, Bishop Gotthardt, mentioned that schools along the Kavango River, particularly those at Nyangana and Andara were exclusively managed by teaching nuns, as sufficient trained teachers were not yet available in Kavango.²⁹

The fact that missionary education in Namibia, including Kavango, lacked qualified teaching staff is shown by the following statement made by Rev. W. Ollp of the Rhenish Mission:

Daar was bykans geen opgeleide onderwysers beskikbaar nie, en waar onderwysers wel beskikbaar was, het hulle taal- en ander probleme ondervind. Die beskikbare onderwysers was nie onderlê in hulle vakke nie en die gevolg hiervan was die swak en powere onderwysmetodes. Hulle leesaanbiedings het dus veel te wense oorgelaat.³⁰

Another feature of mission schooling was the fact that it educated Kavango children in directions opposed to their culture and religion. It seems that everything Kavangan was regarded as pagan and as an obstacle to Christianity. In writing about the Vagciriku of Kavango, Bierfert referred to the people as superstitious "Urheiden", whom he found difficult to convert to Christianity. He wrote about the witchdoctor, the medicine man, ancestor worship, traditional dances as pagan practices and as dangers to the Christian religion. According to him, the Christian community, i.e.

the school children as well as all those who accepted Christianity should be warned and made aware of these dangers. He believed that missionaries had the responsibility to protect these people against these dangers.³¹ Since the introduction of textbooks in schools in Kavango by the late 1950s mission education was characterized by a pronounced South African bias. This was reflected in the provision of the curriculum. Afrikaans, seen by many pupils as the language of domination, was emphasized in every subject taught. Afrikaans poems like "Die Ossewa" were recited and "Die Stem" and other Afrikaans songs were sung during the singing periods. In geography and history, examples and materials were drawn from South Africa. Namibian history or the history of Kavango people was not included. The stress on the Bible and Catechism in religious education left little time for an understanding of the traditional beliefs and rituals of the Kavango people.

Among the missionaries there were also those who believed that the cultural level of Kavango people was very low and that it was their duty to raise them to a higher cultural level. In a letter to the Administrator of South West Africa, Dr. U. Paunu, Director of the Finnish Missionary Society, commented in 1936:

I am very glad that the Administration of South West Africa pays its attention to the education of the Natives also in the most remote Northern parts of the country, and hope that it will bring good results for rising the Natives to a higher cultural level than they at present have.³²

Schools established on mission stations were all boarding institutions. The pupils were to be separated from families and friends, with the result that they would have to adapt to the European way of life. In his description of the first school in Kavango at Nyangana, Bierfert mentioned that the school had the aim of protecting the children against the bad influence of adults.³³ What Bierfert and other missionaries who shared his view did not try to understand was that the adults were the children's parents, family members and elders of their community and that the "bad influences" were part of their culture.

The cultural influence of the missions on the Kavango people and other African's way of life was seen as one of the great achievements in their education. Education was thus perceived by some missionaries as one of the major tools of casting out the evil beliefs of Africans and of "civilizing" them. The experience in Southern Africa had been contentiously described by Nyaggah and Mugomba as follows:

....the missionaries perceived themselves as the real spokespersons of the African masses. Given their guardianship principle and mentality, they relegated Africans to the legal category of inarticulate, incompetent, if not mentally retarded, wards and treated African civilization as abnormal and African cultural resistance as backward and sick. They also adopted the settler ethnocentric view that Southern Africa was the "White man's country", in which education was being offered to the Africans as the White man's act of magnanimity.³⁴

Many missionaries who came to Africa were deeply imbued in the Victorian belief of cultural superiority and saw themselves possibly as custodians of values, morals and ethics. Missionaries have been seen as spokespersons of the "Child Race" whom they thought to be incompetent. Africans were thought to be backward, and those who resisted their culture were sometimes regarded as abnormal and undesirable.

Mission education in Kavango, as elsewhere in the country, lacked organized central control and coordination, and at the same time it was under developed. Each mission (Catholic and Finnish Lutheran) concentrated on its respective area of operation without much regard for development outside it. In its report of 1958 on Non-European education in South West Africa the Commission wrote:

All schools established by missionaries in conjunction with their mission work at this time were fully fledged mission schools, i.e. they were with regard to syllabuses, subjects, school hours, school calendar, etc., not organised by the mission under a common scheme, but only to fit in with local needs, local conditions and the missionary's views. Every missionary was his own Director of Education.³⁵

The mission school system in Kavango was at primary school

level only, there was no provision of post-primary education, lower secondary education or technical education. In the sixties the teacher training colleges outside Kavango (Döbra, Augustineum and Oniipa) developed into secondary schools.

Missionary schools, particularly, those established outside Kavango, were minimal in nature, selective and encouraged elitism. The number of pupils who benefitted from it was small. The informants pointed out that pupils were chosen with great care. The first contingent always included the sons of traditional leaders. Next in order were sons of catechists and teachers and future priests and nuns as well as those who were obedient. In reply to a question whether all pupils who proved to be intelligent could attend the schools outside Kavango, two distinct points of view emerged from the teachers and parents interviewed. There was general agreement that mission education was selective in nature, but differing perceptions about the selection process. In Catholic schools selection was based on whether one of the pupil's parents was a chief or whether the father was a headman, teacher, catechist or evangelist as well as whether the pupil had to promise to become a priest or nun before he/she was to be selected. In Lutheran schools, however, selection was based on good character and intelligence only. The second group said that both missions based their selection on the status of the pupil's parents and the promise he had to make irrespective of his character or the fact whether he was intelligent or not. They added that in both missions, pupils favoured by missions benefitted in the education.³⁶

In its report on Native education, the Commission of 1958 wrote about mission education for Africans in the following terms:

Youths who, because of their character and intelligence, seemed suitable for consideration were taken under their personal care and supervision and their development observed. On reaching the age for admission to the training school they were recommended for admission by the missionariesThe careful and strict selection

of candidates for admission to the training school kept elements with undesirable character traits out of the schools.³⁷

Selective education had a negative effect on the Kavango unity of the society. Referring to this type of education, Holmes has claimed:

Selective education meant that the gap between the elite and the masses widened. In one sense this was a gap between the literates and the illiterates, or between the Christians and the Non-Christians.³⁸

This has been the case in Kavango by the late 1950's where many pupils who wanted to go to these schools were not given the opportunity to attend them. Missionaries argued that they had limited funds, because every mission had to bear all expenses in connection with the provision of buildings, school furniture and other equipments, the remuneration of African teachers and the provision of books and stationary for the pupils.³⁹

Mission education in Namibia in general encouraged a separate school system for different races. Although there was no overall control of education in the country at the end of the German colonial regime, the system of separate education was already there. Missionaries had established separate schools for Africans, separate schools for Coloureds and Basters and separate schools for Whites. In Kavango, for instance, there were a small number of White children whose parents were Finnish Lutheran missionaries. These children could have been incorporated in Kavango missionary schools. The children, however, never attended African schools, but were either taught at home or sent to White schools in the Police Zone.⁴¹ The education offered by missionaries in different communities also differed in content and assumed separate functions. While Black (African, Coloured and Basters) education aimed at converting and preparing them for semi-skilled labour, White education aimed at reproducing the European system. This was common in most British colonies in Africa in the early 20th century. Education for Africans remained elementary in its contents.⁴¹

Referring to the Rhenish Mission Society, the forerunner of the Finnish Lutheran Church in Ovambo and Kavango, the 1958 Commission wrote:

The curricula prescribed by the mission were based on those for German primary schools with the necessary adjustments to allow for conditions amongst the Natives in South West Africa. The standard of work for different classes was lowered and adapted to the actual mental development of the pupils. For instance, the subject matter covering one year in European schools was spread over two years in the Native schools. The curricula for smaller schools were even further diluted.⁴²

The education offered by missionaries in Kavango did not differ from that offered in other African schools in the country. On the curriculum in Rhenish mission schools and Roman Catholic mission schools, Niemand points out that the curriculum prescribed for the former was largely the same as that prescribed for the latter.⁴³

Mission education was dualistic in structure, in the sense that missions and the colonial administration constituted the two most important operational agencies. In Namibia the missions and the administration cooperated on matters concerning African education. The control and administration of the education services was the responsibility and duty of the colonial government while the missions were left to manage the schools. In Kavango and other northern regions the contribution of the Christian missions in the field of education was strengthened by the fact that the colonial administration to a large extent relied on the missionary groups for the development of African education. Therefore most of the colonial revenue for African education was channelled through the missionary organisations.

3.3 ATTITUDES AND AIMS: THE CURRICULUM AND THE IDEOLOGICAL CONTENT OF MISSION SCHOOLING

The education offered by missionaries in Kavango during the period between 1910 and 1957 was not organised and administrative control was poor. Apart from the fact that

learning was occurring at a specific place and time, school attendance was irregular and systematic records were often not kept.⁴⁴ Louis Burger, former inspector and later director of education in Kavango (1957-1981) describes the education during that time as follows:

The term 'formal education' is unsuitable for the period between 1910 and 1957. The schools as I found them in 1958 offered education at a very wide basis, but in a reasonably informal way, and by that I mean that there was no standardized curriculum according to which instruction took place. The teachers who taught in the school did not have Methodics, but were only trained in religion.⁴⁵

The Director of Education, after doing inspections in mission schools in Kavango and Ovambo in 1936 observed:

- i) That the standard of education attained by the majority of the Native teachers employed in the mission schools is very inadequate and disappointing;
- iv) that generally the methods of teaching leave much room for improvement;
- x) that no fixed School Calendar is followed by some schools belonging to the same society.⁴⁶

The reasons for this state of affairs are probably obvious: The early missionary educationists and teachers were not well educated, they were only trained in religion and not in the teaching as such. Because of their knowledge of religion, religious training dominated their education programme. Hygiene and health were also emphasized not only practically, but in reading and writing as well.

In 1958 the Commission of Inquiry found:

The standard of the academic part of the work in a missionary school was naturally not high. The imparting of knowledge was not the main purpose, although subjects like Reading, Writing and Arithmetic were included in the curricula in due course. With his teaching founded upon religion and bound by practical considerations, the missionary taught the Native in South West Africa to make use of their spiritual and mental powers; he taught them to think. Along this lines the Native was approached educationally and prepared for general upliftment and education in order to make a Christian of him.⁴⁷

In general, the curriculum introduced by missionaries in Kavango laid much emphasis on character training, rather than on academic standards. For missionaries, the Christian character must be fashioned after the pattern of Christ. Character development based on religion was the dominant factor of every educational activity. Missionaries were not specifically concerned with education for employment, except a career in the church or teaching.⁴⁸ The curriculum of their schools further emphasized manual training based on agriculture and technical training. This was meant to equip themselves and White farmers in the Grootfontein and Tsumeb areas with useful and cheap labour. In his 1936 report on mission education in Kavango and Ovambo, the Director of Education mentioned that industrial education was included in the curriculum, and that it consisted of subjects such as carpentry, blacksmiths work, gardening, brick laying and plastering, woodcutting and clothing. The Director's comment on industrial education was as follows:

The industrial education seems to aim at the production of articles than at the training of the pupils. No definite schemes of work are prepared; no plans are drawn up; no models are made by the pupils. One cannot help getting the impression that they are more employed as unskilled labourers to promote the productiveness of the establishment than as apprentices or pupils who are there to learn a trade.⁴⁹

In Kavango, in particular, the Roman Catholic mission, for example, applied their underlying educational principles known as "Erziehung zur Arbeit" and "Nicht zu viel lernen" which can be translated as "Work Education."⁵⁰ In a letter to the Director of Education in Windhoek, Father August Lochsfelder, Rector and teacher at the Roman Catholic mission Bunya, reported in 1933 that the manual work for all classes included gardening, the weaving of mats, fishing baskets and picture frames.⁵¹

In May 1946 the Organiser for Native Education visited the oldest school in Kavango, Nyangana. On his return to Grootfontein, he reported his findings to the Director of Education in Windhoek as follows:

Handwerk word op groot skaal gedoen onder die toesig van die hoof. Nie alleen word die gewone vleg- en mandjiewerk onderrig nie, maar die meidjies maak hulle eie rokke en brei kouse en musse. Die versiering van karton- en houtdosies met ystervarkpenne vereis behendigheid en word slegs deur die ouere leerlinge beoefen. Die voltooide artikels het 'n besonder goeie indruk gemaak.⁵²

On a visit of the officer in charge of Native Affairs to the same school on the 16th July 1934, the principal of the school produced a number of articles which have been made by the boys. They consisted of table cloths and other fancy work such as baskets, picture frames, handbags and trays which were made from mealie and palm leaves. According to the report of the officer, the only articles made by the girls were rough grass baskets used for the carrying of grain and flour.⁵³

From the information supplied by informants who attended mission schools, it was clear that practical training, although it was done after school and on Saturdays, formed an integral part of the school curriculum. The informants emphasized that this education was aimed at producing articles for the mission stations, but not for learning a trade. In Finnish Lutheran schools carpentry and brick making for boys and domestic science for girls were part of the curriculum. Boys made furniture such as beds, chairs, tables and desks. They also did bricklaying and plastering. The former scholars indicated further that furniture such as beds and desks was used by the scholars themselves and that the first school building at Rupara Finnish Lutheran Mission station was also built by the scholars.⁵⁴

Domestic science for girls included cooking, doing laundry and ironing. Needlework, home-care and child-rearing were also taught. Kavango girls who attended the Catholic Girls Primary School at Waldfrieden outside Kavango, received the same education.

Gardening seemed to be the most important practical occupation of boys and girls, probably because of the river,

high rainfall and the fertility of some parts of the Kavango soil, or because agriculture was part of Kavangan life. Gardening involved keeping the fruit and vegetable gardens for missionaries' use and big fields where grain, maize, pumpkins and watermelons were planted for the scholars use. The Officer in charge of Native Affairs, who visited Nyangana Roman Catholic school in 1934 reported to the Director of Education in Windhoek:

A large mealie field and vegetable garden is maintained by the scholars, who are obliged to spend a certain numbers of hours daily in the fields. A quantity of mealies, vegetables, tobacco, etc. is grown and reaped for the scholar's use. This seems to be the most useful section of the school.⁵⁵

Agricultural education was not highly developed in a society which depended overwhelmingly on farming. New skills, unknown to the pupils were not introduced or taught. The recipients of this education therefore have tended to regard its practical nature as inferior, skills of the hands being associated with low subsistence farming economy and hard labour and low wages. From the recipients point of view this type of education was meant to condemn them to an inferior position in society. Another reason for the failure of attempts by missionaries to agriculturize Kavango education was the contemporary African demand for a more academic type of education. This was linked with the realities of the prevailing job market, there being a greater demand in the emerging economy for teachers, interpreters and clerks than for technically trained persons. On the other hand both the missionaries and settlers in the country needed trained labourers. Therefore, the missionaries's moves to give a vocational orientation to Kavango education were seen by the recipients as attempts to provide second-class education and "to keep the African in his place." Writing about the same issue, Wellington (1967) points out that the simple fact was that if the Whites required African servants, they could only ensure a continuous supply by seeing to it that the servants were kept in a state of decided educational inferiority to

their masters. To educate them was to give them contact with world movements and world thinking which from the White's point of view "inculcates such mischievous and intolerable ideas as democracy, the brotherhood of man, fundamental human freedoms, and the like." The colonial Administration and the Whites generally preferred to deal with "raw" Africans who were much more honest and useful than the educated ones who tried to "ape" Europeans. Wellington further argues that this attitude goes back to German times when Paul Rohrbach, the Imperial Emigration Commissioner, speaking the mind of the great majority of Whites, recommended that missions should be allowed the freest and widest field of operation possible, "but under the fundamental exclusion of any writing and reading instruction that could lead to the understanding of a European language."⁵⁶

The blunt truth behind the rejection of practical education was that the scholars did not see agriculture as a necessary part of the curriculum. If, for instance, traditional elements such as Kavango history, religion, music, and the like were not included in the curriculum, then it was not understandable why agriculture was singled out as being a necessary part of the curriculum. What the scholars wanted was intellectual education, the education that would enable them to escape from hard labour and to adapt to the changing economic system. This type of education was also seen by scholars as the route to high wages, equality and power, and a better life.

Mission schooling was producing a limited number of teachers and minor administrative personnel. The majority of the products of their schools, who were semi-literate, were to make up the labour force which was needed for the growing White population. The objectives of missionary education in Namibia as a whole were summarized by Hoeflich, a German missionary working among the Herero people, as follows:

For its development the country does not need "educated negroes" but competent, intelligent workers. The main emphasis will therefore be on education for obedience, order, punctuality, sobriety, honesty, diligence and moderation, rather than academic learning.⁵⁷

Another German missionary, Rev. Vedder, reported in 1940 with reference to the education of Africans in Namibia as follows:

As the aim of the school for Natives is not the production of learned persons, but a useful preparation for that kind of life which the children will afterwards be called upon to live as members of the working class of the population within the borders of South West Africa, the instruction in practical subjects is very useful and what has already been reached therein justifies good expectations for the future.⁵⁸

In Kavango and everywhere in the country the education principle (*Ora et Labora*) was based on raising obedient labourers for White farmers and for missionaries, because they also held land and needed cheap labour.

The importance of mission schooling was further reflected in the economic function they performed. With the expansion of trade and administration, both the government and commercial enterprises needed local staff to fill the lower posts which it would have been impossible to fill by expatriates. It should be understood that traders, for example, as well as settlers found the mission educated boys useful. The fact was that the traders wanted literate storekeepers and salesmen, the miners and farmers wanted clerks and foremen who could count cattle and workers, take stock of the tools and implements, and above all, a man they could easily converse with in German (earlier) and Afrikaans (later). The colonial administration needed literate assistant clerks and messengers who could accompany the regional "native" Commissioners to remote places where he could deliver his message to the people. Interpreters were also needed to translate his message in local languages so that the people could understand it. Therefore, the political and socioeconomic realities demanded that missionaries, supported by the administration, provide at least elementary education for the simple reason that the colony would not develop economically and could not be managed politically if the vast majority of the people remained uneducated, and

that those few who were educated were to occupy secondary positions in the administration. As teachers, interpreters, messengers, drivers and foremen, Africans were indispensable auxiliaries in the administration and economic exploitation of the colony.

Many missionaries adopted the view that academic knowledge was not suitable for a Kavango individual or African who was sometimes referred to as 'ape' or 'sub-human'. Father Bierfert was one of the missionaries who often used the term 'ape' when referring to those whom he wanted to convert. In writing about the Vagciriku of Kavango, he noted:

Die von mir öfter geäußerte Behauptung, ihr stammt jedenfalls von den Affen ab, wurde stets als Beleidigung empfunden und mit Entrüstung zurückgewiesen.⁵⁹

Missionaries appear to have believed in the Darwinian doctrine which asserted that Africans were the lowest human species with the lowest intellectual state. Father Bierfert was presumably referring to the Darwinian theory of evolution. Makaya reflects the attitude of many missionaries (at the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference of 1910) as follows:

"Animistic people usually on a low state of human development and intellectual hindrance arise chiefly from the fact Owing to their low intellectual state, they have but little sense of natural causation It is largely because of the absence of reflection that they are in bondage to superstition and witchcraft."⁶⁰

It could, thus, be argued that Darwin's hypothesis that human beings originate from animals was useful to missionaries, because they could use it when referring to Africans.

In writing about his experience with the Kavango people, Bierfert mentioned that these pagans could not be convinced about the stupidity and foolishness of their superstition through teaching.⁶¹ Bridgman (1981) states that White settlers referred to Africans as "baboons" and treated them accordingly. He quotes one missionary reporting that the real cause of the bitterness among the Herero people towards

the Germans was without question the fact that the average German looked down upon Africans as being about on the same level as the higher primates (baboon being the favourite term) and treated them like animals.⁶²

The belief that Africans were on the same level as the higher primates and that they were inferior to Whites seemed to be a common theme throughout Africa. Lyons (1970) notes:

Western racial commentators generally agreed that Blacks were inferior to Whites in moral fibre, cultural attainment, and mental ability. Traditional ideas about the lesser cranial capacity of Blacks, the similarities of Blacks and apes, and the pre-Adamite ancestry of Africans persisted throughout the period discussed in the paper. However, those ideas took on new meanings in the light of Charles Darwin's evolutionary discoveries. Later nineteenth century anthropologists and biologists saw the African as a creature much less evolved than the European; the African was, to many eyes, the child in the family of man, modern man in embryo.⁶³

Many missionaries and settlers believed that the characteristics of an African adult are like those of a European child. Therefore, they argued that the intellectual ability of what they believed to be the 'Child Race' or 'Animal Race' did not need academic knowledge. To the missionaries in Kavango it must have seemed a waste of time to give a Kavango academic knowledge, which was beyond his mental and intellectual ability. Writing about Africa Lyons states:

What was needed was a training in agriculture and the more menial vocational subjects. Such training was within the African's ability to learn and it did not "spoil" him by giving him too high an opinion of himself.⁶⁴

It could be argued that while not all missionaries and settlers shared the racist view that Africans could not be educated at all, there was agreement on the advisability of making the African population more useful within the framework of a developing and presumably permanent European community. While the missions in some degree saw education as a means of evangelizing the people and of improving their life, they could not fail to be influenced by the

Administration's views that African education should be directed towards producing a useful labour force. This could be illustrated by the subject known as "work education" which was in accordance with the German missionary motto "Ora et Labora" (Erziehung zur Arbeit). "Work Education" was designed to "discipline" the young Africans and turn them into useful labour to be exploited by settlers, and this was warmly welcomed by the administration. Against this the Herero people complained that the education offered to their children had as its objective and aim the inculcation of the African inferiority to the Whites, and that the highest duty of the African should be to remain the White man's servant.⁶⁵ Owing to the fact that Africans in northern regions (Ovambo, Kavango, Koako and Caprivi) were regarded by both the administrator and settlers as an invaluable labour reservoir, one cannot fail to believe that "work education" was introduced in Kavango by German missionaries to serve that purpose.

There was, thus, cooperation between missionary and administrator/settler on education for Africans. In Southern Africa this cooperation "stemmed from the convergence of their interests. Both shared the ideology of racism, cultural imperialism, White supremacy, and capitalist materialism fashionable among Europeans ... The missionary, therefore, was the best agent to produce the efficient, law abiding, subservient African labourers and consumers, through a "good Christian education".⁶⁶

Another tendency which was noted by an informant was that some missionaries commented that academic knowledge was not meant for Black people, because they did not know how to use the knowledge that arose from that education. They further argued that academic knowledge would give an African a "swollen Head" which would lead to madness. In answer to a question whether Kavango people believed in this theory, the following comments were made:

Until recently there was a tendency among some conservative Kavango people to refer to an educated person as a mad person. Dr R. Kampungu, the first member of the Kavango community to have an international PhD degree from a European University, was known among Kavango conservatives or traditionalists as a mad person.⁶⁷

Writing about the underdevelopment of African education in Zimbabwe, Mungazi (1982) refers to the same theory:

The colonial negative attitudes and policies towards the educational development of the Africans were based on many assumptions, including the myth of African intellectual inferiority and the belief that western education would create serious health and physical dangers to the Africans.⁶⁸

Arguments of African mental inferiority were used as justification for keeping Kavango children away from an academically orientated education and steering them into agricultural and industrial programs. As pointed out by Nachtwei (1976) industrial education (traditional handicrafts and trades such as bricklaying, carpentry and blacksmithing) was emphasized in schools in order to prevent the African from reaching a level where he could become dangerous for the Whites.⁶⁹ This meant that industrial education would make him a good labourer and enlightened citizen. At the same time it would keep him depoliticised and would teach him to know "his place". Europeans feared that academically orientated education would exacerbate political tensions borne out of social tension.

Education offered by missionaries may be seen as a wedge which was forced between what they called the pagan beliefs and tradition of the Kavango people. Some missionaries believed that everything of the White man was wonderful and valuable. Because of this belief, they regarded it their destined mission to put something valuable in the place of these evil practices of the Kavango people. Louis Burger, a man who worked with missionaries for 25 years and therefore identifies himself with them, argues that it was necessary that missionaries included the civilizing theme in their curriculum, because he feels that those "pagan practices" of the Kavango people could not be tolerated by both missionaries and other Whites living in Kavango. Burger argues as follows:

Before the arrival of missionaries in Kavango, pagan practice was the order of the day in that area. The child had to grow up in this formless, undirected, chaotic youth world in which only his existence was of great importance. The mission had to change his whole school of thought, and the only way to do it was to put something valuable in the place of that against which they preached.⁷⁰

From Helsinki (Finland), the Mission Director of the Finnish Mission Society, Dr. M. Tarkanen wrote that the Finnish Mission Society saved the people from taking part in the Herero uprising of 1904 and that "it has broken the witchcraft and in many other ways civilized even the heathen population."⁷¹ In a report dealing with Kavango and Ovambo schools in 1936, the Director of education refers to Kavango and Ovambo peoples as "raw and uncivilized natives" whose education constitutes a very difficult task.⁷²

In opposition to these arguments, Kavango people interviewed claimed that what Burger and missionaries considered to be evil, was valuable to the Kavango people themselves, and what he believed to be good and right (western civilization and religion) was not fancied by many Kavango people during the initial period. They argued that Kavango people at that time had little or no wish to become Christians nor were they interested in western civilization. This can be supported by Bierfert's statement that the success of their preaching was nil and that the preaching on Sundays was not enough to convince the Kavango people:

Als wir in Gründungsjahre unser erstes Wohnhaus unter Dach hatten, mussten wir darüber klar werden, welche Mittel und Wege wir wählen sollten, um diese Urheiden zu bekehren. Der sonntägliche Predigt genügte nicht ... Der Erfolg der Predigt war Null.⁷³

In answer to an inquiry about the methods used by missionaries to gain converts and scholars, ten informants gave a very similar answer which can be summarised as follows: In the first place missionaries started to bribe Kavango chiefs by offering them gifts. For the time being the chiefs were attracted by the material comforts and wealth of missionaries. In order to gain materially from the foreigners, the chiefs in return ordered their people to attend church services and to send their children to school. Secondly, people who attended church services were rewarded with material goods such as blankets, trousers, dresses, shoes, shawls and groceries such as sugar, sweets, salt and coffee or tea. In addition everyone was given a handful of tobacco. Thirdly, children were invited to mission stations

to attend school for payment. They were, however, not paid in cash, but in goods such as blankets, clothing and sweets. On many occasions missionaries hunted and killed wild animals and distributed the meat among their converts. On special days such as Christmas and Easter missionaries arranged parties for the people in order to attract them to the mission stations. Consequently, many people, Christians as well as Non-Christians started settling near mission stations in order to gain material possessions.⁷⁴

Bierfert mentions that there was once a school strike because the children were not happy with the idea of attending school for nothing. They demanded a reward or payment for attending lessons in reading and writing.⁷⁵ The report of the Administrator for 1927 said:

The number of pupils is very small. It can be said that the people of the Okavango area have not responded well to mission influence. They look upon the missions as a means of obtaining light employment, food and clothing, rather than as a means of obtaining education and enlightenment.⁷⁶

Missionaries and their supporters were aware that while they condemned social and cultural values of Kavango people as evil and heathen, they failed to provide alternatives acceptable and understandable for their converts. As has been shown out by Van Tonder, the missions failed miserably to produce a social structure in which a better life for Africans in Namibia could be found. To teach an individual not to respect ancestors and not to be involved in traditional dances is according to Van Tonder's point of view, irrelevant if the social structure in which his values find expression is broken down:

These missions have failed because they started breaking down and humiliating the symbol of that structure, the chieftainship. By doing this they undermined the sacred and spiritual unity of the tribe which no administration, not with the best will in the world, can ever hope to regain.⁷⁷

The schools on central mission stations were all boarding schools. Shortly after completion of these central stations, missionaries persuaded parents to send their children in mission hostels, because missionaries believed

the pupil's home and Non-Christian parents had a negative influence on their Christianity efforts. Father Heinz Hunke (1980), a Roman Catholic priest wrote:

In 1911, a conference of Catholic missionaries complained about the utter immorality of the native family system and the wicked influence at home under which the youth must grow. They, therefore, recommended immediate erection of hostels or boarding schools where the children would remain under the same influence of the missionaries.⁷⁸

Father Bierfert, when referring to the first nursery school at Nyangana mission station (1910), wrote that the school was there to protect the small ones against the bad influence of adults. After they had been baptized, it was expected from them to stay for a longer period in the mission stations hostels in order to lead a Christian life.⁷⁹ The hostels in missions stations were, thus, another way of rooting out what missionaries considered to be evil customs among Kavango children.

Parents were opposed to hostels, firstly because of the severe discipline and the suffering their children endured and secondly, because they needed them for duties such as cattle herding, ploughing, harvesting, fetching water from the river, cleaning the compound, gathering wood, cooking. This was part of their education which prepared them for adulthood and citizenship. Informants who could remember what conditions were like in their school hostels help one gain a fuller picture. V. Matamu, a pupil at Nyangana Catholic school in 1944 remembers the following:

We slept on cold floors in big sleeping halls. Missionaries did not supply us with beds and blankets. We had to get the blankets from our poor parents. Our parents were forced to sell one or two heads of cattle to Portuguese traders and then bought the blankets from shops that belong to missionaries. We woke up at five in the morning, walked to the river and bathed in cold water. From six to seven we attended the Holy Mass in the Church. From 7h00 to 7h45 we cleaned our sleeping halls, the compounds, missionaries' rooms and many other places. Without having breakfast, we attended school from 08h00 to 13h00. The rest of the time until 18h00 was spent working on mission stations and surroundings.

N. Libebe, a pupil at Nyangana Catholic Mission School in 1930 added the following:

I am not exaggerating in equating life in a school hostel with life in a prison or in a refugee camp. First of all the child was separated from his parents and home and was not allowed to visit his parents, except on long holidays. There was no leisure time, because the Catholic's belief was based on hard labour, prayer and less school work. The main emphasis of hostel life was put on hard labour. We did not learn much in school. As far as I can remember, we spent the school hours singing church hymns, reading the Bible, writing dictation and a little bit of counting from 1-100.

F. Fughe, a pupil at the Roman Catholic School Andara (1944) remembers the following:

Conditions in school hostels were so bad that many children secretly disappeared from mission stations and returned back to their parents' homes where they could enjoy freedom and eat better food. We were confined to the mission stations and surroundings, working in fields, gardens, helping in clinics, cleaning missionaries' rooms, helping with carpentry, painting, building and many other duties. All these were done under the strict supervision of a priest or nun (in the case of girls).

J. Shiwarongo a pupil at the Bunya Catholic school in 1949 had this to say:

The first thing I hated while in school hostel was hard labour. Especially in the afternoons, we worked from 15h00 to 18h00 without any rest. By the time we went to bed we could feel the pain in our small backs. Our parents at home never let us work like that. The second problem we encountered was hunger. We never had breakfast in school hostels. We attended school lessons with empty stomachs. Our first meal for the day was enjoyed at 13h00 during the day and the second meal was at 18h00 in the afternoon. The food was badly cooked by the older boys, and consisted mostly of beans and thick mealie pap.⁸⁰

Parents argued that the work their children were doing on mission stations were different from that performed at home. At home they were assisting their parents, but on mission stations they were working as labourers for the upkeep of mission stations. Work such as breaking stones with pick

axes and hammers and carrying the stones in buckets and wheelbarrows from the river to the mission stations was not children's work. This type of work was never done by children at home. This was the work of adults. Parents felt that hard labour would cause severe health problems in the children's adult life. They argued that experience had taught them that a child whose duties involved picking up heavy objects and carrying heavy loads could easily develop back pain problems in adult life.

Another reason for opposing boarding schools was the fear of parents that children would change their attitudes. Parents felt that isolated boarding schools could reinforce attitudes of elitism in their children. Experience had taught them that old boys of boarding schools who were teachers by 1935 had the tendency to consider themselves, not only different, but superior to the common people.

In order to gain boarders for their boarding schools missionaries travelled from village to village and from household to household to persuade parents to send their children to boarding school. Gifts were given to Non-Christian parents who refused to send their children to boarding schools. Most Christian parents and their children were, however, afraid to negate the missionaries' wishes because they did not want to be cursed. "Once a missionary cursed you, you and your whole family would die or would develop terrible diseases."⁸¹

Opposition to missionaries' wishes was never tolerated. Those who dared to negate any statement or remark made by a missionary were referred to as "Children of the Devil" and they were punished corporally before expelling them out from the mission hostel and school. German missionaries of the Catholic and Rhenish missions were the most extreme in treating their converts. Hunke maintains that German missionaries' attitude of educating Africans to make them useful collaborators within the White system and of pacifying them to avoid any rebellion, remained throughout the period in which White missionary personnel were in charge of schools.

Confessional opposition remained irreconcilable at those times; the missionary strategies were the same. The churches hold the same pessimistic attitude towards African societies; the same faith in obedience, punctuality, labour, the same collaboration with the law and order of the German colonial rule: no Kulturkampf in German South West Africa; patriotism and faithfulness to the Emperor were the same for Protestants and Roman Catholic.⁸²

In Kavango the Roman Catholics preached obedience and peace, submission and docility in following the leadership of the missionary. All former Catholic scholars interviewed stated that the Catholic mission would not tolerate opposition to what they preached. The former scholars stated that whenever there was opposition the tribal chief was summoned in order to suppress the opposition. The offender could either receive corporal punishment or he was expected to pay one head of cattle before he was ordered to leave the mission station immediately. They submitted that pupils expelled from mission stations had no alternative but to go on contract labour. The Finnish Lutheran former scholars argued that the Finnish Lutheran missionaries were more liberal in attitude when approaching situations such as these. Opposition to missionaries was to them not an offence. Finnish Lutherans were tolerant, they tried to understand those who opposed their wishes and they were given the chance to proceed with their learning.⁸³ Their tolerance can possibly be attributed to the fact that Finland was not a colonial power, and that the intention of the Finnish missionaries was not to make the inhabitants of Ovambo and Kavango subjects of that power.

While in mission schools and in mission hostels the Kavango children learned to be Christians and to appreciate Western ideals and western culture. It was also expected of them to cast out their old traditions and to learn to dissociate themselves from their homes, their Non-Christian families and community. Consequently, some of these young people became detribalised and lost their identity. The experience in other African countries was that African children who attended mission schools belonged to the church and, thus, had been subjected to the rules for membership of the church. These rules included a ban on anything which was

outside the missionaries theological conception.⁸⁴ P.X.
Shilubane sums up the situation in Africa:

In some places such as Zimbabwe the rules forbade school children to attend "night-dances". This put a blanket ban on all forms of ancestor cult ceremonies which usually took place at night. Christian parents were also forbidden to attend asking for rain as well as have ceremonies and the making of offerings to family ancestors. In many African societies traditional musical instruments were forbidden as accompaniments of Christian worships; the drum in particular was considered to have associations with the heathen past and also to have the effect of exciting people. Natives' musical forms were frowned on because of association with hunting, fighting and scolding of wrongdoers. Dancing was also prohibited.⁸⁵

A former pupil who attended the Roman Catholic mission schools of Nyangana and Sambyu, A. Hashipara, whose views were supported by other former mission school pupils said:

Kavango people who were brought up in mission hostels were indoctrinated by missionaries to despise their traditional beliefs, customs and education. They were taught to appreciate the White man's culture and religion and to live according to that culture and religion. Today, these people are totally lost, in other words, they have lost their identity. They can be compared with an earthly object hanging in the air, which is unable to find its way back to where it belongs.⁸⁶

The ban on everything connected with the African way of life have resulted in the estrangement of the Kavango people and other Africans in Namibia from their culture.⁸⁷ Comparatively, in the whole of Southern Africa "this led to the emergency of individuals and groups whose beliefs, values and lifestyles were quite alien and antithetical to African traditions Some from the boarding schools have learned to despise traditional forms of dress, cosmetics, entertainment, and etiquette. Simultaneously, those Africans, who have not acquired formal education, hence good jobs and material possessions, due to either traditionalism or lack of money and schools, are made to feel inferior and worthless."⁸⁸ As shown by Hunt Davis, Asevedo, Chainaiwa and Pachai, one of the ideals of colonial education was to produce a "good African" who was supposed to be a self-deprecating, black-skinned European and a

docile tool of settler colonialism whose highest ambition was to live like a settler in whose image he had been moulded. At boarding school, the African was taught the White's history and culture and instilled with their capitalistic individualism, materialism and ethics. "Thus removed from his village, people and values, and living on imported ideas, the culturally "born-again" African became alienated from himself and his heritage. Often this alienation created a serious identity crisis."⁸⁹

With the idea of forcing the people to dissociate themselves from their own culture and to appreciate and accept the foreign tradition, missionaries created the impression among the Kavango people that everything associated with them was superior and that everything of the Kavango people was inferior and worthless. Referring to Africa in general:

Consequently, some Africans distinguish between the God of humanity and the God of the "boreal nations". They see some missionaries to have come to Africa to preach about the "deus es machina" and to make the Africans believe that it is only through that medium that they can have life. They conclude that the African God who listens to all kinds of African music, who admires the African's dancing and his laughter is then substituted with the boreal God who dislikes the very thing that gives the African life and strength.⁹⁰

Culturally and psychologically African children and adults were undergoing a disorienting experience under this disturbing indoctrination. At both the individual and community levels, they were experiencing a new identity crisis of magnitude.

Mission education imposed a great strain on the Kavango children and other African children in the whole country due to the fact that it was not related to the pupil's milieu and situation. In Africa at large, this problem led to the formation of the Phelps-Stokes African Education Commission⁹¹ in 1934 which attempted to adapt the school curricula to the natural and social environment of the pupils. The recommendations of the Commission were, however, difficult to be put into practice due to the fact that the teachers were not re-educated. Commenting on this issue, John Wilson

(1966) mentions that the educational activities seen in the community, that were believed to be the implementation of the Phelps-Stokes principles were in reality not related to the life of the community. John Wilson writes:

Despite appearances these educational activities were not really effectively related to or meaningful in the life of the community. Nor were they effective and meaningful in terms of the school curriculum ... Hygiene was studied as a set of textbooks rules and physiological facts to be memorized, not as a science based on observation to be applied in living a healthy life. Nature study was more a list of orders of the natural world to be memorized from biological textbooks ... Arithmetic remained as it had been before, memorization of little understood tables, rules and processes, seldom if ever applied to the practical purposes of the school garden, the family economy, good husbandry, and civic economic.⁹²

As media of instruction in missionary schools, the Kavango indigenous languages were frequently encouraged for the first three years of school. The indigenous languages were, however, seen as a preliminary to education through the medium of Afrikaans. From Sub A to Sub B pupils were introduced to the vocabularies of the two European languages, English and Afrikaans. Missionaries, however, concentrated on Afrikaans due to pressure and demand from the South African officials who continuously complained that their language was being neglected in African schools. (German was never taught in primary schools). The director of education, after visiting a teacher training centre at Oniipa in 1936 stated:

The lady missionary in charge of Afrikaans was on furlough to Finland. The teaching of Afrikaans was left in the hands of the Native teacher. It was evident that this teacher, could not do justice to the subject as hardly any progress in that language had been made by the students. The teacher's own training has been inadequate to fit him as a teacher of the subject in a training college. The pupil's vocabulary and pronunciation were extremely poor. Their reading in a Standard 1 Afrikaans reader was weak and unintelligent.⁹³

Reacting to the teaching of one of the official languages (Afrikaans) in missionary schools, as a condition urged by officers in charge of Native Affairs, for receiving school sites, Rev. Paunu wrote:

Of course we can do that. But it is a matter which is against all pedagogical methods. In primary schools all instruction ought to be given in the vernacular tongue of the pupils. And it had ever been one of the main principles in the non-roman mission that as well the preaching of the Gospel as the teaching should be given in the vernacular languages.⁹⁴

In higher classes, that is from Std 1, the teaching of both European languages was encouraged in order to enable the pupils to meet the requirement arising from what the colonists and missionaries believed to be contacts with European civilization. In answer to Rev. Paunu's letter, the Administrator of South West Africa wrote:

The first step must necessarily be made through the mother tongue but it is in the interest of the native who goes out to work amongst the Europeans to have a knowledge of either Afrikaans or English and for this reason it is considered that in the third or even the second school year one of the official languages should be taught.⁹⁵

Missionaries totally disregarded all facets of the Kavango tradition, except for learning the Kavango dialects. The studying and writing of Kavango dialects was necessary for their work if the conversion was to be meaningful and successful. Missionaries had, thus, to know the indigenous languages in order to communicate with their converts and pupils, to spread Christianity and preach the Gospel through the education they offered.

The method used by Catholic missionaries to learn the indigenous languages was described by Bierfert as follows:

Initially the young missionary comes to an older colleague (brother), who introduces him with the help of a grammar book, a dictionary and a catechism into the acquisition of the language of the people. After a few months of intensive study he is able to hold a sermon in this language. However, once he mingles with the people, he becomes aware of the fact that he still has a lot to learn. Even though he can speak to the people, he does not understand, what the people say to him, because he only learned the language with his eyes, not with his ears. He will only be able to understand the people if he maintains constant contact with them.⁹⁶

Concerning the Finnish Lutheran missionaries, Green (1952) mentions that they learned the indigenous languages before leaving Finland. Referring to children of the Finnish missionaries, Green wrote:

They learned the Ovambo language rapidly, and I heard a father call upon his five year old son at lunch one day to settle the pronunciation of a word.⁹⁷

With the help of their Kavango assistants missionaries were able to write and publish booklets which were used in their schools. The content of the reading books was mostly based on the importance of the Christian religion and the Kavango environment. Father Bierfert pioneered the first Catechism and the first two reading books, titled **NGANDU** (crocodile) and **NDUNDU** (mountain). With the assistance of Chief Nyangana's son, Mbambo, he succeeded in translating some extracts of the Bible in Rugciriku. The book titled **Nkango damu rukuaru rua Karunga** (Words from God's Scripture) was used in the church, in schools and in homes as a bible. Another book written by Bierfert was **Va liro lietu** (Our relatives).⁹⁸

In Finnish Lutheran schools in Kavango the books used were all written in Ovambo dialects, Oshindonga and Oshikwanjama. Their first ABC - book, written by Lahja Väänänen in Rukwangali was published in 1953. Other Std 1 and 2 booklets were published in 1962 and 1963, respectively.⁹⁹

3.4 KAVANGO RESPONSE TO MISSIONARY EDUCATION

Kavango people did not unquestioningly accept the introduction of western education. Their response to western education should be seen against the background of the disruption of Kavango society by missionaries and the negative attitude of missionaries to Kavango culture and the Kavangan way of life. In general, missionaries put a Christian revolutionary demand to their converts and other members of society: Kavango people should throw away the traditions, beliefs and customs that clashed with Christianity and accept a new way of life, social code and morals. They should reject their **Vahompa** (kings), chiefs, medicine men, rainmakers, elders and their non-Christian

families and relatives. Many missionaries condemned the religion, rituals and dancing that was alien to their concept of religion. Hunke (1980) notes that in Namibia as in other parts of Africa, Christian missionaries' strategies were to weaken powerful leaders in order to break through into heathen society and make it collapse. The former way of life which the people enjoyed, the traditions of their forefathers, were constantly being cursed and belittled by the mighty White missionaries. Referring to the history of the Christian churches in Namibia Hunke notes:

It is a mission history full of personal heroism and admirable individual dedication. Seen objectively on the level of structural effects it is a history of complicity in the disastrous work of colonial power. In a religious evaluation, and according to Christian criteria, it is the history of sad error of confusing imposed civilization with a conversion of faith.¹⁰⁰

Rev. D. Ellenberger (1938), writing about the ideals and conception of the first missionaries in South Africa and Lesotho observed:

From the very first ... all the customs that seemed to them incompatible with Christianity have been fearlessly denounced and forbidden by them ... In order to become converts, the Basutos had to make real and very heavy sacrifices...They aimed at quality, not quantity, and from the very first they set their faces firmly against anything tending to accommodate or compromise that sphere of moral life which is the most important for a church that has grown out of paganism. It is safer to push Christian intransigence too far than to leave the door open for dangerous customs. One must break definitely with heathendom and not run the risk of letting it come into the Church again as a victor, and thereby bring about the ruin or the degradation of that Church.¹⁰¹

In Kavango, missionaries used what may be described as extreme methods to break Kavango traditions. In churches and schools they preached and taught that people should respect each other, but at the same time they consciously or unconsciously failed to demonstrate their preaching. Some missionaries appear to have had little respect for the Kavango people. Women who, according to western standards, should be treated with respect, were humiliated. Kavango tradition, for instance required that women and girls should

plait their hair in different complicated styles. This custom had, according to the people interviewed, a very strong traditional value.¹⁰² For missionaries the plaits were considered to be dirty, unhealthy and undesirable, and they demanded that all school girls and women converts should cut their hair. On their refusal, some Catholic missionaries, like Father Wüst, pioneered the cutting of girls' and women's hair. This hurt parents, husbands, chiefs, elders (and professional hairdressers as well), and was seen by the whole Kavango community as a humiliation of women and a violation of their honour and dignity. Missionaries, on the other hand, seemed to have proudly believed that they succeeded in eliminating one of those 'dangerous' customs that were incompatible with Christianity and Western education. Lategan (1980), who conducted an interview with Dr M. Fish, former missionary (medical) doctor who worked at Nyangana missionary hospital, writes:

Eise van die sendelinge se kant om van sekere vasgewortelde gebruike af te sien omdat dit heidens of onhigiënies was, het sterk teenkanting uitgelok. Die inboorlinge het nie kans gesien om ter wille van Christenskap 'n totaal nuwe lewenswyse te aanvaar nie. Een kwessie wat veral onder die Hambukushu teenstand ontlok het, was die vrouens se haartooisels ...Hierdie gebruik het sterk tradisionele waarde gehad. Vader Wüst het dit uiters onhigiënies en ongewens beskou en geëis dat die bekeerlinge en skooldogters hul hare moes afsny. Sterk teenkanting teen hierdie verbreking van die tradisie is ondervind.¹⁰³

In the eyes of the Kavango people missionaries failed to adjust their religion to the Kavango milieu and to make it understandable to the people. Missionaries proudly believed that their own religion, their own way of life and their education were best for the people. They also believed that Kavango children were happy with the new system of education which they had brought with them. In this regard, Louis Burger stated:

Think about the experience of the child when it starts to communicate by means of letters and figures. What a totally new idea which necessarily should replace the old one; and yet the missionaries had to offer something in place of the old one that they condemned. Thus, the missionaries' major task was a revolutionary attack against the traditions of a nation which

was being transmitted for many centuries so that the child had to accept it as a way of life. Thus, what the missionaries had to offer had to be accepted without question or qualification.¹⁰⁴

Kavango people were opposed to Western education and religion in the initial times for several reasons. First, to the chiefs, medicine men and elders in the community, it was clear that missionaries were attacking the foundations of the Kavango society. Kavango parents, elders and headmen did not want anything to do with strange religious teachings, nor were they particularly keen that their children should become Christians. They felt that missionaries were threatening their own authority over the younger generation. Consequently they opposed the establishment of churches and schools and kept their youth away from school in trying to defend their society and prevent the social disintegration. Chiefs felt that their authority over the whole society and their school prestige was being threatened, which meant that they saw the new teachings as being a potential threat to their power, and the customs of the Kavango people. On the question of whether there was any opposition from the Kavango people to Western education, L. Burger stated:

The answer is positive. There was enormous opposition to Western education at the initial time. Remember, the people had their own customs and traditions which were transmitted from generation to generation, and here comes a lot of strangers and foreigners and say that it is wrong. This means that the future prosperity of the people and their leaders was now in the balance.¹⁰⁵

The answers of the people interviewed can be summarised as follows:

That time when the traditional African economy was still very strong, no parent dreamt of sending his/her child to school. In the parents' opinion education would offer them nothing more than making them servants of the White man. If the economical and social structures of the people had not been changed, the missionaries would never have succeeded in getting some converts and pupils for their churches and schools. All five of the Kavango chiefs were uninterested in Christianity and education. What concerned them most were the material goods missionaries would offer them. The

presence of missionaries brought security and secular advantages. As long as missionaries did not interfere with Kavango customs, they were more of an asset than a threat. When their teachings conflicted with Kavango custom, the chiefs became hostile and bitter towards the missionaries. Their hostility was met with hatred on the part of missionaries. They were labelled as savages, heathens and fiends, in short, those associated with barbarism?

Remember that not one of the Kavango chiefs or their wives was converted to Christianity. They totally refused to be baptized and never encouraged their children to attend school.¹⁰⁶

As far as all Africans in Namibia were concerned, Niemand wrote:

Die Swartes was negatief teenoor die onderwyspogings van die sendelinge. Hierdie beskouing het tot die gevolg gehad dat baie kinders nie toegelaat was om die skole te besoek nie. Die ouers het geredeneer dat die skole die kinders uit die werk gehou het en dat dit wat hulle geleer het, minderwaardig en ontoereikend was. Die doel en praktiese waarde van die onderwys was dus duidelik bevraagteken.¹⁰⁷

The second reason for opposing Western education was because of its impact on traditional marriage. The pattern of early marriage for girls was traditional in Kavango, as elsewhere in Africa. Most parents in Kavango were in favour of early marriage for their daughters.¹⁰⁸

Parents argued that if they sent their daughters to schools, they would not be ready for marriage at the right time. In addition, parents felt that Western education would 'spoil' girls for their future husbands. From the parents' point of view, educated girls were always disobedient, and this change in attitude on the side of the girls would cause many difficulties which would result in divorce. From the information obtained during an interview, the idea of single parenthood and that of the unmarried woman which exists among the Kavango elite today was unthinkable before the arrival of the Europeans in the area. Therefore, they argued that these problems can partly be attributed to the imported education system.¹⁰⁹ There was, however, no impact on traditional marriage for boys, because boys could marry

even at a later stage.

Thirdly, parents were opposed to boarding schools. To the missionaries the separation of children from their homes was part of the education they have brought with them. To the Kavango parents the new system of education which involved living away from the family was not proper education. According to the parents, proper education would demand an uninterrupted stay at home. However, at a particular age when it was necessary to send the youth elsewhere for training, it would have been the decision of the parents themselves. In short, parents wanted their sons to help them with farming in the fields and on the Kavango plains. They wanted their daughters to help with domestic duties. Whether Mbukushu, Gciriku, Sambiu, Mbunza or Kwangali, children were expected to do some sort of light work suited to their age group.¹¹⁰

When asked why parents opposed the boarding school system and whether they did something to show their feelings, some former scholars answered:

Many parents protested against the missionaries' demand of taking their children to boarding school. One should remember the fact that the children were needed most for helping their parents in many duties. A parent was not able to do all these duties at the same time. It always happened that while parents were working in the mahangu fields, boys had to take the cattle to plains or pastures and look after them. Girls had to pound mahangu, fetch water from the river, look after small brothers and sisters, clean the compound, etc. On seeing that their children were being taken away, some parents marched to the mission stations armed with assegais, spears and daggers in order to attack missionaries and to rescue their children. If Kavango missionaries' assistants were unable to intervene, missionaries were forced to seek refuge in the church building or elsewhere.¹¹¹

The very labour that parents needed was also needed by missionaries. In the boarding school classroom, work was frequently interrupted by missionaries in order to use the boarders as labourers and servants on the mission stations and surroundings. Bierfert's statement "So Stütze die Arbeit die Schule und die Schule die Arbeit"¹¹¹ was a

justification of the activities. This statement can perhaps be interpreted to mean that these duties were part of the children's education.

This was seen by parents as exploiting their children. At a time in 1936 when attendance at Kavango mission schools was very low, the mission faced large scale failure. Lategan gives the reason for low attendance as the drought and famine which forced the children to abandon the school and to go into the veld in search of food.¹¹³ This reason contrasts with the version of former scholars interviewed. N. Libebe, who attended the Nyangana mission school during that time stated:

Children were held by parents from going to school because the education received served no purpose and parents saw no advantage in it. Parents argued that their children were doing more physical work than school work. They suspected that the schools were established with the sole intention of making Kavango youths more useful servants of the White community.¹¹⁴

Libebe's statement can be supported as the majority of scholars who finished Std 2 at mission schools and were not sent to Döbra afterwards, could do nothing more than contract labour in mines or work on settler farms where they were treated as menials. Because of this, many children were forced by parents to remain at home and help with family work. In 1937 missionaries had to face complete failure, and they consequently declared a long holiday for their schools, because children did not turn up.¹¹⁵

The fourth reason for opposing mission education was the paternalistic and domineering attitudes of missionaries, particularly the Catholics. This seems to have been a common occurrence in the rest of Namibia and in other African countries. Idowu Bolaji, writing of Christianity in Tropical African countries, pointed out that there

... were missionaries to whom the imperial flags meant more than the Cross of Christ, who had more regard for their White skins, European dignity and 'superior status' than they had for the brothers and sisters for whom Christ died, whose relationship with African ministers and other church workers was not one of collegueship, but

strictly official, always, or too often, that of master and servant; at best their attitude to the whole congregation was one of paternalism.¹¹⁶

That was virtually the position in Kavango. It was, for instance, an obligation that missionaries should be referred to by anyone, young or old, as 'Father', 'Brother', 'Sister', etc. When talking to missionaries Kavango Christians and non-Christians had to use the third person, for example "Would Father offer me a lift to the hospital, please!", "Would Sister allow me to see my grandson!", etc. At the same time they called Kavango individuals, even elders and the elderly, by name and treated them like small children. In the interview, N. Libebe recalled his amazement at seeing a Catholic priest ordering and shoving an elderly woman out of the church because she had come five minutes late for the church service. Another incident he recalled in the interview was seeing a priest giving a girl a good hiding during a church service because he had seen her asking for a hymn book from a friend.¹¹⁷ Niemand also mentioned that some missionaries were severe in their treatment of pupils in schools and churches.¹¹⁸

The paternalistic attitude of some of the missionaries was also accompanied by what today would be regarded as a racist attitude. Missionaries frequently referred to Kavango people and other Africans as a primitive race. This attitude could be shown in statements justifying their educational attitudes. In a report (dated 12 April 1933) sent to the Director of Education in Windhoek, Father August Lochsfelder, the then Director of Bunya mission station in Kavango wrote:

As to the discipline of the pupils, one has to remember the primitiveness of the race.¹¹⁹

Charles Lyons (1975), writing on British ideas about Black African educability has pointed out that not only Britons, but Westerners in general demonstrated racist and race prejudice attitudes. He argues that Christian missionaries fell under the influence of race-ideology and began to reflect the colonialist mentality:

Even when Africans and Europeans went to church together, they often did so on unequal terms. Kenneth Kaunda, son of an African clergy-man and the first President of Zambia, recalls in his autobiography his distress at seeing European missionaries assuming 'separate seats in the church'.¹²⁰

From the Fifties onward not only were elders, chiefs and parents opposed to the teaching of missionaries. Youngsters, mostly those who were adherents of missions, began to develop an unfriendly attitude and to be antagonistic towards their education. Young and old were confused when they found some missionaries behaving in ways which contradicted the Gospel which they were preaching. Kavango people were beginning to doubt whether the church's teaching of the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of all believers and the Christian teaching of human dignity had any validity at all.

Referring to South Africa, Wilson has stressed that one of the contradictions within the Christian church is that revolutionaries of one generation have repeatedly become conservatives of another, and that one of the criticisms made of the church in South Africa is that it helps to maintain the status quo in a caste society. Wilson stressed further:

In any community, anywhere, the Gospels remain revolutionary documents (as I have said) they continually bring institutions under judgement, and drive men to seek a social order more in conformity with love to one's neighbour. At the same time the structures of the church are essentially conservative, maintaining an existing community.¹²¹

In America and Africa this contradiction explains the establishment of independent Black churches which seek to institutionalise the view that the Christian faith is non-racist. The principal idea of these churches is the parenthood of God and the kinship of all humankind. In Namibia, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Namibia (ELC) in central and southern Namibia, and the Evangelical Lutheran Ovambo-Kavango Church (ELOC) in northern Namibia had begun

their role as a unifying force of Namibians and as the 'Voice of the Voiceless'. Since its establishment in 1954, the ELOC has been trying to create a non-divided Christianity, and one of her principal ideas is mutual love and esteem between all humankind. Together with the ELC, the ELOC (in 1960) adopted a resolution of fighting against racism and discrimination and campaigned against South African imported Bantu education. The two churches contributed in making the school-going youth and members aware of the negative effects of colonialism and apartheid. Since 1960, the youth in northern Namibia, who were members of the ELOC had become antagonistic towards the colonial state and its Bantu education.

3.5 DENOMINATIONAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CATHOLIC AND FINNISH LUTHERAN MISSIONS

From the beginning relations between the two missions were poor. There are several reasons for this state of affairs. Apart from doctrinal differences, the two missions were engaged in a rivalry for gaining more converts and sites. Both groups worked among the same people in western Kavango and the recruiting of pupils was sometimes carried out in the same villages.¹²² This intense competition began to confuse both Christians and non-Christians as such differences did not make sense to them. The result was that many Christians began to turn their backs on the Gospel and did not want to attend church services any longer. To illustrate the intense competition between the two missions, Bishop Gotthardt, Director of the Roman Catholic mission wrote in 1927 about Ovambo:

Est ist nun eine dringender Notwendigkeit, in möglichst kurzer Zeit eine Hauptniederlassung bei jedem Stam zu gründen, und das so mehr, da die Finnische Mission ... eine fiberhafte Tätigkeit entwickelt und versucht, sich überall den Vorsprung zu sichern. Die Mittel zur schnellen Inangriffname mehrerer Stationen in Ovamboland müssen daher unbedingt aufgebracht werden.¹²³

Quoting the Officer-in-Charge of Ovamboland, Mr Rappard, a member of the Mandate Commission noted:

The competition amongst the missions, particularly the Finnish and the Catholic denominations, is very keen. This seemed to him a rather important criticism of the work of missionaries, and he would be very grateful for an explanation.¹²⁴

In a letter (dated 27 June 1937) to Dr Paunu, the Assistant Native Commissioner at Rundu, referring to relations between the two missions, wrote:

As pointed out to you, the policy adopted previous to Proclamation No. 31 of 1932, was that the Mission Societies could operate and build anywhere in the tribal areas to which they had been admitted, provided they made their own arrangements with the Chiefs and headmen. This policy led to friction between the different Mission Societies, and the Native Chiefs and headmen. The missions also competed against each other, and built stations or established bush schools in proximity to existing schools of other missions. Your own Society was not blameless in this connection, having established bush schools - against the advice of the office - in the immediate vicinity of head stations of the Roman Catholic Mission at Sambusu (Bunja) and Utokota Sambiu.¹²⁵

Some of the former pupils of the two missions summarised the situation as follows:

Shortly after their arrival the two missions created a divided Christianity among the people of Kavango. From the beginning they were engaged in a sort of cold war, whereby one was accusing the other of intruding into its already occupied mission fields. The Roman Catholics were also accused of purchasing young children in order to baptize them and put them into their boarding schools. At the time, scholars as well as other Christians, had developed the nature of judging one's deeds and behaviour according to the teaching of the missions. There was too much hatred between the two missions that the missionaries never greeted one another and did not want to speak to one another or shake hands. On seeing these differences, Christians were confused and began to doubt whether the teaching of love to one's neighbour had any validity.¹²⁶

The Catholic mission was favoured by both the German

colonial regime and the neo-colonial regime of South Africa, while the Lutherans were neglected. One of the reasons for it being neglected was its nationality and linguistic difference and the fact that it was 'disloyal' to the two regimes. The Roman Catholic missionaries were, at the time all Germans, and were loyal to the state. Referring to differences between the German and Finnish missionaries, Hunke (a German Catholic priest) states:

In Ovamboland the Finnish missionaries worked with more freedom. Regarding matters in which they had to comply with colonial rule, such as schools and migratory labour, they obeyed the laws and educated their people to do so. The Finnish approach was very different from the German method ... They did not consider their missionary task as preparation and support for Finnlandization, nor did they have the support of their colonial government. The relationship of Ovambo people to the Finnish missionaries did not make the Ovamboland inhabitants the subjects of an alien power.¹²⁷

The unequal treatment which the two churches received from the colonial administration is evident in Rev. D. Alho's letter (dated 24 September 1927) to the Administrator of South West Africa. In this letter he expressed his disappointment at the refusal of the South West African Administration to their application for permission to begin missionary work in Kavango. They wanted to be treated like the Catholics who had been permitted to operate in Ovambo and Kavango. Rev. Alho wrote:

The other denominations have got the right to establish themselves everywhere in Ovamboland, though the Finnish Mission had already occupied all the Ovambo tribes. Why has the Finnish Mission not been given the same right at Okavango? The Finnish Mission has been working in Ovamboland 57 years. It has schools all over the land and 7 000 scholars. It has trained native teachers and pastors and a congregation of 20 000 Christians. Yet the Finnish Mission was not considered being able to serve alone the spiritual requirements of the Ovambo. How can it then be

said of the Roman Catholic Mission with regard to the Okavango people, which mission has not yet even settled herself in the district of Kuring-Kuru, so far as we know.¹²⁸

The Catholics were in the majority in Kavango, as their churches and schools were to be found in all five communities of Kavango, while the Finnish Lutherans only operated among two communities, who resided in the western part of the region.¹²⁹ It would seem that the Catholics had thus not felt the necessity in getting in touch with a group which represented only a small minority. There was little or no contact between the two different missions in the field of education as well.

On the question of whether there was any difference in their education, two points of view were expressed by informants. Of the former scholars interviewed, one group stated that as far as can be seen there were no distinct differences between the education given. Underlying motives could have differed according to the differences in church dogma, but this could not be shown. These former scholars claimed that there were differences in church doctrine which must have influenced his or her methods of teaching.¹³⁰

It may be argued that one thing which did have an influence was the duration that the missionaries stayed. The Finnish Missionaries, for instance, came out under contract for 5 years, which could be renewed. This gave the impression that everything which they did was only temporary. In his annual report of 1969, the Director of the Finnish Mission pointed out:

I should like to emphasize once again that, in accordance with our principles we, as foreign workers, want to serve here only as long as it is necessary ... We are only human beings and, as such, we hope for a good end to our work. In other words: that the independent Ovambokavango church can say a peaceful goodbye to the mission, and will itself see to it that the gospel is preached, the sick are cared for and the young are taught and trained for a variety of tasks.¹³¹

Leadership training was also a dominant factor in the education of the Finnish Lutherans. It was stated that right from the initial times the Finnish Lutherans trained church leaders who would take over when the time was ripe for them to leave.¹³²

In the beginning, the mission station buildings of the Finnish Lutheran missions in Kavango were temporary, and were made of locally available materials, such as poles, reeds, grass, clay, antheps, etc. This also gave the impression of poverty, whereas it was clear that the Catholic missions were there to stay. Catholic missionaries built permanent stations, and came out for the duration of their lives. Catholic stations with their stately churches, fine gardens and adequate buildings were far more impressive than the Finnish Lutheran stations. Comparing the Finnish Lutherans and German Catholics in Kavango, Lawrence Green makes the following observations:

A greater contrast in mission and missionaries it would be hard to find. The Finns, with their Arctic fairness of hair and complexion and severe cloths, seem a long way from Finland amid the Okavango palms ... Several of the unadorned mat-walled Finnish churches stand open to the sky. The mission buildings lack the solid finish, the air of permanence which the Roman Catholics have achieved. The puritanical Finns, simple and kind people, have not the same skill in carpentry or the art of creating marvellous gardens in the wilds. They are not there for life (my emphasis). Steam baths of the type used in Finland are their only luxury.¹³³

Thus there was more continuity in the Catholic mission than in the Finnish one. The Catholic Church became dominant and the educational and medical institutions in the Kavango region were therefore strongly influenced by the social policy of that particular church, its own economic resources, its relationship with the colonial government, and by the relationship the church had established with the Kavango people. This had greater influence on the Kavango communities. It meant that many Kavango people, seeing that the Catholics had established themselves in the region, began to flock to the Roman Catholic mission stations in

order to gain materially from missionaries. They settled alongside mission stations hoping to get work.

In the second place, circumstances and areas in which the teachers received their training should also be taken into account. For example, the students at Döbra (Roman Catholic institution) had a big advantage over students who were at Onguediva (Finnish Lutheran institution) or who had previously been educated at Oshigambo (Finnish Lutheran institution). Those at Döbra were near Windhoek, the capital of the country, and they could take part in sport and speech competitions with Augustineum (Rhenish institution), which was a high school. At the same time students at Döbra were taught by well trained and better qualified missionary teachers from the Netherlands. Therefore, students from Döbra had a better developed background to those students who grew up and remained in Ovambo and Kavango and received their teacher training in Ovambo, from local teachers who were less well qualified.

The other group of former scholars interviewed stated that although the aims of the two missions as far as education was concerned was the same, namely to propagate the gospel and to build up a labour force for the White economy, the duration of stay in boarding school and the content of education differed in a way. The methods of the two missions were aimed at producing Kavango people, loyal to the colonial administration and the ideologies of the two missions, but they differed in that the Lutherans concentrated on the Bible, while the Catholics used the Catechism in their teaching.¹³⁴ In the Finnish schools and in the churches, the Bibles was read and memorised. Catholics, on the other hand, emphasised the learning and memorising of the Catechism in order to prepare pupils for the Holy Communion.

The Catholic mission taught and demanded submission and total obedience. This is reflected in the fact that many of the so-called loyalists of the colonial administration in

Kavango today are products of the Catholic mission and government schools. On the other hand, most critics of the colonial government policy have been from the Lutheran mission schools. In answer to the question why most former scholars of the Catholic mission are so submissive, M. Kakuru, a Catholic theology student at the University of Lesotho said:

The answer is clear: We had been brought up that way in Catholic boarding schools. Remember that the Catholics could neither tolerate any objections to their view, nor would they allow anyone to air his view. They expected us to obey and accept any demand put to us by them. We were indoctrinated to believe that submissiveness was an ideal character for a good Christian. White officials working in the colonial administration benefitted in this type of education. In their speeches they praised us and our chiefs as peace-loving people, while chief S. Mipasi and his followers who were former Lutheran mission scholars had occasionally been accused of being a SWAPO activist and a great threat to peace and stability in Kavango and Namibia as a whole. In short, the unity which existed among the Kavango people had been broken down. Western education and Christianity have created a divided society which consists of Protestants and Catholics, loyalists and non-loyalists, pacifists and activists, etc.¹³⁵

Although the emphasis was placed on Bible reading in Lutheran schools, in their teaching they included awareness of the political situation in the country and other matters dealing with human dignity.¹³⁶ In Catholic schools 'politics' was not tolerated, nor was it allowed to ask any questions or to give ideas or views on matters concerning oneself. Everything said or taught was to be accepted without any question. Pupils who appeared to be interested in the political development of the country and those who could not demonstrate submissiveness were expelled from Catholic schools, and other Catholic mission stations were notified in order to exclude those pupils from other Catholic schools. This happened to M. Shindimba (and many others before and after him) in 1964 when he was expelled from Nyangana Catholic boarding school for opposing the teaching of the view that all African people are stupid and

obstinate.¹³⁷ Other former Catholic scholars, including two sons of the chieftainess M. Mwengere, were expelled from Döbra Teachers Training College because of what the missionaries interpreted as bad behaviour and 'barbarism'. These students could not bear the humiliation they suffered from racist remarks made by missionary teachers. When confronted by students, the teachers referred them to the principal, who told them to leave the boarding school grounds immediately. A student expelled from Döbra was accompanied by a testimonial of condemnation, which was to be handed to the police, and later to the rector of a mission station on arrival in Kavango.¹³⁸

Catholic missionaries argued that students expelled from their schools were possessed by the devil and that they were a bad example to those who were submissive. Such pupils were often welcomed in Lutheran schools where pupils were offered freedom to express their ideas and views. It also happened frequently that a catechist or teacher dismissed by the Roman Catholics for misbehaviour could be welcomed by the Lutheran church.¹³⁹

In Catholic schools all children were, nominally, Roman Catholics. The Catholic mission was aimed at providing an education for children of their own denomination. Lutheran missionaries, by contrast, accepted Christians from any denomination as well as non-Christians at their schools. The main aim of both denominations was to spread the Gospel so that it could reach every village and every home. In addition to this the Finnish Lutherans also aimed at converting the non-Christian children attending their schools. This happened in the western part of Kavango at places such as Nkure-Nkuru and Mpungu where some non-Christian !Kung children attending school were converted to Christianity in 1954.¹⁴⁰

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

1. In the literature, including Lategan, M. (1980) the place Nkure-Nkuru has been referred to as Kuring-Kuru, a spelling based on the incorrect pronunciation of Europeans who have tended to ignore the proper and correct pronunciation for the place.
2. The central mission stations which have been established by the Roman Catholic mission are as follows: Nyangana (in the Gciriku area), Andara (in the Mbukushu area), Tondoro (in the Kwangali area), Bunja (in the Mbunza area) and Sambiu (in the Sambiu area). See Chronicles of the Roman Catholic Mission Stations, pp.5-6, also quoted by Lategan, M. (1980): Sending- en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango. 'n Histories-Pedagogiese besinning, p.75.
3. Interview with I. Shikukumwa (14 February 1987). See and compare with Bosch, J.L. (1964): Die Shambiu van die Okavango, p.39.
4. Chronicles of the Roman Catholic Mission, pp.5-8 quoted by Lategan, M. (1980): Sending- en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango. 'n Histories-pedagogiese besinning, p.75.
5. Chronicles of the Roman Catholic Mission, p.17, quoted by Lategan, M., p.76.
6. See Lategan, M. (1980): Sending- en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango. 'n Histories-pedagogiese besinning, p.78. Pupils who completed Std 2 at Roman Catholic schools could receive further education at Döbra. Missionaries selected only a few, especially those whom they favoured.
7. The two mission stations and schools were all situated in the Eastern Kavango only, as the R.C. Missionaries saw no need in rushing to establish other mission centres and schools among the other two communities in Western Kavango. Later when they realized that the Finnish Lutheran Church was establishing herself in the western region, they rushed to the same place where

- they established two mission stations and schools.
8. It was decided by missionaries that every group should be taught its own dialect: Rugciriku was taught at Nyangana and Sambiu, Thimbukushu at Andara and Rukwangali was taught in schools at Tondoro and Bunya.
 9. R.C. Mission, Zwischen Namib and Kalahari, p.108, quoted by Lategan, M. (1980): Sending- en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango, p.82. A. Hashipara was not the first local qualified teacher, there were already some before him, teaching at Nyangana and Andara schools.
 10. Interview with inspector K.P. Shiyaka (23 October 1986). He was supported by the former regional Director of Education in Kavango, Louis Burger (24 May 1987), Rundu.
 11. This is the view of H. Ausiku, quoted from his Paper History of the Lutheran Church in Kavango, p.39.
 12. Lategan, M. (1980): Sending- en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango, p.104. Also Ausiku, H. (1980): History of the Lutheran Church in Kavango, p.39. According to Ausiku a school for girls was also established at Nkure-Nkuru in 1940. The school started with 23 girls and later on more girls arrived. By 1942 married women also joined the girls in attending this school. The school was known as "Kagumbo", an Ovambo word meaning small village. Subjects taught in this school were the three R's, Singing, Bible teaching, Food Preparation, Needlework and Housekeeping. According to Ausiku, the first three girls who qualified in this school married the first three Kavango men who qualified as Church Ministers.
 13. Lategan, M. (1980): Sending- en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango, p.105. Also Ausiku, H. (1980): History of the Finnish Lutheran Church in Kavango, p.39.
 14. Ibid. pp.105 and 39.
 15. H. Ausiku, J. Kangaji, I. Shikukumwa stated that the school buildings were made up of huts, built with grass, poles and stones. (Interview on 20 January,

- 1987, in Rundu)
16. EDU FILE EI 58/1, 1946, p.3 quoted by Lategan, M. (1980): Sending- en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango, p.107.
 17. Interview with K.P. Shiyaka (24 January 1987). The information was corroborated by L. Burger on the 15 May 1987, Rundu.
 18. The few girls who attended the school were not allowed to stay in hostels, as a hostel for girls was not available.
 19. Interview with K.P. Shiyaka (24 January 1987), an ex-scholar of the Nyangana Mission Primary School and the Döbra Teachers Training College. Until the late seventies Döbra had a good reputation as all its staff members were well trained qualified teachers from the Federal Republic of Germany and the Netherlands.
 20. Interview with K.P. Shiyaka (24 January 1987), Rundu.
 21. O'Callaghan, M. (1977): Namibia: The effects of Apartheid on Culture and Education, p.75. O'Callaghan's statement is correct, as the Rhenish Mission Society opened a school at Augustineum in Okahandja where some Kavango youths were trained as evangelists and teachers. In 1959 the Roman Catholic Church opened a school at Bunya Mission Station in Kavango where prospective Kavango youths and adults were trained as catechists. After completion of the course, the catechists were sent to propagate the gospel and to go out and baptize as many people as possible.
 22. Niemand, C.M. (1979): Onderwys aan die Swart Volke van Suidwes Afrika tot 1970, p.55.
 23. Bierfert, P.A. (1938): 25 Jahre bei den Wadiriku am Okawango, p.92.
 24. S.W.A.A. File No. A 489/13. The Finnish Missionary Society, Helsinki (Finland) 1936, p.3.
 25. Ibid. pp.3-4.
 26. Shilubane, P.X.: Culture and Change in Africa, in: Spring Lectures 1982/3 (1984): University of the North, Faculty of Arts: Myth, Culture and Change,

p.56.

27. Bierfert, P.A. (1938): 25 Jahre bei den Wadiriku am Okawango, p.26. "Send the children to school so that they can learn reading these words."
28. File 612/1. Mission Schools: Conference October 1923 and Syllabus for Native Schools Minutes, p.3.
29. File 460: Mission Station Nyangana, Andara and Swakop, Education Department.
30. Revd. W. Ollp (President of the Rhenish Mission in Namibia 1933), p.27, quoted by Niemand, C.M. (1979): Onderwys aan die Swart Volke van Suidwes Afrika tot 1970, p.66.
31. Bierfert, P.A. (1938): 25 Jahre bei den Wadiriku am Okawango, pp.74 and 82.
32. S.W.A.A. File No. A489/13 The Finnish Missionary Society, Helsinki (Finland) 1936, p.2.
33. Bierfert, P.A. (1938): 25 Jahre bei den Wadiriku am Okawango, p.92.
34. Nyaggah, M. and Mugomba, A. (ed) (1980): The Political Economy of Colonial Education in Southern Africa, Santa Barbara, p.232. In Kavango, many seconded civil servants, among them Louis Burger, had the same perception. They believed that the cultural influence was a contribution to the education and mental development of all Africans in Namibia.
35. Administration of South West Africa (1958): Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Non-European Education in South West Africa, Part 1, Native Education, p.32
36. These groups were of two kinds: The first group consisted of community leaders and retired teachers who are themselves products of the mission churches and schools. The second group consisted of teachers and school inspectors. To the first group belong A. Hashipara (78 years old), Chief S. Kamwanga (62), I. Shikukumwa (63), J. Hikerwa (71), S. Kandere (63), N. Libebe (78), R. Kambundu (68), J.M. Kandjimi (62). The second group is J. Kangaji (46), M. Mukoya (50), I. Mokerabi (46), V. Matamu (61), F. Fughe (62), J. Shiwarongo (46). All these people attended mission

schools in their youth and most of them also attended mission teacher training colleges Döbra, Oniipa, Oshigamob. The interview took place on the 20th and 21st of January 1988.

37. Administration of South West Africa (1958): Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Non-European Education in South West Africa, Part 1, Native Education, pp.38 and 39. The report added that at different stages during the course pupils who did not meet the required standard of performance and character was eliminated.
38. Holmes, B. (1967): Education Policy and the Mission Schools, p.36.
39. Administration of South West Africa (1958): Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Non-European Education in South West Africa, Part 1, Native Education, p.36.
40. Interview with I. Shikukumwa, J. Kangaji, J. Hikerwa and S. Kandere (20 October 1988, Rundu).
41. O'Callaghan, M. (1977) points out that Education for Africans and Whites had different aims: Education for Africans aims at facilitating conversions to Christianity and at giving Africans the training needed to fulfil European needs for African labour. The purpose of White education was to inculcate the moral principles on which the Empire was based and to minimize tension among Whites themselves. See O'Callaghan, M. (1977): Southern Rhodesia: the effects of a conquest society on education, culture and information, p.15.
42. Administration of South West Africa (1958): Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Non-European Education in South West Africa, Part 1, Native Education, p.36.
43. Niemand, C.M. (1979): Onderwys aan die Swart Volke van Suidwes Afrika tot 1970, p.83.
44. Interviews with Fathers B. Hartmann and M. Baetsen (24/2/1987).
45. Information obtained from the answer on a questionnaire sent to Louis Burger on the 18th May 1987. Louis Burger was assistant inspector (1957-1964), school inspector (1965-1970) and Director and Secretary of

Education (1971-1981) in Kavango. His statement was supported by his former assistant, I. Shikukumwa (24 June 1987).

46. S.W.A.A. File A489/13: Extracts from the report by the Director of Education on his visit to the Kavango area, 6-12/6/1936 and Ovamboland 15-23/6/1936, pp. 10 and 11.
47. See the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Non-European Education, Native Education, Part 1, p.84. The Commission and the colonial administration were in support of this and they left the missionary societies to carry on with this type of education for more than 55 years. The colonial administration and the Commission were not concerned with African education, their only concern was White Education.
48. See the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Non-European Education, pp.39 and 40. The emphasis on moral education and character training seemed to suggest that the African, viz. Kavango character was so bad that it required the missionaries' time and responsibility to put it in the right way. However, no mention was ever made of their own characters or the characters of other Whites in the country.
49. S.W.A.A. File No. 489/13: Extracts from a report by the Director of Education on his visit to the Okavango area, 6-12/6/36, and Ovamboland 15-23/6/36, p.8. Compare with O'Callaghan, M. (1977): Namibia: the effect of apartheid on culture and education, p.96. Bosch. J.L. (1964) adds that the curriculum of missionary schools in Kavango included subjects such as joinery and handicrafts for boys and needlework and basketry for girls. See Bosch, J.L. (1964): Die Shambiu van die Okavango, p.39. In the interview with I. Shikukumwa and J. Kangaji (24 January 1987) it was stated that they were also taught to make furniture such as beds, tables, chairs and desks.
50. See Niemand, C.M. (1979): Onderwys aan die Swart Volke van Suidwes Afrika tot 1970, p.226.
51. S.W.A.A. Education File 496 Roman Catholic Mission School Bunja (12 April 1933).

52. S.W.A.A. Education File 460/4 Department of Education, Report of the Organiser for Native Education, Ondangwa, Ovamboland, p.6.
53. File No. 18/2/34 Director of Education, Roman Catholic Mission School Nyangana, p.2.
54. Interview with councillors of the Kavango regional administration L. Hakusembe, A. Hashipara and S. Kamwanga; school principals J. Kangaji and I. Kavara; school inspectors I. Shikukumwa and G. Hashipara, Rev. H. Ausiku and employees of the Kavango Administration J. Hikerwa and S. Kandere (5 January 1988). It should also be borne in mind that the furniture were made of local timber. Bricks were made out of antheaps mixed with sand and stones. All these building materials were to be found at the river banks, except the timber which was to be found in the Kavango forest, far away from the river. At Roman Catholic mission stations furniture were made and buildings were erected by Catholic Brothers, assisted by Kavango workers hired to work on mission stations. In the afternoons male boarders were also expected to assist with erecting buildings and making furniture.
55. Education File No. 18/2/34: For the Director of Education. Roman Catholic Mission School Nyangana, p.2.
56. Rohrbach, P. p.286, quoted by Wellington, J.H. (1967): South West Africa and its human issues, Oxford, p.391.
57. A statement made by Rev. Hoeflich, head of the German Lutheran Church in Namibia, quoted by Justin, Ellis (1981) in Education, Repression and Liberation; Namibia, p.14: See also Melber, H. (1979): Schule und Kolonialismus: das formale Erziehungswesen Namibias, Hamburg, p.20. Ellis adds that Blacks who joined the mission were expected to become employees and artisans, able to participate in a capitalist economy. See also Hunke, H. (1980): Namibia; the Strength of the Powerless, p.87.
58. EDU FILE 601, VOL.2: Annual Report of the Work done in schools for natives in South West Africa 1940, pp.2-3.

59. Bierfert, P.A. (1938): 25 Jahre bei den Wadiriku am Okawango, p.41. "The statement I often used that they originate from apes was considered as humiliation and was rejected with indignation."
60. World Missionary Conference, Report of Commission IV, The Missionary Message in Relation to Non-Christian Religions, (Edinburgh, June 18, 1910) pp. 10-14, quoted from Makaya, P.B. (1982): An Analysis of Industrial Education for Africans in Zimbabwe since 1899, pp. 29-30. For detailed discussion of the Darwinian theory, see for example Mungazi, D.A. (1982): The underdevelopment of African education. A Black Zimbabwean Perspective, p.6. See also Lyons, C.H. (1970): To wash an Aethiop White, British ideas about Black African educability, 1530-1960, p.105.
61. Bierfert, P.A. (1938): 25 Jahre bei den Wadiriku am Okawango, p.32.
62. Bridgman J.M. (1981): The Revolt of the Hereros, London, p.62, quoted from Drechsler, H. (1966): Südwestafrika unter deutscher Kolonialherrschaft, Berlin, p.349. According to the report of the missionary the settler holds the view that the native has a right to exist only in so far as he is useful to the White man. It follows that the Whites value their horses and even their oxen more than they value Africans.
63. Lyons, C. (1970): To wash an Aethiop White, British ideas about the Black African educability, 1530-1960, p.87.
64. Ibid. p.148.
65. Report of the Administrator 1934, p.43.
66. Nyaggah, M. and Mugomba, A. (ed): The Political Economy of Colonial Education in Southern Africa, p.23.
67. Interview with Rev. S. Mbambo and G. Haindaka (19 December 1987), Rundu.
68. Mungazi, D.A. (1982): The underdevelopment of African education, A Black Zimbabwean Perspective, p.19.
69. Nachtwei, W. (1976): Namibia - Von der anti - Kolonialen Revolt zum nationalen Befreiungskampf, p.53,

- quoted by Hunke, H. (1980): in Namibia, the strength of the powerless, p.87.
70. Quoted from Louis Burger's letter addressed to the author (dated 13 May 1987). It should be understood in the sense that regarding matters such as education, migratory labour, etc., the missionaries and the colonial officials' view were the same. Both missionaries and White government officials had the same view on Kavango culture and tradition.
 71. A letter (dated 8 May 1927) to the Administrator of S.W.A. in S.W.A.A. File A489/2, signed by Rev. M. Tarkannen, p.1.
 72. S.W.A.A. File 489/13: Extracts from a report by the Director of Education on his visit to the Okavango area 6-12/6/36) and Ovamboland 15-23/6/36, p.6.
 73. Bierfert, P.A. (1938): 25 Jahre bei den Wadiriku am Okawango, p.74.
 74. Interview with Kavango chiefs: A. Mayavero, S. Kamwanga, G. Haininga, L. Hakusembe, and teachers M. Mukoya, I. Mokerabi and F. Haushiku. The interview was conducted at the time when the teachers were attending a conference in Rundu (28-31 December 1987).
 75. Bierfert, P.A. (1938): 25 Jahre bei den Wadiriku am Okawango, p. 87. See also Angelus of Sept/Oct 1970: 75 years Catholic Mission in Windhoek, S.W.A. Sister Leopoldine recalls in the article on p.23 how she bargained with the mother of a girl for allowing her to take the girl to boarding school.
 76. UG31 - Report of the Administrator for the year 1927, p.47.
 77. Van Tonder, L.L. (1966): The Hambukushu of Okavangoland. An anthropological study of the South Western Bantu People in Africa, University of Port Elizabeth, p.25.
 78. Hunke, H. (1980): Namibia, the strength of the powerless, p.87.
 79. Bierfert, P.A. (1938): 25 Jahre bei den Wadiriku am Okawango, p.92.
 80. Interview with A. Hashipara, I. Mokerabi, S. Shiyave,

- N. Libebe and F. Fughe (28 December 1987). See also Bierfert, P.A. (1938): 25 Jahre bei den Wadiriku am Okawanqo, p.49. Bierfert refers to the Kavango people as the offspring of the biblical Cham.
81. Interview with N. Libebe, supported by the abovementioned people (18 December 1987).
 82. Hunke, H. (1980): Namibia, the strength of the powerless, pp. 82-83.
 83. Interview with former scholars F. Fughe, J. Kangaji and I. Shikukumwa (28 December 1987).
 84. Shilubane, P.X.: Culture and Change in Africa, in University of the North Spring Lectures, Faculty of Arts (1984): Myth, Culture and Change, p.57.
 85. Ibid. p.57.
 86. Interview with A. Hashipara, T. Mukoya, S. Mbambo and U. Haikera (29 December 1987).
 87. See The Namibian of 15 April 1988, p.15. Not only the older generation are experiencing this problem, but the youths of today as well. Commenting on this problem E. Henogh, student and chairperson of the NANSO (Namibian National Student Organisation) branch at a private school AME in Gibeon mentioned that colonialism should be made the basis of cultural estrangement. Henogh stated that the colonisers did not only rob us of our land but that they have also distorted, disfigured and destroyed our culture by invading it. The history of the colonisers has been marked with conquest, division and manipulation of the people. The result is that they have estranged us from our past and that we are now suffering from cultural estrangement.
 88. Nyaggah, M. and Mugomba, A. (ed) (1980): The Political Economy of Colonial Education in Southern Africa, p.235.
 89. Ibid. p.229.
 90. Shilubane, P.X.: Culture and Change in Africa, in: University of the North Spring Lectures, Faculty of Arts (1984): Myth, Culture and Change, p.57.
 91. The Phelps Stokes Commission was formed to investigate the effect of government, education, missionary effort,

and commerce on African development and on the relations between Europeans and Africans. According to the Commission the African should be given a Christian civilization without destroying what is best in his own culture and traditions. The environmental and social viewpoints should be applied to every element in elementary education so that the pupil may see the relation of what he is learning to his own problems and life about him.

Report of Rev. Anson Phelps-Stokes on Education, Native Welfare and Race Relations in East and South Africa (1934), p.45.

92. Wilson, J. (1966): Education and Changing West African Culture, p.37.
93. S.W.A.A. File No. 489/13: Extracts from a report by the Director of Education on his visit to the Okavango area, 6-12/6/36 and Ovamboland 15-23/6/36, pp. 2,4,5,6,8,9 and 11. Lategan states that the English language was introduced in Kavango schools as a subject in 1961. The official policy was to use Afrikaans as the language of instruction from Std. 3. See Lategan, M. (1980): Sending- en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango. 'n Histories - pedagogiese besinning, pp.203 and 205.
94. S.W.A.A. File No. 489/13: A letter (dated 14th April 1936) to the Administrator of South West Africa, p.6. In his letter Dr. Paunu quoted the "Education in Africa" edited by the African Education Commission (page 26) as noting:
- "1) The tribal language should be used in the lower elementary standards of grades.
 - 2) A lingua franca of African origin should be introduced in the middle classes of the school, if the area is occupied by large Native groups speaking diverse languages.
 - 3) The language of the European nation in control should be taught in the upper standards."

and the Report of the Government of the Union of South Africa to the Council of the League of Nations:

"The two principles that guide the education of the natives are:

- 1) to develop the native on his own lines, i.e. in his own language and in keeping with his own habits and mode of living in so far as these are not in conflict with the great general principles on which civilizations rests.
- 2) to achieve this aim by helping him to advance step by step from his raw native state."

95. S.W.A.A. File No. 489/13: Letter (dated 2nd June 1936) from the Administrator of South West Africa to Rev. U. Paunu, p.2.
96. Bierfert, P.A. (1938): 25 Jahre bei den Wadiriku am Okawango, p.81 See also Lategan, M. (1980): Sending-en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango. 'n Histories-pedagogiese bespreking, pp.85-86.
97. Green, L. (1952): Lords of the Last Frontier. The Story of South West Africa and its People of all Races, p.235. See also Lategan, M. (1980): Sending-en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango, p.99.
98. Interview with Fathers M. Baetsen, B. Hartmann (18 December 1987) and the correspondence between the author and Father Kapp of Andara Mission Station (15 April 1987). See also Lategan, M. (1980): Sending-en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango, p.205. Lategan's reference to a book called Mu liro lietu (Our family membership) could be misleading. Mu liro lietu is a chapter title in the book Ngandu (Crocodile).
99. Department of Education of South West Africa, File E1/58/1. Year report of Native Education in the Northern Sector 1953, p.6 and Year report ... 1963, p.3 quoted by Lategan, M. (1980): Sending-en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die

Kavango, pp. 207 and 208. There is no evidence that Finnish missionaries in Kavango translated the Bible and used it for teaching. It should be mentioned that the Bible translated by Bierfert were used by other Catholic mission stations in Kavango. In their churches and schools the Finnish Mission used the Bible which was translated in Oshivambo.

100. Hunke, H. (1980): Namibia, the strength of the powerless, pp.82 and 83.
101. Ellenberger, D. (1938): A Century of Mission Work in Basutoland (1833 - 1933), pp. 110 - 111.
102. Interview with A. Hashipara, S. Kandere, N. Libebe and J. Hikerwa (21 December 1988, Rundu). In the interview it was stated that every type of hairstyle determined the social status of the woman in Kavango society.
103. Chronicles of the Roman Catholic Mission Stations ... pp. 16,23, 24 and 34, quoted by Lategan, M. in (1980): Sending- en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango. p.66.
104. A statement made by Louis Burger on the question of whether missionary education was accepted or rejected by the Kavango people and how he views missionary education in Kavango. The statement was made on 15 May 1986 in a speech given at the Rundu Secondary School and was supported by the ex-Commissioner, J. Enslin.
105. Ibid. See also Lategan, in (1980): Sending- en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango, pp.55-56. Father Kapp of the Mission Station Andara confirmed Burger's statement when he said that the people of Kavango were totally opposed to their teaching (14 April 1987).
106. Interview with N. Libebe, T. Mukoya and G. Mukoya (24th February 1988).
107. Niemand, C.M. (1979): Onderwys aan die Swart Volke van Suidwes Afrika tot 1970, pp.65-66.
108. Many Kavango parents stated that 15 years of age was the ideal time for girls to go into marriage, because all Kavango men preferred their brides to be very young. Kavango parents also believed that because of

pregnancies and childbirths, a woman gets old earlier than a man. Therefore, a girl could go into marriage while 15 in order to stay attractive for her husband for a much longer time.

109. Interview with community leaders E. Muronga, G. Mukoya, M. Kanyondi, N. Libebe and R. Kambundu (24 February 1988).
110. On the question whether children were taken to mission stations by parents, the informants answered that children were fetched from home by missionaries. Parents who refused to send their children to boarding schools were regarded as enemies. It was, therefore, not the decision and choice of every parent to give away his/her children to boarding school. Some were forced to do so by missionaries. Not only children from Christian families were taken to boarding school, but also those from non-Christian families. See Lategan, M. (1980): Sending- en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango, p.55. Lategan mentions that school attendance was viewed by Kavango parents as having brought no material advantages, and the children who were expected to work at home had been 'taken away' by missionaries. This statement is an indication of the fact that parents were against boarding schools. The children's attendance at mission stations and schools was seen as a disruption of their proper education and a waste of time. At Nyangana mission school (in 1940) there were 30 boys and 6 girls in boarding school. See EDU File 406/4. Report of the Organiser for Native Education, p.2. In the interview with N. Libebe, E. Muronga, G. Mukoya, A. Hashipara and C. Haushiku, it was stated that low attendance in boarding school (in 1940) was attributed to the fact that parents kept their children at home after long holidays (24 February 1988).
111. Interview with S. Kandere, J. Hikerwa, M. Kalyata, K. Ndango, N. Libebe and A. Kudumo (24 February 1988).
112. Bierfert, P.A. (1938): 25 Jahre bei den Wadiriku am Okawango; p.87. The aim was to train Kavango children

as useful labourers for themselves and other Whites who needed them on their farms and in their households.

113. Lategan, M. (1980): Sending- en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango, p.91. Lategan's statement was based on the information she obtained from the interview with Louis Burger and J. Jantunen.
114. Interview with N. Libebe, I. Muyeghu, A. Kudumo, S. Shiyave and M. Kalyata (20 January 1987).
115. Abovementioned informants stated that chiefs were bribed to encourage parents to send their children to school the following year.
116. Quoted from Idowu Bolaji: Predicament of the Church in Africa, in International African Institute (1968): Christianity in Tropical Africa, p.430. Missionaries had also parental authority over the children in schools and in boarding houses. The authority covered all activities and duties for the whole day.
117. Interview with J. Kauma, N. Libebe, B. Kabuata, U. Haikera and A. Munkanda (14 March 1988). All those interviewed had had their own experiences. To mention one example, missionaries had the tendency of pushing and shoving those who could not 'behave' themselves in school and church. An adult or youth who was seen smiling, whispering or even handing a book to a friend was given a hiding and humiliated in front of all people present before being kicked out of school and the church. This happened frequently and was questioned by the converts.
118. See Niemand, C.M. (1979): Onderwys aan die Swart Volke van Suidwes Afrika tot 1970, p.67. Niemand mentions that severe corporal punishment is one of the reasons why children stayed away from school. According to the abovementioned informants corporal punishment was inflicted on children for 'breaking' any school rule or even for arriving a minute late on Sunday after visiting parents.'
119. Education File 490 Roman Catholic Mission School Bunya. He was justifying severe corporal punishment and was emphasising racism.

120. Lyons, C.H. (1975): To Wash and Aethiop White, British Ideas about Black African Educability 1530 - 1960, p.125. A quote from Kenneth Kaunda's autobiography (1962): Zambia shall be free, p. 146.
121. Wilson, M. (1976): Missionaries: Conquerors or Servants of God?, an address given on the occasion of the official South African opening of the Missionary Museum, King William's Town, 30th January 1976, p.42.
122. In western Kavango the competition was very intense as both the Catholic and Lutheran mission competed for converts and areas of operations. In eastern Kavango, by contrast, there was no competition as the Roman Catholic mission was the only mission to operate there.
123. Gotthardt, J. (1927): Monatsblätter der Oblaten der Unbefleckten Jungfrau Maria (Monthly Paper of the Oblaten of Mary Immaculate), No. 1, p.14.
124. S.W.A.A. 489/13: Fifth meeting held on Monday, October 19th 1928, under the chairmanship of the Marquis Theodoli, p.83.
125. S.W.A.A. 498/13: Finnish Mission Work in Okavango Native Territory, p.2.
126. Interview with teachers J. Kangaji, I. Kavara, U. Haikera and P. Kupembona (20 December 1987).
127. Hunke, H. (1980): Namibia, the strength of the powerless, p.83.
128. S.W.A.A. File No. 489/13: The Finnish Mission, Ondangua, Ovamboland, p.2. In the late seventies, after Angola gained independence, it appeared as if the Lutherans were being accused of being disloyal to the state and of identifying themselves with the oppressed and many of them were expelled from the country. Proclamation 50 of 1920 (and later AG 50) "The Undesirable Persons Removal Amendment Proclamation, 1978" empowered the Administrator General to order certain undesirable persons to leave the territory. These proclamations were used against persons not born in Namibia, but identifying with the majority of Namibians in denouncing South African occupation and brutal state terrorism, See Hunke, H. (1980): The

Strength of the Powerless, p.127.

129. See Angelus of Sept/Oct (1970): 75 years Catholic Mission in Windhoek, S.W.A., pp.20-21.
130. Interview with J. Kangaji, I. Kavara, P. Kupembona and L. Mbereshu (30 December 1987).
131. Year Report 1969 of the Finnish Mission, Mission Office at Oniipa, quoted by Kritzinger, J.J., (1972): Sending en Kerk in Suidwes Afrika, Volume 1, p.448.
132. In an interview held on the 28th December 1987, J. Kangaji, J. Shikukumwa, E. Kakukuru and I. Kavara pointed out that periods were often renewed.
133. Green, L. (1952): Lords of the Last Frontier. The Story of South West Africa and its People of all Races, p.249.
134. As far as the Bible was concerned, a pupil from a Catholic school could not compete with one from a Lutheran school. Most of the books, their chapters and verses, were memorised by pupils of the Lutheran schools. The Lutheran mission occasionally organised competitions in their schools in order to enable all Lutheran pupils in the country to test their knowledge, in order to find out whether their bible teaching was effective.
135. Interview with M. Kakuru and M. Mukoya, supported by I. Mokorabi, T. Mukoya, J. Kangaji and V. Matamu (30 December 1987). These people made it clear that the conservative Roman Catholics had a great influence in eastern Kavango where all the chiefs are so-called loyalists to the colonial government. In western Kavango, chief S. Mpasi, supported by the majority of the Vakwangali, is a great critic of the South African government and the S.A.D.F. in Namibia.
136. Interview with I. Shikukumwa (30 December 1987).
137. M. Shindimba, today a domestic worker in the household of a White official in Rundu, recalled in an interview how he confronted a teaching nun whose racist attitude he could no longer tolerate. This led to a fight between the two of them with the result that Shindimba was expelled from the mission boarding school.

Eyewitnesses F. Ukuvi, M. Kalyata, A. Kudumo and T. Makanga supported Shindimba's statement (29 December 1987).

138. Interview with the abovementioned (29 December 1987).
139. Catholic missionaries favoured pupils who were set to 'spy' on fellow pupils and those who always bowed their heads to the missionaries.
140. See Shejavali, A. (1970): The Ovambo-Kavango Church, p.31.

CHAPTER FOUR**MISSION EDUCATION AND STATE CONTROL (1884-1948)****4.1 INVOLVEMENT OF THE STATE IN AFRICAN EDUCATION**

Historically, the two major groups providing education have been the state and mission churches. In the early years of South African rule, the churches took almost responsibility for the education of Africans in Namibia. In spite of the dominant role that missionaries played in providing western education to Africans, it needs to be stressed that this role was always subordinate to the overall plans and philosophy of the South African government. The colonial government always dictated educational policy and missionaries had to fit in to the overall framework.

When Namibia was under German colonial administration (1884-1915), nothing was done to change or develop the pattern of missionary education for Africans in Namibia. With the exception of a few schools for Whites, educational services were disorganised. Education for Africans was left in the hands of missionaries, and the missionary schools for Africans operated independently.¹ By the end of the period of the German rule, 115 mission schools with a total enrolment of 5 490 students provided a rudimentary education for Africans in Namibia.² The northern areas were not under effective German rule.

With the establishment of South African military rule in 1915, the educational arrangements created by the German colonial government were continued. It was not until 1920, when South Africa assumed mandate over Namibia, that plans were made to organise the educational services and to bring them under central control.

The education Proclamation 55 of 1921 made provision for the government to control all educational services whereby a Department of Education for Whites with the Director of Education at its head was established. The education for Africans began to receive some government financial aid, but was left to the mission schools provided "they would also

conform to conditions laid down by the Government regarding the establishment, recognition, control, syllabuses and the classification of schools, the employment of teachers and conditions of services and inspection."³ As they appear in the proclamation itself, the changes brought about were:

- a) Not only European, but also non-European education from now on came under Government control.

- b) The government provided the necessary funds and left the management of non-European education in the hands of the missionaries provided they accepted its conditions for the making of financial grants in connection with:
 - i) the establishment, recognition, control, syllabuses and classification of schools;
 - ii) employment of teachers and conditions of service;
 - iii) inspection.⁴

The education Proclamation of 1921 also gave the government the power to establish government schools for African children. This education Proclamation, however, affected only the education services of those Africans residing in the Southern Sector and those in the Police Zone. As far as the Northern Sector was concerned, it had no force as these areas were governed as administrative independent African territories. The education of these areas was left in the hands of the missions. This encouraged the Adventist Church to establish itself in Caprivi in 1920, the Catholic Church established itself in the same area in 1936. The Catholic and Anglican churches began their work in Ovamboland in 1924, the Finnish Mission opened a new field in Kavango in 1926 and in Koakoland in 1927.

The Mission Societies operating in the African areas of Ovamboland, Kavango and Caprivi were informed (on the 24th June 1926) that they would be free to carry on their work and to preach the Gospel wherever they considered it

necessary, subject to the following conditions:

- 1) That each denomination shall make its own arrangements with the native chiefs or headmen for establishing itself in any particular area;
- 2) That each denomination shall undertake:
 - a) to assist the Union Government in its administration of Ovamboland;
 - b) to encourage all natives under their influence to seek employment in South West Africa proper, that is to say, within the Police Zone. It will be remembered that Ovamboland is the main source of labour for mines and railways, and nothing must be done to interfere with the free flow of labour;
 - c) to instill into all native under their influence a sense of loyalty to the administration;
 - d) to support the authority of all chiefs and headmen in the area assigned to them.⁵

The first condition gave the Mission Societies practically a free hand in regard to the obtaining of sites, with the result that stations and bush schools were established throughout the areas mentioned above.

In 1923 a conference was held in Windhoek, attended by the representatives of the South African Government (the Director and Chairman, H.H. Krepp, and the Secretary, Cooke) and the various missionary societies, excluding the Finnish Lutheran mission which had no desire to alter its education system to conform to the requirements of the South West Africa Administration. The conference was held in order to find a common basis of operation between Government and Mission and to come to an agreement about the aims of instruction and the content of African education. The basis found may be summarised as follows:

- 1) The mission provides the school buildings, trains the teachers and supervises the process of instruction;
- 2) The Administration pays the teachers, supplies the school material, controls the process of instruction and inspects the schools.⁶

It was hoped that through this close cooperation between Mission and education department an advancement of school-work could be ensured. The discussion in the conference also concentrated on the issue of the medium of instruction in African schools. The Rhenish and the Catholic Missions chose both Afrikaans and English as medium of instruction due to the lack of reading materials in African languages. The representatives also came to an agreement that a four year primary school (Sub.A - Std 2) should be provided for Africans and that any additional classes would require the approval of the inspector of Schools depending upon the teacher's ability, the number of pupils and the availability of accommodation.⁷

At the education conference it was also stressed that teacher training was badly needed. Consequently, the two schools, Augustineum at Okahandja and Döbra in Windhoek, which had been closed just before the end of the German colonial administration, were reopened in 1923 and 1925. Another Catholic training school at Tses operated between 1927 and 1937 before it was closed due to a lack of students. More teacher training schools were established in Ovamboland by the Finnish Lutheran and Anglican missions. The Anglican mission started a school at Odibo (1936) and the Finnish mission started schools at Okahao (1948) and at Oshigambo (1952). Another school opened by the Finnish Mission at Oniipa in 1890, was moved to Onguediva in 1955. The Odendaal Commission of 1964 reported that Oshigambo training school was converted into a secondary school in 1959 and Odibo training school in 1960.⁸

The new arrangements in connection with the educational

services were set out in Proclamation 16 of 1926. Mission schools in Namibia were to be classified, namely those for Coloureds and Basters and those for Africans. A separate education system for Coloureds and Basters was to be established. This would mean that their syllabus was to become similar to those of the Whites and that they could study beyond Std 2 while Africans were prevented from doing so.⁹ The control and administration of the education services as a whole was to become the responsibility and the duty of the Department of Education of South West African Administration, but the missions were to keep their schools. From the missionaries working in the Northern Sector, the Administration of the territory required that they would promise in writing to 1) support and promote government policy; 2) encourage the people in the areas to work in the police zone; 3) confirm authority of traditional leaders in their area; 4) teach the people in the areas loyalty towards the Administration and 5) emphasize practical education and only introduce new syllabuses into their schools after discussions with the Director of Education.¹⁰

The syllabus to be followed by mission schools for Africans consisted of the following subjects: Religion, Reading and Writing of a home language, reading and writing plus speaking of either English or Afrikaans, elementary arithmetic, manual instruction and singing. The syllabus for subsidized training schools for teachers consisted of the above subjects plus school management, geography, local history, nature study and drawing.¹¹ In 1933 the school syllabus was revised to include more systematic instruction in the mother-tongue, geography and hygiene, and to provide for a fifth year of schooling, namely Std 3.¹²

The new educational arrangements were applicable to all African schools, including schools in Kavango. At first nothing was done by the Administration to assist mission schools financially, but from 1922 mission schools approved by the administration were to be given free books and equipment, and the salaries of White teachers were to be

paid.¹³ In 1930 there were only 5 major schools in Kavango and only one would be subsidized. According to the report of the Organiser of African education for the year 1930, Nyangana Mission School was the only school in Kavango which was being subsidized by the Education Department. The subsidy was in the form of a salary of £100-10-180 p.a. which was being paid to the White principal, Sister Chrysantha Jakob.¹⁴

The director of Education who visited Kavango (6-12/6/1936) and Ovamboland (15-23/6/1936) in 1936 and inspected all mission schools, found that progress was very slow due to bad teaching. Among the points that were observed during the inspection tour as more or less striking features of at least some of the schools are: 1) that the standard of education attained by the majority of African teachers employed in the mission schools was very inadequate and disappointing, 2) that generally the methods of teaching left much room for improvement, 3) that school attendance was on the whole very irregular, 4) that in some cases no attempt was made to introduce any one of the official languages, 5) that with a few exceptions there was a lack of school-rooms, furniture equipment and school material, even at main stations, 6) that no fix school calendar was followed by some schools belonging to the same society.¹⁵ Consequently, rules were tightened up: no new schools were to be set up for three years and every African teacher was to be approved by the Native Commissioner responsible for that area.¹⁶

In 1930 the question whether government schools should be established for all Africans in the country was again discussed by the Administration when the Permanent Mandate Commission¹⁷ asked why the Administration was proceeding so slowly with African education. The reason given by the Administration was that 1) the Administration would not tax Whites to provide schools for Africans, 2) that Africans were not yet ripe for higher education and that the few that were ambitious could easily be trained at mission schools,

and that parents were not willing to let their children be trained as teachers as it takes them from home when they should be working for their parents.¹⁸ One of the things which concerned the Mandate Commission was the large amount spent on the education for Whites, who were in the minority and the comparatively small amount granted to mission schools. In 1926, for instance, £65 000 was spent on the education of 12 000 Whites while only 6 500 was spent for the education of 110 000 Africans. In 1927, £110 000 were spent on the education of 25 000 Whites while only £8 000 were devoted to the education of 93 491 Africans within the Police Zone, to say nothing of Africans living outside the zone.¹⁹ Expenditure on Education in 1927-8 was distributed as follows:

8 000 White scholars:	£120 520 expenditure
	(£5-1s-5d per child)
3 760 African scholars:	£10 500 expenditure
	(£2-16s per child)

In 1934 expenditure on education was:

£95 000 for 31 600 Whites
 £12 000 for 235 000 Africans, i.e. a per capita expenditure of £3 for Whites and 1s for Africans.²⁰

Apart from the small expenditure on African education, the Administration had built no schools and gave as its reason the fact that there was opposition to education and schools on the part of Africans. The Administration further stated that the territory's African education was based on practice in the Union. The Mandate Commission reacted by saying that the case was not parallel. In the Union the Government framed its educational policy in the interest of the tax payers while in Namibia the Union was tutor and the people its ward. Whites who chose to live in Namibia were therefore bound to share in the burden and responsibility of tutelage. The argument that it was unfair to tax Whites for African education was rejected, because in most tropical countries Whites could not exist without Africans who supplied them with necessary labour. That being so, Whites

owed something to Africans.²¹ Referring to the Administration's statement that Namibia's economy was almost entirely dependent on the European taxpayer, Wellington points out that this statement raises several questions in the mind of the reader of the report. Among the questions the reader would ask is what taxes were paid by Whites and for what expenditure they were paid. Wellington quotes the South West Africa Commission of 1935 as pointing out that there was then neither income-tax in Namibia, nor personal tax as there was in the Union. The revenue of Namibia was contributed mainly by diamonds and base minerals.²²

As can be seen from what has been said above, the Union government of South Africa's treatment of Africans in Namibia was scandalous. It should be borne in mind that education for Africans was of major importance in fulfilling the terms of the mandate. Article 22 of the Mandate provided that "...The Mandatory shall promote to the utmost the material and moral well being of the inhabitants of the territory subject to the present Mandate."²³ Goldblatt points out that a cardinal point of dispute between the Mandate Commission and South Africa was who were to be regarded as the original and rightful inhabitants of Namibia, the promotion whose well being and moral progress was envisaged in Article 2 and 22 of the Mandate. At the 1926 session of the Commission, Mr Rappard, a member of the Commission made it clear that the Permanent Mandates Commission never at any time departed from its view that it was Africans whose real well being and social progress was intended in Article 22 of the Covenant and Article 2 of the Mandate.²⁴ The Union Government of South Africa, however, ignored the requirements of the Permanent Mandate Commission of following a very full plan as regards African education.

In 1939 the Mandate Commission censured South Africa over its mismanagement of the mandate. At that time a prosperous White population paid no taxes at all, yet when asked why White education received ten times as much money as Africans, in a country with one tenth as many Whites as

Africans, South Africa replied that there was a lack of teachers and provision of more staff was stated to be beyond the financial resources of the Administration.

In 1940 three different kinds of schools had been created for Africans in Namibia. There were government schools, state-aided mission schools and a few private church schools. In Kavango and other northern areas all schools were mission schools and were under the administration of the Finnish Lutheran and Catholic missions. The two missions received subsidies in the form of writing equipments such as slates and slate pencils. Supervision over the teaching of missionaries was entrusted to an Organiser of Native education with an Assistant Organiser having their headquarters at Grootfontein in the Police Zone.²⁵ According to the Education Department Report of 1940, however,

the only activity of the Education Department as far as schools in Ovamboland and along the Okavango River are concerned is to pay a subsidy of £100 to each of the two schools, viz. - The Teacher's Training School at Oniipa and the Industrial school at Onguediva. The payment of these grants were authorised by the Administrator after a personal visit to Ovamboland.²⁶

In the 1940 report no mention was made whether any of the 5 major schools operating in Kavango received any subsidy from the colonial administration.

In 1944 M.H. Greeff, the then Chief Inspector for the Northern Sector visited Ovambo with the intention of investigating the circumstances there and of meeting missionaries and holding discussions with them. Consequently, certain recommendations which would only apply to the education of Ovamboland and Kavango were made and a preliminary syllabus suitable to all mission schools in Ovamboland, Kavango and Koakoveld was drawn up. Regarding the medium of instruction, the teaching of arithmetic and religion, duration of school day and school year and the problem of school attendance, Greeff made the following recommendations:

- a) The mother-tongue was to be used as the medium of instruction for all subjects, except for whichever official language (English or Afrikaans) has been selected by the school.
- b) Pupils should study counting and arithmetic in either English or Afrikaans, according to which one has been chosen as a second language by the school.
- c) The syllabus for religious instruction should be compiled by the missionary society under whose jurisdiction the school falls.
- d) Each school day should last at least four hours.
- e) Because the rainy season does not begin simultaneously in all areas, and because the planting and harvesting seasons in the eastern and western areas differ from each other by several weeks, it is difficult to establish a school year that would be suitable for all areas. The fact that attendance is not obligatory hampers any resolve to establish a fixed school year on the assumption that parents would find this convenient.
- f) Attendance is dependent on a favourable school environment. Adequate provision of equipment will improve matters, but effective teaching are undoubtedly the most important factor. Attendance is already affected when the children of Non-Christian parents attend school on casual basis, and overcrowding of classroom areas hinders the work. It is therefore recommended that pupils whose attendance is extremely irregular are not allowed to attend arbitrarily. Such a decision, for example, would resolve the question of insufficient space to some extent.

The precise duration of the school year and the setting down of semesters or trimesters could only be decided on when the real causes of poor attendance were established, and (as far as possible) done away with. For the time being, the school

year and holidays were to remain as they had been in the recent past.²⁷

In addition to the recommendations a preliminary syllabus was drawn up by Greeff for Sub Standards A and B and Stds 1-3. The syllabus included the first language (mother-tongue), second language (English or Afrikaans), Writing, Arithmetic, Handwork, Physical Education, Hygiene, Drawing and Singing for Sub-standards A and B and Stds 1 and 2. For Std 3 the subjects History, Geography and Nature Study were included in the syllabus. Greeff, in conjunction with the northern inspectorial circuit also gave recommendations regarding the methods which should be used in teaching and learning the prescribed subjects. The authorised syllabus drawn up by Greeff was not adopted immediately by the missions in Kavango, the reason being the lack of qualified teachers and educational aid as well as irregular attendance on the part of the pupils. The missions continued concentrating on teaching religion, writing, reading and arithmetic.²⁸

As work and enrolment increased and attendance improved, they added Singing and Drawing to their curriculum. In 1946, however, when the Department of Education began to put more pressure on the mission schools, they started following the same curriculum.²⁹

It is noteworthy to mention that one might be tempted to ask the question why this curriculum was drawn up for the northern areas only, and not for all African schools in the country. It seems that the education officials did this with certain specific aims: to make the northern regions less developed and preserve them as future "homelands" and labour reservoirs, to isolate the Ovambo-Kavango group from other African groups in the country, to dilute their education which was already inferior³⁰ as well as to restrict the expansion of academic secondary schooling. The education officials and the colonial administration seem to have seen no need to give Africans more than a rudimentary knowledge. They feared perhaps that too much knowledge

might make an African dangerous, by producing African nationalists who were equipped to debate on the colonial power's own terms.

Following the curriculum and syllabi did not mean that there was any change in the education for Africans in the territory. Until the year 1949 schools for all Africans in Namibia were still in the hands of the various missionary societies. As far as the financing and funding of schools in Namibia were concerned, it would be argued that the government was eager to fund the education for Whites. The education for Africans received little indeed, and was mostly funded by missionaries and the poor unsophisticated Africans themselves through taxations (in the form of tribal funds) imposed on them by the government.³¹ In addition Africans were to be given a rudimentary education with a separate curriculum designed for them. They were not provided with technical and vocational education, except teacher training. The Native Labour Commission seemed to put the blame on the missions for not doing enough in the sphere of vocational training. In its report of 1948 it stated:

There does, however, remain an important sphere in which ... little if anything has been done to make extra-territorial and northern labour more efficient and that is in the sphere of vocational training. During its visits to the Okavango Territory and Ovamboland the Commission paid visits to most schools conducted by different mission societies and subsidized by the state. It found that little training of this description is being given to the natives. There is a certain amount of arts and crafts training, but this is to a large extent confined to native girls and takes the form of basket work and needlecraft. With all the beautiful wood at their disposal in the Okavango territory and to a lesser extent in Ovamboland it was disappointing to find that the missions have not developed the teaching of woodwork to a greater extent. It was found that natives as have been trained by the missions are engaged in most cases on work for the missions. The missions do not seem to have gone much further than training natives for their own requirements.³²

Statistical summary in respect of schools and teachers until the end of 1949 in Kavango is as follows:

ION	STATION SCHOOLS	OUT SCHOOLS	WHITE TEACHERS	CERTIFIED AFRICAN TEACHERS	UNCERTIFIED AFRICAN TEACHERS	AVERAGE ENROLMENT	AVERAGE ATTENDANCE
ion	5	21	5	14	18	1 230	815
	5	19	4	12	21	1 011	790
	Girl's School	-	-	1	-	20,4	17,1
ish ton	3	7	2	10	3	517	275
	3	7	1	13	1	387	199
	Girls' School	-	1	-	-	25,4	24,9
	Boys' School	-	-	1	-	15	14,3

Source: EDU FILE 612/2 Mission Schools: Syllabus for Native Training Schools, p.7.

In Kavango, in particular, the picture of education during the years 1910-1949 is a bleak one, and as far as development is concerned, it was stagnant: Education was a separate missionary endeavour, completely self-supporting and self-administrating, staffed by missionaries and Kavango teachers. Schools were in short supply and badly maintained.³³ Many Kavango teachers were completely untrained and those who were qualified had a very low academic level. In earlier times (up to 1946), for instance, a Kavango teacher's qualification was Std 3 plus 2 years teacher training, and later (up to 1949) it was Std 6 plus 2 years teacher training.³⁴ There was no training school in Kavango (except the one in Windhoek, Döbra, and others in Ovambo who served Kavango pupils). Not a single state school was built for Kavango pupils between 1910 and 1966. Only a small proportion of children were at school and they did not proceed further than Std 4.

The abovementioned educational arrangements remained imposed on Namibia, including Kavango, until 1948 when the Nationalist Party assumed power in South Africa and introduced its apartheid policy in South Africa and in Namibia. In 1949 legislative power over education was transferred from the Department of Education of the South West Africa Administration to the Legislative Assembly under the final authority of the South African government.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1. Administration of South West Africa (1958): Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Non-European Education in South West Africa, Part 1, Native Education, p.38.
2. Leu, C.A.: Colonial Education and African Resistance in Namibia, in: Nyaggah, M. and Mugomba, T. (1980): The Political Economy of colonial education in Southern Africa, p.154. See also Lategan, M. (1980): Sending-en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango, p.47.
3. Tjitendero, M.P. (1984): Education Policy for Independent Namibia, p.3, also O'Callaghan, M. (1977): Namibia: the effects of apartheid on culture and education, p.97.
4. Administration of South West Africa (1958): Report of the Commission of Inquiry into non-European Education in South West Africa, Part 1, Native Education, pp. 38-39.
5. S.W.A.A. FILE NO. A409/13: Control of Sites (Churches, Schools and Missions) Proclamation, 1932, Proclamation No. 31 of 1931, p.1.
6. EDU FILE VOL. 4561/30A The Education of non-European children, p.17.
7. Administration of South West Africa (1958): Report of the Commission of Inquiry into non-European Education in South West Africa, Part 1, Native Education, pp. 40-41. See also O'Callaghan, M. (1977): The effects of apartheid on culture and education, p.98.
8. The Odendaal Commission of Inquiry into South West African Affairs 1962-1963 (Pretoria 1964): Government Printer, pp. 225 and 227.
9. Ellis, J. (1984): Education, Repression and Liberation: Namibia, p.21. See also Katjavivi, P. (1988): A History of Resistance in Namibia, p.27. Also The Report of the Commission of Inquiry into non-European Education in South West Africa, pp. 53 and 88. The reason given by the Administration for not providing further education for Africans were the

unavailability of funds and the difficulty of finding qualified teachers who could teach in the higher standards. The problem of finding qualified teachers has been complicated by the government's policy and principle that the African languages together with the African cultures, had to be preserved at all costs. In his report of 1926, the administrator reverting again to the problems involved in African education, enunciated two basic principles:

- 1) The aim is to develop the Native on his own lines, i.e. in his own language and in keeping with his own habits and mode of living in so far as these are not in conflict with the great general principles in which civilization rests. Any attempt to force him to abandon his native customs and to give him instead the aspirations and outlook on life of Europeans is to be deprecated.
- 2) The method of achieving this aim is to help him to develop step by step from his present raw Native state. Any desire to show early results by making him skip a number of rungs on the ladder of progress is unsound and is bound to have disastrous results in the end.

The Van Zyl Commission (1958) found that many of the progressive African teachers, including some representing Teachers' Associations, considered that this was against true progress. They maintained that the most important object of educational system should be the teaching of a 'world language' which would enable Africans to be in touch with the cultures of the most advanced peoples of the world and with the great developments in human thought and opinion. (See, for example, letter of South West African Student Body to the Administrator, EDU FILE E742 NATIVE EDUCATION GENERAL VOL. III.)

10. Töttemeyer, G. (1978): Namibia Old and New: Traditional and Modern leaders in Ovamboland, p.19, also quoted by Tjitendero, M. (1984): in Education

Policy for Independent Namibia, p.4. It should be borne in mind that what had been planned and decided by the Administration about Ovambo was also applicable to Kavango and its people, because the two communities were always treated and regarded as one group. Historians like Goldblatt and others refer to the Ovambo and Kavango peoples as cousins. In most literature about people living in the Northern Sector of Namibia, mention is always made about the Ovambo people who are in the majority and who have been offering resistance to colonialism and apartheid.

11. The Union Government 21, 1924, Report of the Administrator of South West Africa for the year 1923, p.34.
12. The Union Government 27, 1934, Report of the Administrator of South West Africa for the year 1933, p.30.
13. The Union Government 21, 1923, Report of the Administrator of South West Africa for the year 1922, p.20.
14. See EDU FILE 460/4: Report of the Organiser of Native Education, Ondangua, Ovamboland, for Director of Education, p.1.
15. S.W.A.A. File no. A489/13: Extracts from a report by the Director of Education on his visit to the Okavango area, 6-12/6/36, and Ovamboland, 15-23/6/36, pp. 10 and 11: The names of the schools the director visited and the number of pupils at the schools are not indicated in the report.
16. The Union Government 31, 1937, Report of the Administrator of South West Africa for the year 1936, p.40. See also the Administration of South West Africa (1958): Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Non-European Education in South West Africa, Part 1, Native Education, pp. 51-52.
17. The Permanent Mandate Commission was a worldbody, consisting originally of nine members, all experienced colonial administrators. Although they were appointed by their governments, they did not sit as their representatives, but as experts to examine the conduct

of the mandatory powers in their administration of the territories committed to their trust.

18. The Union Government 25, 1938, Report of the Administrator of South West Africa for the year 1937, p.43, also Administration of South West Africa (1958): Report of the Commission of Inquiry into non-European Education in South West Africa, Part 1, Native Education, pp. 47-48.
19. U.G. South West Africa: Examination of the Annual Report for 1926, p.108.
20. See Permanent Mandate Commission IX, p.41, and the Union Government 25, 1936, Report of the Administrator of South West Africa for the year 1935, p.34, also the Report of the Administrator, 1934, p.36.
21. Wellington, J.H. (1967): South West Africa and its Human Issues, p.315.
22. Ibid. p.306.
23. Goldblatt, I. (1971): History of South West Africa from the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century. pp. 207-208.
24. Ibid, p.211. See also Cockram, G.M. (1976): South West African Mandate, pp. 71 and 90. Mr Rappard, the Swiss member of the Permanent Mandate Commission commented in 1925 that it was the first duty of the Commission to look after the welfare of Africans. The Italian chairman of the Commission, the Marquis Theodoli, even expressed the conviction that the spirit of the mandates requires as a fundamental principle the material and moral progress of Africans; the White population ought only to be considered in so far as it assisted in achieving this progress.
25. Administration of South West Africa (1958): Report of the Commission of Inquiry into non-European Education in South West Africa, Part 1, Native Education, p.56.
26. EDU FILE 601, VOL. 2 Annual Report of the Work done in Schools for Natives in South West Africa: 1940, p.14. It is important to note that although the report deals with Ovamboland and Kavango, not a single Kavango school was mentioned in the report, and it is not clear

- whether subsidies were being paid for Kavango schools.
27. EDU FILE 1/14/5 VOL. 1 Year report for 1946: Greeff, M.H. (1944): Preliminary Curriculum of Schools in Ovamboland and Okavango, pp. 1-2. Greeff was Chief Inspector of Schools (1933-1954) and Director of Education (1955-1956).
 28. Interview with I. Shikukumwa (16 February 1987) and information obtained from a letter received from L. Burger (dated 13.5.1987).
 29. D.R. Rootman who was appointed professional Organiser of Education for the Northern Circuit in 1946 had to see that the syllabus was to be followed by the missionaries. See File P/8/3 Education in Kavango 1976, p.2. See also Administration of South West Africa (1958): Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Non-European Education in South West Africa, Part 1, Native Education, p.69. The missions, however, carried on using their own syllabus. Only some of the subjects were added to their curriculum.
 30. The Administration's excuse was that African communities in Namibia showed little interest in western education. African parents, on the other hand, complained that the government used education to teach their children that they were inferior to the Whites, and that the government's emphasis on maintaining African languages and traditions was a clever ruse to keep Africans backward - education for subservient. The aspirations of Africans themselves centred round the provision of a kind of education which would above all enable them to earn high wages and to become proficient in a language which was worldwide in its use. It has been stated during the interview that what all Africans (and the Kavango people are no exception) in the territory wanted was adequate education which was seen as the route to high wages, equality and power. In Namibia, the typical White-settler-mentality was against this (see chapter 3). Informants stated that one of the reasons why people rejected western education was because the education given to them was

inferior and led to frustration. Interview with I. Shikukumwa 16 February 1987.

31. See S.W.A.A. File A489/13, Control of Sites Proclamation 1932, Proclamation No. 31 of 1932. In this Proclamation the Administrator notes that it was intending to establish funds which would mean African taxation and warned missionaries and Africans that it would consider limiting the number of stock which might be grazed free, the imposition of grazing fees for any stock in excess of such limit and the fees to be paid into the tribal funds, pp. 4 and 5. Eedes, the Assistant "Native" Commissioner in Kavango, refers to tribal funds as African taxation.
32. See EDU FILE E742 Native Education General Vol. III. See also Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Non-European Education in S.W.A., Part 1, Native Education, p.62.
33. See Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Non-European Education in S.W.A., Part 1, Native Education, pp. 85 and 87.
34. See EDU FILE 612/2 Outline of a Syllabus to be followed in Training Schools for Native Teachers in South West Africa, p.1. The outline of the course to be followed in two years' training after Std 2 was as follows:
Compulsory subjects;
 - 1) Religious Instruction
 - 2) Home Language of Student
 - 3) One of the official languages
 - 4) Arithmetic
 - 5) Writing
 - 6) School Method and Management
 - 7) Geography
 - 8) Nature Study
 - 9) Hygiene
 - 10) Manual Work

Optional subjects:

 - 11) Singing
 - 12) History

- 13) Drawing
- 14) Drill

Except in religious instruction and the home language,
the medium of instruction was the official language.

CHAPTER FIVE

MISSION EDUCATION AND STATE CONTROL (1949-1966)

This chapter examines the role played by the colonial government in the development of education in colonial Namibia, with special attention to Kavango. Before the colonial government's efforts can be discussed, it is important to examine briefly South African apartheid education policy in order to shed light on why the colonial government acted as it did regarding education in colonial Namibia, viz. Kavango.

Shortly after the Nationalist Party came to power in South Africa in 1948, it appointed a Commission of Inquiry on Native Education, known as the Eiselen Commission for its chairman, Dr W.M. Eiselen, then South African Secretary for Native Affairs, with the following terms of reference:

- a) The formulation of principles and aims of education for natives as an independent race, in which their past and present, their inherent racial qualities, their distinctive characteristics and aptitude, and their needs under ever-changing social conditions are taken into consideration.
- b) The extent to which the existing primary, secondary and vocational educational system for natives and the training for native teachers should be modified in respect of the content and form of syllabuses, in order to conform to the proposed principles and aims, and to prepare natives more effectively for their future occupations.
- c) The organisation and administration of the various branches of native education.
- d) The basis on which such education should be financed.
- e) Such other aspects of native education as may be related to the preceding.¹

The Eiselen Commission reported its findings² in 1951 and recommended, among other things that:

- c) a division of Bantu Affairs should be called into being, consisting of a Department of Bantu Technical

Services, a Department of Bantu Education and a Bantu Development Authority; the latter body to be served by a Research Organisation.

- d) In order to secure active participation of the Bantu in the solution of local problems it is recommended that Bantu local authorities be set up in the reserves and in the urban areas. The intention is that these bodies should in course of time evolve into local government units charged with the administration of all local services, including education. Their funds would be drawn from local and national taxation.

Concerning the finance of Bantu schools your Commission recommends the adoption of the following principles:

- i) educational expenditure should be correlated with the development plan and attention given to the problem of using education to improve the economic situation.
- ii) the responsibility for financing education must be shared by the State and the Bantu local authorities and communities.
- iii) as the development plans take effect it is expected that Bantu local authorities will be able to shoulder a proportionately heavier share. In the earlier stages, however, the share of the State will be heavier and must be regarded as an investment or 'pump-priming' device.³

One of the Eiselen Commission's aims was to create a separate education for Africans in South Africa. The Commission hoped that under this new plan the goal of a lower primary education for all African children could be attained in ten years and that higher primary and secondary school education facilities would be adequate for the number of African pupils continuing the education course to these levels. To accomplish all this the Commission estimated that the government would have to spend about R20,5 million in 1959, compared to R10 million in 1949.⁴ Horrell (1968)

notes:

The Eiselen Commission considered that over a 10-year period, ending in 1959, the aim should be to provide sufficient school accommodation for all the children in the eight to eleven year (inclusive) age group, enough higher primary accommodation for the numbers who could be expected to attend for a longer period, high schools for all those who could be absorbed by the present Bantu society or by the suggested development plan, and increased numbers of vocational schools, bursaries, etc. Such a plan would involve roughly a doubling of the number of pupils in both primary schools and an increase of two-and-a-half times in the number of students teachers.⁵

Consequently, the Bantu Education Act No. 17 of 1953 was adopted by the Nationalist government of South Africa in 1954 and extended to Namibia. This Act came to determine the education for Africans living in South Africa and in Namibia in terms of control, management, administration, content and finance. The Act was designed in order to give the South African government the ultimate power of controlling and directing the development of the African population separate from that of the Whites. Davenport (1977) has pointed out as follows:

As chairman of the Bantu Education Commission appointed in 1949, Eiselen moved against the control over African schooling achieved by the Christian missions, Catholic and Protestant, after over a century of work in the field. In its Report, tabled in 1951, the Commission argued the case for a separate educational system for the Bantu, controlled by the Central Government rather than the provinces, and ... by the Department of Native Affairs rather than by the Union Department of Education. It also argued a differential syllabus for Africans, designed to prepare them for their special place in society, rather than give them what Heaton Nicholls had described in 1937 as 'a little clerky instructions in individualism.' This meant, as Eiselen saw it, a greater emphasis on the use of the vernacular medium than was practised in any colonial territory in Africa, so as to anchor the African child in his own culture ...⁶

In the case of Namibia, the policies of separate development were soon impressed upon the African peoples of the

territory, as evidenced by the passage of the 1954 South West African Native Affairs Administration Act. Under this law, control over African Affairs, though not education, was transferred to the South African Department of Bantu Administration and Development, thus giving South Africa the authority to politically control and manipulate the African population of Namibia.

The Act was followed by the Van Zyl Commission, also known as the Commission of Inquiry into non-European Education in South West Africa⁷, to investigate the African education system in Namibia. This Commission had the following terms of reference:

- a) The formulation of an efficacious system of education which will serve the interest of the Native and Coloured communities in South West Africa as two separate, independent racial groups, taking into consideration the historical development of each group, the respective distinctive characteristics and aptitudes, and their respective needs under the general, constantly changing social, economic and political conditions;
- b) the extent to which the Union systems of non-European education may serve as basis for the formulation of education systems for non-European communities in South West Africa;
- c) the extent to which primary and secondary vocational training and the training of teachers for both groups separately, should be changed in respect of the content of the syllabus to make the proposed systems of education as serviceable as possible to the two racial groups;
- d) the control over, and the administration and financing of native and Coloured education in South West Africa;
- e) the desirability of instituting a scheme of feeding non-european children, having regard to the feasibility of administering and financing it;
- f) such other matters touching upon Native and Coloured education connected with the above which may prove

- necessary for a thorough investigation into all the aspects Native and Coloured education;
- g) the financial implications of the proposed efficacious education system for the two racial groups.⁸

By 1958 education in Namibia had already changed dramatically and was separated into three systems of education: one for Coloureds and Basters, one for Africans and one for Whites. As far as the education for Africans in the territory was concerned, two separate systems had already been created, namely one was operating in the Southern Sector and the other one in the Northern Sector. Schools for Africans in the Police Zone were controlled by the government, the missions as well as private organisations. In the Northern Sector, schools were controlled and administrated by the missions. These schools, however, received subsidies and supervision from the government. The supervision went through the Organiser of Native Education, who was authorised to inspect schools and make decisions concerning staff and cost estimates. The Organiser was, however, not bound to report his school inspection to the Department of Education:

The inspectors do not visit the schools outside the Police Zone, the organizer for these territories and his assistant enjoy considerable freedom with regard to control and even policy. The only share that the central authority, the Education Department, has in two-third of Native Education in South West Africa is in the granting of subsidies, for the rest the organizer acts practically independently.⁹

The role of the Department of Education as far as non-European education was concerned, was one of co-ordination divorced from responsibilities for planning and provision, discipline and teacher training and the education was clerically administered by way of record-keeping and occasional correspondence, and supervision was exercised by one inspector for each circuit.¹⁰

In the investigation, the Commission, headed by H. Van Zyl, the then Secretary of Bantu Education in South Africa,

visited many parts of Namibia where members of the Commission visited all African schools. In the case of Kavango, they visited all mission stations and held discussions with rectors of the mission stations as well as principals of the mission schools. Van Zyl's visit to Kavango seemed to have two major aims: To enquire about the languages spoken in that region, which could be regarded as independent languages and to find out why all schools on mission stations went only until Std 3, and not further. The Assistant Organiser of Education and the Assistant Native Commissioner argued that there were not enough teachers in Kavango who could teach further than Std 3, because the trained teachers from Döbra, Augustineum and Onguediva were not fit for the task as they did not satisfy the requirements.¹¹ Van Zyl's recommendations were that the Small Sub.A¹² be done away with, the languages Rukwangali and Thimbukushu had already developed and could be used until Std 2 and that mission schools could go on with Std 4 and then try to reach Std 6 by 1960.¹³

Statistical summary in respect of school and teachers for the report year 1957:

MISSION	STATION SCHOOLS	OUT-SCHOOLS	MIS-SIONARY TEACHERS	QUALIFIED AFRICAN TEACHERS	UNQUALIFIED AFRICAN TEACHERS	AVE-RAGE ENROL-MENT	AVE-RAGE ATTEN-DANCE
Roman Catholic	5	22	2	22	20	1 618	1 154
Finnish	3	7	2	14	3	575	402

Source: E DU FILE NO. 274 SWA Administration Staff file no. E1/4 (1958) Subject: Annual reports, Education Department, pp. 9-10.

In 1958 the Catholics had 27 schools and the Finnish Lutherans had 12 schools. All these schools were lower primary schools, there was no higher primary schools. Pupils enrolled at the 27 Catholic schools totalled 1 925,

while at 12 Finnish schools the total enrolment was 668.¹⁴

The Van Zyl Commission found that educational provision was so meagre in the Northern Sector that it stated that in 1958 there were no Senior Certificate candidates in schools outside the Police Zone, and that only 27 students were in teacher training. The Commission stated further that the syllabuses used in schools in the Northern Sector left much to be desired. The syllabuses for the higher primary classes consisted of a series of graded class-books to be worked through without any indication of the actual content of the syllabuses, while the syllabuses for the lower primary classes were antiquated and were not issued by the Department, but by the Organiser.¹⁵

As far as the whole Namibia was concerned, the Commission found that by 1958 whereas about 95% of school - age White children were enrolled at schools, and 71% of Coloured children, only some 30% of African children of school age were at school. These included 40% of the children in the reserves, 28% of those in the northern sector and 17% of the children on farms. Of the African children being educated 90,09% were in the lower primary (Sub-standards A and B, Std 1 and Std 2), the remaining 0,81% being in the secondary, the teacher training and vocational classes.¹⁶

In summary, the evidence heard from witnesses reflected the following opinions and points of view:

- i) Concerning the control of schools, some churches and other individuals felt that the status quo should be maintained while other churches and most Africans thought that the Government should take over the control and responsibility. The churches, in fact, feared that the schools would lose their Christian character and that religious instruction would be neglected, and therefore called for a scheme which would ensure the continued influence of the churches. Some headmen and 'tribal' councils desired that mission schools

should be converted into government schools, maintaining that religion would not suffer neglect as the community of parents in each case consisted of Christians and church members.

- ii) Chiefs and 'tribal' councils were in favour of the creation of bodies as school committees and school boards due to the idea of serving on such bodies and exercising authority over schools. Most churches and mission societies felt that such bodies would not make any real contribution without the guidance of European chairmen.
- iii) It was agreed that the home languages only should provisionally be used in the beginners classes and that Afrikaans should be the medium in higher classes. The opinion was also expressed that more time should be devoted to English. The consensus was that the syllabuses should be revised.
- iv) Vocational training was mostly needed in Ovambo and other northern areas where there were no such facilities.
- v) Most witnesses, including the 'tribal' councils, agreed that the community should contribute towards the financing of education.
- vi) All African witnesses indicated that they would not be satisfied with a system which would give the impression that it was inferior to the system for European and Coloured schools.
- vii) All organisations and persons giving evidence urged more, and more efficient, educational facilities for Africans and more and better teacher training. Also emphasized was the necessity of giving the child opportunity for more advanced education.
- viii) Most witnesses pleaded for more lower primary schools nearer the children's homes and regretted the fact that many children could not attend because they live so far away from schools.
- ix) Most people opposed the idea of having the control of African education taken over by the Union.¹⁷

After the investigation in all parts of the territory had been completed, the Van Zyl Commission proposed many recommendations. The Van Zyl report included the basic recommendations of the Eiselen Commission, adapted to apply to the Namibian situation. Among other things, the Commission recommended: 1) the introduction of Bantu education syllabus in schools in Namibia, 2) the introduction of mother tongue of various communities as the medium of instruction until Std 2, 3) separate administration of African education under the South West African Department of Education, 4) the replacement of missionary schools by community schools, 5) the extension of the Lower Primary Course over four years, and 6) the teaching of Afrikaans, English and Religion.¹⁸

As far as higher primary education was concerned, the Commission recommended that; 1) at least one central higher primary school and a community hostel be provided in each of the seventeen reserves within the Police Zone, 2) central higher primary schools with hostel accommodation be provided at suitable centres in Ovambo, while only one higher primary school be established at Rundu in Kavango to provide for the needs of the whole area, 3) in locations and townships, for example, ethnic grouping would have to be taken into account when providing schools, 4) higher primary schools in town locations should only receive day scholars, and no provision should be made for hostel facilities in these locations.¹⁹

Regarding junior and secondary schools, the Commission recommended: 1) the provision of two junior secondary schools for the Nama and Herero speaking Namibians. For teacher and senior secondary training (Std 9 and 10) pupils of these two language groups were to be accepted at the Augustineum Teacher Training School; 2) the provision of a single junior secondary school for the Ndonga and Kwanyama speaking groups of Ovambo and the acceptance of pupils for teacher training and secondary training at the proposed Ovambo Training School; 3) the attachment of secondary

classes to the proposed central higher primary school at Rundu for the Kavango speaking Namibians; 4) the provision of hostel facilities at and the appointment of European staff (only) for all the proposed secondary schools.²⁰

The Commission also suggested that the Education Department in Namibia should be consulted when changes in the syllabuses had to be carried out. It was also recommended that a Bureau of Native Languages headed by a White philologist, assisted by two or more Africans should be established in order to direct the Development of African languages.

These recommendations were obviously meant to facilitate central control over African education and ensure the development of a separate cultural community for each African group. The recommendations were fully supported by the South African government, and consequently, the Bantu school syllabus in South Africa was introduced in African schools in Namibia, including Kavango in 1968 despite the objections of the Anglican missions, the AME church which runs the Nama schools unassisted by the government, the Herero and Nama peoples and the South West Africa Teachers' Association.

The recommendations of the Van Zyl Commission of Inquiry into non-European Education in South West Africa were supplemented by the Education Ordinance No. 27/1962 published in the Government Notice No.116 of 1962.²¹ Concerning the education for Africans, the Ordinance provided for an advisory board for native education, the establishment of a Bureau of Native languages as media for writing and teaching, the establishing and maintaining of state native schools and the establishing and subsidizing of native community schools. Furthermore, the Ordinance provided for the discontinuation of mission involvement in educational activities and declared as follows:

1. a) From a date to be fixed by the Administrator by Notice in the official

Gazette, no church authority, body or person shall establish, continue or maintain any native school, unless such school satisfies the requirements prescribed by regulation for the registration of such school and had been registered with the Department in the manner prescribed by regulation or has been exempted from registration under the regulations.

- b) The Administrator may register a native school for such period as he may determine at a date of registration, and any school so registered shall, save as is provided in paragraph (c) at the expiration of the period for which it has been registered, be dissolved and cease to function as a native school notwithstanding the fact that such school satisfies the requirements prescribed for registration as a native school referred to in paragraph(a).
 - c) The Administrator may in his discretion extend the period of registration referred to in paragraph(b).
2. The Administrator shall refuse to register any native school if he is convinced that such school is not, or would not be, in the interests of the native population or of any section of such population or that such school would be, or would probably be, detrimental to the physical, mental or moral well-being of the pupils or persons who attend or may attend such school.

In order to make it difficult for the churches to establish new schools, the Ordinance declared:

4. Any church authority or body or person who, after the date fixed under paragraph(a) of subsection(1), establishes, continues or maintains a native school not registered or exempted from

registration under his Ordinance, or who admits a native child or person to such a school shall be guilty of an offence and shall upon conviction be liable to a fine of not exceeding one hundred Rand or, in default of payment of such, to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months.²²

In addition the Ordinance provided that the African population should participate actively in the control and management of state African schools and African community schools. The Ordinance gave the Administrator the authority to create regional, local or domestic boards and to entrust to such bodies the control and management of such a school or school. The powers of these boards were, however, limited:

The Administrator may at any time and whenever he deems it advisable to do so, abolish such regional, local or domestic board, management board or other body or withdraw a state native school or native community school from the control and management of the reserve board or tribal council to which such control and management have been entrusted in terms of subsection (1): provided that the Administrator, before exercising his discretion in terms of this subsection, shall cause an investigation to be made at which the board, management board or body concerned shall be entitled to be heard.²³

The Administrator was also authorised by the Ordinance to make different regulations in respect of different teachers of different groups, classes or races, or in respect of different schools or areas. Thus, the Ordinance of 1962 assisted and ensured the introduction of apartheid education based on the South African Bantu Education Act of 1953 in Namibia, including Kavango.

When members of the Van Zyl Commission visited Kavango, no parent, pupil or Kavango teacher was interviewed or consulted.²⁴ Its findings were only based on the information obtained from missionaries, other Whites living in the region, the "native" Commissioner and members of the "tribal" council. Therefore, it is no exaggeration to argue

that everything that had been decided were not in the interest of Kavango children and their parents, but rather in the interest of Whites who were to benefit in getting labourers for their households and farms. Education was designed for a specific purpose: to prepare an African for an inferior place with which he had to suffice in society. Therefore, education had been established as follows:

- a) A Lower Primary Course till Std 2 for literacy.
- b) A Higher Primary Course till Std 6 for a better working class.
- c) Junior Certificate for the training as teacher, nurse, police, etc.
- d) Matric for admission to university for higher training.
- e) Manual training mainly in building trade as joiners.²⁵

On the recommendations of the Van Zyl Commission (1958) and the Ordinance of 1962, schools in Kavango at that time were still administered by the churches, but being supervised by the Administration through the Organiser of Native Education, who was authorized to inspect schools and make decisions concerning staff and cost estimates, but was not compelled to report this to the Department of Education.

In 1960 D.R. Grundling was appointed Inspector of Education for the Northern Sector with Grootfontein as headquarters. The Northern Sector which includes Ovambo, Kavango, Koakoveld and Caprivi was too big for one inspector, therefore, an additional inspector for that area was appointed for the control and administration of the education services in Ovambo and Koakoland with Ondangua as headquarters. This would mean that Grundling would pay more attention to schools in the Kavango region.²⁶

In 1961 the Assistant Director of Education, the Chief Inspector for Native Education, the Inspector for Native Education and the Professional Organiser visited Kavango in

order to establish whether the possibility of replacing missionary schools by 'community schools' could be realized. The main reason behind the establishment of 'community schools' seemed to be not only the participation of Kavango parents in the management of schools for their children, but also to extract greater financial contribution from the Kavango community as well as to undermine mission schools.

These were clear to the missions. In the discussion between the government officials and the Catholic mission, it was clear that the Catholics were still not in favour of 'community schools'. On discovering this, the education officials began to discuss general matters surrounding the problems the Roman Catholic mission was encountering in the region and other problems regarding the teaching of the mother tongue.²⁷

The Finnish Lutheran mission argued that the time was still not ripe for the replacement of mission schools by 'community schools'. The reason the Finnish mission gave was that both parents and their children were not interested in school and that Kavango parents lacked responsibility as far as schools were concerned.²⁸

The education officials came to an agreement that the Kavango region was still not ready for 'community schools'. Consequently, they proposed that the state and the missions should cooperate in the education of the Kavango community. The officials then recommended that the education for Africans living in Kavango and other northern areas should still be left in the hands of the missions and that the state should make grants-in-aid to the missions. The state agreed to the recommendations but reserved the right of inspection.²⁹

The picture of education in Kavango by 1961 was as follows: In 1961 all mission schools in the region were primary schools only (Sub.A-Std 4). In this year the following schools existed in the Kavango region:

MISSION	LOWER PRIMARY	HIGHER PRIMARY UNTIL STD 4
Roman Catholic	27	4
Finnish Lutheran	11	3
Total	38	7

Enrolment of pupils during this year totalled 3 302.

Source: EDU FILE E1/4 (VOL 7) S.W.A. Administration, Education Department 1961.

Subject: Yearreport 1961, p.3.

The first school to have Std 6 was the church mission school Nyangana in 1962. The rest of the mission schools went either until Std 3 or Std 4. Since 1960 it happened that most pupils in Catholic schools who qualified for Std 4 were sent to Nyangana to have Std 5, and later to complete the Std 6 course before they were sent to Döbra for teacher training. In December 1962 the first four candidates sat for Std 6 examination at Nyangana mission school in subjects English, Afrikaans, Mother Tongue, Nature Study, Social Study, Hygiene, Arithmetic and Religion. In the oral examination emphasis was placed on reading, story-telling, recitation and singing.³⁰

Prior to the introduction of the Odendaal Commission recommendations in Namibia in 1962, the education of Africans in the Namibian territory was unchanged. Apart from the fact that there were already some 'community schools' in the South and in the 'Police Zone', the recommendations of the 1958 Commission were not fully implemented. In 1968 when the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development (South Africa) assumed full control of all "Bantu Affairs" in Namibia, the 1958 Commission recommendations were implemented. In terms of Act 39 of 1968, known as the South West Africa Constitution Act of 1968, control of 'native' education passed from the Administration to the Department of Bantu Education of South

Africa. Such was the education situation in Namibia at the time the formal system of apartheid education, based on the South African Bantu Education Act of 1953, was introduced in Namibia.

As can be seen from the Commission recommendations and Ordinances, the Administration of South West Africa had maintained an inefficient education system in Namibia for such a long time. The reason in doing this was ideological. Namibia was administered as part of South Africa and as South Africa's fifth Province. The head offices of the Department of Bantu Education, for instance, were situated in the four provincial capitals and Windhoek.³¹ Therefore, the politics of White domination and privilege and that of divide and rule were pursued by the South African Administration as had been under the German rule. In addition the necessary subjugation of Africans in Namibia was guaranteed. One of the policies of the Administration was to put the African education financial burden on the shoulders of the missionaries and the local communities who had little access to modern sector employment, and who were denied the benefits of the exploitation of minerals and other natural resources.

To argue that the defects of the African school system in Namibia, viz. Kavango, were essentially attributable to the missions would be wrong. The missions did not have the authority to order educational dispensation, nor did they have the authority and finance to create better facilities for Africans. It was the Administration which tolerated inadequate facilities, the lack of trained teachers and the inefficiencies of educational provision. The Administration was also the one which permitted the missions to manage African education on its behalf and it was the one which made decisions concerning the manner and extent of subsidies.

In 1962 the South African State President appointed another Commission under the chairmanship of F.H. Odendaal (former attorney and administrator of the Transvaal) to inquire into the affairs of South West Africa, with the special directive to make recommendations for a general five-year plan of African development.³² The Commission's findings provided a detailed picture of educational conditions in Namibia, as well as various other economic and social conditions. It found that although education had been made compulsory for White students in 1921, it was still voluntary for African pupils and other non-White pupils.³³ While the South West African Administration operated the bulk of the White schools, 89% of the Coloured-Baster and 57% of the African schools were still run by the mission, despite the efforts to convert them to Bantu community schools.³⁴ The report says that both White and African schools used the South African syllabus. According to the report, the African syllabus was 'adapted to suit local conditions' and was varied in content and method as determined by factors of cultural tradition and background.³⁵

The Odendaal report also reveals a racial differential in the matter of training requirements for teachers. Teachers for White schools needed post-matriculation training, available through bursaries at South African institutions, while African teachers needed to have completed only Standard 6 course to be eligible for three of the four teacher training institutes in Namibia. In 1961 the total number of Africans in teacher training was 514 of whom 44 were at the government school, Augustineum, 50 at the Catholic mission school, Döbra, and 60 at two Finnish mission schools in Ovambo.³⁶

Among the African pupils, the drop-out was alarming, beginning in the first few primary grades and increasing sharply, so that only a few completed high school.³⁷ In the Northern Sector attendance, after the first few years of primary school, was appallingly lower than in the Southern Sector. A statistical analysis of the attendance per standard of Africans in the different regions of the Northern Sector:

Africans in successive standards, Northern Sector, 1962:

STANDARD	OVAMBO	KAVANGO	KOAKOVELD	CAPRIVI
Sub. A	13 627	1 959	128	601
Sub. B	5 721	598	21	337
Std 1	3 843	403	13	234
Std 2	2 113	263	3	139
Std 3	1 020	143	0	85
Std 4	414	42	0	70
Std 5	214	36	0	34
Std 6	119	0	0	3
Std 7	46	0	0	0
Std 8	19	0	0	0
Std 9	0	0	0	0
Std 10	0	0	0	0

Source: Odendaal Report Tables LXXXVI and LXXXVII, p.239.

On the part of the South African regime, the early drop-out of African students was attributable to the absence of any tradition of educational attainment or aspiration among the African parents, and the consequent failure of parents to insist that their children stay at school. The South African regime did not, however, concede the possibility that Africans were not interested in education because they knew they had the prospect of future employment in the labouring class only and so had no incentive to obtain further skills.³⁸

The Odendaal Commission approved the idea that the 'homeland' system which was already introduced in South Africa should also be introduced in Namibia. Consequently, the non-European people of Namibia were to be divided into their language groups. The Commission's recommendations for future development included the transfer of the control of educational services from the territorial Legislative Assembly to the Government of South Africa with the provision that the government authorities (Homeland authorities) 'be given a direct say in the establishment and

control of their education services' and that in further planning and expansion full amount be taken of the requirements in the various homelands.

Most other recommendations of the Commission concerned less important matters, but in the field of education in general the Odendaal Commission recommended that 1) the education of Whites should continue to be the responsibility of the South West African Administration 2) the education of Coloureds, Bastards and the African communities be transferred to the South African Department of Coloured Affairs and the South African Department of Bantu Education, respectively, 3) African education should be developed integrally with various 'homelands' and 4) the establishment of community schools be continued.³⁸

For the expansion of educational services in the 'homelands' (Bushmanland, Damaraland, Hereroland, Namaland, Tswanaland, Koakoveld, Ovamboland, Kavango and Eastern Caprivi) the Commission recommended 1) the incorporation of educational services as an integral part of community development, 2) the provision of lower and higher primary school at concentration points or central places in the 'homelands', 3) the establishment of secondary and/or high schools with hostel facilities in each 'homeland', 4) further subsidization of mission schools for the improvement of existing facilities and 5) the creation of facilities for the training of teachers.⁴⁰

For ordinary instruction in all the schools for the indigenous language groups, the following courses and subjects were recommended:

- 1) A Lower Primary Course (Sub A-Std 2) with emphasis on reading, writing and arithmetic, and supplementary subjects such as religious instruction, mother-tongue, environmental studies, hygiene and physical training, singing and handicraft, and a practical introduction to the use of English and Afrikaans.

- 2) A Higher Primary Course (Std 3-Std 6) aimed at the attainment of a higher level of education in preparation for secondary education and/or vocational training.

In addition to subjects for the lower course, the Higher Primary Course was to make provision for social studies, nature study and practical subjects such as homecraft (for girls) and soil conservation (for boys). Instruction in the mother-tongue, Afrikaans and English was to be continued on an advanced basis.

- 3) A General Junior Certificate Course (Forms I, II and III) with instruction in subjects such as the mother-tongue, Afrikaans, English, social studies, general arithmetic, religious instruction, physical training, singing and music and subjects chosen from a science, agriculture, mathematics, woodwork, arts and crafts, homecrafts, etc.
- 4) A Commercial and Clerical Junior Certificate Course (Forms I, II and III), basically the same as the General Junior Certificate Course, but with subjects chosen from: bookkeeping, commerce, typewriting, shorthand, commercial arithmetic and science.
- 5) A Technical Junior Certificate Course (Forms I, II and III), basically the same as the General Junior Certificate Course, but with subjects chosen from: building construction, joinery, carpentry and cabinet-making, drawing and design, tailoring wickerwork, leatherwork, mechanics, etc.
- 6) A Senior Certificate Course (Forms IV and V) which was to follow the syllabuses of the Joint Matriculation Board or those of the Department of Education, Arts and Science of the Republic of South Africa, and therefore meet the requirements for admission to a university or other institution for post-school training.⁴¹

For each 'homeland' the Commission recommended the

institution of a government teacher training school which would gradually take over from the existing mission training schools and the institution of technical centres for formal technical training after Std 6, initially concentrating on training in bricklaying, woodwork, tailoring, wickerwork, leatherwork, commercial subjects, assistant stock and health inspectors, etc. In addition, training in agriculture and animal husbandry was to be provided in collaboration with the Government departments concerned for a) Herero-Nama complex and b) the Ovambo-Kavango complex. With regard to the mother-tongue instruction in African schools, the Commission recommended the recognition and development of the mother-tongue of each population group and the use of these mother-tongues as the medium of instruction up to the end of the primary course (i.e. Std 6). The Commission further recommended the development of the existing language Bureau into a Language and Publications Bureau with sufficient staff to give attention to the development of each of the recognised languages and the provision of reading books, textbooks and general literature in the various languages.⁴² In regard to subsidies to the missionary societies the Commission recommended that the financing of the educational services for the Whites remain the responsibility of the Administration, the financing of educational services for Bastards, Coloureds and Nama be the responsibility of the Department of Bantu Education which was to control and implement the services. It was also recommended that conditions of service for African teachers be brought into line with those in the Republic of South Africa, and that subsidization of mission schools was not to be for the addition of new facilities but only for the maintenance and improvement of existing facilities.⁴³

The Odendaal Commission recommendations were implemented in Namibia in 1968, despite strong objections from several African groups (churches) and criticism from the United Nations. The United Nations denounced the Odendaal proposals and solemnly affirmed "the inalienable right of the people of the territory to self-determination, national

unity, territorial integrity and independence".⁴⁴ Wellington (1967) notes that in its criticism the United Nations further pointed out that to regard the different tribal groups as different 'nations' was hollow, since Boers, Germans, Portuguese, Italians, etc., were not so regarded, and the suggestions that cultural and linguistic differences made a central government impossible, was flying in the face of the fact that in many parts of the world such governments do succeed. He states that "in the face of such criticism, and to avoid legal complications in the International Court Case, the South African government decided to refrain, at least temporarily, from implementing the Commission's recommendations on the establishment of homelands and on the reorganization of administrative functions between the territory and South Africa."⁴⁵

As can be seen from the recommendations, the new measures proposed amounted in substance to a movement away from cultural integration of school-going youths of various communities towards forced division of African youths. To take but one example, the Augustineum training institution in Windhoek which was the only educational institution where African (including those from Kavango) and Coloured youths and teachers worked, studied and played together as brothers and sisters was closed in 1975 for African children and teachers. With arrogance and insensitivity to local needs the South African government transferred the Augustineum from the Department of Bantu Education to the department of Coloured, Rehoboth and Nama relations. African youths were forced to go to other, newer, ethnic institutions in their 'homelands' of Ovambo, Kavango, Caprivi, Hereroland, Damaraland and Tswanaland for teacher training.⁴⁶ The Döbra training school where many Kavango youths did their teacher training, was also closed for youths from the northern regions. Since 1970 Kavango youths were no longer allowed to leave their regions and study at Döbra. They had to do the courses at their new institutions in their 'homeland'.

The Odendaal Commission recommendations meant that South

Africa would now have absolute control over the direction of African education in Namibia and that the costs of expansion of educational services would be largely paid for by Africans themselves, the group least able to finance education from its slight tax base. The recommendation that Africans should have a voice in their education, through the school boards and school committees appeared to be fanciful, but these boards and committees appeared to be not a progressive step. Like in South Africa members of the boards were to be acceptable to the Department of Bantu Education, therefore they might tend to become apologist for the government policy. In addition the department had the power to dismiss African teachers by withholding subsidies for their salaries from the school boards and to veto certain of the school boards' decisions.⁴⁷

The transfer of African education to the South African Department of Bantu Education meant that its minister could now close a school or any class for Africans at such times he deemed advisable. He could prosecute any church authority or individual who establishes an African school without first registering it with his Department. Ultimately, it meant that South Africa could regulate the African educational system and manipulate it to its own political advantage, while it has no such authority over the education of the Whites in Namibia.

The implementation of the Odendaal Commission recommendations in Namibia resulted in the fact that Namibia education had become a figure in the pattern of segregated South African life. It meant that Africans in Namibia were being taught in poorer conditions and in inadequate numbers. The educational objectives of South Africa in Namibia represented nothing but an aggressive racial policy of separate development similar to that in South Africa itself. It was a policy which suppressed all feelings for national unity and advocated training people of different races for different jobs or positions - Africans for unskilled or semi-skilled labour, Coloureds and Bastards for skilled

manual labour and Whites for skilled higher managerial positions. At the same time it 'taught' and encouraged the creation of tribal identities. Ultimately, Africans in Namibia were doomed to become, not even a separate but equally educated people, but a cast of permanently, tribally-orientated labourers. Like in South Africa, African schools taught, to some extent, the political ideology of the Bantustan system, inculcating a sense of the 'reality' of the Bantustans, and fostering ethnic division amongst the Africans. The implementation of the Odendaal Commission recommendations should also be seen as an attempt by the South African government to link educational provision to the strengthening of the Bantustans and the influx control system by building secondary schools and teacher's training schools in those areas identified as 'homelands'. As a consequence of such policies, the African youth of Namibia has been fragmented into 8 ethnic groups.

The introduction of 'Bantu Education' in Namibia should not only be seen as a destruction of the existing mission school system, but also as a response to the colonial administration's real need to restructure education. It also needs to be understood as an attempt by the colonial government to relate the education system more closely to changing economic needs. As had been done in South Africa, a restructuring of education was required to generate the semi-skilled African labour on which the Apartheid economy was built.

Four years in school was seen as providing a basis for semi-skilled labour requiring minimal numeracy, literacy and work discipline, and it was schooling at this level that the colonial administration sought to encourage. The basic thrust of the colonial administration's policy was in line with mine employers and farmer's needs, because they were interested in using African labour primarily at semi-skilled level.

The advent of monopoly capitalist industrialization is one

explanation in South Africa of the transition to an education order based on mass schooling. This could also be applicable to Namibia, because she was administered as the fifth province of South Africa. Schooling in this interpretation was subordinated to the labour requirements for a sufficient unskilled and semi-skilled labourers to sustain the capitalist economy. In any modern society the education system is expected to supply adequate manpower to different sectors of the economy. This, the so-called manpower function of education, has been attempted in Namibia by, among other things, the expansion of primary education since 1962. The number of pupils in primary education in the Northern Sector expanded quite rapidly from 32 083 in 1962 to 62 583 in 1970. By 1976, enrolment had increased to 104 500.⁴⁸ These increases in the Northern Sector where a larger school age population is found was, however, unsatisfactory. The higher annual growth rate in the Northern Sector was due to the fact that educational development there started from a comparatively lower base.

In the Kavango region the picture of education was as follows: In April 1962 the Roman Catholic Mission accepted the recommendations of converting the mission schools into 'community schools' in the near future, due to the fact that the Administration was threatening the churches with the withdrawal of financial aid. A Roman Catholic priest, Father Mathias Baetsen, was appointed as honorary-public relations officer for the purpose of managing and administering all mission schools in Kavango for the time being. As the result of this, all Catholic schools were registered as 'community schools', but a school committee was not chosen, which means that the schools were still being controlled by the missions via the public relations officer appointed by the Education Department.⁴⁹

The Finnish Lutheran Mission Society by that time was still not in favour of the idea of replacing their schools by 'community schools'. They felt that the people in the Kavango region were not ready for this, and they argued that

they should be given more time to think about the whole situation. In 1964, however, when they were encountering problems such as a shortage of teachers and funds, they decided to accept the idea.⁵⁰

1965 seemed to be the year when Kavango was ready for the establishment of 'community schools', because the first of such schools was established in Rundu at a place known as Ncuu. Due to this development the officials for the Department of Bantu Education were encouraged to carry on with their plan of forcing the missions to give up their schools and of establishing new 'community schools' and state schools.

Statistical summary of pupils according to classes in Kavango in 1965 is as follows:

CLASS	MISSION		TOTAL
	CATHOLIC	FIN. LUTHERAN	
Sub A	1 247	724	1 971
Sub B	848	211	1 059
Std 1	425	183	608
Std 2	268	129	397
Subtotal	2 788	1 247	4 035
Std 3	176	127	303
Std 4	77	54	131
Std 5	78	42	120
Std 6	23	35	58
Subtotal	354	258	612
Grand Total	3 142	1 505	4 647

Source: Department of Education, Kavango, quoted by Kritzinger, J.J. (1972): *Sending en Kerk in Suidwes Afrika*, p.350.

It would seem that the missions were entirely responsible for the education service until 1965. The first state school was established in 1968 and started with a Form 1 class.

The following table shows the growth of education from 1945 over a period of 5 years until 1965.

YEAR	ENROL- MENT	UNQUALI- FIED AFRICAN TEACHERS	QUALIFIED AFRICAN TEACHERS	MISSIONARY TEACHERS	NUMBER OF REGIS- TERED SCHOOLS
1945	1 345	19	23	6	36
1950	1 927	22	23	5	33
1955	2 847	26	42	8	34
1960	3 328	48	33	5	37
1965	4 685	25	92	6	53

Source: Kritzinger, J.J. (1972): Sending en Kerk in Suidwes Afrika, p.349 and Lategan, M. (1980): Sending- en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango, p.181.

As can be seen from this table the number of pupils rose quite dramatically from 2 847 in 1955 to 4 865 in 1965. Also the numbers of qualified African teachers from 42 in 1955 to 92 in 1965 and the number of registered schools from 34 in 1955 to 53 in 1965. By 1967 all schools in Kavango were already 'community schools' and they totalled 54 while the pupils numbered 6 019.⁵¹

From 26 April 1965 the Deputy Director of Education and the Chief Inspector of Bantu Education accompanied by the Professional Organiser visited Kavango in order to investigate whether schools in Kavango were equipped with enough facilities. They also toured the Kavango region from Nkure-Nkuru and Mpungu in the West to Bagani in the East to find or look for suitable places for the establishment of 'community schools' and state schools.⁵² Their visit was a preparation for the taking over of education by the state, viz. the implementation of the Odendaal recommendations. Apart from the many plans which were discussed during their visit, they made the decision that school boards, assisted by the school committee for each school, should replace the Catholic public relations officer and take over the management of schools temporarily.⁵³ Consequently Louis Burger was appointed inspector for Kavango in the same year.

The investigations and planning campaign was a great success on the part of the colonial Administration, viz. the Department of Bantu Education in South Africa, because in April 1966 all mission schools were converted into 'community schools'. This seemed to be the end of mission education and the beginning of state education in Kavango.

On the 22nd of April 1966 the first school committee (and school boards) was chosen and appointed at the same time. The school committee which was chosen consisted of the following persons: 1) Three members elected by the parents, 2) One member chosen by the chief, headmen or tribal council, 3) Two members chosen by the local church community which previously ran the school, 4) One member chosen by the Director of Education. From these members, the chief, headmen or tribal council on consultation with the Director, chose a chairperson and vice-chairperson. The committee chose one of its members to act as Treasurer. The chairperson had an ordinary vote as well as a casting vote, while the principal of the school who acted as the Secretary of the committee, had no voting right.⁵⁴

The functions and duties of a school committee can be summarised as follows: 1) A member of the committee had the right to enter any class in the school provided that he did not interfere with the work of the teacher; 2) to expel a pupil or teacher on the grounds of immorality, continuous misbehaviour or lack of cleanliness; 3) investigate any complaint which concerned the school or its staff members, and to refer it to the school board if necessary; 4) to present their considered opinion on inspection reports to the school board, and to make recommendations; 5) to advise the school board with regard to the appointment of teachers; 6) to collect and manage schools funds; 7) to inspect and approve an audit of the income and expenditure of the school funds during February each year, and to provide the school board with a copy; 8) to maintain the school building, school grounds and enclosing fence, and to undertake repair work without delay;

9) to construct new buildings after consultation with the Department and the school board; 10) to convene a meeting of parents every year during March and to carry out any other duties assigned to it by the Department. The school committee also made recommendations to the school board in the case of staff members who: a) did not have the required qualifications; b) were not capable of teaching in the prescribed language; c) were unsuited to teaching because of physical or emotional disabilities or problems.⁵⁵

With the appointment of school committees and school controlling boards, education for Kavango and other African children was to be based on educating a majority at primary school level rather than on secondary education or further education for a few. Emphasis was to be on industrial needs rather than on expanding literary education. Community development was to be used as a means of raising funds from the African reserves. The school boards and committees had to have limited power, for "The Administrator may, at any time ... abolish such regional, local or domestic boards ... or withdraw a state native school or native community school from the control and management of the reserve board of tribal council ... provided that (he), before exercising his discretion ... shall cause an investigation to be made at which the board, management board or body concerned shall be entitled to be heard."⁵⁶ Under this Ordinance the Administrator could prescribe the functions and duties of recognised mission schools as well as the conditions for executing these duties in any of the educational institution under the control of the Department of Education.

After the school committees and school boards had been chosen and appointed in Kavango, it appeared as if Kavango people had accepted western education. The first parent day, held at Nyangana Mission school was attended by a large number of parents. Louis Burger, Inspector for Kavango schools and chairperson of the committee in 1966, stated that parents listened attentively, which he believed as a sign that they had accepted western education. Burger

argued that parents made it clear that they did not want their children to grow up the way they themselves grew up, which means that they wanted their children to be literate and to be educated in a western way. Burger argues further that the success of the school committee appointment and the fact that members of the school committee visited villages and homes every morning and chased children to school proved that the parents were in favour of western education, and that they were interested in the education of their children. At this time parents began to look after their cattle while their children were attending school.⁵⁷

If Burger's view that parents accepted western education was right, then the question which one might ask is, why did they accept it, if it was rejected in the beginning? The White man's religion and education had always been associated with the breaking of the power structure of African chiefs, the losing of land, war, soldiers and guns as well as the forced labour system and the introduction of taxation. Why, then, should Kavango parents accept western education?

Kavango people themselves view the matter differently. In looking at the response of parents and teachers interviewed, one notices that the acceptance of western education was less the result of a positive decision than of an absence of choice. As we have seen in the previous chapters, the acceptance of western education was the result of social and economic changes that had taken place. A modern society must change if it wishes to survive. On the question why they sent their children to school, people interviewed responded as follows:

R. Kambundu: "Our traditional economic structure had been totally broken down. The White man had introduced a new economic system which goes hand in hand with their education. What else could we have done than accept their education and send our children to school?"

N. Libebe: "We had no other choice than to send our children to school, because education was the only weapon for fighting poverty."

C. Haushiku: "I sent my son to school, because of the hope that he would later release me from the yoke of taxation."

R. Ukuyu: "I did not want to have any trouble with the Administration or the chief. According to the regulation which was read to us by the Assistant Native Commissioner in 1962, a parent who withheld his/her child from attending school had to pay heads of cattle, or otherwise corporal punishment would be inflicted on the parent. I did not want both."

J. Hikerwa: "The only reason why we accepted education was for the economic advantage it brings with it. We could see that those who qualified at Döbra Teacher Training College could be offered White-collar jobs in the Administration departments. Therefore, every parent wished his/her child to belong to the 'elite' group."

A. Hashipara: "There was a greater need for education than ever before, as Kavango people began to realize the importance and benefit of western education in the changing Namibia. Education seemed to give a person a prestigious social position. Kavango people could see that their chiefs were beginning to seek advice from those who had received western education. People had realized that education not only gave a prestigious social position, but also one received financial benefits which were needed to pay taxes and to buy food and clothing."⁵⁸

One may conclude that the major reason why Kavango people accepted education was that circumstances forced them to do so. The people of Kavango were no more ruled by their chiefs, but by the White Administration. The chiefs were no more chiefs of long ago, but rather paid government agents who could be appointed and removed by the Administration if it wished to. In terms of the Native Administration Proclamation (No. 15 of 1928) and Government Notice 60/1930, not only were the traditional authorities defined as administrative officials, but the administrator assumed "all political power and authority which, according to the laws, customs and usages of natives, are held and enjoyed by any

supreme or Paramount Native Chief."⁵⁹

Secondly, these traditional chiefs were given the authority to punish those parents who would not do according to government regulations. Any parent who dare to withhold his child from attending school for whatever reason would be charged with the breaking of the law and would appear before the chief or magistrate who would punish him/her by means of imprisonment, payment of cattle or money, or even corporal punishment. Both parents and children were actually scared of the victimization they would suffer at the hands of the chief or the Assistant Native Commissioner.⁶⁰

There could be another reason why Kavango people could have accepted western education. By 1966 Kavango people who were the products of missionary schools could be divided into two groups. One group was the workers who went on contract to the "Police Zone" and worked as labourers on settler farms in the Grootfontein and Tsumeb areas, on copper and diamond mines, in building roads, cleaning offices as well as working as domestic servants and gardeners for Whites in Rundu or elsewhere in the country. The other group were teachers, office clerks and interpreters. Most parents wanted their children to be members of this White-collar group rather than the group of non-educated manual workers. Not only their parents, but the children themselves as well wished to become members of this group from the point of view of financial income, social status as well as work conditions.⁶¹

From the interview record, the main reason for the acceptance of western education is clear: the economic advantages and status achievement the education brings with it. When asked about the advantages of western education, some of the comments received from the people interviewed were:

A. Hashipara: "Ambitious young men who could go to school preferred a White-collar job which would enable them to work in favourable conditions and to get a higher salary."

- N. Libebe: "An 'educated' Kavango man who received a salary of R120 a year was held in the highest esteem among all men in the villages and had a mighty influence upon all the people with whom he associated. Even the chiefs and headmen were his friends."
- S. Mashika: "The very person who inspired me to become a teacher was my former Sub. A teacher. This man was respected and admired by all the people whom he came in contact with. He was frequently invited by the chief who wanted him to marry one of his daughters. The chief simply favoured him for his money and his status as a teacher."
- J. Hikerwa: "Almost every parent wanted his/her daughter to become the wife of an "educated" Kavango rather than that of a manual labourer."
- R. Kambundu: "The demands of the economy forced parents to send their children to school. It was hoped that education would rise the standard of living of the people and that education would offer them opportunities for economic advance."⁶²

At the beginning of the colonial period parents were unwilling to send their children to school, but after 1966 the great majority of parents arranged for the education of their children. Gotthardt, an early missionary in Kavango, records how the first pupils and their parents at Nyangana wished to be paid by missionaries for attending school.⁶³ It was not long, however, before the advantages of education were clear to most people. Most parents, both affluent and poor, wanted their children to complete schooling for better occupational opportunities.

Not only in Kavango or Namibia, but also in other countries in Africa, western education was seen as the only way of escaping from poverty and manual labour and from the career restraints imposed by the administration. Molteno, writing on *Schooling and Black South Africans*, states that in South Africa, the popular enthusiasm which gathered momentum from the final quarter of the 19th century (for an even inferior

education) was attributable to the fact that schooling "at least enhances the individual's chances of finding employment at a rate of remuneration relatively higher than the entire unschooled can earn."⁶⁵ Molteno further notes that Black leaders who were themselves school products supported an educational policy which would enable African children to enter a common society. He quotes Shingler as stating that these Black leaders saw education "as a means of participating in the structure which had been imposed upon them and of obtaining familiarity with literature and ideas, skills and techniques, which were the sources of wealth and power."⁶⁵

In the rest of Africa, and in Kavango in particular, western education offered some hope of escaping from poverty as well as from demands laid down by the Administration and its agents, the chiefs and headmen. Therefore, it is not surprising that from 1966 Kavango people began to accept western education and to demand more education facilities for their children.

With the appointment of the school board and school committee in Kavango, all mission schools had automatically been converted to 'community schools'. The schools were still on mission stations, but the churches had no say in matters concerning the schools. The schools, the school board, the school committee together with the teachers were yet an independent department that had nothing to do with the church, although some members belonged to the church. This development led to the take-over of education by the state in 1968.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE

1. U.G. NO. 53/1951 Union of South Africa: Report of the Commission on Native Education 1945-1951, Government Printer, Pretoria, pp. 135-137 and pp. 160-161. See also O'Callaghan, M. (1977): Namibia: the effects of Apartheid on Culture and Education, p.100.
2. Some of the most important evidence of the Eiselen Commission are as follows:
 - a) African witnesses unanimously desired increased education for the masses and insisted on the equality of education offered to African children and that offered to White children. The witnesses favoured the use of one of the official languages as medium of instruction and pleaded for the adaptation of schools to the environment of the pupils.
 - b) European witnesses complained that schools were not practical enough, were too western in purpose and outlook and were adapted to the needs of either the Africans and the country as a whole.

The witnesses also emphasized the following:

- i) The importance of mass education, of the education of chiefs and of compulsory education.
- ii) The need for more and better technical or industrial education.
- iii) The importance of efficient inspection and the necessity of the inspector's knowing the mother tongue of the pupils, particularly in the lowest classes.

See U.G. No. 53/1951 Union of South Africa on Native Education 1945-1951, pp. 101-103.

3. U.G. No. 53/1951 Union of South Africa: Report of the Commission on Native Education 1945-1951, Government Printer, Pretoria, pp. 135-137 and pp. 160-161. See also O'Callaghan, M. (1977): The effects of Apartheid on Culture and Education, p.100.
4. See Horrell, M. (1968): Bantu Education to 1968, p.28.
5. Ibid, p.28.
6. Davenport, T.R.H. (1977): South Africa: A Modern History, Second Edition, Johannesburg, p.267. Davenport adds that the use of the vernacular medium

was combined with basic instruction in both the official languages and special emphasis on manual training, to provide an avenue to employment in the White-controlled economy.

7. Administration of South West Africa (1958): Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Non-European Education in South West Africa, Part 1, Native Education.
8. Ibid., pp. 1-2. Also O'Callaghan, M. (1977): Namibia: the effects of apartheid on Culture and Education, pp. 104-105.
9. Two circuit inspectorates were created for the Southern and Northern Sectors. For the regions Ovambo, Kavango and Koakoland the government appointed an Organiser who had to inspect the schools. The organiser was assisted by an Ovambo speaking Namibian. In the case of Caprivi, the Administration did not appoint an Organiser as the Caprivi region was left to follow the Cape syllabus. During that time Caprivi was considered as part of the Cape Province. See the Administration of South West Africa (1958): Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Non-European Education, Part 1, Native Education, pp. 56-57 and 85. In its investigation, the Van Zyl Commission found that these officers (Organisers) acted fairly independently of the Education Department. They drew up their own estimates, did not submit any school inspection reports and made their own decisions with regard to staff and other education matters. Van Zyl Commission, however, did not elaborate.
The fact that these Organisers were left by the Department to act on their own shows that there was no eagerness on the part of the Government to accelerate the process of African education.
10. See the Report of the Administrator, 1926, p.56.
11. See File P/8/3: Education in Kavango, 1976, Department of Education Kavango, p.2.
12. Ibid. p.2.
13. Ibid. pp. 2-3. By the time Sub.A was divided into two Standards, namely Small Sub.A and Great Sub.A. In

order to go to Sub.B, a child was obliged to finish both Small Sub.A and Great Sub.B in the course of two years' time.

14. See Kritzinger, J.J. (1972): Sending en Kerk in Suidwes Afrika, Volume 1, p.349.
15. Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Non-European Education, Part 1, Native Education, pp. 21 and 89.
16. Ibid, pp. 85-87.
17. Ibid, pp. 79-82.
18. See Leu, C.A.: Colonial Education and African Resistance in Namibia, in Mugomba, A.T. and Nyaggah, M. (1980): The Political Economy of Colonial Education in Southern Africa, p.155.
19. Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Non-European Education, Part 1, Native Education, pp. 101-102, and O'Callaghan, M. (1977): Namibia: the effects of apartheid on culture and education, p.108.
20. Ibid. pp. 104-105, also quoted by O'Callaghan, M. (1977): Namibia: the effects of apartheid on Culture and Education, pp. 108-109.
21. Report of the Commission of Inquiry into South West African Affairs 1962-1963, (Pretoria 1964), p.221.
22. O'Callaghan, M. (1977): Namibia: the effects of apartheid on Culture and Education, p.113, quoted from the Authority of South West Africa, Official Gazette Extraordinary of South West Africa No. 2413, p.913, Windhoek, 4th July 1962.
23. Ibid, p.114, quoted from the Authority of South West Africa, Official Gazette Extraordinary of South West Africa No. 2413, p.917.
24. People consulted and interviewed in the Kavango region were: Father M. Baetsen, Rector of Nyangana Mission Station; L.J. Burger, Assistant Organiser of Native Education in northern territories; Father Fröhlich, Rector of Andara Mission Station; Father B. Hartmann, Rector of Sambiu Mission Station; Dr C.J.J. Joubert, District Surgeon at Rundu; D.F.J. Maré, Native Commissioner at Rundu; S. Markkanen, Principal of the Finnish Mission School at Nkure-Nkuru; Sr L.

Mühlbauer, Principal of the Catholic Mission School at Sambiu; Father Noll, Rector of Tondoro Mission Station; Father Küper, Rector of Bunja Mission Station; Pastor T. Toivanen of Nkure-Nkuru Finnish Mission Station; Miss A. Turninen of Nkure-Nkuru Mission Station; Miss Von Schlantz of Rupara Mission Station and lastly the Kavango Tribal Council whose membership were all employees and agents of the Administration. Informants V. Matamu, S. Mbambo, U. Haikera, J. Kangaji and others (28th December 1987) stated that the membership of the Tribal Council were all older, less sophisticated chiefs, headmen and village heads of whom the majority had never been to school, could not read or write, and could thus not understand what was being discussed. The Administration and members of the Commission knew that these people were apologists of the Administration who was after all their employer, and that they were always in favour of any decision taken by the Administration whether the decision was harmful for their own people or not.

25. Van Zyl, H.J.: Native Education in South West Africa, A lecture held during a conference: Political and Economical development of the homelands in South West Africa, Rundu/Kavango, October 1970, also quoted by Kritzinger, J.J. (1972): Sending en Kerk in Suidwes Afrika, Volume 1, p.338. Bantu Education was, and is, a system based on the "principles and aims of Education for Africans as an independent race" (Eiselen Commission) and it is a system designed on the basis that there is no place for Africans in White communities above certain forms of labour (Verwoerd, 1953). See Horrell, M. (1968): Bantu Education to 1968, pp. 4-5.
26. South West Africa Department of Education, File E1/58, Report of Bantu Education in Ovamboland 1962, p.9, quoted by Lategan, M. (1980): Sending- en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango. 'n Histories-pedagogiese besinning, p.127.

27. Ibid, pp. 1-2, quoted by Lategan, M. (1980): Sending-en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango, p. 129.
28. Ibid, pp. 1-2, quoted by Lategan, M. (1980): Sending-en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango, p.129.
29. Lategan, M. (1980): Sending- en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango, p.129.
30. Interview with L.J. Burger, I. Shikukumua and Father M. Baetsen, former Rector of Nyangana Mission Station (24 February 1987), Rundu.
31. Ruperti, R.M. (1973): Ornogram of the South and South West African Education Systems, UNISA, Pretoria, p.21, see also Töttemeyer, G. (1978): Namibia Old and New: traditional and modern leaders in Ovamboland, London, pp. 77-78.
32. Report of the Commission of Inquiry into South West African Affairs, 1962-1963 (Pretoria 1964), Government Printer, p.3.
33. Ibid, pp. 235, 237, 241.
34. Ibid, p.223.
35. Van Zyl Testimony, International Court, C.R. 65/71, p.15.
36. Report of the Commission of Inquiry into South West African Affairs 1962-1963 (Pretoria 1964) Government Printer, p. 239.
37. Ibid. See statistics of attendance per standard, pp. 233, 237, 239.
38. Van Zyl Testimony, International Court, C.R. 65/71-72.
39. Report of the Commission of Inquiry into South West African Affairs 1962-1963 (Pretoria 1964), pp. 261 and 263.
40. Ibid. pp. 257 and 259.
41. Ibid. pp. 257 and 259.
42. Ibid. pp. 259 and 261.
43. Ibid. p.263.
44. U.N. Monthly Chronicle, 1,2 (June 1964), pp. 33 f, quoted by Wellington, J.H. (1967): South West Africa and its Human Issues, Oxford, p.399.

45. Wellington, J.H. (1967): South West Africa and its Human Issues, p.399.
46. See Cowley, C.: Power Structures in South West Africa. A Collection of Lectures prepared for the Course, 'South West Africa: Problems and Alternatives'. University of Cape Town, 10-14th February 1975, pp 18 and 19. Cowley states further that "the apartheid bludgeon was not only being used on schools, but also on churches, particularly the Black Lutheran Churches as well. Missionaries were being kicked out of the country every three months on average and were being accused of talking politics to Black Churches and encouraging them to overcome ethnic differences in defiance of the official policy of separate development."
47. Horrell, M. (1964): A decade of Bantu Education (South African Institute of Race Relations) p.46.
48. Odendaal Commission, pp. 233, 239, 1970-1976: R.S.A. Bantu Education Journal, 1971-1972.
49. South West African Department of Education, File E1/1960, Chief Inspector of Bantu Education to the Director of Education, d.d. Windhoek 1/9/1961, p.1, quoted by Lategan, M. (1980): Sending- en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango, p.130.
50. Ibid, p.1, quoted by Lategan, M. (1980): Sending- en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango, p.130.
51. Department of Bantu Education, Windhoek, and Education of Kavango, quoted by Kritzinger, J.J. (1972): Sending en Kerk in Suidwes Afrika, p.349.
52. By this time it had already been decided that a secondary school was to be established in Rundu, the centre town in the Kavango region. The Rundu Secondary School would then be the first school in Kavango established by the state.
53. South West African Department of Education, File E1/1960, Planning for School Facilities for the Kavango region for the next five years ending 31/12/1970, p.1,

quoted by Lategan, M. (1980): Sending- en Staatsonderwys vir die inheemse bevolking van die Kavango, p.132.

54. This was compiled by the Directorate of Education for the Northern Sector in Grootfontein and was introduced in Kavango by Louis Burger, the then Inspector of Schools in Kavango. The election of the school board and school committee as well as the parent day meeting was organised and chaired by him. Members were elected or chosen for a 3 year period, but the Director could shorten or lengthen the term of office. With the appointment of the school board and school committee, a Department of Education and Culture for Kavango was established in 1970 with Louis Burger as Secretary, assisted by a White school inspector and a Kavango assistant inspector, I. Shikukumua.
55. Ibid. Information about the functions of the School Board and School Committee is to be found in: The Administration of South West Africa (1958): Report of the Commission of Inquiry into non-European Education, Part 1, Native Education pp. 126-128.
56. Authority of South West Africa (1962): Official Gazette Extraordinary of South West Africa, No. 2413, 4 July 1962, Windhoek p.914, quoted by O'Callaghan, M. (1977): Namibia: the effects of apartheid on Culture and Education.
57. A statement made by Louis Burger on his respond to a questionnaire sent to him by the author. The statement (in the form of a letter dated 13 May 1987) was supported by G. Van Zyl, the former Principal of the Levi Hakusembe Secondary School (24 February 1987).
58. Interview with parents R. Kambundu, C. Haushiku, E. Muronga, A. Hashipara, N. Libebe, J. Hikerwa and former scholars and teachers F. Fughe, V. Matamu, M. Mukoya, and J. Kangaji (24 February 1987). Kavango people were quite aware of the plight of their compatriots, the Herero people, who lost their land and right when Germans entered the country. Ovambo people, too, had a bad experience. One of their chiefs, Mandume, who

resisted the rule of the South African colonial Administration was murdered by South African soldiers in 1917. His head was cut off and brought to Windhoek for a display. 5 000 Ovambo and 100 of Mandume's people were also killed by South African soldiers. The rest fled to Angola where they were chased away by the Portuguese. See Katjavivi, P. (1988): A history of Resistance in Namibia, p.18. Kavango's chief Himarwa was also punished for driving the missionaries out of the region. A punitive expedition was sent to him in 1907. See Goldblatt, I. (1971): History of South West Africa, p.194. Kavango people believed that what happened to the Herero people would also happen to them if they refused to do what they had been told to do.

The regulation to which the parent is referring in the interview is the "Regulations for Missionary Schools in Receipt of State Grants", drawn up in 1913 and inherited by the South African colonial Administration. This regulation laid down that in "South West Africa" adult Africans "to whom the pupil has a personal relationship of dependence" could be sentenced to a fine for keeping a child away from school, and if this occurred repeatedly, to a "flogging in accordance with the Imperial Chancellor's Decree of 22 April 1896."

This regulation meant that corporal punishment was to be inflicted on parents and guardians, which demonstrates that the whole field of education remained firmly embedded in the overall system of colonialist rule by terror and intimidation. (See 'Schulordnung für Missionschulen, die staatliche Beihilfen erhalten', 3 Sept. 1913, pp 90ff.)

59. SWAA A50/79 Native Administration Proclamation No. 15 of 1928. See also Emmet, T. (1984): The Rise of African Nationalism in Namibia, pp. 290-291. "This proclamation gave the Administrator the power to appoint or dismiss any person as chief or headman and it legally entitled him to define or alter the boundaries and composition of 'tribal' groupings,

whether to divide these groupings into a new 'tribe', part of a 'tribe' or individual to any part of the territory, and could call on traditional authorities to supply armed men or levies for the defence of the territory or for the suppression of rebellions. The Administration was not, however, subject to any court of law when exercising the powers conferred on it by the proclamation."

60. The Administration was seen as a despotic and repressive alien power exclusively serving the interests of the ruling class of that power. (See letter of the African Student Body (dated 28.11.1952) to the Education Department in: EDU FILE E742 Native Education General, Vol. 111,p.1). In regions such as Ovambo, Kavango, Caprivi, Koakoland and other "tribal" areas, the Administration was represented by the Native Affairs Commissioner with his White clerks and African messengers. The Commissioner was always in close touch with the chiefs and headmen, and visited them frequently. In every group in Kavango, for instance, he had his own African agents who kept him well informed as what was happening. Frequently, the chiefs consulted him even with regard to misdemeanour. The chieftaincy was, thus, useful for the functioning of the colonial system because it was economical and convenient to rely on persons holding a position of authority within the African communities. Consequently, the Administration retained chiefs who displayed "good behaviour" but removed those who revealed anti-colonial sentiments, using the most drastic methods for this purpose, not even stopping short of murder (as in the case of chief Mandume).
61. Interview with school inspectors I. Shikukumua, K.P. Shiyaka, J. Kandjimi, G. Hashipara, A. Mashika and I. Mokorabi (28th December 1975). The information obtained from the interview was supported by former members of the school board and school committee S. Kamwanga, N. Libebe, E. Muronga, W. Moshosho and C. Haushiku (28th January 1988).

62. Interview with A. Hashipara, N. Libebe, S. Mashika, J. Hikerwa and R. Kambundu (28th January 1988).
63. Gotthardt, J. (1927): Auf zum Okavango. p.92. Also Bierfert, P.A. (1938): 25 Jare bei den Wadiriku am Okavango., pp. 87 and 88.
64. Molteno, F.: The Origins of Black Education, in Kallaway, P.(ed.)(1984): Apartheid and Education, p.74. Pam Christie also states that "education was seen more and more as a way into the dominant economic and social system. See Christie, P.(ed.)(1986): The Right to Learn, Johannesburg, p.70.
65. Shingler, J.D.: Education and Political Order in South Africa 1902-1961, PhD-thesis, Yale University, p.54 and Molteno, F: The Origins of Black Education, in Kallaway, P.(ed)(1984): Apartheid and Education, p.76. See also p.193.

CHAPTER SIX
THE SURVIVAL OF KAVANGO TRADITIONAL EDUCATION
FROM 1910 ONWARDS

People have over centuries lived within a network of cultural and traditional norms which they have handed down from generation to generation. Although communities in mankind have possessed in common the need to transmit their cultural heritage to each oncoming generation, each community has its own way of life (which suits to its environment), and changes take place gradually and over a long period of time. This gives culture and all its aspects, including the educational aspects, a static appearance.¹ A disturbance of one aspect necessarily affects the whole way of life of the people which has to adjust itself to the change. It is clear, therefore, that a change in a people's religious system, educational system or economic system affects the whole culture or people's way of life.

We should bear in mind that we are busy discussing the tradition and culture of a people who progressed from a gathering culture through a variety of changes to an agricultural economy based on the steel plough. The whole picture that traditional education presented up to ± 1970 is of the felt sense of reality and experience of people at that time. The reality, in fact, continuously changed as the result of the people's shifting of conscious, value judgement as well as the impact of Christianity and colonialism. New demands during colonisation determined the form and character of Kavango traditional education. Unlike the pre-colonial period the actors during the colonial period are mixed, namely local people and those who came from foreign countries and continents. Consequently, social needs became mixed. Specialization became crucial, because each person was to be specialized in one or another occupation to contribute towards the satisfaction of the social needs or demands.

Kavango society and its education underwent a continued

process of change from 1910 when first German missionaries arrived in Kavango. Missionaries introduced the Christian faith to the people. After the Herero and Nama peoples were defeated, laws were introduced covering various aspects of the Namibian peoples' lives. Kavango people were, for instance, confined to the Kavango region and could not travel freely in the country of their birth and visit their compatriots, as they had done before the colonisation.

The colonial competition between the German and the Portuguese, the European trade and expansion of mission work in Kavango, simultaneously created more demands for changes in the Kavango society. The traders first spread new European material culture, such as clothes, fire-arms, spirits, tobacco, etc. to the people. Missionaries were also engaged in trade. They combined religion and trade, attaching general stores to the mission stations, in order to help them pay their way. The new possessions changed the everyday life of the people radically and caused new social relations and orders of precedence in society. Although the missionaries had a very strong material influence on the people, especially around the missionary stations, their major impact was of an intellectual and cultural character. As appears from the information obtained, the missionaries had a very decisive role in cultural and intellectual changes of the traditional system. Their influence was based on the permanent system they had built in the course of years, including the missionary station network, clerical organisation, schooling system, medical mission, work in the service of the rulers and trade.

The new cultural and intellectual system was seen most clearly in the religion and religious behaviour. It resulted in, among other things, the abandonment of many traditional customs. The healing system, for instance, was regarded as sorcery, witchcraft or magic and thus substituted with European medical science. In the same way the traditional educational system was replaced with missionary schools. The literacy and the creation of the

written word for Kavangó people and so the opening of doors to western thinking and conception were a long-established part of the missionary activity.

Because the religion and culture were connected very closely with the social and political system of society, the missionary impact was also strong there. A great change in the traditional social order was the crumbling of the traditional family structure of the people. In the political hierarchy the missionaries gained a special status as assistants and advisors of the traditional rulers and mediators between them and the colonial authorities.

It should, however, be stressed that the missionary work did not bear fruit very easily. The resistance of the traditional cultural system was very strong, particularly in the distant areas. The primary aim of the missionaries was to win souls and create a new man in Kavango, and they considered such matters as education and material well-being as secondary. The Kavango people aimed at acquiring Christian education and European skills and goods as a step towards a better material life. It is quite possible that Kavango people accepted Christian teaching because, on the surface, it did not seem to represent a new ideology. To them, missionaries put great emphasis on the worship of Karunga (creator God, high God), whom they already worshipped, and missionaries used the Kavango name Karunga or Nyambi in reference to the Christian God.² Generally the Kavango people believed that they could borrow selectively certain ideas from Christianity and still be able to retain their culture intact. They, therefore, accepted the Christian teaching as a safe way to self-betterment.

Reading and writing were welcomed by the Kavango people as the skills seemed to bring the wisdom necessary to cope with the impinging world of the Europeans, and the traders and teachers were men who had this knowledge. The Bible was thought to contain wisdom which only those who could read might tap. Reading and writing were also associated with

medical success. So crucial were these skills that one Kavango man asked Father Bierfert to offer him a pair of spectacles to enable him to acquire the skills faster.³

Change, adaptation and continuity characterized the political development of the Kavango region. Cultural change (which led to educational change) resulted from the intermingling of peoples of different origins. European institutions and practices spread, European law, education, religion, European clothing and living habits, being the most prominent. In the economic sphere Europeans brought money, the cornerstone of the European economy. These changes came about both through some form of coercion in the beginning and voluntarily, later on. As rulers, White people used state power to reinforce their institutions which eventually became predominant. The application of new law as an agent of social change was especially important in this regard.⁴ In the Kavango region the district "native" Commissioner enforced European laws of land or movement of the people, marriage, property inheritance, taxes and many others, including migrant labour. Some Kavango people who went to school also voluntarily adopted the European way of life, because it was prestigious to emulate the ruling group.

European traders brought new goods and services which further diversified the traditional economy, caused some institutional changes, and increased the degree of political centralization, because Kavango rulers controlled trade and commanded great wealth. The trade have resulted in the increased use of European goods such as clothing. Chief Nyangana, for example, dressed himself and his wives in clothing supplied by European traders.⁵ The use of the ox-drawn plough enabled Kavango people to realize a surplus in good years. Some of the surplus was exchanged for cattle, the bulk being sold to European traders and missionaries for cash or goods. At the end of each harvest the traders tended to purchase mahangu at low prices, reselling it during the dry season or years of scarcity at exorbitant

prices. While cattle continued to be the main source of wealth and social prestige, the use of cash became more widespread in the early 1950s, so that, in addition to barter, traders now required cash for their goods. The new trade, however, did not become the mainstay of Kavango economy, affecting only a few mainly within the ruling elite. On the whole the traditional economy and the old methods of production persisted.

To find out whether Kavango traditional education has survived, one needs to consider various aspects of that education and its links to the survival of traditional crafts and practices.

6.1 CHILDREN'S PLAY TO CULTIVATE TRADITIONAL SOCIAL LIFE

People interviewed on this topic elaborated as follows: Even after 1960 there were big villages in the Kavango region. People lived in extended families together with a village head they called *nturaghumbo* in each of the villages. In the middle of each village there was a big hut which was called *shinyanga* which one may freely translate as "gathering or central place". Many forms of traditional education took place in that specific place after supper around the big fire-place. There, parents or senior members of the community performed certain plays which youngsters imitated, or older people taught the youth how to play *mantambo*. This game was encouraged by the social structure and traditional faith.⁶ After about 1960 the game took another form, which means that boys were no longer involved in this game. The reason for this is that missionaries forbade the practice of allowing children of the opposite sexes to play together. After about 1970 this game disappeared almost entirely within the communities surrounding mission stations. In distant areas the game still exist.

Apart from the *shinyanga* there was a place which was called the *shira*, freely translated as "playing ground". Every evening when adults were engaged in serious discussions,

children performed certain games on the playing ground. After about 1970 such tradition disintegrated as the result of 1) Christianity-Missionaries condemned traditional games, 2) Colonial education caused conscious shifting within the younger people. Many children started to spend most of the time of the year in boarding schools at mission stations. During holidays children were no longer interested in such traditional games which they considered to be backward and uncivilized as they had been taught in mission schools. Such disintegration became very strong in the immediate surroundings of the mission stations and the villages near the town of Rundu. In the remote rural areas within the Kavango region these games do exist to a certain extent.

6.2 PHYSICAL TRAINING

Physical training in olden days was mostly done by means of music and certain dances. The places *shinyanga* and *shira* were of cardinal importance, because such traditional music and dances aimed at training youngsters, physically, was mostly performed at these places after supper. Adults performed while children imitated. The disintegration of this form of traditional education was elaborated by people interviewed as follows: From around 1973 after Kavango was declared an independent "homeland", many of the older generation started using alcohol. They moved from one drinking place to another until late at night and had, thus, no time to spend at the *shinyanga* in the evening to give such valuable traditional education to the youngsters.

Young people, too, became more interested in foreign types of dances like *shiwingi* and disco, to mention two examples. Instead of spending the evening at the gathering places with their parents and elders and learning how to perform certain dances, they preferred to attend to the foreign entertainments. Kavango men who worked on the Witwatersrand mines brought with them gramophones or record-players and musical instruments such as guitars and concertinas. They played western music such as waltz and rock and roll. These contributed to the alienation of Kavango people from their

music and dances.

After the second World War the communities started to be exposed to new culture like watching bioscope at mission stations with the result that people began to view their own culture as being inferior as compared to that which they were seeing in the bioscope and the music they were listening to on the radio, record-players, etc.

Accounts obtained suggests that traditional dances which disappeared after the 1960s are many, among them being shisho, shambandonga, rengo, kambembe, nyambi, ndere and makiti. Reasons for their disappearance are those already mentioned and that the kind of dresses used when performing these dances were in later days difficult to obtain. For instance, lion skins were used when performing a dance like rengo. Secondly, many of the older generation who were good dancers and singers have died in course of time. A dance like shiperu and lipera have survived, because missionaries later let people continue to perform it due to the fact that they were not ritual dances. These dances were for recreation and entertainment only.⁷

6.3 CHARACTER TRAINING

Character training was done by means of various methods of moral education. People interviewed stated that in recent times there were still many tales and legends by means of which parents formed the characters of their children. Through these tales children learned to be brave, honest, hard-working, obedient, etc. Children were particularly warned not to be lazy, otherwise they would develop into grey apes. They were told that there was a group of people in the Kavango region who were too lazy to do agricultural work. This group of people depended on gathering wild fruit and vegetable, consequently, they changed into the grey apes which are to be found in the tropical and savannah regions of Africa. These apes are generally believed to have retained certain ritual ceremonies performed by Kavango people. One example is the coming of age of a girl which

was celebrated with a ritual dance called **shisho**. The ceremony usually lasted 18 hours after which another ceremony of her marriage was to take place. The grey apes are also supposed to perform this ritual, some of them beating on fallen dry trees or logs with sticks as their drums, female and children singing and clapping hands just as Kavango people did during such an initiation ritual dance. During the ceremony the apes are supposed to sing:

Ntyimal twa kalire tu vantu

(Ape! we were human)

Malima-lima twa tyira 2x

(We ran away from agricultural work)

People interviewed suggested that this moral tale could have continued to exist beyond the 1960s, especially among the people living in the interior rural areas where this type of animals could be seen daily.⁸ This moral tale boosted courage into youngsters to practice agriculture in their adult life as agriculture was the corner stone in the life of the people.

Another moral tale goes that two men went to the forest to hunt. On their way to the forest they came face to face with a lion. One man stood on the same spot without moving and stared in the face of the lion, while the other man was overcome with fear with the result that his hands and knees began shaking. The lion looked at both men and then jumped and attacked the one who was trembling. This tale was intended to inculcate in the youths the sense of bravery and courage. Those who herded cattle occasionally came across such situations. Youths were told to risk their lives in protection of women, children, the elderly and cattle. Accounts given by people interviewed indicated that this tale and many other moral tales are still to be found within the community living in the interior of the Kavango region where most children never attend school. Communities living along the banks of the Kavango river no longer maintain such

moral tales due to reasons mentioned already, the fact that they became negligent towards their own traditions and the failure of the new schools to incorporate this valuable cultural heritage.

6.4 INTELLECTUAL TRAINING

Intellectual training to transmit adequate knowledge to youngsters was done by means of certain games, narration of history, myths, legends, the learning of proverbs, riddles, names of months, seasons, stars, etc. According to the information obtained, certain forms of this traditional education had disappeared by 1966 while other forms continued to exist. Examples of those still existing are names of months, seasons, stars and many proverbs which are taught in schools during language lessons. A game like wera which requires intensive calculation continues to be played by adults and children. The game is usually played on Saturdays and Sundays as recreation. It can sometimes take six or more hours to finish this game, whereby players from one of two opposing sides surrender their most stones or mangetti nuts to the other.

Another game being used for intellectual training is *Tamburamo* which one may translate as "Take it". This game also requires attention and intensive thinking. In remote rural areas where children do not attend school the game is still played after supper.

Accounts obtained indicated that problem solving games was one of the means by which adults tried to develop their children intellectually.⁹ Parents in remote areas who refused to send their children to boarding school still keep their children busy with these games.

6.5 SPECIALIZED TRAINING (OR JOB ORIENTATION)

6.5.1. Agricultural Education

The existence of communities in the Kavango region depends heavily on agriculture. Most people still use ploughs

pulled by oxen to cultivate their fields, while only a few use tractors. Accounts obtained stressed that even those who are educated have their own fields on "tribal" land. They hire people to work on their mahangu fields. Within families which are still practising agriculture boys are usually taught by their fathers how to prepare a new field for agricultural purpose, how to handle a hoe and a plough. Girls are still being taught by their mothers how to sow the seed, how to weed, how to thrash and how to pound mahangu to produce meal from which a stiff mahangu pap is prepared.

Interviewees postulate that a special ritual ceremony which was very strong among the Vambunza and Vakwangali, namely mukumbwira which was connected with agriculture was still practised in remote rural areas.¹⁰ This ritual dance preceded the ploughing of fields. Only women and girls were connected with the ritual dance. When the first rain fell, they went in the bush and made themselves skirts from green leaves. The girls and young women sang while the elderly women danced and proceeded slowly to the river. At the river the elderly women while dancing dived into the water. This is supposed or believed to result into a good year. How long this tradition is going to continue is perhaps a matter of a few years, because many young people have started moving to Rundu and other major towns in Namibia to look for jobs and what they call better and easy life. The agricultural projects at Musese, Shitemo, Uvungu-vungu and Shadikongoro will play a decisive role in and will contribute to the disappearance of traditional agricultural education.

6.5.2 Hunting and Fishing

Hunting started to diminish within the communities along the Kavango river by 1940 due to laws introduced by the colonial government to protect certain species of animals. The Hambukushu chief, Ndara Dimbu, was arrested in 1946 by the Regional Commissioner for killing a hippo. In 1958 horses and guns were confiscated in the Mbunza and Ukwangali areas by the Commissioner because they were used for killing

eland.

The traditional hunting of big game by a group of men and boys using spears, assegais, bows and arrows, traditional axes and later on handmade guns, accompanied by dogs is believed to have begun to decline in the 1950s, because of the fear that people would be arrested. Only professional hunters continued hunting certain species of wild game which were allowed to be killed. However, illegal hunting continued even after the 1970s, but hunting education decreased and was restricted within communities living in the interior of the region where wild animals were still plentiful.

Children living in remote rural areas continue to be taught the skills of trapping and snaring of small animals and birds (guineafowls, doves, etc.). In the course of time this form of education diminished because children were no longer interested in this way of obtaining meat. Professional hunters later on acquired rifles which replaced traditional hunting weapons.

In the case of fishing, the tradition continues to exist even today. Fishing baskets like vikuku, vididi, vintunga, dimuduva, mashasha, marunkinda and many others are still being made. Though children still learn to weave fishing baskets and to fish in the traditional way, many of them are no longer interested, because there are professional fishermen who can catch fish with nets or baskets to be sold to others.

6.5.3 Animal Husbandry

Cattle-rearing and managing cattle posts was done by men and boys. Therefore, it was imperative that every boy had to learn how to do the job. Accounts obtained, postulate that this tradition started to decline very strongly at the end of the 1960s. By 1966 it became an offence to keep a child from school for parents living along the Kavango river. Many parents could no longer allow their sons to be absent

from school for longer periods which lasted from December to August. Parents like teachers, headmen and catechists began to see school education as a long term investment and sent their children to boarding schools. Kavango people who lived along the river discontinued to call their ancestors around the sacred fire, to sacrifice animals for special occasions and to read their future on the *katemba*. Socially, religiously and economically, livestock was no more central to Kavango existence. Many people started to value money more than they valued cattle. The people did not wear their traditional clothing anymore, but had adopted western clothing. Consequently, they began to exchange their cattle to Portuguese merchants, missionaries and other traders for money, clothing, alcohol and other commodities.

Accounts obtained suggest that the decline of cattle in the Kavango and other regions can also be attributed to the arrival of veterinary surgeons in the regions. It was said that the first chief veterinary surgeon Dr M. Zschokke and his assistant, F. Wiers,¹¹ were the major cause of the disappearance of cattle-posts. In the first place, certain areas identified by people as areas for establishing cattle posts were declared no go areas for cattle. An incident that happened in the Ukwangali district in 1958 was that cattle owners drove their cattle to the prohibited areas, because they did not want to give up their cattle posts. Without warning all these cattle were mercilessly shot dead by the veterinary surgeon. Since 1958 the number of cattle was regulated, cattle were counted and immunized after every six months. By the 1960s many cattle belonging to Kavango individuals were stolen by Portuguese messengers (*Vimbali*) and driven to Angola. Such occurrences contributed to the decline of cattle in Kavango, because many individuals and families were discouraged to own cattle in such circumstances. People interviewed did not rule out the survival of this type of traditional education, but they pointed out that after 1966 only boys who grew up in the remote areas in the interior and never attended school, learned the practice of animal husbandry.

6.6 TRADES AND CRAFTS

6.6.1 Wood-working

Woodworking to produce certain household commodities and tools was indispensable to the life of Kavango people until the late 1960s. Since the introduction of modern utensils by traders, farm labourers and mine workers and since SWANLA opened its shops at Nkure-Nkuru, Rundu and Mukwe, and since missionaries opened a shop at every mission station, and the household commodities became easily available, the practice of woodworking began to decline. By the beginning of the 1970s traditional utensils were replaced by modern European utensils in areas along the Kavango river. Traditional wooden chairs, beds and pounding blocks and sticks used for preparing mahangu meal are still being made in areas along the Kavango river. Boys whose fathers practise woodworking also learn from their fathers how to do the job after school.

Canoe-making was encouraged by missionaries and Portuguese on both sides of the river for their own advantage and benefit. Until the late 1950s the river was the easiest way of transporting goods and of travelling to visit communities living far away from mission stations. Ntoma Shiremo, specialist in canoemaking who has practised the craft since the age of 17 in 1930, said in the interview that traditional education of canoemaking ceased to be given to children by 1956 when a road from Botswana to Rundu was completed, when all mission stations obtained lorries and when Portuguese completed their road from Port Quangar to Port Shishongo and Port Mbukushu along the northern bank of the Kavango river.¹² Albion lorries travelled in convoy every week from Shakawe in Botswana to Rundu and back, transporting Kavango and Angolan mine workers who worked on the Witwatersrand, back to their homes and to work. Transport of people became more efficient by the use of modern vehicles on roads rather than canoes on the water where their occupants risked their lives. Dangerous hippos often attacked, overturned boats and destroyed them. A

restriction on the cutting down of certain trees, including the dolf tree (*Pterocarpus angolensis*), from which canoes and oars were made, was placed by the Regional Commissioner, Marée, by the late 1950s. The decline of traditional woodworking became serious after 1968 when school education began to be seen by parents as the route to a better and easier life. Forms of woodworking, such as the making of canoes, chairs, beds and pounding blocks and sticks, which survived the impact of westernization remain exclusively in the hands of professional crafts-persons like Ntoma Shiremo and few others. The woodworking that is being done in Kavango today by Angolan (*Vanyemba*) immigrants is different from that done by Kavango people before 1968.¹³

6.6.2 Basketry and Matting

People interviewed suggested that the learning of basketry and matting by children disappeared by 1968. Many children spent long periods in boarding schools and there was not enough time to learn this craft. Baskets used for gathering wild fruit and vegetables and for winnowing, were replaced by buckets and big dishes or bowls, big baskets used for storing *mahangu* and other crops were replaced by steel containers bought from missionaries, mats that were placed on traditional beds were replaced by mattresses. Many people started buying the abovementioned goods instead of making and learning how to make baskets and mats. Although professional craftsmen continue with this activity today, its educational character disappeared after 1968. Boys and girls were no longer compelled by circumstances to learn how to make mats and baskets. Basketry and matting as a form of traditional education became of minimal importance. Only people in remote rural areas still practise this craft and children living there who do not attend school join adults in making baskets and mats.

6.6.3 Pottery and Leathermaking

Accounts obtained from interviews suggest that this form of traditional education could have started to decrease within the communities by the early 1960s due to the availability

of modern utensils and other household goods.¹⁴ Farm labourers and mine workers came back home bringing pots, pans, plates, cutleries and tools like wire and chains which were to replace the use of clay pots and leather. Modern utensils and tools were valued above the traditional ones, because of the high quality of things made in factories and that they were durable. The making of pottery and the preparation of leather was a long process and required time, patience, energy and hard work, therefore it became unnecessary to strain oneself while better and durable goods were available. At places where this practice survived after 1968, it was only done by adults, and not learnt by children.

6.6.4 Hairdressing

Traditional hairdressing is generally believed to have started declining in the early 1950s. Missionaries were totally against this tradition which they considered to be one of the signs of heathenism.¹⁵ To become a Christian, to acquire a European first name and to wear European clothing became fashionable among the Kavango communities living along the river, and no woman could become a Christian without removing her coiffure and cutting her hair.

With the establishment of mission hospitals and the introduction of western medicine, many people began to seek medical attention on mission stations. Women were told to first remove their styles of hairdressing if they wanted to be attended to. Children whose mothers had traditional hairdressing styles were turned away from hospitals even if they were seriously ill. Those who continued to wear traditional hairdressing were those who refused to become Christians. Traditional hairdressing, thus, never survived the impact of Christianity, westernization and school education. Thus, to become a Christian, to attend school and to seek medical treatment, a woman or girl had to remove the coiffure.

The Kavango children attending school were forced to discontinue plaiting their hair once they became scholars.

This was done because Kavango children would dirty the walls, desks and other facilities with the red ochre used on the hair. Later on most children did not want to smear themselves with red ochre once they were used to cleanliness.

6.6.5 Ironworking

Accounts concerning ironworking suggest that this form of traditional education could have survived until the early 1960s in certain remote rural areas of the Kavango region.¹⁶ Iron ploughs could be purchased from SWANLA and missionary shops, farm labourers and mine workers brought home already prepared iron, iron implements were also available in Portuguese shops. Many Kavango people did not see the need of doing a strenuous job like ironsmelting when already prepared iron was available. Traditional education in ironsmelting vanished due to factors mentioned and the fact that children wanted a modern type of education.

The making of tools out of iron, copper and brass on large scale continued even after 1966. Accounts obtained from interviewees suggest that missionaries could have encouraged the making of agricultural tools such as traditional hoes and small hoes and axes in the beginning, because they also needed them.¹⁷ The tools were used by school children in cultivating and weeding gardens and agricultural fields which belonged to missionaries. After 1970 the work was most restricted to Kavango families living in the Quito area of Angola. These people manufactured iron tools on minimal scale for own usage and for selling. Boys in this area were still learning the art of ironworking, because they had no access to schools.

6.7 PROFESSIONS

Accounts given on this topic postulate that the practices of traditional medicine and divination are examples of traditional education which survived the impact of Christianity, civilization and western education. The

accounts suggest further that even after 1966 the teaching of identifying and administering herbal "medicines" occurred among both boys and girls. Girls, in particular, were being taught by their grandmothers and mothers what types of herbs were suitable for what type of sickness. They were taught to identify herbs for treating cough, diarrhoea and vomiting, nose-bleeding, eye sicknesses and many other minor ailments. This was done to prepare them for their future life as mothers and wives.

People interviewed stated that school children were secretly taken from boarding school to be treated by traditional doctors. People believed that some sicknesses could only be cured by traditional doctors. Therefore, this aspect of traditional education has remained strong, although there was a change that only children of traditional doctors were trained in this profession.¹⁸

The practice of divination also resisted the impact of westernization, because the *katemba* "speaks", it "identifies" the cause of an illness, a misfortune or even the sudden death of a relative and "directs" how to cure the ill person or even how to trace stolen goods. This belief still prevails among the Kavango people, Christians as well as non-Christians.

Lack of well-equipped hospitals and clinics in the Kavango region before 1970 created opportunities for traditional doctors and diviners to continue with their practice. Since the introduction of the monetary system in the region traditional doctors have been making a living out of their professions. Whereas in the past they demanded cattle and goats as payment for their services, today they are paid in cash. The two practices will continue to co-exist within the communities in the Kavango region, and children of traditional doctors and diviners will continue to learn those professions for as long as the natural environment is not damaged by development.

Other professions like that of rainmaking practised

exclusively by the Hambukushu royal family are said to have begun losing their value by the late 1950s.¹⁹ Since then people were no longer interested in this profession.

Finally, in discussing the survival of traditional education, one should take note of the role played by Christianity and western education in effecting social and economic change in Kavango. The coming of the written word, the establishment of modern style schools were powerful instruments for weakening the stability of the old society and for ushering in a process of change. This was done by the way schools imparted new skills such as literacy, numeracy, various professional and vocational skills, values and attitudes appropriate to a modern industrial society, with which the newly literates were invested, and which opened up new possibilities for their self-advancement in the authority structure. The new skills competed effectively with the old traditional prestige of practising agriculture and animal husbandry, and pulled many young people to schools away from village life. The penetration of the money economy, with all its accompanying features, created a new stratification in the Kavango society, with a thin layer of modern elite at the top who were self the products of colonial/mission education and the masses at the bottom. An awareness of their position made them demand for more and better education facilities in the region. Western education was seen as a means of bringing about economic development and cultural self-assertion. A majority among the people interviewed, especially those who went to school, said education was an investment that would help their children obtain good jobs and live a better life.

The transition of Kavango people from a subsistence to a cash economy was not merely an economic change, it involved a whole new way of life, with new forms of work and play, new perspective, changing values and goals, new form of inter-personal relations and social networks. Economic, political, sociological, psychological and religious changes were involved.

The new trade introduced new goods and services which further diversified the Kavango economy and caused some institutional changes. Christianity also made a significant impact on the Kavango people's way of life. Kavango people, it seems, were more concerned with European goods and skills, than with the new religion, whereas missionaries aimed at a total overhaul of Kavango society. They insisted on the total abandonment of "pagan" customs, for in the minds of missionaries at that time, the African convert had to be a totally new man, endowed with Christianity and Western culture.²⁰ The people faced a different situation: They needed European goods and skills, but the new ideology undermined their way of life.

6.8 CONCLUSION

This dissertation has attempted to trace the transition of the Kavango people from the pre-colonial and early colonial era, and the role which education played in this. In order to do so, it has been necessary to depend on the accounts of older people in Kavango, and in the process their accounts have been recorded and will, hopefully, enrich the future historical understanding of the Kavango people.

The dissertation departs from the version of the history written by outsiders concerning the educational practices which they introduced and at times imposed on Kavango.

Based on the research conducted, it is possible to conclude that:

1. Kavango traditional education played a vital and effective role in preparing individuals to meet the requirements of their membership of a functioning community.
2. The educational approach and the resulting impact of western education and its norms and values disrupted the traditional nature of the Kavango society.
3. Kavango people accepted mission efforts to instill literacy and numeracy, but rejected 'work education' as well as missionaries' cultural arrogance and scant regard for Kavango culture.

4. The colonial administration did not support education in the northern regions, because the people living in these regions were regarded as little more than useful migrant labourers.

It is to be hoped that the Kavango people will be able to preserve those values, traditions and practices which have remained until today, while responding to the new challenges and hopes represented in post-colonial Namibia.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 6

1. By the term culture is meant all the norms, customs, beliefs and symbols used by a society to regulate the behaviour of its members, and the expression of these in art and crafts, in ideology and religion. The forms and contents of cultural expression reflect the way in which society is organised economically, socially and politically. Culture thus encodes and comments upon the way a society is organised and relates to its environment, and how people have experienced this.
2. See Fish, M.: Die Kavangofischer, in Namibiana 10, Vol V(1) 1984, John Meinert (Pty) Ltd., Windhoek, p.123. Also Mertens, A. (1974): Kavango, Acknowledgement notes. Mertens says that the fundamental Kavango belief in Karunga as a transcendent god, opened the way for the Christian message.
3. Bierfert, A. (1938): 25 Jahre bei den Wadiriku am Okavango, p.89.
4. Interview with Prof. B. Otaala and Prof. D. Mkandawire, Prof. N. Arnim and Dr. R.F. Zimba, 20 June 1991, Windhoek.
5. Interview with Chief S. Kamwanga, 28/02/1988, Nyangana.
6. Interview with T. Kushokoska, H. Kannyinga, T. Likoro and S. Kamonga, 18 December 1990, Rundu.
7. Interview with A.K. Shiremo, K. Kamangu and N. Shiremo, 18 December 1990, Kayova and Gumma.
8. Interview with S. Kamonga and E. Muronga, 18 December 1990, Ndiyona.
9. Interview with D. Nekare and S. Thikusho, 18 December 1990, Rundu.
10. Interview with N. Sitarara, N. Haunona and K. Kantana, 18 December 1990, Sinzogoro.
11. See Mertens, A. (1974): Kavango. In her acknowledgement she makes reference to Dr M. Zschokke and F. Wiers.
12. Interview with N. Shiremo, 18 December 1990, Kayova.
13. Malan (1980) states that articles (masks, stools, drums and various sculptures) made by Vanyemba are marketed

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14. Interview with chiefs S. Kamwanga, E. Mbambo, A. Libebe, L. Hakusembe and S. Mpasi, 18 December 1990, Rundu.
 15. Ibid.
 16. Interview with M. Kakuru and J. Shikongo, 10 June 1991, Windhoek.
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