Christian Missionary Endeavour in Education in South Africa (1737-1955)

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Samevatting

Die rol wat Christen Sendinggenootskappe in die Suid-Afrikaanse opvoedkundige historiografie gespeel het, is goed gedokumenteer. Vir bykans twee eeue het sendelinge van hierdie genootskappe 'n belangrike rol gespeel in die opvoeding van hoofsaaklik swart Suid-Afrikaners. Hulle bydrae word steeds gedebatteer. Alhoewel die kersteningsproses eers werklik van die grond af gekom het gedurende die 18de eeu, het dit eers gedurende die volgende eeu 'n toppunt bereik. Verskeie faktore is vir hierdie versnelling verantwoordelik. Ten einde die konteks te verstaan waaronder sendingonderwys gefunksioneer het, is dit noodsaaklik om die ontwikkeling van Christensendings na te vors, sowel as verskeie motiverende redes wat 'n invloed op hierdie onderwys gehad het.

1. Introduction

The establishment of a refreshment station by the Dutch East India Company at the Cape of Good Hope in 1652 not only constituted a foothold for Europeans in Southern Africa, but also signalled the beginning of the Christianisation process of the indigenous people (Kritzinger, 1988:14). Initial undertakings to evangelise and educate were infrequent. Possible reasons for these sporadic efforts could have been that the Cape was initially not seen as a permanent settlement; the material policies of the administrators consumed most of their time and energy; and their apparent general apathy with regard to responsibilities towards the indigenous people (Behr, 1988:173). It was only during the 18th and 19th centuries that concentrated efforts were made to evangelise the people of Southern Africa through an influx of missionary societies from abroad. Missionary endeavour was due to the founding of several mission societies in Europe and the United States of America at this time, emanating from evangelical awakenings on these continents and subsequent voluntarism by individuals to go out and preach the Christian faith. Other factors included a spirit

of philanthropy and humanism which spurred Europeans and Americans to altruistic deeds regarding the spiritual plight of the so-called 'heathen'. The colonial settlers engaged in the opening up new frontiers for the colonial powers who were followed by missionaries with the aim of Christianising the 'conquered heathen'. The impact of this missionary fervour and consequent expansion in South Africa made it "the most over-denominationalized missionary area in Africa" by the end of the nineteenth century (Du Toit, 1984:618).

The primary aim of missionaries was to evangelise. Education was seen as a means of accomplishing this aim which, in most cases, resulted in the founding of schools and educational institutions linked to the mission stations. The reason for providing education through formal schooling was encouraged by the 17th and 18th century movement known as Pietism. "The strong pietist emphasis on the word of God led naturally to a strong desire that all people should be able to read God's word. This gave birth to one of the strong pietist mission principles: that church and school should go together" (Saayman, 1996:204). In terms of education, the mission schools executed three broad functions. Firstly, missionaries generally taught basic reading and writing. Secondly, manual work and practical training formed a fundamental part of the education provided by missionaries. Finally, they also provided a higher level of education, especially teacher training, for an elite group in order to propagate the Word of God. All these activities took place within the sphere of the Christian gospel.

1.1 Aim of article

Before the advent of colonialism and western education, the home and community were important catalysts for social development among African communities. The arrival of missionaries of different denominations led to the introduction of formal education among the indigenous people as literacy was viewed as essential to evangelisation (Masumbe & Coetzer, 2003:208). The contribution of denominational mission groups to education has been dealt with critically by several researchers (Mabunda, 1995; Radhudzulo, 1992; Radhudzulo, 1999; Ndlovu, 2002; Mabunda, 1995; Masumbe, 2003; Seroto, 1999; Stuart, 2002). Other missiological critiques of Christian enterprise in education in South Africa emphasise negative outcomes such as racism, subordination and cultural hegemony (Stuart, 2002; Kritzinger, 2002). While acknowledging the shortcomings of missions in education, this article aims to give a comprehensive overview of the impact of the key missionary endeavours on education until the mid-twentieth century from the perspective of history of education.

2. Initial endeavours: 1737-1799

Little was done with regard to educating the indigenous inhabitants of the Cape during the Dutch colonial periods (1652-1795 under the administration of the Dutch East India Company; 1803-1806 under the administration of the Batavian Republic). Initial attempts at missionary work in the Cape under the Dutch East India Company did not meet with much success. The endeavours by Ds Petrus Kalden, a clergyman at the Cape from 1695-1707, as well as the brief visit by the Danish missionary, John George Böving, in 1709 came to naught (Behr & MacMillan, 1971:359). The first Protestant mission society at the Cape to achieve some sort of foothold is attributed to the endeavours of the Brethren of the Moravian Church commencing in 1737. The Moravian Brethren originated from Herrnhut in Saxony and were a small circle of churchmen who established this group with the aim of sending out missionaries to foreign countries to spread the Protestant faith. The first representative of this group of missionaries to land at the Cape on 9 July 1737 was George Schmidt. Schmidt set up a mission station at *Zoetmelksvlei*, a military post on the banks of the Sonderend River, amongst the *Khoikhoi,* the indigenous populace, where he taught religion, language instruction as well the rudiments of agriculture. After a short while he relocated the mission station to Baviaans Kloof, later known as Genadendal, literally meaning 'valley of grace'. This mission station also provided elementary education and training to the local *Kohekohe* adults and children. In 1744 Schmidt was pressured by the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC), the then established church at the Cape, to vacate his enterprises and he returned to Europe. The Dutch Reformed Church was the most influential denomination at the Cape at the time and invariably influenced the colonial government to exercise its influence. Reasons given were that Schmidt did not have the necessary equipment for such a daunting task and that his church background was not acceptable to the majority of the colonists. A commission of enquiry had found that Schmidt was not “pure in faith” and not “able enough to teach the religion of the reformed Church” (Behr & MacMillan, 1971:360). The intolerance exhibited towards Schmidt by the church and colonial government was not an isolated case since this bias was also extended towards the Lutherans (Böeseken, 1975:69), thus reflecting denominational jealousies at the Cape. In 1792 three other Moravian missionaries resumed Schmidt's enterprises at Genadendal. These missionaries built a church, workshops and a school for both religious instruction, training in agriculture and trades (Joyce, 1989:155). These attempts by the Moravian Church were the first real undertakings

by a European Christian missionary society to educate the indigenous peoples in South Africa.

In 1795 the British annexed the Cape and this annexation lasted until 1803. During this period the London Mission Society (LMS) commenced their endeavours at the Cape. On 31 March 1799 two Dutch missionaries, JT van der Kemp and JJ Kicherer and two English missionaries, W Edwards and J Edmond arrived at the Cape in order to further the interests of the LMS (Du Plessis, 1911:99). Initially, the LMS established mission stations on the eastern border of the colony through the endeavours of Van der Kemp and Edmond and among the indigenous peoples under Chief Ngqika in the Tyumie Valley and at Bethelsdorp near Algoa Bay (now Port Elizabeth). This signalled the first educational initiatives by missionaries among the Black people. Along the Orange River in the then Northern Cape, missions were established by Kicherer and Edwards among the Korannas, Namaquas and *Basters* (Du Plessis, 1911:103). Included in their enterprises was the founding of educational facilities in order to educate the indigenous populace.

3. The nineteenth century

The British annexed the Cape for a second time in 1806 and established a crown colony, which was entirely under the control of the British government. British rule at the Cape was confirmed in 1814 by the London Convention and became permanent at the Congress of Vienna in 1815. After 1806 educational matters were to receive much more attention than under the previous Dutch colonial government since education was regarded as underpinning colonial policy. One such policy was the Anglicization of Dutch schools which aimed at bringing the inhabitants of the new colony in line with the culture of the mother country. This policy was initiated by the Governor, Cradock, but was 'perfected' by Lord Charles Somerset during the 1820's (Kotze, 1975:79). At this stage the establishment of schools for Black children was not a major factor of colonial policy. Although missionary activity, including educational provision, among Black people had become prevalent towards the latter part of the eighteenth century, the colonial power only involved itself during the second decade of the nineteenth century when a concerted effort was made to make education an important part of colonial policy. In 1813 the British Parliament had stressed the need to introduce useful knowledge also in mission education, as well as religious and moral advancement in India. This colonial policy invariably also applied to other British colonies, the Cape being no exception (Bosch, 1991:102).

3.1 Concentrated missionary endeavour

Various missionary societies set up mission stations during the first three decades of the nineteenth century. The Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, established in 1813, sent its first missionary, Barnabas Shaw, to the Cape Colony in 1816 where he took the lead in mission work in the Namaqualand area amongst the Namaquas. Shaw taught the local inhabitants aspects of elementary education, religion and agriculture. After 1820 the missionary movement specifically directed work among the Black tribes living in the Eastern province. The influence of the Wesleyans eventually progressed to the Xhosa territory (the former Transkei) and Bloemfontein areas in the Free State (Kritzinger, 1988:15). It was only in the 1870's that the Wesleyan Church really organised itself in the erstwhile Transvaal. Some well-known missions founded by this society were Healdtown near Fort Beaufort, Salem near Grahamstown and Lesseyton near Queenstown with several schools also functioning at these stations (South Africa, 1936).

The Glasgow Missionary Society, established in 1796 in Scotland, was especially active in the Eastern Cape region (Ravhudzulo, 1999:34). Consequently, the Presbyterian Church was to become an established church serving the Xhosa of the eastern border areas and founded well-known missions such as Lovedale in 1824. From the outset Lovedale was associated with educational endeavour and was founded on the principles of racial equality and non-denominationalism (Shepherd, 1971:44). In 1829, the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society arrived in South Africa and operated amongst the Basotho of Moshesh's mountain kingdom, the inhabitants of the Wagenmakersvallei (now Wellington), those who dwelled on the banks of the Caledon River, the Batlapin tribes at the present-day Bethulie in the Free State and the Batuang tribe at the present-day Ficksburg in the Free State (Du Plessis, 1911:259).

In 1830, the Rhenish Missionary Society, founded in 1799, arrived in South Africa and worked amongst the *Khoikhoi* along the Cape West Coast and up into the Northwest province (present day Namibia) amongst the Herero, Damara and several other tribes (Van der Merwe, 1970:58). In 1834 six missionaries of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) established in 1812 left for South Africa from Boston Massachusetts (USA) and set ashore in Table Bay on 6 February 1835 from where they travelled on to Natal in 1836. They operated amongst the Zulus and unsuccessfully amongst the Matabele. One of the missionaries, Dr Newton Adams, was to found the well-known educational institution, Adams College, near Amanzimtoti (Booth, 1968:110).

In 1834, the Berlin Missionary Society, established in 1824, entered South Africa. Their work amongst the Korranas (a tribe of *Khoikhoi*) was not very successful and they later proceeded east to the Zulus and Xhosas. In the 1860's, they began operating in the former Transvaal amongst the Bapedi, Sotho and Venda speaking tribes. Mission schools were established at places such as Ermelo, Heidelberg, Johannesburg, Middelburg, Pietersburg, Potchefstroom and Pretoria. In 1865 Botshabelo mission station was founded and in 1906 from which a training college was later established (South Africa 1936:23). In 1836, the evangelical wing of the Anglican Church channelled their mission work through the Church Missionary Society (CMS), initially into Zululand. Missionary growth was slow until 1848 when Dr Robert Gray, first Bishop of the Cape of Good Hope and St Helen landed at the Cape, where after steady growth and expansion occurred. A notable feature in the missions of the Church of England was the prominence given to educational work. Beginning with the establishment of the Zonnebloem Native College in Cape Town in 1858, every diocese supplied its own schools and training institutions. The education imparted followed strictly denominational lines and in consequence the number of students was small compared to that of undenominational mission schools (Du Plessis, 1911:359). The Scandinavian missions such as the Norwegian Missionary Society (established in 1842) began operations in the northern parts of Zululand in 1844. The Swedish Missionary Society came to work in South Africa in 1876 amongst the Zulu and contributed to the immense work of the Lutherans. Several other Scandinavian societies operated in South Africa, mainly in Natal. The Hermannsburg Missionary Society from Germany arrived in South Africa in the 1850's and focussed their mission work in the central parts of Natal, Zululand and later on in the Western Transvaal amongst the Tswanas (Du Plessis, 1911:380). The Swiss Missionary Society initially joined the Paris missionaries in Lesotho and after an orientation period of three years, they started their mission work amongst the Tsonga of the former Transvaal Lowveld, near the Mozambique border. Educational institutions set up by the Swiss missionaries included that of Lemana Training College in the present day Northern Province (Seroto, 1999:145). Only after 1860 did the DRC (Kritzinger, 1988:17) start mission work in earnest especially in the Transvaal region. In 1881, as a result of DRC missionary activity, separate churches were established among the Coloured people, namely the *Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendingkerk (NGSK)*, the *Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Afrika* (*NGKA*) for Black people and the Reformed Church in Africa (RCA) for Indians (Du Toit, 1984:617).

It was only after the 1830's that the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) set about missionary work amongst the indigenous people at the Cape. Up until the 1830's the Catholic presence at the Cape was infrequent and it was only in 1838, due to the consecration of Bishop Patrick Raymond Griffith as the Bishop of the Cape of Good Hope, that mission work on the part of the RCC really advanced (Flanagan, 1982:56). A Du Plessis note that initially nothing was done for "native missions", as the RCC's focus was more so on "the children of the household of the faith", implying the European colonists and militia of the Cape (Du Plessis, 1911:245). Initially the evangelisation amongst Black people was minor and it was only in the 1850's that this process expanded due to the presence of the Missionary Congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, and the later arrival of the Cisterians, who developed into the Missionaries of Marianhill (Natal), with their centre at Marianhill where industrial schools were established. Mission work elsewhere was usually accompanied by the establishment of schools for the instruction of children of the indigenous population. The RCC mission amongst Black people also made progress in the Eastern Cape, Lesotho, Bloemfontein, Griqualand West, and the Transvaal (Du Plessis, 1911:371).

By the end of the nineteenth century missionary endeavour with its concomitant educational enterprise had expanded drastically. In 1850 only eleven Protestant missionary bodies were at work in the region; by the turn of the century this had doubled, with 693 established Protestant mission stations, with some form of educational enterprise and 4 124 out stations. The Roman Catholic missions at turn of the century accounted for some 258 stations (Du Plessis, 1911:465).

3.2 British colonial administration and mission education in the first half of the nineteenth century

For the first part of the 19th century, mission schools were entirely dependent on their own support. The setting up of a mission station and the subsequent education provided was a costly endeavour which demanded capital building costs, expenditure on school establishments, expansion which brought about increased opportunities for proselytisation and the training of prospective missionaries. During this period missionaries absorbed the costs of providing education for the indigenous people aiming to be *self*-supporting, *self*-governing and *self*-propagating. This policy was exemplified in the choosing of a new site and subsequent building of Lovedale by the Presbyterian Church during the 1840's when it was declared that:

> From the commencement of the project it was decided to have agricultural operations connected with the institution. It was declared that it was intended that students should labour on the land, partly for their sustenance, partly for their health while otherwise engaged in sedentary pursuits, and more than either that they might be able afterwards to instruct their countrymen in the art of cultivating their own soil as well as the things of religion (Shepherd, 1973:12).

The principle of self-sufficiency was a reason why missionaries made use of converts to labour on the mission station, as well as educating them in trades and skills, a phenomenon very often perceived by reproduction theorists as contributing to Western capitalism (Van der Walt, 1992:75).

However, after 1939 the practice of self-financing of mission schools changed in the Cape Colony, when a Department of Education was established with mission schools coming under its charge. This development was the result of the endeavours of the governor, Sir George Napier, who had voiced the need for central control of education in the Cape Colony during the 1830's. In 1837 Sir John Herschel was instructed to investigate educational matters in the Colony. The result of this investigation was the publication of a Government Memorandum in 1839 whereby a department of education under the supervision of a general superintendent was visualised. The first Superintendent-General of Education to be appointed was Dr James Rose-Innes, a Scottish educationist, connected with the South African College. He laid the foundations of this department despite numerous problems and inadequate funding (Scholtz, 1967:111). Consequently, in 1841 state aid was made available to mission schools in the form of a grant used exclusively for the support of teachers in the form of salaries. This grant was specifically focussed at the schools for “poorer classes” which inevitably included mission schools. This granting of state aid had profound implications for mission education (Scholz, 1967:207). Consequently, “Subsidized schools had to be conducted to the satisfaction of the Superintendent-General of Education, who had the right to inspect them and call for returns” (Scholz, 1967:207). The state had a say in language policy, curricular affairs and admission criteria. Molteno sums up the effect that this financing had on mission schools, and the education that they provided:

> Thenceforth the mission schools were formally under the jurisdiction of [the] Department [of Education]. Some state control was exercised through the grant of funds, which first became available in 1841 but, in the main, schooling was left to the churches and missionary societies. Although the latter's financial resources were at times supplemented from contributions from the Black commu-

> nities served by the schools, funds were always very limited. The standard of teaching was low; minimal secondary education was offered and that usually by teacher training institutes. Only a minute fraction of the child population received any schooling at all (Molteno, 1984:44).

Several reasons contributed to the new policy of granting of financial aid to mission schools: the prevalent colonial policy of equality amongst the inhabitants of the colonies due to philanthropic influences and the necessity of the Government to have some form of control over the education being given to the Black people. However, the move was also beneficial to the missionaries. Many cash-strapped missionary societies welcomed any form of monetary aid to alleviate the "monetary burdens of educational provision" (Mackenzie, 1993; 52). These aids lead to, among others, a considerable increase in the number of mission schools.

3.3 British colonial administration and mission education during the second half of the nineteenth century

In the 1850's a new approach aimed at "detribalizing, educating and befriending the native" was introduced in British colonies (Scholtz, 1967:196). This aim was to be partly realised by assisting missionaries and supporting the education that they provided. This view lent impetus to mission education in the Cape Colony. The governor, Sir George Grey, appointed in 1854, viewed mission education as a means to address the frontier problems which had arisen between the Black tribes and the colonists particularly on the Eastern frontier. This formed part of his 'border pacification' policy. Education was to be the paramount weapon in the vanquishing of the indigenous people and Grey persuaded the British Government to subsidise mission institutions further. He maintained that Black people should be trained as interpreters, evangelists and schoolmasters amongst their own people. He also emphasised industrial training in mission schools to ensure political security and social progress in the Cape Colony (South Africa, 1936:10). In the early part of 1855, Grey stated during his address to the opening of the second session of the Colonial Parliament:

> [W]e should try to make them [the Black people] part of ourselves, with a common faith and common interests, useful servants, consumers of our goods, contributors to our revenue; in short, a source of strength and wealth for this colony, such as providence designed them to be. What, therefore I propose is, that we should fill it up with a considerable number of Europeans, of a class fitted to increase our strength in that country, and that, at the same time, unremitting efforts should be made to raise the Kaffirs in Christianity and civilization, by the establishment among them, and bey-

> ond our boundary, of missions connected with industrial schools, by employing them on public works, and by other similar means (Rose & Tunmer, 1975:205).

In July 1855 Grey succeeded in persuading the British government to increase the subsidies to missionary institutions in order to educate and train Black people in industrial occupations. As a result 40 000 pounds Stirling per annum was provided by the British government for the period 1855-1857 to support this enterprise (South Africa, 1936:199). This new emphasis on industrial training for the indigenous people had already been reflected in the Education Committee of the Privy Council to the Colonial Office's report in 1847 which stated:

> A short and simple account of the mode in which the committee of the Council of Education considers that industrial schools for the coloured races may be conducted in the colonies and to render the labour of the children available towards meeting some part of the expenses of their education (Ball, 1983:242).

The effects of Grey's policy on education are diverse. On the one hand, critics regarded the end result of this type of education was to acquire "a docile and efficient labour force which would accept both European religious and political authority, as well as European social superiority" (De Kock, 1996:71). In contrast, others commended the policy. For example, Lovedale's fifth principal, Robert HW Shepherd praises Grey's initiatives and remarks that "the enlightened nature of Sir George Grey's policy is deserving of amplest recognition" and goes on to note that the then principal, William Govan, expressed "hearty consent" to the Government's initiatives (Behr & MacMillan, 1971:22). This latter perception implies missionary endorsement of this colonial policy. However, co-operation with the colonial apparatus was done, in many cases, for pragmatic rather than ideological reasons, "acquiescent neutrality may have been the price to be paid for the opportunity to proselytise." (Mackenzie, 1993:49) Although the Grey Plan ended in 1863, industrial education continued to receive emphasis at mission institutions thereafter.

4. The eventual demise of mission education: 1910-1955

The Union of South Africa came into being in 1910 and four provinces were established: the Cape, the Orange Free State, the Transvaal and Natal. Schooling at the time of Union was already firmly segregated along racial lines and schooling for Black children was primarily provided by mission education. While some government primary schools for Black learners had been established, mainly in Natal, the dominant view was that primary schooling for Black children should be left in the hands of missionaries, who would be aided by provincial subsidies. The four dif-

ferent provinces were afforded control over primary and secondary education by means of their separate Provincial Councils (South Africa, 1911:26). Thus, the Provincial Councils controlled and financed Black education. Each of the four provinces had its own system of income tax for Black people whereby education was financed. This separate form of taxation for each province resulted in serious anomalies in that the rate of development in Black education differed from one province to another. In the Cape, the rate of development for Black education during this period remained slow. In 1919 a provincial commission was appointed in the Cape which recommended that the authorities should have more control and mission institutions less control over Black education, that the authorities increase their financial aid and that marked changes be brought about with regard to the curriculum (The Education Bureau, 1981).

In the Transvaal, a new curriculum for Black pupils at mission schools was introduced in 1915. In 1920, three inspectors for Black schools were appointed to investigate Black parents' demands for community schools which would be free from church influence and equal to public schools. In 1924 the Transvaal Advisory Board on Native Education was established to consult between the administration and mission institutions. In 1935 a Chief Inspector for Native Education was appointed in the Transvaal, who acted as technical adviser to the Director of Education "in unifying and directing educational effort amongst the Natives" (South Africa, 1936:27).

By 1926 there were 2 702 mission schools with 215 956 mainly Black learners nation wide as opposed to 68 state schools with 7 710 learners clearly indicating the extent to which mission education had grown (Behr & MacMillan, 1971:374). The central government of the Union gradually started providing financial assistance for Black education after 1925 according to Act No 21 of 1925 (South Africa, 1953). According to Government Notice 978 of 12 July 1935, the Minister of Education appointed an inter-departmental committee under the chairmanship of WT Welsh, who was assisted by six committee members to investigate the provision of education for Black learners. The findings, conclusions and recommendations were published in the *Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Native Education of 1935-1935* (UG 29/1936). The Report came to some overall conclusions and made certain recommendations concerning Black education, necessitating reforms (South Africa, 1936:5):

i) The financing of Black education was found to be unsatisfactory compared to White education.

ii) Nearly 70 per cent of Black children of school-going age were not at school. Part of the reason being a lack of facilities.

iii) Education standards were not the same for White and Black learners.

iv) The average school life of Black pupils was less than three years which resulted in alarming rates of juvenile delinquency. The commission did not recommend the adoption of compulsory education due to its problematic application in practice. However, the feasibility of a measure of compulsion in certain areas had to be investigated.

v) Although criticism could be levelled against mission institutions (e.g. denominational rivalry in their bid to establish schools without regard for the community's needs and facilities at their disposal) the missionaries were applauded for their efforts. Mission education, it was felt, was to play an important and continual role in educating Black learners, however the report urged that a programme be planned which would lead to the State taking full responsibility (administration and financing) for the education of Black learners.

During the period 1926-1945 joint control of Black education was exercised by the Provincial Governments and the central Department of Native Affairs and this was characterised by an increase in the responsibilities assumed by the central Government: larger grants, more government schools for Black learners and an increase in inspection and administrative staff (South Africa, 1951:33). Act No. 29 of 1945 saw the passing of financial control of Black education to the Minister of Education, Arts and Science. The Provincial Councils however, remained the legislative authorities in the respective provinces. Black education, during the period 1946-1949, was also characterised by joint control exercised by the Provincial Governments and the central Department of Education, Arts and Science (South Africa, 1951:36).

After the coming into power of the *Herenigde Party* (later to become the National Party in 1951) in 1948 under Dr DF Malan, a Commission on Native Education was set up under the chairmanship of Dr WWM Eiselen in 1949, which “began with the premise that a distinction should be drawn between White and Black education”. The Report of the Eiselen Commission appeared in 1951 and was discussed at length in Parliament (South Africa, 1951:40). The report's main recommendations were later taken up in the Bantu Education Act, 1953 (South Africa, 1951:41). Findings by the Commission included: that the education programme for Black people was not part of the socio-economic development programme; there was no active participation of Blacks in the control of educati-

on; inadequate inspection and supervision of schools; short school life of learners; schooling was too academic; teachers were not involved in the broader planning of general development schemes, and denominational rivalry. It also found that "school control by religious bodies has created a multiplicity of administrative units of very unequal size and efficiency, and with widely different conceptions as to the aims and practices of education" (South Africa, 1951:112). Thus the Commission recommended that –

i) The control of Black education should be vested in a separate government department and not be run by provincial administration; and

ii) That a measure of decentralisation had to be brought about with the establishment of six regional divisions (each with its own director and staff of administrative and professional assistants). This division would ensure that "homogenous population elements were grouped together" (South Africa, 1951:112).

In September 1953 the Bantu Education Act was passed and promulgated on 1 January 1954. This Act was broadly based on the report of the Eiselen Commission. Administration and control of Black education passed from provincial administration in Natal, Transvaal, Orange Free State and the Cape Province, and from mission churches, to a separate Bantu Education Section in the Department of Native Affairs of the Central Government (Hartshorne, 1992:36). The results of this Act were profound and endorsed racial differences in education. According to this Act, Black education would not be compulsory as was the case with White schools, and would be financed from limited Governmental funding as well as from Black resources and not, as was in the case of Whites, from general revenue. A further consequence of this Act was that Black universities would be situated in less developed homelands which not only stunted academic and skills development, but it also prohibited Black access to White urban universities.

In his capacity as Government spokesman in 1954, the prime minister, Dr HF Verwoerd noted that the previous system of mission education "[was] unsympathetic to the country's policy... by ignoring the segregation or 'apartheid' policy.... By blindly producing pupils trained on a European model, the vain hope was created among Natives that they could occupy posts within the European community" (South Africa, 1954:289). Further criticism of mission education was also evident from the Eiselen Report. Attempts were thus being made at all levels of society to subsequently change peoples' perceptions in abhorring the previous system of education in favour of separate education.

Wide criticism to segregated education was prevalent in political and educational circles; it was also prevalent in theological, missionary and implicitly, mission education circles (*Cape Times*, 1953:4). On 10 November 1954, the Episcopal Synod of the Church of the Province of South Africa issued a statement condemning the Bantu Education Act. Although not approving the Act as "it [the Act] is morally wrong to follow a policy which has for its object the keeping of a particular racial group in a permanent position of inferiority", it was prepared to lease certain of its educational buildings to the State since "it was forced to choose the lesser of two evils" -- in that closure would do both teachers and pupils out of a job and education (*Cape Times*, 1954; 1). Opposition to the Act was also made known by the Holiness Mission Churches, the General Assembly of the Bantu Presbyterian Church of South Africa, the Methodist Church of South Africa, Episcopal Synod of the Church of the Province, as well as the American Board Mission in South Africa, who all regretted the Government's need to embark on a system of education that would place Blacks in a subordinate position which, in essence, was incompatible with Christian principles (*South African Outlook*, 1954:164). Opposed to these objections emanating in the early 1950's, the DRC Commission's viewpoint was that of endorsement of the Government's commitment to mass education, but failed to refer to the Government's plan of segregation thus amplifying the stance of the DRC to the acceptance of the ruling party's ideological stance (*South African Outlook*, 1954:181).

5. Conclusion

This article gives a comprehensive overview of the profound role played by missionaries in educating Black South Africans. It covers the early missionary enterprise during the 18th century and the period of greatest activity, the 19th century. In recent years the contribution of missionary endeavour to the development of education for Black learners has been sharply criticised. It has been argued that mission education revealed mainly negative outcomes. While it is acknowledged that mission education was frequently not ideally suited toward the majority of Black children, this overview of the mission endeavour in education in South Africa indicates several positive outcomes. A vast number of mission stations were established, and subsequently the large number of schools as well, which operated especially in the mid-nineteenth century and well into the mid-twentieth century in South Africa. Christian missions in South Africa developed to such an extent that the education they provided far surpassed that provided by the state by the early twentieth century. Only in the mid-twentieth century did the State take control of Black education, thereby totally minimising the influence that mission societies had over

this type of education, so much so, that after the 1953 Bantu Education Act, their influence virtually came to a standstill.

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