

CHAPTER 3

THE TIMES OF BEN MARAIS

1. INTRODUCTION

The country now (2003) called the Republic of South Africa underwent turbulent changes during the 20th century.⁷⁸ Neither is the country unique in its experiences in the 20th century, nor is the 20th century unique as a calendar period in containing turbulent events. While not diminishing the anguishes experienced, or camouflaging them through shifting the focus to particular highlights in the century, such as developments in academia, science, technology and the organization of international sport, cognisance must be kept that these experiences are acute because they still form part of the recent past. Placed within a broader framework of 1500 years, or even 2500 years, and different patterns emerge of which the events in the 20th century form part. Within world trends, South Africa found itself part and also apart. The disjointing itself was a phenomenon that needs to be understood within a broader context. However, for the purposes of this study the focus will fall on describing 20th century South Africa as the times in which Ben Marais lived.⁷⁹

2. SOUTHERN AFRICA IN THE 20TH CENTURY

In *The two faces of Africa*, Ben Marais orientates his reader to the race problems experienced in the 1960s in South Africa by tracing the problems to 1688. When (1964b:1):

“... [his] forefathers reached the tip of Africa to settle, the nearest Africans (Bantus) were still +/- 600 miles from Cape Town but were slowly moving southwards. The whites started their great movements northwards and eastwards. Vast tracts of present day South Africa were at that time inhabited only by bands of nomadic Bushmen or Hottentots.”

⁷⁸ Ben Marais (1958:3) refers to the twentieth century as “winter-like”.

⁷⁹ It must be remembered that the Western calendar, working in years of 365 days (sometimes 366) or 12 months, decades, centuries and millenniums, organised in orientation to the sun and not the moon, is itself a construct.

He mentions his white South African background because this “inevitably influences one’s views one way or the other” (Marais 1964b:1). The historian is personally involved in his subject. Furthermore, it is impossible to discuss the 20th century without a few references to the 19th century.

a. Winds From the 19th Century

It would be possible to relate the history of the Cape settlements from the 17th century, when in 1688 Ben Marais’ forefather, Charles Marais, from Plessis near Paris, arrived in Saldanha Bay aboard the *Voorschoten* with his wife, Catherine Taboureaux, and four children.⁸⁰ However, for purposes of immediate relevance to the 20th century, as the demarcated period for this study, consideration will be limited to the 19th century, though particular themes are discernibly present in the 17th century. Attention is focused more on the Eastern frontier, what was to become the North Eastern region of the Cape Colony, because Ben Marais originated from this region.

Selected views are given on issues and events that took place during the 19th century that had an impact on the thoughts and opinions prevalent in the 20th century, and which influenced Ben Marais’ family.

It is problematic to refer to the migrant farmers as Dutch, since many of them were of either of German or French origin, or English or other, and were not yet an identifiable unit “Afrikaner”. The term “boer” is thus used in preference. Though, the English by preference referred to all the non-English settlers as Dutch, principally because they all conversed in Dutch.

Andrew Ross (1986:11) correctly claims:

“... the destiny of the various peoples living in the area (Cape Colony) in the first seventy years of the nineteenth century was very much in their own hands and those of the British officials in the Colony.”

⁸⁰ The family then sailed to Cape Town aboard the *Jupiter*.

i. The Clashes on the Eastern Frontier

It is not exactly sure when Ben Marais' forefathers migrated, beyond the Overberg,⁸¹ to the region known as the Eastern Frontier (perspective taken from the Cape of Good Hope – Western Cape), but it is known that his father and two uncles left the Tarkastad region for a farm in the Steynsburg region during the 1890s. By the late 19th century, the majority of the clashes between the farmers – Boers and English – and the Xhosa tribes had been resolved, with the Xhosas being driven back.

Clashes between the migrating farmers from the Cape of Good Hope, who were venturing into the interior, and the indigenous people residing in the hinterland, started when the first farms were plotted in the 18th century. The first contact was not with the South moving Xhosa, but with the resident Bushmen (San). Two attitudes, present during the 18th and 19th centuries, towards the “problems” can be discerned. On June 5, 1787, the Political Council decided (Vermeulen 1952:5):

“... dat alle middelen om die roofsgtige Bosjemans Hottentotten tot stilstand te brengen, vrugtelooos zijn aangewend, heeft men derhalven moeten besluyten, om in die bij voorsg. missivie gedaan voorstelling, om dezelve door sterkere Commando's te doen attacqueeren en langs dien weg uijt te roeijen, te bewilligen.”⁸²

And (Vermeulen 1952:5):

“At the beginning of the 19th century Col. Collins reported that ‘It was very satisfactory to me to observe the anxiety evinced by the farmers of the North-Eastern districts to preserve peace with that people rather by conciliation than terror’....”

The first attitude was to remove all threat of the San population by killing them, while in the second attitude a sense of co-operation and co-habitation is detectable. These references do not refer to the south-west moving Xhosa who clashed with the north-east moving pioneers.

⁸¹ The region beyond a ridge of mountains encircling the Western Cape.

⁸² “... that all means to halt the thieving Hottentot Bushmen have been fruitless, thus it has been decided as a precautionary measure, to appoint a stronger commando to wipe them out.”

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While the first conflicts on the Eastern Frontier could be dated to the 1770s, between the Sundays and the Kei rivers, the Eastern Frontier Wars between 1835 and 1879 were more intense and battle orientated. Interestingly, the 1820 Settlers (English) were very involved in these battles.

There was not only conflict between the South-West migrating Xhosas⁸³ and the North-East settling Boers and English farmers, trade between these opposing groups also took place. The one group offered skins and ivory, while the other offered market goods from Europe. There were thus reasons for good relations. Missionaries also contributed – positively and negatively – to the relations, brokering in disputes, offering protection and instigating on occasions of abuses and maltreatment. Cattle rustling, from both sides of the “border” and the reactions thereto, escalated into a series of bitter battles.

In the 1810s, Dr J. van der Kemp and James Read of the London Missionary Society encouraged Khoi who held grudges against their white superiors – masters, to up hold themselves. This disturbed the white community and resulted in various court cases. The court cases, and “imposition by the British [government] of a severe and alien system of law and procedure drove the trekboer into a state of rebelliousness which culminated in the Slagter’s Nek rebellion” (Ross 1986:28). The tension in the situation is intensified when it is realised that the trekboer rebellion against the British was suppressed by the British through the Cape Corps – principally soldiers of mixed race.⁸⁴ The ringleaders of the rebellion were hanged in front of the Cape Corps, possibly more

⁸³ Andrew Ross (1986:14) draws attention to the question on how long Xhosa were resident in the Eastern region of the African continent. It appears that arguments are governed by sentiment, where an emphasis on a migrating Xhosa tribe – originally from the great lakes region – would strengthen white land claims (see Strydom 1938:306, “Die Koms van die Bantoe”), while emphasising an ancient residence would contravene such claims. It is my belief that both arguments are to be considered as feasible: The tribes of Africa would have migrated behind the animals, which migrated in a clockwise rotation, over many decades, around Southern Africa. Sometimes inter-tribal conflicts hastened such migration, and other times periods of longer residence were experienced. The southward movement of other tribes would have intercepted them at particular points – language differences reiterating the long pass in common origin, while language similarities with the San indicating a longer association. Interestingly – to further this argument – the East moving (anticlockwise) migrant boers (Ben Marais’ forefathers) would have – in time – fallen into this pattern (clockwise) had the Cape Colony Administration not insisted on drawing up and enforcing borders.

⁸⁴ An important theme in British colonial warfare is breached, where the British Empire used soldiers from its colonies to fight in the front lines. This was a military strategy that was employed by the Scottish Highlanders in Canada and in South Africa, and South Africans in the 1st and 2nd World Wars.

out of triumph – show of power, and warning – instalment of fear, than out of a sense of military justice.

A memorial was raised to the men of Slagter's Nek in the 20th century by the propagandists of Afrikaner nationalism. The "outlaws" of Slagter's Nek were retrospectively commemorated as forerunners of Afrikaner nationalism and independence (Ross 1986: 28). A few points need to be emphasised. Firstly the men of Slagter's Nek were definitely not nationalists, and did not represent the broader trekboer population. Secondly, they were more prone to rebelling against the English foreigners, and to this purpose approached the Xhosa chieftains for help. Thirdly, the rebellion was an expression of their rejection – or freedom (Ross 1986:28) – from any authority other than their own. This was one of the reasons for their seeking greener pastures beyond the Overberg.

The arrival of the 1820 Settlers also had a major influence on the conflicts at the Eastern Frontier, and on the local migrant farmer population. To greater extent, the English who settled and moved inland to farm, built firm friendships with their boer counterparts. This can be seen in the baptismal registers of the NG Kerk, where English surnames appear, adorned with Boer first names, two witnesses one with English names and the other with names associated more strongly with the Boers.

The 1820 settlers were introduced under the British administration of Collins as a buffer between the Boers and the Xhosa. Collins had drawn up the frontiers along clear cut lines, and had disregarded land preferences of the Xhosa.

The tensions on the Eastern Frontier contributed towards a further migration of Boers into the interior, between 1836 and 1838. These migrations constitute what is known as the Great Trek. Because this migration did not have a direct influence on Ben Marais' family, no more attention will be paid to its details, except that it played a significant role, retrospectively, during the rise of Afrikaner Nationalism in the first half of the 20th century, and the migrations inland would have constitutional consequences on the status of the NG Kerk and its members across the borders of the Cape Colony. Ross

(1986:194) claims that “the voortrekkers had no ideology of race – no vision of progress with the ‘savage’ disappearing before the advance of civilisation as part of the ‘immutable law of nature’”

A last point on the conflicts of the Eastern Frontier: in the photographs taken during the Anglo-Boer War, in possession of the Middelburg (Cape) museum, it appears that the tensions of the early 1800s of the Eastern Frontier had been refocused onto the battles in the Boer Republics (Transvaal and Orange Free State)– where the Voortrekkers settled. The photos depict black – Xhosa – troopers in British military attire. However, photos of the Boer commandos and rebels also depict black – Xhosa – men.

The fate and involvement of black people in the tensions between the Boers and English in Southern Africa during the 19th century are integral to the defining of the rise of African Nationalism, as well as playing a role in the development of Afrikaner Nationalism and the instating of English (South African) Nationalism. These histories form part of the history of 19th century Eastern Cape, the region Ben Marais’ family settled in, and where he grew up. He would have been well aware of both the trials and tribulations of the different peoples. He would have known about the good and pleasant relations between Boers and English farmers, and about tensions, often along party and church political lines, within the Afrikaner communities, and how relations with the English and Xhosas differed from place to place, person to person.

ii. The English Politician and the Missionary from London

Further winds that blew in from the 19th century that help illustrate the world Ben Marais grew up in – the Eastern Frontier – the Mission World – the Pioneer World, could be personified in the persons of J.M. Bowker, an English politician who was a racial protagonist, and John Philip (1775-1851), the revered and despised⁸⁵ evangelical philanthropist of the London Missionary Society. While recognising the danger of presenting people as a means towards an end, in the person of Bowker can be seen the

⁸⁵ Depending on perspective. According to Hofmeyr and Pillay (1994:129) John Philip was “the prototype of the interfering missionary.” See also Prinsloo (1939:12) for a negative and biased attitude towards the London Mission Society.

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request for racial policies, and in the person of Philip, humanitarian concerns. The winds these persons personify clashed most severely during the second half of the 20th century in South Africa. Ben Marais, interestingly, concerning their types – or points of view (prevalent also in the 20th century) – would not have associated with either, though he would have been in interaction with them.⁸⁶

In his letter to Dr Blake, dated 3 September 1970, and to Dr Potter (1978[?]), Ben Marais expresses a concern for the involvement of Christian movements – World Council of Churches (which has its origins in mission) in movements or organisations that intend bringing about social change. Apart from it not being clear whether the questions of source financing and control (the fear of communism) were the only concerns, it is clear that Ben Marais differed from the 19th century mission philanthropist John Philip. The decision of the World Council of Churches to financially support the African National Council in their plight for social reform in South Africa could, in principle, be compared to the concerns of John Philip for the social well being of the people of the Eastern Frontier during the 19th century. This was akin to his being a product of the Evangelical Revival (1750s) and sharing the concerns of the English Evangelicals.⁸⁷

The key issues of the English Evangelicals, contemporary to John Philip in the 19th century, are: firstly, the spreading of the Good News of Salvation in Jesus Christ to all people; secondly, bringing about change in society, on the one hand to facilitate the conversion of the indifferent and secondly to bring society more in line with the mind of the Lord; and thus thirdly, the abolition of slavery as the primary social injustice of the time, especially under the provocation of evangelical parliamentarians like William Wilberforce.

⁸⁶ It is interesting to note that Ben Marais emphasises the spiritual aspects of mission in his overview of the mission activities of the NG Kerk family (Hanekom 1952:328). For Ben Marais' criticism against Philip see Hanekom (1952:313; my translation): "The actions of a few men [referring esp. to Philip], who unfortunately had an audience in the government circles in England, cast a shadow over the work of other workers of the London Missionary Society, who were of the most blessed in our fatherland and broader circles."

⁸⁷ Compared to the more radicalised American Evangelical Abolitionists.

A major consideration concerning the relations between the people of Southern Africa, the political powers and the religious bodies, is that the government in the Cape Colony and Natal, as well as the Boer Republics, and later in the Union and Republic of South Africa, share a strong orientation towards being policy driven. This could be determined by a strong Calvinistic association with canon law, the doctrines of the church and confessions, all with clear applications for daily life through “beleidstukke”,⁸⁸ or it could be a characteristic of Western orientated civilization. The Dutch East Company had clearly spelled out policies on issues of church and land, and the British government was intricate in its policies and procedures.

Thus, it would come as no surprise that human relations would be controlled through policies in South Africa, even in the 19th century. The person who can be used to determine this sentiment is John Mitford Bowker, a popular and enthusiastic politician. He found support in the mission field with the Methodist missionary, W.B. Boyce, who, in 1838, expressed criticism of the “prejudice of some philanthropists, who had harmed the development of the Xhosa people”⁸⁹ (Ross 1986:190). In a letter to Mantague, Maitland’s Colonial Secretary, dated 25 November 1844 (Ross 1986:190) he wrote:

“The cant of the present day is leading well-intentioned people far astray from the promotion of true civilisation in Africa. Niger Expeditions, Aborigines Protection societies, Anti-Slavery societies, Mission Institutions, as at present conducted, are things of naught. Savage nations must be taught to fear and respect, to stand in awe of a nation whose manners and customs, whose religion it is beneficial and desirable for them to adopt. Mankind are ever prone to imitate the manners of their superiors all over the world; and we must prove to these people that we are their superiors before we can ever hope for much good to be done among them, by conquering them if no milder means are effectual. Their haughty arrogant spirit, buoyed up by pride and ignorance, must be brought low ... But I maintain that many missionaries have done much to continue them as a nation of thieves, by holding up all the attempts of the colony and its government to repress their thievish disposition, and recover stolen colonial properties cruel aggression and bloody commandos, whilst they continue fruitlessly to preach Christianity to a nation of thieves. Roman manners and customs were rapidly adopted by conquered Britons in the time of Agricola, but I am not aware that Agricola ever became patron to an Ancient Briton Society! ... [C]olonialisation has been fettered with the wild theories of pseudo-philanthropists, whose cant and folly has been foisted into the very laws of

⁸⁸ Policies.

⁸⁹ Boyce is referring to the cancellation of D’Urban’s settlement of the frontier at the end of Hints’s war.

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the colonies; and turn which way you will, you meet it in some shape, and its offsprings are – slave piracy – kaffir depredations – Hottentot Vagrancy a dead weight thrown on all colonial improvements with their horrid and inevitable consequences.”

This letter, even as it is from a different era, contradicts the pleas reflected in the letters of Ben Marais to the secretaries of the World Council of Churches. The letter of Bowker is steeped in ideology and does not consider the possibility of alternative views or resolving any issues. It is rather simplistic in its analysis of the situation, and rather direct in its assumption of superiority and insight.

Besides Bowker’s vexation with the evangelical philanthropists and peoples of other races – cultures – he harboured a personal concern for the poor English in England and strongly promoted emigration to the wide open lands of Southern Africa. Ross (1986:192) mentions “the development of a full blown racist ideology. In line with Curtin’s *The Image of Africa* and Gosset’s *Race, the History of an Idea in America*, the ideology was initially developed in British intellectual circles, spreading from there to other parts of the world.”

In short, the ideology, which influenced Bowker’s attitude, though only more prevalent in the later part of the 19th century after it had received scientific justification by T.F. Huxley and other social Darwinists (Ross 1986:192), was a growing force in the 1840s:

“It took the form of seeing the key to all history and all culture as lying in a hierarchy of utterly distinct racial groups – distinct intellectually, morally and physically. It was also linked with the idea of more or less inevitable ‘progress’ as a law of nature.”

Afrikaners could be divided between those that accepted the official policies, and those that did not. Those that did not were considered to be rebels. Their orientation was always the policies. The policies on segregation were not the most significant – though traumatic. The policy of wherever the white man is – there is their jurisdiction; their tax and land laws were of greater concern. The language laws were also of far greater significance. Within all this the seeds of a sentiment can be found – a sentiment that blew through the Anglo-Boer War and into Afrikaner nationalism. The orientation to church policies emphasised this concern with political policies, and why, in 1948 it was

necessary to substantiate a political policy on religious grounds for authentication.

Reference needs to be made to the threats mentioned in the correspondence of Ben Marais with the secretaries of the World Council of Churches, those being Communism, Islam, and Secularism. In the 19th century the threats were the London Missionary Society (esp. John Philip) and the English governors and tax collectors: there was merely a transferral of orientation, once the “Engelse gevaar” had been neutralised.

iii. The Weaker Brother

On 6 November 1857, the synod of the NG Kerk of the Cape Colony accepted a proposal by Ds A. Murray (senior) of Graaff Reinet, in response to an intense debate following a motion presented to the synod by Ds R. Shand of Tulbach on behalf of the presbytery of Albany. The resolution emphasised the practical grounds for holding Eucharist separately for the different race groups, and stressed that such a measure was neither desirable nor scriptural (Marais 1952a: 291):⁹⁰

“The synod is of the opinion that it is desirable and scriptural that our members from the heathens be admitted to and be incorporated in our existing congregations, everywhere where it can be done; but where, as a result of the weakness of some, this stipulation would hinder the propagation of the gospel among the heathens, congregations from the heathens that have been or are to be established, shall receive their Christian privileges in a separate building or institution.”

This resolution was often referred to in the 20th century when Apartheid was being promoted, also in relation to Mission Policy (Borchardt 1986:70-85). Holy Communion was the central issue, as it was when the matter was brought before the synod for the first time in 1829, when it met for only the third time. Interestingly, in April 1829 a presbytery of the NG Kerk resolved “... that according to the teachings of the Bible and the spirit of Christianity, one is bound to admit such persons to communion on an equal basis with born Christians.”

⁹⁰ See also *Acta Synodi 1857*. NG Kerk Archives, Cape Town.

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This happened in 1857, a few years after the first colour orientated church had been established in the United States of America. A group of negroes were organised into a separate church as negroes – as a result of slavery (Marais 1952a:288). It is told (Lückhoff 1978:154) that Ben Marais (in *The Star* 11 October 1962) was of the opinion that every speaker of the synod of 1857 deplored the “unfortunate prejudice” against communal worship of different race groups and expressed the hope that communal worship would be reinstated quickly.

iv. Diamonds, Gold and Wealth

In 1867, the discovery of diamonds at Kimberley by a young farm boy who was walking in the veld, resulted in an insurgence of immigrants to Southern Africa. Kimberley became a vibrant economic centre, and the Cape Colony prospered. Before 1867, the specific regions were privately owned farms. The Cape Colony prior to 1870 was little known and rarely discussed at home – England. Only Cape Town and Simon’s Bay were considered to be significant due to their strategic importance on the sea routes to the East. The Royal and Merchant Navies of Britain used the ports at the Southern tip of Africa, thus justifying the retention of the Cape Colony at the end of the Napoleonic wars. Diamonds, gold and the scramble for Africa changed everything.

The mining industry brought great wealth to the Transvaal Republic, and particular mining barons, who also had political interests, prospered, and were able to prospect further north for minerals and land. Attention was diverted slightly from Johannesburg, where gold had been discovered in 1886. A further shift in economic gravity from the Cape Colony to the Transvaal Republic, also contributed to the political struggles during the last decade of the 19th century (Hofmeyr & Pillay 1994:145).

v. The Anglo-Boer War

Ross (1986:11) makes the observation that the Cape Colony, even in 1899, was South Africa from an European point of view.⁹¹ This is an important consideration in the naming of the war that raged in the two independent republics in Southern Africa, north of the Cape Colony. Battles were also fought in the Cape Colony, near Steynsburg and Middelburg – battles in which Ben Marais' father and uncles were involved, as rebels. From an English perspective this war was titled “the South African War”, I believe for purposes of geographical-political manipulation and home propaganda. It would not have been good for the home front in England to know that its sons were engaged in a war, not in South Africa, but in independent republics. The name “Boer War” determines that the Boers were the aggressors or “enemy”, while the same argument, “English War” determines the English as perpetrators. The local population – the Boers (Dutch-Germans-English-French) – called it the “Tweede Vryheidsoorlog” – “Second War of Freedom”. The term “Anglo-Boer War” is the most neutral, and will thus be used in this thesis.

The reference to the war as the Second War of Freedom indicates that an earlier war took place between the English and the Boers. These series of bloody battles, known in Afrikaans as the “Eerste Vryheidsoorlog”,⁹² were fought between the Boer Republics and Britain, who wished to impose a federal scheme over the two republics, and so establish its superiority (paramountcy) in the region. The First War of Freedom was resolved with a Boer Victory at Majuba in 1881.

Since the coastal colonies were threatened by the consolidation of Transvaal mining, and were keen to control these assets, and Britain was still keen to confirm its superiority, it set about weakening the Republic of Transvaal through encirclement. The Republic of Transvaal was now under leadership of Paul Kruger.

⁹¹ Compare also to standard work on the Anglo-Boer War, Pakenham *The Boer War* (1979), who attempts a balanced view through the eyes of the English.

⁹² First War of Freedom.

Cecil John Rhodes, premier of the Cape Colony and notorious tycoon,⁹³ was discredited as premier after plotting a second coupe against the Republic of Transvaal in the Jameson Raid of 1895.⁹⁴ The mantle of British policy fell on Sir Alfred Milner's shoulders. Milner was supported by Joseph Chamberlain, the British colonial secretary, in pressurising the Boer Republics, and in October 1899 Britain declared war. It was in this war, as citizens of the Cape Colony and thus rebels supporting the Boers of the republics, that the uncles and father of Ben Marais were captured (P. Marais Interview 20 September 2002), along with many other men and women from the Steynsburg, Venterstad and Middelburg districts.

The two most important aspects of the Anglo-Boer war are that it swept across the borders into the Cape Colony, into the districts where Ben Marais grew up – his elder siblings (Johanna – 02 November 1898 and Pieter Abraham– 26 April 1900) were infants, and the importance it held for the later development of Afrikaner and African Nationalism – and Indian Nationalism cannot be denied.

After the Anglo-Boer War the population was divided along political party lines – often coinciding with church and language – but not always. The extended Marais family were known to be South African Party supporters (B. Aucamp Interview 17 September 2002), the party was led by the former Boer General Jan Smuts and General Botha. In the Steynsburg district, where the Marais family was farming, these party differences were felt rather acutely in church, school, and broader society.

⁹³ Rhodes had interests in De Beers diamonds, the Chartered Company north of the Limpopo and in Consolidated Goldfields.

⁹⁴ The 1st attempted coupe took place in 1877 when Britain attempted to annex the Republic of Transvaal in its federal scheme.

b. Sunshine, Winds of Illness, Drought and Storms in the 20th Century

The weather greatly influenced the ministry of Ben Marais while he was chaplain of the students in Pretoria. The church was some distance from the residences, and thus the slightest rain affected the church's student service attendance. A downpour within an half hour before a service was fatal. Ben Marais and his wife would keep an eye on the weather, especially before special occasions like farewells (1955[?]).

South Africa did well in Rugby and Cricket before its exclusion from international participation in the early 1970s. Ben Marais was a season ticket holder at Loftus Versveld, the home of the Northern Transvaal Rugby Union, and was president of the Cricket Club at the University of Pretoria. He would have spent many winter Saturdays on the open pavilion watching rugby, thus experiencing cold, warm, windy, and windless weather while enjoying the sport. His daughter, Augusta often accompanied him (A. Marais Interview 17 December 2002). Though, during the 20th century, life in Southern Africa was not always enjoyed by everybody. Also, South African sportsmen and supporters felt the isolation from international participation due to Apartheid.

There have been more than two periods of transformation in South Africa. The different colonies and republics merged; leadership and allegiances changed hands several times; international events left their transformational imprints on the country; there were periods of wealth and development and poverty and decay. The two chosen periods represent the two predominant nationalist activities in 20th century South Africa. These two periods, which often shared the same dates – running concurrently – and the same events, cannot be understood in either isolation from each other nor from the time periods before – expressed in the section above. To facilitate an orientation to these two periods of transformation, use is made of a weather metaphor.

Sometimes, during the same cold weather patterns, certain people were praying in a warm church that God should guide the country's leaders, be with the poor and the homeless, and consider all the missionaries abroad, especially those distributing Bibles

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in Communist Russia. Afterwards they would return to their warm houses in powerful cars. On the other hand, others were praying for food and a jersey. This polarised situation (accentuated) was not always self inflicted or deserved.

Ben Marais was not equally involved in the two transformational periods. He made no attempt to hide the fact, as in *The Two Faces of Africa* where he announces, “I write as an African, be it a white African” (1964b:1). Both periods must be explored, since a one sided analysis, albeit also by a white African, would leave a half-weathered picture of the struggles Ben Marais was involved in.

To summarise the twentieth century in one paragraph as orientation to the two periods of transformation, focus needs to be placed on the post Anglo-Boer War years when the rebuilding of farms took place, when dignity was being restored and focus was placed on the education of Afrikaner youth. The Christian National School of Steynsburg serves as one example. After the colonies and republics merged to become a union in 1910, and during the Great War, a black influenza⁹⁵ swept across the country, taking also the life of Ben Marais’ elder brother – Pieter Abraham. To the people of the Eastern Cape, the Great War was a fiasco, because their sons were sent to German South West Africa, and Manie Maritz was there. A depression in the 1930s accentuated the poor white question and migration to the cities did not alleviate social problems. Many thought the wrong country was being supported during World War II, and the rising Afrikaner class was becoming dominant in commerce, industry, education and politics, as experienced in the predominantly Afrikaner National Party victory of 1948. The various riots – Sharpsville, Langa and Soweto were suppressed, and in the 1980s and 1990s the Afrikaners had to reconsider their positions in the country. Alternatively, it needs to be asked how black and coloured nationals experienced the post Anglo War years, being excluded from participating in the Union of South Africa, being considered cheap labour on the farms, being forced to carry passes and live separate from families, to receive education in Afrikaans and to be controlled by the rule of the Army, to finally being recognised as citizens and being granted the opportunity to excel in education, commerce, industry and sport.

⁹⁵ Swart Griep.

i. Political Climates

Several representative themes are used to illustrate the political climate of the 20th century, as background to the two-faceted world of twentieth century South Africa.

David Bosch (1981:24-37), an old student of Ben Marais, highlights some of these themes in his discussion on the relations between church and politics in South Africa, with a strong evangelical-theological orientation. Bosch (1981:25) determines that the intention for Christians should not be to withdraw from society. Rather, he wishes to encourage Christians to be involved in societal affairs, but differently from non-believers. The themes highlighted by Bosch have a scriptural orientation, indicating the close affinity between church-state-societal relations and scriptural justification. The themes are only mentioned in this study, to serve as orientation to emphasise the piety within the church in its attitude towards the state, and the abuse of this piety by statesmen and churchmen for political gain. The themes are: The State as an ordination of God (Bosch 1981:26; Romans 13), compelling obedience; Love for the neighbour (Bosch 1981:28; Romans 13:9) implying an involvement in the wellbeing of others, thus political involvement; Freedom of the church (Bosch 1981: 31) implying that the church should not associate and identify with only one group, but must be relevant; and, Everything united under Christ (Bosch 1981:35; Ephesians 1:10), thus a call to allow Christ to be Lord over all aspects of life.

Midst these general themes, different tendencies, threats and blessings are discernible in South African politics, which to varying degrees, were influenced by, affected or were in cohesion with the church.

Changing Allegiances

During the 20th century, leadership of South Africa changed hands quite significantly. In the search for common threads or themes, it is interesting to note that there has been an emphasis on allegiances and disassociation common to all transference of power. While this could be said to be healthy democratic practice, in South Africa it has not always been healthy, where it has been controlled and manipulated either by policy and law, or by socio-economic-cultural-national group. It is interesting that some of the alliances

formed, and/or suggested often crossed over the borders of race,⁹⁶ religion,⁹⁷ culture⁹⁸ and socio-economic standing.⁹⁹ Leadership swayed from Afrikaner leadership in the Boer republics to join English imperialism in the English colonies during the first decade of the 20th century, back to Afrikaner domination in 1948, and to a relatively bloodless transition signifying a multi-racial leadership in 1994.

Apart from the interesting alliances, another, and for the purposes of this study, more significant trend has been the identification of threats. In the NG Kerk these threats have normally been embodied in the Roman Catholic Church and Islam, and in the political sphere in Communism.

Communism

Ben Marais wrote to Dr Potter (1978[?]):

“I have a feeling that in your legitimate attempt at solidarity with the oppressed and the poor, you run great danger of ending up in an uncritical identification with contemporary movements over which you have little control as to the methods used and the ultimate aims.”

The “contemporary movements” Ben Marais is referring to implicates Communism. This is quite evident from the remainder of the letter. The concern about Communism (Rooi Gevaar) was deeply entrenched in the mindset of Ben Marais, though, it is evident that he saw their threat differently to that of many of his colleagues. In Lückhoff (1978:68) reflection is given on a letter Ben Marais wrote to Visser’t Hooft in 1960, in which he expressed his personal views on Apartheid. In the letter (Lückhoff 1978:68), Ben Marais mentions a meeting of the mission committee of a congregation that was scheduled to take place between ministers of different race groups and evangelists in the

⁹⁶ At the battle of Slagter’s Nek, the boer rebels approached the Xhosa chieftains for support against the English colonial powers.

⁹⁷ During the “Dutch administration” Roman Catholics were not allowed to celebrate mass on land. Many of them were French. However, the Calvinistic Dutch administrators welcomed predominantly Roman Catholic French naval support against the Calvinist English in 1781, while a few years earlier, in 1758, the arrival of 14 ships from France concerned the people because of the fear of an attack and the subsequent spread of Catholicism (Hofmeyr & Pillay 1994:10).

⁹⁸ After the Anglo-Boer War, the Boer generals, Smuts and Botha, joined forces with the predominantly English orientated South African Party.

⁹⁹ A reference can be made to the alliance between the English social orientated Labour Party and the Afrikaner farmer associated National Party of Hertzog in 1924.

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church hall. After the church council refused permission, the local minister invited the mission committee to hold the meeting in the study of his manse, “But within fifteen minutes after the adjournment of the meeting, one of the white ministers who was present, phoned him [Ben Marais] to voice his strong condemnation of his ‘communistic’ ways to have kaffirs (sic) with Whites in his study.”

On the one hand it could be argued, without much justification, that Communism was an easily identifiable “enemy” of Western civilisation and Christianity (the Cold War), which could be used to unify and strengthen own political and economic agendas by different political interest groups (see Kotzé 1961:152-164). Within this argument, fears were accentuated which were promoted by certain bodies, for example the church. On the other hand, Communism represented a different view to economic structuring of governments and countries that had far reaching cultural and social implications. The NG Kerk, which was aptly associated with Afrikaner culture (western), thus would have had much to be concerned about. Furthermore, much of Communism was unknown or alternately certain aspects were accentuated to represent the whole, and thus the distorted vision of the “Red Monster” represented a genuine concern as an enemy of the Afrikaner (Mouton 2002:78). Alternately, there were considerations of Communism that were worrying.

It is important to remember that while Karl Marx’s criticism against the church was valid, for focussing disproportionately on the salvation of the soul and little care for humanity in its immediate plight (God’s kingdom in the world), there was a strong semblance between the institutionalised church, the political powers and the economic systems, the communists – socialists – attempts to deal with the problems of structural injustice in the political regimes, had to also target and break down the broader church in order to achieve its aims. Notwithstanding, there were Christian socialist organisations in Europe,¹⁰⁰ and other Christian groups which were not as institutionalised and had particular concern for the poor in their economic bondage, such as the groups of the Pietistic Awakening, the Evangelical Revival, and the

¹⁰⁰ The Christian Social Congress in Germany under A. Stoker; the Christian National Workers’ Union associated with A. Kuyper, and others.

Abolitionists, the Salvation Army (Pillay & Hofmeyr 1991:218). Thus, when defending institutionalised Christianity, conceivable as a western orientated religion (Marais 1952a; 1964b), it is understandable that Communism was seen as a threat.

Kinghorn (1986:106) is very apt at drawing a correlation between the fear of communism and the search for a justification of Apartheid, which could be seen as a particular manner of constituting the church and society within a religiously sanctioned economic system. Where justification on grounds of Scripture were hampered by the protests of Ben Marais at the 1948 synod of the Ned. Herv. or Geref. Kerk, justification of a political nature was pursued: concerning the unacceptable alternative to separateness – unity and the associated communism. The concern the churchmen fell in line with was the advance of the interest in communism in South Africa during the post Second World War years, and the international differentiation between East and West: Communism and Christianity (Capitalism); the Cold War between Russia and the United States of America. The argument, according to Kinghorn (1986:106) was thus: “Communists are atheists. If communists were proponents of ‘equality’, then Christians must ward against them because thereby they would be fighting atheism. There is a negative mission motive thus incorporated. Adversity to communism as an unacceptable alternative would then be a strong argument in support of Apartheid, which ‘protected Christianity’ and Western civilisation. Thus any person who opposed Apartheid, was easily considered to be a communist. In this vein, Beyers Naudé (1995:77-78) tells of the accusations against himself and Albert Geysers of being communists and the Christian Institute of being a front organization of Communism.

It is interesting, and pertinent to the argument on the justification of Apartheid, how the need for Scriptural justification and the adversity to communism were interwoven in clever rhetoric. Kinghorn (1986:107) draws attention to J.D. Vorster, an expert on anti-communism (Louw 1994:306), who in 1947 argued in *Die Gereformeerde Vaandel*:

“But it is especially the fact that Communism has increasingly become the philosophy of life and religion of the coloured nations that makes a peaceful resolution to this problem impossible ... The creator alone can provide us with the purpose of separate races and the correct relation between them ... The provisions of Scripture can be summarised in Acts 17:26: ‘And he made from one blood every nation of humanity to live on all the face of the

earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their habitation?.

Boundaries and the existence of separate groups is not inherently materialistic or evil. God has it so willed. It is not the result of random acts or sinful self promotion of certain groups over other groups, as the communists view it. No, God has found the existence of separate groups necessary for the realisation of his divine plan....¹⁰¹

The unacceptability of communism is then related to an exposition of Genesis 11, on the differentiation ordained at Babel. Genesis 11 was one of the main texts propounded by the proponents of Apartheid theologians.

Conversely and mentioned only for interest, considering the concerns of communism, apart from its aversion to religion – all forms – for justified historic reasons, pertaining to the welfare of society (compare to Kotzé 1961:153), there is, ironically, a concern for the poor. This sentiment is also alluded to in Ben Marais' letter above, though under different circumstances and with different interests at heart. Thus, the key to the problem of Ben Marais' concern over the actions of the World Council of Churches associating with the concerns of the poor and oppressed, could be seen as a point of criticism against the church. If the church were to fulfil its ministry to alleviating the pains of poverty and oppression instead of promoting it (considered retrospectively), then communism as an alternative to the free market system would not have been a threat.

Isolation

An interesting, though coincidental parallel is drawn in this study between the isolation of the Afrikaner orientated South African churches from international ecumenical bodies during the 1960s to 1990s,¹⁰² the suspension from sport bodies (esp. cricket, athletics & rugby), the political isolation and the ever increasing economic and cultural sanctions, the isolation Ben Marais experienced at the hands of his colleagues and contemporaries during the 1960s, and the National Party's policy of separate development. As with race relations, relations with international interest groups were

¹⁰¹ My translation.

¹⁰² See esp. Du Toit et al (2002) who provide a post isolation evaluation and survey of the NG Kerk's isolation and departure from isolation.

based on a justification from Scripture, based on principles (*Handelinge van die Sinode 1951:179*). The policy on separate development was influenced by the Separate Suburb Organization, of which J.D. Vorster was a member (Louw 1994:340).

It is possible to relate support for the Mission Policy and criticism against it, the sentiment encouraging isolation and support for a segregated society, and Ben Marais in one breath, as is done by J.C. Botha in his letter to the editor (*Die Kerkbode* 15 May 1940). This letter, is in principle a reaction against Ben Marais' criticism against the Mission Policy of the NG Kerk, that it cannot be justified on Scripture (*Die Kerkbode* 10 May 1940).¹⁰³ The second half of the letter is significant in understanding the Afrikaner's self isolation, justified on religious grounds, as well as on nationalistic grounds (*Die Kerkbode* 15 May 1940):¹⁰⁴

“... if we walk a lonely path in our policy, and are out of sympathy with world Christianity in this regard, it does not necessarily imply that they are correct and considering the state of ‘world Christianity’ today, it is an honour for author to be out of sympathy with it, not to be a slave supporter of a Christianity – by name especially Western – that is nothing more than a Christianity in name only. No, in South Africa as Calvinists we still believe in the God instituted race differences, and we keep this in mind in our relations with Bantu and coloured races, not to suppress them, but to act in their interest as Christian guardians. We believe we have been placed in this part of the world for this purpose, and this purpose we must obey and live, otherwise things will go wrong.”

While Ben Marais withdrew from his contacts with the ecumenical bodies, and could not see his way open to touring Africa, if his church was not accepted (Viljoen Interview 1986), thus a self imposed exile from international contact, the country and church also went into a laager.

The breaking of contacts kept South Africa cold from the developments in the rest of Africa, and restricted the country playing any significant role. Though, in certain fields, the country became an international forerunner, for example, in the military industry.

It is most pertinent to note that the isolation of Ben Marais did not restrict him from

¹⁰³ See also Ben Marais' letter in *Die Kerkbode*, 15 May 1940, on the Mission Policy.

¹⁰⁴ My translation.

making a positive contribution and to extending, where he felt necessary, as in the case of the letters to the Secretaries of the World Council of Churches (to Blake and Potter), while the sanctions and enforced isolation contributed to the government of South Africa reviewing its policies.

Much of the isolation of the NG Kerk was the result of its own doing (Hofmeyr & Pillay 1994:225-230), in which the reactions against the internationally generally accepted theological insights of J. du Plessis, indicate the rejection of the views of others and the promotion of the views and insights of the self. In this process of consolidation of Theology and theological reflection, the conservative theologians of the NG Kerk, e.g. E. E. van Rooyen, J.D. Vorster, F.J.M. Potgieter and H.G. Stoker, prompted the views of the self at the expense of critical insights from other traditions. This theological envelopment contributed towards an ecclesiastic enshement and eventual isolation from other Christian traditions,¹⁰⁵ in the century of ecumenical awareness (Pillay & Hofmeyr 1994).

Focus on Policies

A further consideration of common trends within the 20th century has been the focus on policies. It has been indicated that this has been a phenomenon that was present during the previous century, and stems to the days of the Dutch administration at the Cape.

A central consideration of the focus on policies is their function in providing an external structure and guidelines within which can be acted and thought. Those who disagree are ousted from society, or move – geographically (Great Trek), spiritually (Pentecostal Movement), or politically (inter-party or exile). The phenomenon of policies is western, and underlying disposition towards Western-European attitudes towards policies has been influenced most strongly by the concept of *Corpus Christianum*.

¹⁰⁵ See esp. *Handelinge van die Algemene Sinode 1970* (181-183) on the isolation of the NG Kerk from the NG Kerk family.

Kinghorn (1986:49) explains the concept of *Corpus Christianum* as a unity culture consisting out of two facets. Thus, in theory the two facets, church and state, are equal and are the two fronts of the one principle, Christian religion. Church and state that were seen as complimentary to each other, as in spirit and body, eternity and temporary, Word and Sword, incorporated also the relation between the individual and society. This interpretation resulted in Christianity being considered on a equal keel to social structure. Kinghorn (1986:49) indicates this Christianity orientated society as European. Thus, Europeans were Christians, and European standards were Christian. Thus European culture became Christian culture, and the Christian way of doing things was European.

Therefore, when an action or a political or administrative action or point of view was enshrouded in religious – Christian language – it was more readily accepted. The general population was also dependent on such policies to organise their lives. Thus, in organisational terms, policies made a positive structural contribution to society.

Three points of conflict can be mentioned: 1. When the same policies are superimposed over a different society with a different religious system; 2. When the validity of the policies are disputed due to their distortion of Christian doctrine; and 3. When society rejects the religious – Christian – orientation. Ben Marais was especially involved in the second point of conflict, while the National Party were engaged in the first type, and the third point has led the church, currently to reconsider its position, status and function within society.

Besides these points of conflict, the concept of *Corpus Christianum* would give rise to a self appreciation comparable to a sense of superiority, resulting – as Kinghorn (1986:49) points out – in guardianship of one society over another. He (Kinghorn 1986:51) quotes the American A.J. Beveridge, who in 1898 announced:

“[God] has made us ... the master organizers of the world to establish system where chaos reigns. He has given us the spirit of progress to overwhelm the forces of reaction throughout the earth ... He has marked the American people as his chosen Nation finally to lead in the regeneration of the world. This is the divine mission of America, and it holds for all of us profit, glory, happiness possible to man. We are trustees of the world's

progress, guardians of its righteous peace.”

A South African example of such authoritarian or paternalistic attitudes towards civilisation and guardianship can be seen in the Mission Policy of the NG Kerk of the 1930s and the subsequent distortions into the policies of Apartheid.

ii. Social and Cultural Climates

South African society was divided, each social group developed an own identity and cultural heritage, which was used to foster further feelings of separateness and uniqueness. Also, there was much manipulation of cultural affairs within the Afrikaner community. The Afrikaner community was not uniform, rather it was divided, as the differing allegiances after the Anglo-Boer War illustrated, and there were attempts to control organised cultural organisations and thus academia also (Mouton 2002). The most significant organization was the Federation of Afrikaner Culture Societies (FAK)¹⁰⁶ and the South African Academy for Art and Science, which invited Ben Marais to join, but which he turned down because he did not agree with its policies.

Within the Afrikaner community numerous artists broke through the cultural barrier, such as Andre P. Brink, who published in both Afrikaans and English, and in one Romantic Novel (*Dry White Season*) based on the life of a “fictional” character who dared to participate in the activities of the banned organisations in South Africa set in the 1970s, “Ben Du Toit”, the fictional character, who was a 53 year old school teacher who became involved in underground politics, was terrorised, like Ben Marais and Beyers Naudé, and was murdered. The fictional narrator, a journalist, was sent documentation that told the story. It is interesting that Brink was able to depict reality through a romantic novel. Also interesting is the orientation to subjected victimisation from a white perspective, when compared to the victimisation of artists and representatives from other race orientation, which Brink incorporated excellently through the quotation of Mongane Wally Serote’s poem “A dry White Season” (Brink 1979: front page):¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniginge.

¹⁰⁷ See also Serote’s *To Every Birth Its Blood* (1981), a biographical novel depicting the conditions in Alexandria, the resentment and the reaction against Apartheid..

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“it is a dry white season
 dark leaves don’t last their brief lives dry out
 and with a broken heart they dive down gently headed
 for the earth
 not even bleeding
 it is a dry white season brother
 only the trees know the pain as they stand erect
 dry like steel, their branches dry like wire,
 indeed, it is a dry white season
 but seasons come to pass.”

The allegoric poem depicts the anguish of coloured people and an understanding of history, seasonal, in which the oppression under the contemporaneous regime would pass. The poem depicts the history of South Africa and the changing flow of life, and of the anguish of the leaves, the life giving leaves of the pained tree. The tree is awaiting the nourishing rains of liberation (the poem though gives no sense of hope), as many South Africans awaited the lifting of political, social, and cultural bondage.

iii. Ecclesiastic Climates

While the 19th century is known as the Century of Mission (Rossouw 1988:31), the 20th century is known as the Century of Ecumenical Movements, with a strong strive for co-operation and unity between the churches (Praamsma 1981:14). Ben Marais was an ecumenical figure in the international arena and to a lesser extent in South Africa.¹⁰⁸ In the age of ecumenical relations during the 20th century, the NG Kerk first participated actively, then withdrew, then was isolated, to be re-invited to participate in various movements and capacities at the turn of the 21st century.

The primary reason for the changing affiliation to ecumenical movements was the adherence of the NG Kerk to Apartheid policies.¹⁰⁹ The relations between the churches in South Africa were also strained at times, and flourishing at others. A further consideration needs to be made on the plurality of religions, where Ben Marais

¹⁰⁸ See Ben Marais’ short publication on ecumenism (1958) for his views on ecumenical relations. Ben Marais saw the contemporaneous relations against the broader background of the Reformation, the Early Church and the New Testament.

¹⁰⁹ See Saayman (1979:107-111) for an overview of the different pronouncements of the different synods of the Dutch Reformed Churches on the justification of Apartheid. The pronouncements have strong historical bearings.

personally, and the NG Kerk generally saw Islam as a threat; this was especially concerning Mission.

Consideration must also be given to the emergence of a “Liberal” Theology during the 19th century, which had far reaching influences in causing a polarisation of theological contemplation in South Africa, which culminated and clashed in the Du Plessis Case in the late 1920s and early 1930s, and which contributed to the theological isolation of South African theologians.

During the 19th century, the era of mission, theologians turned their attention to developing a theological methodology that would be acceptable in the scientific orientated academia. Besides Albrecht Ritschl (1822-1889), who contemplated an ethical monotheism (Pillay & Hofmeyr 1991:213), and Frederich Schleiermacher (1763-1834), who “offered to the scientific and cultural despiser of religion” an alternative point of view (Pillay & Hofmeyr 1991:213), attention can be paid to Adolf von Harnack (1851-1930). In his writings, Von Harnack clarified the main ideas of liberalism and the growing historical consciousness of the 19th century. According to Pillay and Hofmeyr (1991:213), Von Harnack maintained that the simplicity of the Christian message of New Testament times had been unnecessarily confounded when it passed through Hellenic culture and came under the influence of Greek philosophy. It needed to rediscover its simplicity, which he formulated as essentials: “God is our Father; through Jesus he calls us to union with himself in love” (Pillay & Hofmeyr 1991:213). Thus, with the main tenants of love of God and love of the neighbour, liberal Theology in the 19th century started emphasising humanitarianism, which also affected mission practice, and the strive for ecclesiastic unity and co-operation in the 20th century.

The World Council of Churches

During the 19th century mission and Bible societies were established in numerous countries. While certain mission societies were not associated with any specific denomination, others had stronger confessional bearings. The missionary movements benefited from world travel, trade, and the establishment of European colonies, which provided a sense of authority, infrastructure and protection.

Rossouw (1988:31) contrasts the styles and characteristics of the mission activities of the open mission societies, which allowed for greater indigenisation, and the denominational mission operations, which carried in their polarised confessional divisions where-ever they went, and suggests that this caused interested parties to realise how important inter-confessional and international co-operation in the mission field is. Rossouw (1988:31) claims that the origin of the ecumenical movement is to be found in inter-confessional and trans-national ecclesiastic co-operation.

The first ecumenical meetings to be held before the 1st World War were mission conferences, and these were attended principally by delegates from the western world. Rossouw (1988:31) notes the disillusionment that set in after the war, the awakening of anticolonialisation and own forms of nationalism in the developing countries, as well as the fact that mission was concerned with the totality of the person: physical, education, social needs – though the horizontal implications (as done by John Philip) were only emphasised later (see letter from E.C. Blake, 24 September 1970).

Key words in the vocabulary of the World Council of Churches are: Scripture; confessional polarisation; developed and developing countries; total person; paternalism; inter-confessional global co-operation; anticolonialism; rising forms of nationalism; war; peace; awareness; advantages and disadvantaged (Rossouw 1988:31).

A conference was held in 1925 in Stockholm, bringing together the different smaller mission bodies. The conference wished to discuss practical Christianity, and was titled “Life and Work”. In 1937, Oxford, the rising national socialism brought the relations between church and state to the debating tables. A strong statement was formulated against any form of racism, and on obedience of Christian to the authorities, and the determinants from Scripture for this. Thus, the churches wished to co-operate on pressing ethical issues. Two further conferences took place, in Lausanne (1927) and Edinburgh (1937) to resolve the causes of ecclesiastic divisions, titled “Faith and Order”.

Rossouw (1988:32) indicates that the two schools, “Life and Work” and “Faith and Order” flowed together into the World Council of Churches. The constitution of the World Council of Churches had to wait until after the 2nd World War. This was done during the conference held at Amsterdam, on 23 August 1948, which Ben Marais did not attend (Meiring 1979:87). In all, 351 delegates representing 147 churches from 44 countries met.

The two Dutch Reformed Churches, the NG Kerk of South Africa (Cape Province), and the Ned. Geref. of Herv. Kerk of Transvaal, resigned from the World Council of Churches shortly after the Cottesloe Consultation due to affinities with the South African government and its Apartheid government. Interestingly, these two churches moved closer together in 1962, when they unified to become one church, thus superseding ecumenical relations!¹¹⁰

Where the meeting held in New Delhi (1961) still placed its faith in the possibilities of conciliation in South Africa, and assured Christians in South Africa that “those churches which to our regret have felt bound to leave our fellowship have not been forgotten in our prayers” (Nash 1975:249), and while considering the polarised situation in South Africa (white affluent nations versus black poor nations) similar to a war situation, and still placing the emphasis on encouragement patience and fellowship, the World Council of Churches had already indicated signs of moving from the politics of consultation to the politics of confrontation (Nash 1975:249). Ben Marais experienced the shift in emphasis in the concerns of the World Council of Churches negatively, the turning point being New Delhi, and the reason being the incorporation of theologians from the third world (Meiring 1979:86-87)!

The consultation of the World Council of Churches had developed through the 1960s, and, in the words of Visser’t Hooft, “a new generation who represented precisely a new era which had on the basis of its own experiences worked out a new style of life” (Nash 1975:331). The conferences in Geneva (1966) and Zagursk (1968) crystallised the

¹¹⁰ See Grobler (1983) for a detailed study of the “Raad van die NG Kerke” (Council of NG Kerke) esp. Chapter 4 (pp. 231-338) on the council’s position on ecumenical and race relations.

“ethico-theological” problems and perspectives, and thus enabled the “churches-in-council” at Uppsala (1968) to set a course “which could be described as seeking the welfare of the world-city” (Nash 1975:331). In August 1969 Blake challenged this “navigational course correction”, pointing out both positive and negative aspects of the polarisation in the new direction, the negative being the hardening and exaggeration of attitudes and differences, and positive in “generating increased dynamism, power and productivity” (Nash 1975:332). Thus, the member churches of the World Council of Churches had committed themselves increasingly to involvement in the socio-economic and political issues of human development, based on their understanding of Scripture (Nash 1975:332).

This theological context served as background to the World Council of Churches’ “Programme to Combat Racism” (Hoekstra 1979:237-242). Recommendations had already been submitted at Uppsala and gained momentum in the years after the conference into the 1970s. The concern over racism was also seen to be more focussed on white racism due to class and economic power associations (Nash 1975:333) and was directed towards providing a platform for justice, “lest the racial conflict should generate and spread counter racism” (Nash 1975:333), which would surely have resulted in war.

It was particularly against this programme to combat racism that Ben Marais reacted in his letter to Blake (3 September 1970), since financial support was being granted to movements that opposed white racism in South Africa.¹¹¹ Thus, through this exchange of correspondence, it is possible to relate the specific circumstances in South Africa, the polarisation between the rich and poor, the different races and theological reflection.

¹¹¹ The following criteria was formulated regarding the fund (Kinnamon 1997:220-221): “1. The proceeds of the fund shall be used to support organizations that combat racism rather than welfare organizations that alleviate the effects of racism, which would normally be eligible for support of the World Council of Churches. 2.a. The focus of the grants should be on raising the level of awareness and on strengthening the organisational capability of the racially oppressed people. b. In addition we recognise the need to support organizations that align themselves with the victims of racial injustice and pursue the same objectives. While these grants are made without control of the manner in which they are spent, they are at the same time a commitment of the Programme to Combat Racism to the causes of the organizations themselves are fighting for.”

The NG Kerk

Due to an attorney from Malmesbury, adv. H.H. Loedolff, who was a respected elder in the local NG Kerk congregation in 1862 the borders of the Colony also determined the borders of the NG Kerk. Thus, the NG Kerk in the Republic of Transvaal and Free State had to organise themselves into constitutionally different synods, though certain congregations in Transvaal still desired to maintain relations with the NG Kerk in the Cape Colony (Van der Watt 1973:104). Relations were restored in 1962 when the churches reunited.

It is important to note that Van der Watt (1973) discusses the constitutional history of the Dutch Reformed Churches in South Africa in relation to the Church State relations of the NG Kerk during the 19th century and “The Separation of Church and State Petition”, known as Ordinance No 7 of 1843 (Van der Watt 1973:37, 1977:104-112). Thus the State – English – no longer had influence over the NG Kerk, and the road was paved for the constitutional forming of separate synods in Transvaal and the Orange Free State. Its status as official church had thus terminated, although there were particular legal implications on the differences between church discipline and the law of the colony, where disciplinary action by congregations were subjective to court decisions (Van der Watt 1973:46).

Advocate Loedolff expressed his concern at the synods of 1857 and 1862 on the representation of “pioneer congregations” outside the boundaries of the Cape Synod. His concerns were for the unconstitutional and illegal inclusion of the congregations beyond the Colony borders into the structures of the synod of the NG Kerk in the Cape Colony.

After South Africa became a Union in 1910, the former ecclesiastic borders were maintained, but the churches were known as the Federale NG Kerk. After South Africa became a republic in 1961, the former ecclesiastic borders were relegated to indicate the borders of the synods as the churches had unified to form the NG Kerk of South Africa.

Training of ministers took place at only Stellenbosch until a seminary was opened in

Pretoria in 1938 and in Bloemfontein in 1978. The history of the seminary at Stellenbosch, opened on 1 November 1859, is of significance to understanding the relations between the Dutch Reformed Churches in the different Colonies and Republics, and the relations with the churches in Europe. In the mid 19th century there was a period when there was an acute shortage of ministers. For example, the only minister in the Transvaal was Ds Van der Hoff (Moorrees 1937:864). Furthermore, there were concerns about the increasing rationalism prevalent at the most European universities. The majority of the church members and ministers in Southern Africa were pietistically orientated, and only a few saw the advantage of such exposure (Moorrees 1937:873).¹¹²

For specific reasons of this research, particular attention is paid to the Nederduitse Hervormde or Gereformeerde Kerk. This is because this was the church affiliation under which Ben Marais served as a student chaplain, minister of a congregation and was called to serve as professor of Theology.

The Ned. Herv. or Geref. Kerk¹¹³

In the 1948 revised constitution of the church (*Wette en Bepalinge* 1948) it is determined that the Ned. Herv. or Geref. Kerk is founded on the Bible as the holy and infallible Word of God (Article 1). The confessional documents of the church are stipulated as the Heidelberg Catechism, the Thirty Seven Articles of the Belgian Confession and the Five Canons of Dordt.¹¹⁴ This was in accordance to the Forms of Unity stipulated at the Synod of Dordt, 1618-1619. Thus, it is clearly indicated that the Ned. Herv. or Geref. Kerk was a confessional church with a strong scriptural orientation. However, concerning membership, Article 3 of the Constitution (*Wette en Bepalinge* 1948) determines:

“To each of the specific congregations belongs only white people:”¹¹⁵

¹¹² Interestingly, the discussions on the Seminary of Stellenbosch took place during the same synod that the separate Holy Communion was agreed upon.

¹¹³ The name of the church was changed to Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk van Transvaal in 1957 (*Handelinge van die Sinode 1957:47*).

¹¹⁴ Heidelbergse Kategismus, Sewe en Dertig Artikels van die Nederlandse Geloofsbelydenis, die Vyf Dordtse Leerreëls.

¹¹⁵ Aan elkeen van die besondere Gemeentes behoort alleen blanke persone:

It is thus stipulated that only white people may belong to the Ned. Herv. or Geref. Kerk. The stipulations that follow, on being a member based on confession of faith, baptism, through birth, associated church bodies. This biased stipulation in the church's constitution is emphasised in Article 9 (*Wette en Bepalinge* 1948), which stipulates that the church does not allow any equality between whites and non-whites.¹¹⁶

Of as equal significance to the stipulations on membership based on colour, is the organization of the church into congregations with clearly defined boundaries (Articles 6, 108, 109, 110, 126). Each congregation is autonomous and self-governing, and relate to each other in geographically determined circuits/presbyteries (ringsverband) and in the synod (Articles 10-15). The significance lies in the apparent parallel governing principles applied to the country by the government, in which clearly defined borders are drawn up, and each region is considered to be autonomous.

The orientation to boundaries of congregations and synods in the thinking of the reformed churches in Southern Africa is significant, not only because of geographic boundaries, as for example between the NG Kerk van Zuid Afrika (Cape Colony) and the Ned Herv. or Geref. Kerk van SA, but also of ecclesiastic differences – concerning name – Ned. Herv. Kerk and doctrine – Gerefomeerde Kerk, which contributed, in an existential-philosophic sense to an understanding of isolation and Apartheid – which could be seen to be inter-determinant. The significance, furthermore, lies in the ecclesiastic independence of churches – the separateness between them, even though they shared a confessional orientation. It would thus not have been strange in the thought of the churches for them to withdraw from ecumenical relations and inflict isolation on themselves. This ecclesiastic thinking of separateness (ecclesiastic Apartheid) as an aspect of reflection on society – would have accommodated considering social Apartheid (across lines of race) a lucrative possibility. Thus, the policy of Apartheid was not strange to the historic and reflective ecclesiastic thinking within the Afrikaner churches.

¹¹⁶ “Die Kerk laat geen gelykstelling tussen blankes en nie-blankes toe nie.” See also Articles 282 & 287.

The English Speaking Churches¹¹⁷

Beyers Naudé mentions in his autobiography (1995:49) on Joost de Blank that everybody at the Cottesloe Consultations had problems with him, even the representatives of the World Council of Churches. Joost de Blank apologised at the Consultation for his prejudices against the Afrikaner brethren at the Consultation, stating that his prejudices were based in part on misconceptions (Naudé 1995:50). Archbishop Joost de Blank had complained to the World Council of Churches, placing before them an ultimatum, that either the Afrikaans churches with their adherence to Apartheid could be members of the World Council of Churches, or the Presbyterian Church, but not both.¹¹⁸ Some of the clergy of his church had participated in the protests against the pass books at Sharpville and Langa, events that evoked the reactions that led to the holding of the Cottesloe Consultations under the auspices of the World Council of Churches. Thus, the attitude between the NG Kerk and the English speaking churches was pessimistic and filled with contempt. This contempt could be drawn along nationalistic lines, as experienced in Graaff Reinett with the Anglo-orientated NG Kerk members (Naudé 1995:20). Further contempt can be seen in Article 256 of the constitution of the Ned. Herv. or Geref. Kerk which determines (*Wette en Bepalinge* 1948): “Parents who send their children to Roman Schools are censurable.”¹¹⁹ Censorship was a serious indictment, indicating how serious an offence this was, as well as the very negative attitude towards the Roman Catholic Church.

In file 5 of the Cottesloe Consultation, 13 April 1960, compiled by Leslie Hewson, the Methodist Church requested the NG Kerk to declare that B.B. Keet, B.J. Marais, P.V. Pistorius and H.A. Fagan, “marked out the true road of South Africa which would lead the all South Africans of every race group to a broad foundation of national unity”.¹²⁰ (Brown 1992b:490). Thus there were exceptions, Ben Marais being one.

Petersen (2001:120) substantiates the popular perception and “received theological

¹¹⁷ Referring to the Presbyterian, Anglican, Methodist and Congregational churches.

¹¹⁸ My wording.

¹¹⁹ Ouers wat hul kinders vir opleiding na Roomse skole stuur, is sensuurbaar.

¹²⁰ “die ware pad van Suid Afrika uitgemerk het wat die gehele Suid Afrikaanse volk van elke rasse groep na ‘n breë fondament van nasionale eenheid sal lei.”

wisdom” that regards the topic of Apartheid and the English speaking churches an oxymoron. He points at the “noble history” of opposition to the theories and practices of Apartheid. Thus, he considers the actions of the missionary of the London Missionary Society, Johannes van der Kemp, who refused to preach in the church in Graaff-Reinet because it excluded Khoi Khoi worshipers (Petersen 2001:120).

Petersen (2001:121) also considers the involvement of the English speaking churches in the history of the political history of the 20th century by comparing the “liberal historiography” of the English speakers, who wished to emphasise 1948 as a turning point in the history of the country, and the historiography of Jim Cochrane, as contained in his doctoral thesis: *Servants of Power: The Role of the English-speaking Churches 1903-1930* (1987). This thesis was a sustained critique of the “heroic” model of the English speaking churches, in which Cochrane (1987) relates these churches to the development of Apartheid. It must also be remembered that the Anglicans generally supported Chamberlain’s aggressive policy towards the Boers (Hofmeyr & Pillay 1994:152). Only a few voices from the English speaking churches raised their voices against the methods used during the Anglo-Boer War.

This study by Cochrane (1987) forced a re-evaluation of the English speaking churches, beginning with a systematic investigation of the role of the missions and the missionaries in colonialism and the shaping of the racial and economic landscapes of the country. Many of these missionaries had become icons in liberal historiography. As early exponents of dissent against “Boer racism”, the missionaries of the London Missionary Society, especially van der Kemp, John Philip, James Read and Robert Moffat, were seen as examples of a continuous liberal and anti-racist agitation on the part of the English speaking churches. This perception was further enhanced by the way in which these figures became cast as symbolic of “die Engelse gevaar” in the mythology of Afrikaner Christian-nationalism (Petersen 2001:121). Every South African school child grew up being taught that van der Kemp, Philip and Read were the embodiment of villainy and evil and that their “meddling” in frontier racial politics was one of the chief factors leading to the Great Trek (Petersen 2001:122).

Petersen (2001:123) indicates that Villa-Vicencio (1988) considers the actual sentiments within the English speaking churches during the Apartheid heydays, indicating that the concentration on and celebration of the few who actively resisted the government policies, and around whom a heroic narrative could be constructed, presents a generally false picture of the actual state of affairs. Petersen (2001:123) emphasises the fact that such a heroic narrative generally fails to note the opposition such activists had even within their own denominations – “how they had to struggle against their own structures and congregates, and how, very often, they were forced to compromise their positions. Concentrating on these (often) lone voices fails to take account of how much of a minority position they actually occupied, and just how few of them there actually were!” (Petersen 2001:123). This is quite typical of Ben Marais, though the history reporting on him tends to emphasise the opposition he experienced!

Further criticism that is levelled against the English speaking churches (Villa-Vicencio) includes the fact that they could have engaged in sustained protest against Apartheid, which also included action and not only protest. Petersen (2001:124) indicates that this provided a kind of ideological self-justification for the liberal conscience in the English speaking churches, while also sustaining the gap between prophetic leadership and ordinary membership in the churches. The protests in the church were always kept in check by the class structures within the separate churches, where the members’ socio-economic well-being had to be guarded. The white English speakers were indirect and direct beneficiaries of the Apartheid system, where their children enjoyed excellent schooling, and where the suburbs they lived in were carefully monitored and security and policing was of a very high standard.

Petersen (2001:125) draws attention to the constraint against protest in the English speaking churches, when South African member churches of the World Council of Churches financially boycotted the World Council of Churches when it decided to give humanitarian funding to the liberation movements through its Programme to Combat Racism. These grants provoked such intense, almost hysterical, white opposition that the churches were forced not only to criticise such grants being made to “terrorist organisations”, but to withhold funding to the World Council of Churches as a

consequence (Petersen 2001:125).

iv. Theological Climates

G.J. Rossouw (2001:99) concludes his discussion on the development of Apartheid Theology by indicating that it was developed as a result of Afrikaner nationalism, and thus terms it a “pastoral apartheid”. “It served to comfort and heal Afrikaners who were devastated by the war against the British Empire and who felt that their cultural identity was endangered by the new policy of Anglicisation” (Rossouw 2001:99).¹²¹

The extensive influences of Abraham Kuyper on the Theology of the NG Kerk need not be treated extensively,¹²² except to indicate the effects of these influences on the theological students, later leaders of the church, who studied in Amsterdam in the Netherlands, and through other means. These were not the only influences: romantic nationalism – under influence of students studying in Nazi Germany – and the ideas of a “pure race”, as well as scriptural interpretations (The Tower of Babel – S.J. du Toit, 19th century),¹²³ evangelical pietism (indirectly), and theories on Missiology influenced the development of Apartheid Theology. It is most important to note that up and till then – 1939 – all ministers of the NG Kerk in South Africa were trained at Stellenbosch, but that they did not all exhibit or support the same arguments and sentiments. The watershed theologian in this regard was Prof. J. du Plessis, and later also B.B. Keet.

Applying the Ideas of Abraham Kuyper

The neo-Calvinistic ideas of Kuyper were popularised in South Africa by students who

¹²¹ See Villa-Vicencio (1979:154-177) who considers the ethical and theological implications involved in the religious self understanding and the ideological identity questions of “White South Africa”.

¹²² David Bosch (1984:14-35) discusses Abraham Kuyper in conjunction with Groen van Prinsterer as representatives of the Dutch Calvinistic Revival – one of three influences on Afrikaner Nationalism. The other two influences are Reformed Evangelicalism and German neo-Fichtean romantic nationalism. David Bosch places particular emphasis on Van Prinsterer’s formula “In Isolation Lies Our Strength”, which for Kuyper would have implied an isolation for mission, but for its adaptation by Afrikaner students to isolation for survival. Though Reformed Evangelicalism, and its emphasis on pietism, played an important role in Ben Marais’ formation, and the language of romantic nationalism, with its emphasis on the purity of a nation, the organic unity of language, culture and political self determination can be heard in the rhetoric of the proponents of Apartheid: this section rather wishes to emphasise the tensions between the natural sciences and sociologists and theologians, and the interpretation of the Scriptures: Creation. See also Du Toit et al (2002:9-11) for a short overview of the history of evangelicalism in South Africa.

¹²³ See Rossouw (2001:101).

studied, especially at the Free University of Amsterdam during the 1930s. Rossouw (2001:100) indicates that Kuyper based his theology on the conviction that there were a fixed number of creational ordinances. These could be determined by a study of nature and history. These ordinances were applied by the South African students, where it was determined by Kuyper (Rossouw 2001:100) that each ordinance was governed by its own set of laws. The young South African students were particularly attracted to this reasoning, because they identified the nation as one of the creational ordinances. Humans had to respect these ordinances in order to serve the well-being of the whole creation and the honour of God (Praamsma 1981:25).

Rossouw (2001:100) points out that the state was seen as a mere instrument serving the nation's interests, and that nationalism thus became an expression of one's obedience to the will of God. Furthermore, the South African students interpreted the concept of nation along racist lines, and therefore concluded that Afrikaners had a divinely ordained right and obligation to protect their racial purity (Rossouw 2001:100). This, along with Kuyper's thoughts on diversity – variety of nations – as also applied to the church, had tremendous impact on the NG Kerk's ecumenical relations. Rossouw (2001:100) shows how Kuyper regarded the visible unity of the church in history as unimportant, "and even as undesirable". The unity of the church was then an eschatological concept which would be realised in the hereafter. The theological grounds for the withdrawal from ecumenical ties and self isolation of the NG Kerk are thus quite apparent. Finally, Rossouw (2001:100) points out that even as late as 1973, this reasoning on diversity was used as an argument for the justification of separate sister churches within the NG Kerk family – each church for a separate race group, and that unity was to be "realised on a higher spiritual level in Christ" (Rossouw 2001:100).

The Du Plessis Case (1931)

The Du Plessis Case was current at the same time that fundamentalism was a major force in the United States, while Europe was coming to terms with the hermeneutical disturbances¹²⁴ caused by Rudolf Bultmann, Karl Barth and Emil Brunner. Kinghorn (1986:55) considers these times as the times when Church and Theology became aware

¹²⁴ Hermeneutiese woelinge (Kinghorn 1986:55).

of the importance of reconsidering the interpretation of Scripture anew. On the one hand there was a conservatism in interpretation and on the other – in hermeneutical orientated schools of thought – an attempt at engaging in the problems.

There are three aspects of Du Plessis that I wish to draw attention to for the purposes of discussing the development of a Theology of Apartheid. The one concerns the two camps involved in what has popularly come to be known as the Du Plessis Case. The second aspect concerns the theological activity of Du Plessis and the concerns of his adversaries, which led to the mentioned case, and which influenced all subsequent theological activity in NG Kerk circles since, especially at Stellenbosch and to a lesser degree at Bloemfontein and Pretoria. The third aspect is the mission journey through Africa that Du Plessis undertook in 1913 (Du Plessis 1917). While this tour influenced Ben Marais, as is indicated later in this thesis in greater detail, there is especially one chapter that concerns “tensions in the nations on mission”.

Du Plessis, professor in New Testament and Missiology at the Theological Seminary of Stellenbosch,¹²⁵ undertook an extended history tour through Africa in 1913. This tour, reported on in his *Een Toer door Afrika* (1917) most certainly influenced the later tours undertaken by Ben Marais in the 1960s (S. Marais 2000). Interestingly, it also influenced attitudes towards other nations in Africa. Where Du Plessis’ history of Christianity, contained in his book of 1917, is an attempt to show how the missionary enterprise in Africa was blessed midst all the hardship, it also depicts the heathens in vividly barbaric terms (1917:1-8). This would have fostered a negative attitude or fed a receptacle attitude that Africans are cruel, and should be shot. As also a negative attitude towards Islam¹²⁶ (1917:87-92), in which Islam is depicted as a threat to Christianity and Africa. Ben Marais shared this concern about Islam.

The dispute was about how Du Plessis viewed the Pentateuch, and about how he reasoned that it originated, and came to be. Furthermore, he was opposed on his doctrine of Inspiration, and aspects of his Christology. He caused a commotion at the

¹²⁵ For a detailed biography see Gerdener (1943).

¹²⁶ Mohammedans according to Du Plessis (1917).

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seminary because he claimed that it was not written by one person, and referred to the different sources that constituted the Pentateuch. This was under strong influence of the German Historic Critical School. Ben Marais claimed (Viljoen Interview 1986) that the contemporaneous interpretations of the Pentateuch were comparable to Scripture interpretations in the Southern States of U.S.A. That is, fundamentalist, literal and indisputable.

The Du Plessis Case refers to the action taken by Prof. J. du Plessis (Johannes – John to his family and close friends [Gerdener 1934] and Jannie to his students [Meiring 1979:80]), when he took legal action against the NG Kerk of South Africa (Cape Province) in reaction to the church's dismissal of him as professor of the Theological Seminary of Stellenbosch and as minister of the NG Kerk, due to alleged heterodoxy in his teachings. The official actions by the church against Du Plessis commenced on 7 March 1928, when the board of curators of the Seminary of Stellenbosch decided to complain to the presbytery of Stellenbosch about the theological views of Du Plessis, that were not in accordance to the doctrine of the NG Kerk.

The people most involved in the court case were Proff. J. du Plessis, B.B. Keet, D.G. Malan, J.D. du Toit and E.E. van Rooyen, as well as Ds H.J. Pienaar. Interestingly, the students at the Seminary were divided into two camps, those who supported the actions of the church, and those who thought that Du Plessis was treated unfairly.¹²⁷ These two camps would later represent the two camps, in support of and in opposition to Apartheid. Ben Marais mentions in the Viljoen interview (1986) that he visited Du Plessis at his home along with other students. Ben Marais was a student when the Du Plessis Case was in its fervour, and when the consequences of the case were felt at the seminary.

¹²⁷ Further distinction could be drawn between the “soekligters” and the “oupajane”, in accordance to *Het Zoeklicht*, which was the publication of Du Plessis, and *Die Ou Paaie*, the publication of his opposition; also between adherents of Kuyper and adherents of Barth, students of Amsterdam and students of Utrecht. Each school was represented by more or less the same followers.

The effects of the Du Plessis Case promoted a conservatism and pietistic labour in exegetical thought at the seminary, as well as a strong anti academic spirit, where free thinking and inquiries were discouraged (Meiring 1979:80-81). Example of this is the literal translation of 1930 of the Bible into Afrikaans, worked on by J.D. du Toit and E.E. van Rooyen, as well as by B.B. Keet. On the one hand the Afrikaans translation was an instrument promoting Afrikaner nationalism and on the other it was a necessary exercise to make the Word of God accessible to people who could no longer read the Dutch translation of the Bible. Afrikaans was replacing Dutch as liturgical language of the NG Kerk. This exegetical conservatism and pietistic fervour was also experienced and influenced the attempts at justifying Apartheid on Scripture.

There were resultant tensions and consequences in the church; a strong emotional tension. Hardly any one dared to differ from the general consensus for two to three decades. There was thus a resultant stagnation in critical thinking in the church.

Furthermore, the Du Plessis Case influenced the appointment of professors at the seminary at Stellenbosch, anti-Du Plessis theologians only, different to the attitudes at the Faculty of Theology at the University of Pretoria, where, for example, Ben Marais was appointed. Thus there was a profound influence on church leadership through the exposure students had in their training.

Kinghorn (1986:55) draws particular attention to the hermeneutical vacuum that developed in NG Kerk Theology subsequent to the Du Plessis Case, which also affected thinking on Apartheid. Attention is drawn to Kinghorn's observations on the use of and reference to Scripture (1986:56). In his assertion, Kinghorn (Ibid) considers the attempts to justify Apartheid on Scripture as examples of not only Biblicist and fundamentalist exegesis, but that the attempts also indicate a total unawareness that Scripture needs to be read and interpreted in relation to the cohesion of its Salvation history – as pointed out by B.B. Keet and Ben Marais. Exegetes searching for scriptural justification of Apartheid approached the Bible with their own philosophic preconceptions. This was an exegesis of texts, considered to be normative in light of values determined by extra-biblical criteria (Kinghorn 1986:57).

The Theory of Mission

The development of a mission theory and subsequent Mission Policy for the NG Kerk played a particularly significant role in the development of a Theology of Apartheid (see Strydom 1939:787). This affected both the constitution of the NG Kerk regarding its conceptualisation of itself as a “mother church” and the churches catering for the other races as “daughter churches”, all incorporated within the NG Kerk family.¹²⁸

Lombard (1981:41) states that the Mission Policy of the NG Kerk developed gradually from practical experience. The mission activity during the course of the 19th century was principally managed and manned by mission societies (e.g. London Mission Society). Further, the ecumenical movements, prevalent in the 20th century, developed from the initiative taken by individuals who had a background in mission. During the course of the 20th century the NG Kerk was still in the process of formulating a point of view on mission.

Apart from practical circumstances – the existence of separate services and the need to justify the existence of separate churches sprouting, in part, from mission activity (initiated in the previous century) – collating to political theory, the NG Kerk wished to participate in international dialogue and be included in the ecumenical movements. The ecumenical movements had a strong mission orientation, and thus it was necessary for them to formulate a policy. Also, as has been pointed out, the western orientated people of Southern Africa have a strong affinity to and dependence on policy formulation. Lastly, it was necessary to structure the mission enterprise in the church, and the Mission Policy formed an integral part of this structuring.

In considering the Mission Policy, mention needs to be made of the influential mission theory, the different local and international mission conferences, the political perspectives of the synods and the justification on Scripture. It is believed that the

¹²⁸ See esp. *Die N.G. Kerk in die O.V.S. en die Naturelle-Vraagstuk* (1929) a document prepared by the secretary of mission of the NG Kerk in the Free State, J.G. Strydom, in which consideration is given to various aspects pertaining to the theory and practice of mission. The solution to the questions of race are suggested to be in Segregation, Differentiation, Co-operation and Evangelisation. This document was an important forerunner of the NG Kerk’s Mission Policy.

implementation of the Mission Policy by the NG Kerk was a prototype of the Apartheid policy implemented by the government of South Africa. Thus, the objections raised by Ben Marais on the Mission Policy as early as 1940 would also be raised on the Apartheid policy (1948).

In December 1938, Ben Marais had attended the Tambaram Conference, in Madras (India). The Synodical Commission of the Ned Herv. or Geref. Kerk (Transvaal) commissioned Ben Marais to represent the church at this world mission conference. The conference focused on the church, and then especially on the problem of the unity of the church of Christ.¹²⁹ Lombard (1981:49) draws attention to the representatives of the “young churches of Asia and Africa that expressed a heartfelt longing for a visible unity of the church.” Furthermore, the “young churches” were not content to be considered the object of mission of western churches. They wished to be accepted and recognised as fully and truly the church of Christ, by the “elder churches”, and that the responsibility for mission work needed to be shared.

Ben Marais realised that the Mission Policy of the NG Kerk was out of tune with the rest of the Christian world. In *Die Kerkbode* (10 April 1940), Ben Marais condemned the Mission Policy. He mentions how he tried explaining and defending the policy in discussions. His greatest realisation was that “very little, if any, direct support for our policy could be found in the Bible” (*Die Kerkbode* 10 April 1940: 645). At this time, though Ben Marais still believed that the practical problems experienced by the church and society could justify the Mission Policy, because it provided – according to him, then – the best solution and eventually served in the interests of the Kingdom of God in Africa, but then it had to be “in the spirit of Christ and the Bible” (*Die Kerkbode* 10 April 1940:646).

What was the essence of the Mission Policy?

¹²⁹ See esp. Marais (1947), in which Ben Marais gives a critical evaluation of the NG Kerk in relation to international trends.

The policy is divided into six sections: Evangelisation; Labour fields; Relations to other churches and governments; Education and training; Social and economic considerations (*Handelinge van die Raad van Kerke*, 1935:94-99). The larger focus of the policy falls on mission, evangelisation and education. The social and economic aspect of race relations are treated briefly, and nothing is said explicitly about the political implications. Social mixing is emphatically denied, though no mention is made of territorial separation. The guardianship of whites is considered to be natural and the ending thereof is not foreseen in the policy.

Lombard (1981:45) draws particular attention to the introduction of the policy, in which emphasis is placed on the variety¹³⁰ as well as the unity of people and nations. The formulations are often double barrelled, for example, on evangelisation, it is said that the Gospel is proclaimed with a view to collecting souls, but then it is added – on a constitutional point – that it needs to lead to the establishment of congregations and eventually to independent daughter churches. It is mentioned that Evangelisation does not presume denationalisation: “The Bantu (sic) must not be robbed of his language and culture, but Christianity must eventually envelope and purify the whole of his nationalism” (Lombard 1981:45).

It is at once visible that the language of the policy is shrouded in pietistic formulations, but that it carries frightful implications and reflects on intense intellectual thought and meticulous intentions.

Rather than considering the history of the development of the Mission Policy or the activities of the Federal Board of Mission¹³¹ with its complex relations with the Christian Council of South Africa, and the different accents placed at different times by the different synods of the NG Kerk family, or the history of the establishment of the

¹³⁰ Verskeidenheid.

¹³¹ Federale Sending Raad.

different “daughter churches”,¹³² consideration is given to the theory of mission. While having a strong orientation to Scripture, mission theory had a strong sociological orientation.

Orientation to mission by the church “is done in obedience to the command of the Lord Jesus” (*Wette en Bepalinge* 1948: Introduction: point 8) expressed in Matthew 28:19. Interestingly, it is formulated that “the labour of the church is determined by the Word of God, and the Church complies to this in obedience to His King under ordinances that were calculated to accomplish this in the most orderly and efficient manner and to lead to the glorification of God (*Wette en Bepalinge* 1948: Introduction).

Kinghorn (1986:68) rightly claims that Gustav Warneck (1834-1919), whose three volumes of *Evangelische Missionlehre* was the standard work on mission theory, applied the romantic concept of nation in mission theory. Interestingly, J. du Plessis popularised his work in South Africa.

An important concept in the thought of Warneck that Kinghorn (1986:68) identifies is “Volkschristianisierung”. Within this thought, the church must become indigenous in the mission field. This can only be achieved through the imbedding of the church amongst the people, in the nation. Thus a “volkskerstening” takes place, in which the nation is Christianised. The purpose of mission is to establish a national – peoples – church, which is independent.

Within mission theory, three concepts are important, apart from church planting. These are independence, maintenance and growth. The semblance of these concepts, from 19th century mission theory, to Apartheid theory is quite evident.

¹³² NG Sending Kerk in SA (est. 5 Oct. 1881); NG Sending Kerk in O.V.S. (est. 9 March 1910); The Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (est. Oct. 1926); NG Sending Kerk van Transvaal (est. 2 March 1932); Die NG Kerk v.d. O.V.S. in Rhodesië (Rhodesia – incorporating Zambia and Zimbabwe) (est. 3 July 1943); NG Bantoeerk in SA (6 March 1951); Shona Geref. Kerk (9 Sept. 1952); NG Sending Kerk van Natal (est. 30 Oct. 1952); Geref. Kerk van Benue, Nigeria (est. June 1956); The Indian Reformed Church (est. 27 Aug. 1968).

It must be remembered that Mission was not an important item on the agendas of the Dutch Reformed Churches in South Africa during the course of the 19th century. The mission enterprise was carried primarily by mission societies. Kinghorn (1986:68) draws attention to the rise in mission consciousness in the NG Kerk during the second decade of the 20th century. This would have been in time to come into accord with European and American churches and the rising ecumenical movements, on the one hand, and on the other, reflective of a rising mission piety in the congregations, and under the members of the church. Thus, in 1927 the NG Kerk congregation in Middelburg held a Mission Week. Ben Marais does not mention this, but he was living there at the time, and this collates to the time he became aware of his calling to become a minister of the NG Kerk.

Justification of Apartheid on Scripture¹³³

Professor E.P. Groenewald provided the most extensive scriptural justification for Apartheid. One of his most comprehensive presentations is found in Cronjé (1947:40-67). Groenewald's argument, though, is born more out of sociological considerations than out of the desire for correct scriptural interpretations. This was Ben Marais' concern.

Groenewald commences his argument with a reference to the responsibility that the Afrikaner had accepted in formulating a policy on race relations (Cronjé 1947:40). He also refers to the Mission Policy of the NG Kerk in which it is declared that the church opposes any form of equality between black and white, even to the advantage of the black! (Cronjé 1947:41), and: "The indigenous and coloured must be helped to develop into self respecting Christian nations, separate from whites as far as possible" (Cronjé 1947:41). Thus, from a paternalistic point of view, in which it is considered that Christian civilisation (sic) is western and superior to others, a prescriptive mode is applied on how Scripture should be interpreted. Groenewald presents his scriptural justification under the guard of the principles of race-apartheid and guardianship

¹³³ Distinction is drawn between the attempts to justify Apartheid on Scripture and considering human relations in light of Scripture. See in this regard *Handelinge van die Algemene Sinode 1966* (Bylae I 86-91), in which *Ras, Volk en Nasie in die Lig van die Skrif* was first tabled. This formed the basic orientation to the 1986 *Church and Society (Kerk en Samelewing)*.

(Cronjé 1947:41-43).

Groenewald (Cronjé 1947:43) declares that it is fortunate that Scripture is rich in statements that can be used in formulating a Biblical foundation for Apartheid. He also claims that the explanations of the texts involved are so generally accepted that “nobody could accuse us of making a random interpretation in the interest of a preconceived point of view” (Cronjé 1947: 43). Seven conclusions are drawn from Scripture, which form the basis of the argument: 1. Scripture teaches the unity of humanity (Cronjé 1947:44);¹³⁴ 2. The division of humanity into races, nations and languages is a conscious deed of God (Cronjé 1947:45);¹³⁵ 3. God wishes that separate nations should maintain their state of separateness (Cronjé 1947:47);¹³⁶ 4. Apartheid (separateness) extends over the extent of national life (Cronjé 1947:49);¹³⁷ 5. God blesses the honouring of Apartheid (Cronjé 1947:57);¹³⁸ 6. A higher spiritual unity is realised in Christ (Cronjé 1947:58);¹³⁹ and 7. The stronger has a calling of responsibility towards the weaker (Cronjé 1947:61).¹⁴⁰

Though the argument development of Groenewald should be considered in its totality, attention is drawn to his fourth point, “Apartheid (separateness) extends over the extent of national life” (Cronjé 1947:49). The reason for this is because he distinguishes between different forms of Apartheid – states of separateness – in his excursion of biblical texts. These forms are related to nationalism – a primary consideration of this study. The different forms are: National Apartheid (Cronjé 1947:50); Social Apartheid (Cronjé 1947:52); and Religious Apartheid (Cronjé 1947:55). Thus nationalism and religion are related on a different level also. In preamble to his distinctions, Groenewald (Cronjé 1947:49) claims:

¹³⁴ Die Skrif leer die eenheid van die menslike geslag.

¹³⁵ Die verdeeling van die menslike geslag in rasse, volke en tale is ‘n bewuste daad van God.

¹³⁶ Die Here wil dat aparte volke hul apartheid moet bly handhaaf.

¹³⁷ Die apartheid strek hom oor die hele terrein van die volkslewe uit.

¹³⁸ God seën rus op die eerbieding van die apartheid.

¹³⁹ In Christus kom ‘n hoër geestelike eenheid tot stand.

¹⁴⁰ Die sterkere het ‘n roeping teenoor die swakkere.

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“When God desires a division, He desires this in the fullest sense. This we know from the division between good and evil. This is also the case in other areas. And in the entry into Canaan this was one of the first lessons Israel had to learn. The command was given to clear the heathen nations from the promised lands. This was a measure against mixing. With the capture of Jericho one man was disobedient to this command. Agan claimed some of the treasures of the heathens for himself and this led to Israel’s accident at Ai and Agan’s execution in the Del of Agor. Obedience to his command God demanded without compromise, but that command included the complete separateness¹⁴¹ of His nation.

To indicate how the principle of apartheid controls the totality of national life, we now pay attention to national, social and religious aspects of the issue.”¹⁴²

In each case, Groenewald follows a similar pattern of discussion on Scripture, and then draws a direct application to the political model called Apartheid.

The formulation of the Ned. Herv. or Geref. Kerk Synod (Transvaal Synod of the NG Kerk) of 1948 on the Scriptural justification of the policy of race Apartheid and guardianship is set out clearly in the acts of the synod (*Handelinge van die Sinode 1948: Bylae B:279-284*). The formulation contains four parts and an addendum.¹⁴³

The addendum is most significant since it deals with a Scriptural exception and then concerning Ruth (esp. Ruth 1:16: Where you go, I will go, and where you stay, I will stay; your people are my people and your God is my God). the addendum makes it clear that this exception does not disqualify the policy of Apartheid, where it could be used to justify assimilation. The assimilation in this regard is seen not to be a assimilation between races but between national groups, where it is reasoned that race groups contain different national groups. Further, this assimilation would be allowed because it does not hold the possibility of spiritual degeneration (*Handelinge van die Sinode 1948:284*).

¹⁴¹ Volstreckte afsondering.

¹⁴² My translation.

¹⁴³ See also *Handelinge van die Sinode 1951* (Bylae E:179) for a treatise on the Scriptural grounds for Apartheid.

The four parts of the formulation of the report synod (*Handelinge van die Sinode 1948*: Bylae B:279-284) is logically argued and clinical in its outline. The 1st part briefly treats “the policy of the church”, in which extracts are quoted from the official Mission Policy and from the Acts of the 1944 synod of the Ned Herv. or Geref. Kerk. The aspect taken from the 1944 synod concerns the provision of weapons to the Africans who were involved in the 2nd World War. The Second part of the formulation (*Handelinge van die Sinode 1948*:280) mentions the Publications in which “Scriptural Principles are investigated”. It is interesting that reference is not made to E.P. Groenewald’s chapter in Cronjé (1942), but to articles and correspondence in *Die Kerkbode*¹⁴⁴ and *Inspan*¹⁴⁵ as well as a dissertation by B.J. Odendaal of 1946, which tested the principle of Apartheid in the New Testament.¹⁴⁶

The third part (*Handelinge van die Sinode 1948*:280), which deals with the main issue of the report, “Race and National Apartheid in the Bible”, is subdivided into six parts, where the conclusion forms the sixth (*Handelinge van die Sinode 1948*:283): “The principle of Apartheid between races and nations, also of separate missionary and mission churches, is evident in the Scriptures. From the rich diversity of nations that all serve the one Lord together, greater honour is given to this Name (Revelation 7:9f.; Phillipians 2:9-11).” This section is based on the chapter of E.P. Groenewald (Cronjé 1942).

The 4th part of the formulation on Scriptural justification (*Handelinge van die Sinode 1948*:283) considers “Guardianship in the Bible”. Two points need to be emphasised, the first from the introductory paragraph and the other from the post script.

In the introductory paragraph (*Handelinge van die Sinode 1948*:283) it is stated:¹⁴⁷

“A direct scriptural proof for the guardianship of one people over another is difficult to maintain, but the principle can be determined from two cardinal principles in Scripture, that is, a. the principle of the relation of authority and piety, and b. the principle of responsibility towards fellow humans.

¹⁴⁴ Article by T.C. de Villiers – 16 Jan 1946; Correspondence of March, May and June 1946.

¹⁴⁵ Article by J.D. du Toit December 1944, “Die godsdienslike grondslag van ons rassebeleid”.

¹⁴⁶ “Die beginsel van rasse-apartheid getoets aan die Nuwe Testament”.

¹⁴⁷ My translation.

Furthermore, the issue is mentioned once in Galatians 4:2ff, where Israel is described as a juvenile under the guardianship of the law, who has to develop into a adult through faith in Christ.”

In contrast to the religious piety in support of the policy of Apartheid, the postscript (*Handelinge van die Sinode 1948:284*) indicates: “it is noteworthy that the streams that tend to reject race differences, are precisely those that were not highly esteemed in religious-spiritual areas, such as the Philanthropic movement, Humanism and Liberalism.”

Thus, the cause of Apartheid in it being justified from Scripture could be seen to have been manipulated through association as well as by carefully formulated arguments. This could well be called “White Theology”.

Black Theology

Any consideration on the theological climates in South Africa is incomplete without a consideration of the role Black Theology played. On the one hand, Black Theology was considered by mainstream NG Kerk Theologians to be a distortion of biblical Christianity, on the other, it provided other non-white Christians in South Africa a means to express their plight in religious-Christian language.

Oosthuizen (1988:28), who considers the role Black Theology played as a factor of reform in South Africa, draws attention to the fact that the first black theologian had come to the fore and stated the case of the oppressed against the pressures they were experiencing, a century before Black Theology became a popular topic in the 1970s.

Oosthuizen (1988:28-47) also considers the AICs¹⁴⁸ under the heading Black Theology. He asserts (1988:44):

“South African Black Theology is basically reformist and not revolutionary in approach. From the beginning the reaction of men such as Nehemiah Tile was intended to reform the church but when this failed they left and worked for a Christianity which accepted the humanity of the black man, as a fellow human being in need of the support in his situation of deprivation. Black

¹⁴⁸ African Independent Churches, or African Indigenous Churches.

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Theology through the century of its existence never was intended to be reactionary for its own sake, black theologians never were inclined to a communist stance. Neither is there evidence of a strong leaning towards Latin American Liberal Theology. It was a comprehensive approach from the beginning which was related to the socio-economic, political and religious existence of the black man of this country.”

Ben Marais was concerned about the association between Black Theologians and the Communists (Letter of 25 September 1964 to unspecified), but as Oosthuizen indicates (1988:45), “it would have been strange if this theological movement in the South African context did not venture into a Marxist analysis in a situation in which the conventional churches, especially those to which the Apartheid authorities adhered, gave no hope of change.” Thus, it was not a question of models to the Black Theologians, but of formulating a means to reforming the situation that the injustices against certain people in society, based on skin colour, could be rectified.

Black Theology could be associated with African Nationalism, as Apartheid Theology, or the Theology of the Afrikaner churches, could be associated with Afrikaner Nationalism.

The South African Social Revolution

It was the habit of Apartheid to distinguish between the different forms of nationalism, in which a new understanding with diverging parts emerged. The thinking could be founded under an understanding of *oikos* – household (environment, inhabited world – *ecumene*). By this, earth-keeping and stewardship is implied. The close affinity to concepts of creation, civilisation, progress, stewardship, development, Scripture and society, theory and practice are quite apparent.

Within the times of Ben Marais, consideration can be given to the following factors that characterised the storms surrounding the prolonged South African social revolution. These factors are mentioned in brevity and are intentionally not comprehensive. They are motioned to illustrate the complexity of writing about 20th century South African History, from the point of considering nationalism as an expression of identity:

Historical factors, such as the tensions between English and Afrikaners after the Anglo-Boer War, as well as the class struggles with the mine workers and Rand Lords, the urbanization of whites during the 1930s-40s and blacks during the 1970s-80s.

Political considerations determined by the distinctions between the Afrikaner republics, the English colonies and the African homelands. Furthermore, the formation of the Union of South Africa, the breaking of reins with England and the formation of a Republic need to be taken into account along with the end of the British Empire. Also, the exclusion from the voters' role of certain race groups, the party politics that crossed language barriers – and the strange relations and coalitions. The socio-economic divides and language manipulation also needs to be taken into account. Furthermore, racial tensions played a role – between Afrikaners and English and between these and black people, and between these and Indians, not even mentioning the coloureds, and also the individual friendships. The orientation to policies, the development and contemplation of political theory and the implementation of policies through laws are further factors.

Economic considerations, driven between poverty and wealth, about minerals and land, tendencies such as urbanisation and deruralment. The organization of unions, the preference for a capitalistic system and the indifference towards communism and socialism.

Religious factors, such as tensions between ecumenism – evangelicals; the emergence of a strong Afrikaner pietism, and charismatic and pentecostal movements such as the AICs, as well as non-church organisations like Youth for Christ and the Bible Society, and the rallying of churches – congregations along political lines.

Culture and origin, seen as a unit since the traditional is often emphasised, often created or adopted from other cultures – normally European. Used as vehicle of distinction.

Education, and the strive to dominate the schooling systems, syllabi and languages of instruction is an important consideration, as well as the philosophy of education,

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didactic pedagogic models and educational orientation. Extra-curricular activities, such as Cadets, sport, Voortrekkers, and Scouts, played a role.

However, there is another way in which the Social Revolution in South Africa could be considered. That is, in considering the options between violent and peaceful reform. From the correspondence of Ben Marais with the World Council of Churches, it is obvious that he promoted negotiation and sought peaceful resolutions, while the World Council of Churches had determined that it was justifiable to support organisations that used violence as a means to effect change. But, as Nicholas Kittrie (1988:10) observed:

“As one observes the South African scene, the different communities making up this country, the different economic sectors operating within it, the different political agendas proclaimed for South Africa’s future, one is tempted to ask a simple question: Is it possible to find for South Africa creative reform techniques as an alternative to the traditional resort to bloodshed and violence manifested in the history of other countries. In approaching any society that is in the midst of political, social, ethnic or religious turmoil, one must first determine whether or not the warring parties are indeed willing to maintain their national or communal marriage....”

The fortune for South Africa, and its society, is that it found a means to a peaceful resolution and power-sharing, equality and justice to all – a peaceful or quiet social revolution. Ben Marais believed that a crime wave would follow the change in government, based on observations on revolutions in other parts of the world throughout history (P.A. Marais 20 September 2002).

3. HOW BEN MARAIS WEATHERED THE CLIMATES

Once, when Ben Marais was still a university chaplain, he was busy with room visitations in one of the men’s residences. There was one student who was not particularly interested in either the church or the minister. The student was not in his room when Ben Marais called, thus Ben looked around the room for a suitable place to leave a note. He left a note screwed in the top of a half-full brandy bottle that was standing on the desk. The next day, at a larger prayer meeting, there was the same student. The student became an eager participant in the activities of the church.

This antidote is told to illustrate Ben Marais' sense of humour, his tolerant and pleasant nature, as well as the high esteem the students had for him. This particular event happened during the height of the debates on the justification of Apartheid on Scripture. Apart from his characteristic traits, the student environment he was in must have afforded him much stimulation and also protection. Regarding the different climates, he drew on his principles, which were developed during student years and grounded in his youth. These principles are detectable in his writings, reflections from old students, and in his correspondence.

During his visit to South Africa, Visser't Hooft read a manuscript of Ben Marais' *Colour: Unsolved Problem of the West*. He predicted a storm. He also had this to say (Brown 1992b:486): "But Ben Marais will probably come out of that storm as a man of considerable stature and as a leader of the younger generation."

Unlike Beyers Naudé, and other people who opposed the NG Kerk's policies and substantiation of Apartheid, Ben Marais did not leave the NG Kerk. Ironically, he was appointed professor of the History of Christianity and Church Law in the midst of the outcry about his *Colour: Unsolved Problem of the West*. He did not try to effect changes by departing, but rather by engaging in dialogue, calling the church and Christians to adhere to the principles as laid down in Scripture.

Ben Marais did not keep quiet. When he felt he had something to say, he said it, as at the synods of 1944 and 1948. When he was asked not to publish his book, *Colour: Unsolved Problem of the West*, until after his appointment at the university, he did not listen, but published it, because he felt that people need to know what he is about.

His attitude to those who differed from him was compassion. He said that it was good to have people differ from you, because such people helps one to formulate the arguments better.

Important, was how he understood things and was able to relate things within a historic-philosophic framework. He did not accept everything he read.

The most important attribute, though, which helped Ben Marais as to whether the climates in 20th century South Africa, was his faith in God.

4. CONCLUSION

In this chapter on the times of Ben Marais, attention was paid to various themes prevalent in his thoughts as they manifested themselves in the 20th century. Detailed discussions on each theme was not done, since this would have drawn the thesis into imbalance. Rather, the relations between the themes and a strong historic orientation, taken from the 19th century has been presented. It has been of particular importance to indicate how the personal history of Ben Marais and his family is interwoven in to the history of South Africa.

Thus, in considering the next chapter, which looks closer at a periodised theme, nationalism, it will be possible to consider Ben Marais as an authentic reference, intelligent source and knowledgeable on the subject. Though Ben Marais was engaged in many of the debates on Afrikaner nationalism, and his personal friend Dr W. Nicol was personally involved in the activities promoting Afrikanerdom, this study considers the subject retrospectively and openly. The openness is due to the fact that the trends within the various forms of nationalism in South Africa have not yet completed a life-cycle and thus trends can only be surmised upon.