

BEN MARAIS (1909-1999):

**THE INFLUENCES ON AND HERITAGE OF A SOUTH AFRICAN
PROPHET DURING TWO PERIODS OF TRANSFORMATION**

by

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SUMMARY

**Ben Marais (1909-1999): The Influences on and Heritage of a South African
Prophet during Two Periods of Transformation**

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Degree: Doctor Divinitatis
Subject: Church History
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This thesis in Church History presents a biographic study on the life of Ben Marais against the political and ecclesiastic background of South Africa of the 20th century. The significance of Ben Marais' life is approached through his correspondence with the secretaries of the World Council of Churches during the 1960s and 1970s. The letters, pertaining to the World Council of Churches financial and moral support for the organisations fighting against Apartheid, reflect on Ben Marais' involvement with the World Council and his particular concerns. Through a study on the life of Ben Marais insight can be gained into the thinking of the leadership of the NG Kerk. The study presents Ben Marais as a prophet who challenged the then popular tendencies in the NG Kerk theology on policy justification and on the relation between religion and nationalism.

The central question in this study asks, what led an ordinary man, of humble background, to the insights he reflected, and guided him through times of transparent opposition to maintain his belief in what was right and just? What was the essence of his theology and understanding of the South African problem? To what extent could the church leaders of the present, and the future learn from his example and life, in terms of the tribulations faced, different schools of thought, and sentiments, both nationalistic and spiritual?

SUMMARY

The study then wishes to test the following hypothesis: Ben Marais can be considered as one of the steadfast and humble prophets of the church in Southern Africa during the 20th century, who serves as an example of Christian Brotherhood, regardless of the perplexities, for present and future generations on relations between the affairs of faith, state and society.

The thesis presents a broader introduction on Church Historiography. Ben Marais' own historiographical reflection is considered. The approaches to history are summarised as background to the periodisation model adopted by the study. The study wishes to work with a thematic model set against a chronological framework. Sensitivity to geographical concerns is also expressed. Afrikaner Nationalism is not seen in isolation, but in relation to African, English and Indian Nationalism.

KEY WORDS

Ben Marais

Nationalism

Apartheid

Transformation

Prophet

Character formation

World Council of Churches

Policies of NG Kerk

Periodisation

Church Historiography

In memory of Oupa Flippie, Philippus Ludiwicus du Plessis,
whose faith, life, and devotion to the church remain an inspiration.

LETTER TO THE IMPLIED READER

Dear Reader¹

The presentation of a study on Ben Marais as an academic study could be either a straightforward task, concentrating on the biographic details of his life, considering the length and state of his hair, the style of his clothes, and a caricature of his love for gardening, or it could be conducted with a greater challenge in mind – though also in a condensed format as is possible. This challenge is not to be the last or authoritative voice on the subject, merely an echo. It implies that the study on the life of Ben Marais be considered within various contexts, while maintaining a central theme.

The first context of this study is this thesis, intended for degree purposes. Ben Marais was a Church historian. Thus I refer to him in the introductory section, reflecting on his methodology and understanding of church history. The second context of this study is the 20th century, the third is South Africa, the fourth Afrikanerdom and nationalism, and the fifth context is church and state relations. These contexts are difficult to demarcate, as well as being rather contrived, by own admission. They need to be understood in as much as they are of service to this study, in light of the various transformations that took place, and the perspective that is argued, not in all their complexities. For this reason, a more thorough introduction has been considered necessary.

To relate how Ben Marais was part of each of these contexts, hermeneutic keys are used. Ben Marais is also used as a hermeneutic key to South African church/state/culture relations during significant periods in the 20th century. The selection of details from his life, as well as themes from the contexts and the hermeneutic keys are made representatively because they best illustrate the points to be made, as well as giving best insight into the problems formulated and thus help to understand an ordinary but illustrious man.

¹ This letter has been formulated to indicate the presence of an implied reader, who is neither a Church Historian nor a Theologian, but rather a general historian.

LETTER TO THE IMPLIED READER

Ben Marais worked on so many topics and in so many contexts, that it would not be difficult to find myself thinking about these issues – often diverse. These issues could be seen as impulses (influences on and of) from Greek philosophy to Ecumenical relations to Nationalism to Church History to Scottish Evangelicals (also with a Scottish nationalism orientation).

In this regard, the current study is hardly an introduction to the man, Ben Marais (biographies are not always as popular as doctoral theses, while at the same time often being the best histories). Rather, it wishes to explore relations, draw comparisons, consider settings, and in line with African literary theory, indicate the change brought about by Ben Marais, to his contexts and to this study.

It is eventually hoped that this thesis does justice to Ben Marais, and to the study of Church History.

P.J. Maritz

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Mrs H. Steyn and Mrs H. du Toit, from Steynsburg and Middelburg respectively.

ABBREVIATIONS

AIC	African Independent Churches
ANC	African National Council
B.B.C.	British Broadcast Corporation
C.I.	Christian Institute
Di	Dominees, Reverends, plural form of Ds
Ds	Dominee, Reverend
F.A.K.	Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniginge
Maties	University of Stellenbosch
NCRV	Nederlands Christelike Radio Vereeniging, The Dutch Christian Radio Society
Ned. Herv. or Geref. Kerk	Nederduitsch Hervormd or Gereformeerde Kerk
NG Kerk	Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk
NUSAS	National Union of South African Students
PAC	Pan African Congress
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
S.A.C.C.	South African Council of Churches
SPROCAS	Study Project on Christianity in an Apartheid Society
SWAPO	South West Africa People's Organization
Tuks (Tukkies)	University of Pretoria
WCC	World Council of Churches
Wits	University of the Witwatersrand
Unisa	University of South Africa
US SALEP	US SA Leader Exchange Programme

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1. INTRODUCTION

After a short orientation in the form of a synopsis of Ben Marais' life, the nature of this study is considered, relating the theological and scientific orientation to biographies and church histories within church and general historiography. Provisional criticism against the study is also pondered upon. The premises serve as logical conclusions to the philosophical considerations in historiography and as orientation to the posed problem and formulation of the hypothesis. The reasons for the formulation of the title is only presented after the problem and hypothesis of the study has been treated because it contains terms and concepts that are more conclusive in nature than indicating a scope of study. Before concluding the introduction to the thesis, the methodology and procedure followed in the selection of material and the reasoning behind the presentation of the argument is presented.

The work and thoughts of Ben Marais, as a Church Historian, is alluded to during the course of the introduction, indicating his interests in such matters, as well as my own progression and engagement with his thought.

2. SYNOPSIS OF BEN MARAIS' LIFE

In the opening paragraph of *The Two Faces of Africa* (1964b:1), Ben Marais places his life in the greater African context, indicating in the contemporaneous publication how interwoven his own story is with that of Southern Africa. It is presented here as orientation to the short synopsis of his life (Marais 1964b:1):

“I begin this book on a very personal note. I write as an African, be it a white African. I can write in no other capacity. I belong to Africa. My own family emigrated to the Cape of Good Hope in 1688 as French Huguenots and my people have lived there ever since. It is our one and only homeland.”

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Barend Jacobus Marais was born on 26 April 1909, on a farm in the Steynsberg district of the Great Karoo. He died on 27 January 1999 in Pretoria. He suffered a stroke late in 1998 and never fully regained his strength.

He matriculated at the high school in Middelburg, Cape, in 1927. His uncle, Pieter Abraham Marais, sponsored his studies at the University of Stellenbosch. He obtained a B.A., a M.A. in Afrikaans and a M.A. in Philosophy. In June 1935, he left South Africa to study at Princeton, where he obtained a M.Th. in 1936. The title of his D.Phil. thesis, completed in 1944 at the University of Stellenbosch, was *Die Christelike Broederskapsleer en sy Toepassing in die Kerk van die Eerste Drie Eeue*.

During his university years at Stellenbosch he met Sibs Botha, originally from Kuruman. They married on 30 April 1939. Their daughter, Augusta (who married Koos Marais, brother of the Springbok rugby captain, Hannes Marais), was born on 27 May 1940.

In 1936 Ben Marais passed the Candidate Minister's Examination (Proponentseksamen) and became available for ministry in the NG Kerk family. He first assisted in the Riversdal congregation (Cape) and the Old Irene Church in Plein Street, Johannesburg, for several months before being called by the Ned. Herv. or Geref. Kerk Synod of Transvaal to serve as student chaplain (serving 7 institutions and more than 2000 students). The Pretoria East congregation of the Ned. Herv. or Geref. Kerk called him in 1940 as student chaplain and in 1949 as minister. He succeeded Dr W. Nicol, who left the ministry to become Administrator of the Transvaal. In 1953 Ben Marais became professor of the History of Christianity and Church Polity at the University of Pretoria, on the retirement of Professor D.J. Keet. He retired from this chair in June 1974 and was succeeded by the charismatic Dr P.B. van der Watt, who was then lecturing at the University of Stellenbosch. Instead of dedicating his life solely to his impressive rose garden and aloes and honorary duties at the university residence, Sonop Hostel, he also continued his academic career at the University of South Africa, retiring from academia in mid 1986.

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During his active ministry in the NG Kerk he attended several ecumenical and mission conferences, and toured extensively through America, Africa and Europe, meeting various and interesting people. He maintained correspondence with a few people from these meetings, for example, Visser't Hooft. Especially two such exchanges form a kernel to this study.

Ben Marais was predominantly a quiet man, though he was often heard whistling a tune in the passages of the faculty, often related to a sermon he was preparing. His outspokenness against the scriptural justification of the church's Mission Policy and Apartheid at the Transvaal Synod meetings of 1940, 1944, and 1948, earned him a curious place in the history of race relations and church politics. Furthermore, he was a revered radio personality and his articles often appeared in academic journals, newspapers and popular magazines. He is especially known for two, then controversial books, *Colour: Unsolved Problem of the West* (1952a) and *The Two Faces of Africa* (1964b) which contributed, along with other factors, to him experiencing a few lonely years in the 1960s and early 1970s.

I had the good fortune of meeting Ben Marais only once. Wearing the recommended tie, I was introduced to first his wife, Tannie Sibs, and his daughter, Augusta, and then to him. Professor J.W. (Hoffie) Hofmeyr, also in formal attire for the occasion, conducted the introductions. The study was well sunlit, though there were hardly any books left on the extensive shelves. An old acquaintance from the mission field was visiting. We drank tea and made small talk, my place in the order of things and the universe being established. That was hardly the moment to ask him any of the questions that were swelling in my thoughts. Ben Marais suffered a stroke a few weeks later, and I was refused access to him, instead drinking tea with his wife, who volunteered suitable and vital information. Ben Marais died some months later on 27 January 1999.

3. CHURCH HISTORIOGRAPHY

One of the principle questions on Church Historiography, marked by Ben Marais in his copy *On the Meaning of History* (1949), is: "Is there such a being as a 'Church Historian'?" A negative position to this question is taken in by P.G. Lindhart (Kraemer

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1949:9),² who asserts that there “is no Church Historian – there are, of course, Christians who are historians ... Philosophically speaking there is no apprehension possible, as there does not exist contemporaneity [sic] with the past. Theologically speaking it is impossible because Christianity is not concerned with the past nor with the future, but with the present moment which is eternity.” The positive assertion (Kraemer 1949:10), underlined in Ben Marais’ copy, says of the Church Historian:

“... His Christian faith includes a special understanding of God, man, life and the world, and therefore, provides him with a particular way of understanding and evaluating human situations, decisions and acts. It is just of these human situations, decisions and acts that the texture of history is made. This does neither mean that an historian, who is a Christian, is distinguished from other historians by being prophetic or moralising. Prophets are called, not made. Nevertheless, the historian-Christian ... ought at least to understand better and deeper the real meaning and prophetic interpretation of history, which is the Biblical way of interpretation, and be moulded by it.”

Eddie Brown, Emeritus Professor of Church History at the University of Stellenbosch and an old student of Ben Marais, wrote (Brown 1992b:488):

“A student who traces sources in archives and studies them thoroughly, Marais is not. For the new church historian it was all about historical perspective and grasping the contemporary situation the church of Christ found itself in. He did not lapse into apologetic and polemic practices in church history. It was liberating, because the three Afrikaans churches of reformed confession were at that time denying each other the right to exist. He directed the eyes of his students, church historically, towards a broader horizon.”

In response to a question (Hofmeyr Interview 1985) about the difference between the writing of denominational, confessional, and ecumenical Church History, Ben Marais answered that Church History was about the Church of Christ. He mentioned that the first requirement of Church History was the creation of a feeling for the big picture of the people of God, the universality. He maintained that the universality of the church had to be reflected in Church History. He wished that Church History would give expression to the reality that God was active in the world through the church. Therefore, according to Ben Marais, Church History always had to be considered in relation to what is generally called secular history.

² The particular copy that was consulted came from Ben Marais’ collection.

INTRODUCTION

a. Academic/Scientific Foundations of Study

The theoretic and philosophic understanding of Church History in relation to history, theology and scientific disciplines needs to be accounted for. The account will place this study's arrangement of biography within a broader scientific and church historical orientation.

The study on the life of Ben Marais under the banner of Church History is not *A Brief History of Time*, but a brief consideration of one man's life (elective) against a particular context. Where Hawkins' history (1998) is a scientific-mathematical attempt to consider the organisation and structure of the whole universe over the expanse of time and in its geographic extent, this biographically orientated study finds itself suspended between different traditions. Some of these traditions precede the scientific methodology and criteria associated with *A Brief History of Time*, the North-west European and Western understanding of history as a linear phenomenon (Judaean-Christian) while also drawing from cyclic, spiral and circular understandings of time. Alternatively, Church History also runs parallel to these traditions and is intrinsically both dependent and integral with them. On the other hand, Church History is connected to a consideration of history which is both religiously orientated and alternatively stands accountable to non-religious considerations.

While this study considers the subject Church History as more than the reflection on the collection of data from archives and interviews (primary sources) and the retelling of stories in adapted formats, it wishes to present an academic and scientific foundation, a theological contemplation and a historical orientation to the subject Church History, and to Ben Marais, a Church Historian.

b. Philosophy and History

Ben Marais' M.A. in Philosophy was titled: *Probleme van die Ontwikkeling van die Onsterflikheid in die Griekse Filosofie*.³ His D.Phil. was a philosophical contemplation on the universal concept "Christian brotherhood", considering the first three centuries of

³ "Problems of the Development of Immortality in Greek Philosophy".

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the Early Church, but with the then contemporary situation in the church and country in mind. Within these theses it is obvious that Ben Marais approached philosophic questions and contemporaneous issues with a historically orientated framework.

My own orientation is in Greek Philosophy. Though Plato did not discuss the art of history writing as such, what he says on opinion, truth and flattery in *Gorgias* is applicable to the writing of history. While writing *Gorgias* to attract students to philosophic education, he attacks rhetoric, which was flourishing and influential in the then forensic and political debates. He also asks questions about Truth and Right.

Socrates taunts Gorgias (*Gorgias* 459C) and in jest, illustrates, through reason, that rhetoric is a mere device and has its faults. That something is convincing or well said does not mean that it is the truth. Rhetoric could be compared to the art of writing history through an analogy that Plato draws between politics and medicine, justice and gymnastics (body and soul) (464). To what end is history written and practised? Would it be only to record events, as in a chronicle, or as in minutes of a meeting? Or, would it have a particular aim, as in persuading a particular point of view or cause? Or, would it reflect somehow on Truth? Or, is its aim the deconstruction, criticism and negation of an eventuality? How does it, the historian or history, consider the greater scheme of things?⁴

c. Church History and General History

The relation between secular or general history and church history is problematic to some and offers no problems to others.⁵ I find the relations quite complex.

i. Religious History and History

It could be argued that Church History, as expressing the history of the Christian Church, is a history of a religion, and could be understood in relation to General (secular) History by considering the relation between the other world religions and

⁴ It could be argued (Maritz 2000:221) that Plato developed his philosophy in support of his concerns for Athenian politics.

⁵ See Hofmeyr (1979:48-59) for a reflection on Ben Marais' contribution to Church History in perspective of the relation between the practice of general historiography and church historiography in South Africa.

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General History. This relation, then, between Church History and General History would be found to be closer than those of the other religions, such as Islam and Judaism. The North – Western orientation to World History would thus be greater influenced by Christianity than by the other religions due to the close relations between church and secular state from the 4th century until generally during the Enlightenment. Though, due to the peculiar nature of academia and church in South Africa, especially influenced by the Evangelical School through the Scottish ministers in the NG Kerk during the late 19th century, the concerns of the Enlightenment were not pronounced. This implies that the General History of Southern Africa was considered more through a Calvinistic perspective, with a providential orientation. Though, there was a time during the early 1900s that the historical critical schools⁶ prevalent at Utrecht were preferred to the Creation Ordinance School of Kuyper at the Free University of Amsterdam.⁷

The preferred reasoning in South African society, in short, required the justification or criticism of a political theory and model based on Scripture. More particularly for this study, this pious/secular rationale indicates the need to consider Ben Marais' attitude to other religions and to General History in order that his understanding of Church History, or History of Christianity can be better appreciated. For example, in *The Two Faces of Africa* Ben Marais reveals the close relation he draws between secular African and Christian history when he writes (1964b:201):

“Let us in conclusion have a closer look at the role the Christian community plays in present day Africa. We have deep concern about the future of the church in Africa. At many points there is stagnation where there was vigorous growth. Everywhere there is division. Islam is a vast threat, Communism and nationalism may increasingly challenge the Gospel and seek to lay hands on the deepest loyalties of African man which belong to God alone....”

The short quotation reveals at once Ben Marais' piety, also his concern for the Christian contribution to Africa, his aversion to Islam and communism and concern for nationalism challenging Christianity. Furthermore, his consideration of the then current situation in Africa through a “Rise and Fall model” – “stagnation ... growth” and a

⁶ Hoër Kritiek.

⁷ The emphasis move in popularity between the two schools of thought found J. du Plessis caught in the middle, which resulted in the Du Plessis Case. Du Plessis was a proponent of the historical critical school.

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“Unity Division model”. The unity is seen to be a solution and lies in the future.

Before criticising or negating this approach to General History, or even Church History, it is important to consider the relation between Church History and General History, and how history is understood in this study, in order to show how the particular influences on Ben Marais are understood.

ii. Understanding History

In African Church Historiography, Ogbu Kalu considers the concepts of Time, Space, Theme and African Initiative (2002:311-348). David Bebbington (1979) considers a Christian perspective on historical thought in his *Patterns in History*. Stanford (1994:243) indicates the weakness of working with patterns in history, while promoting relevant, functional, thematic analyses. Furthermore, does history have a providential base or a secular base? Church History would also like to distinguish a confessional base and for some also an Evangelical base. Then also, Max Weber, Wrede, Gadamer, Nietzsche, Herder, Von Humboldt, Vico, Von Ranke, Niebuhr, Dilthey, Hegel, Habermas, Latourette, Troeltsch, Collingwood, and others, have all contributed to understanding history, each one working in a different context, and each seeking different results. Not everyone is in consensus. Thus the question remains: How to understand “History”?

The following five-point model serves as a summary of this study’s orientation to history.

- Temporal understanding of history;
- Functionalist understanding of history;
- Understanding the Idea – History;
- Understanding through method;
- Understanding through the material.

Five different modes of understanding history are differentiated. It is contended that all histories contain aspects from each of the five modes, but that some histories exhibit emphasis differentiation. These modes pertain to both the writing and reading of history

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as well as to how it is interpreted and understood.

The following diagrammatic presentation is a simplified model, in summary form, expressing an understanding of history, based on these five modes. Aspects of the model are treated throughout the thesis, in structure, organisation and content.

1. Temporal understanding of history		
This mode of understanding history considers the concept “time”, also in its relation to “distance”. Aspects that are considered include: the structure of time; the practice of periodisation; and the establishing of patterns in history.		
On the structure of time	Cyclic – seasonal	e.g. Heraclitus; Natural Sciences
	Circular – always returns	e.g. Origen. The apokatastasis doctrine (the end will be as the beginning). Also Plato. E.g. in <i>Timaeus</i> (23B) the sentiment (culture, literacy, soul of a people) remaining young while floods and fires save the herdsmen and shepherds and destroys the cultivated in the valleys below. The herdsmen and shepherds in turn settle in the villages and the cycle of progress continues (Also <i>Crates</i> 109E-110A).
	Spiral – returns modified	e.g. Reinterpretation of historic imagery, Old Testament prophets and Apocalyptic Tradition.
	Linear – never returns	e.g. Judeo-Christian views on history.
On periodisation	Macro	Examples of macro periodisation models: 1. Ancient, Hellenistic, Medieval, Modern, Postmodern, Contemporary 2. Old Testament, New Testament, Church 3. The Father, the Son, the Spirit 4. According to Schools: Grammar, Historical, Structural The problem is that not one of these models is fully representative.
	Micro	Examples of micro periodisation models: 1. Patristic, Reformation, Post reformation (problem is not representative – e.g. Greek Orthodox Church did not partake in reformation) 2. French Revolution, Russian Revolution, Industrial Revolution 3. Renaissance, Enlightenment These models are useful when particular themes or interests are discussed.

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		<p>Comment: A particular example of periodisation that would have influenced Ben Marais' orientation to the history of Southern Africa is to be found in the history of the NG Kerk in South Africa: 1652 -1873 of A. Moorrees (1937). He divides the early history into three periods:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The church under the control of the Dutch East Company, but affiliated ecclesiastically to the Classis of Amsterdam – 1652-1804; 2. The church under the direct management of the State – 1804-1824; 3. Abatement of state management over the church – 1824-1862. <p>A further influence on Ben Marais, seen possibly in his 1959 publication providing an overview of Christianity over the centuries, is in the history of The Dutch Reformed Churches in Natal, Free State and Transvaal of Gerdener (1934). Of particular interest is Gerdener's use of battles and action reaction models in his periodisation.</p>
On Patterns	Life and Death	Closely related to Natural sciences – to biology
	Rise and Fall models	e.g. The Roman Empire
	Sequencing	e.g. Platonic political theory (<i>Laws</i> 832; <i>Epistle VII</i> : 326A). ⁸
2. Functionalist understanding of history		
<p>Indicating this mode as "Functionalist" is intentionally ambiguous, and wishes to relate the various structuralist schools as well as the questions on the function of history and history writing. Thus attention is given to the various reception theories, interest groups, as well as to the intention of the written history. Particular aspects, which make tabling easier, are considering history as fulfilling a need in the present, and justification of various issues.</p>		
History as fulfilling a need in the present	Gender Studies	e.g. Analysis of paternalistic language in the political and ecclesiastic documents covering the 20 th century, and following the subtle changes in emphasis.
	Race Studies	e.g. The history of Apartheid in South Africa
	Currents and Trends	e.g. Journalism; styles of recording histories
Justification	of ideology	e.g. National histories
	of cause or interest	e.g. Human Rights
	of movements	e.g. Pentecostalism
	of sentiment	e.g. anti Islamic or anti war or pro Empire or Establishment
	of point of view	e.g. reports on war and sport (esp. journalists: A great victory is a sad defeat!) regarding Church History: denominational, ecumenical, confessional. e.g. Ben Marais: "It is Church History that gives us insight into the universality of Jesus Christ" (Hofmeyr 1979:55).

⁸ It could be argued that the "irremediable degeneracy" of governments proposed by Plato, is the starting point of his political and social speculations. In this sequence Monarchy degenerates into Dictatorship, which is replaced by an Aristocracy. The Aristocracy degenerates into a Oligarchy (love for money) and is replaced by Democracy, which degenerates into mob rule, until a strong Monarch comes to the fore. The question is not necessarily for the best form, but for harmony, righteousness and justice (virtue).

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	of identity	e.g. of subjects: Old Testament, New Testament, Practical Theology, Church Doctrine, Psychology, Science, Church History; e.g. of nations: The Afrikaner nation, The English people, American society; e.g. of individuals: biography, autobiography. Look here at especially the Egyptian autobiographies.
	Regarding purpose	In different fields: e.g. education and training; information conveyance; manipulation of facts and people; elevation/regression of a state; entertainment purposes
	Regarding theme	Various possible themes: e.g. politics; economics; civilisation; nature; time; church – state relations
3. Understanding the Idea – History		
This mode is probably the most interesting, but at the same time most abstract. It asks central questions that have complex answers. Due to its philosophic nature, distinguishable schools of thought are also considered in this mode.		
	What is time?	
	What is truth?	
	What is relevant?	
	What is history?	
	Schools of thought	
4. Understanding through Method		
History could also be understood by the way in which it is presented, whether written or oral, and in the method of organising the history, or inquiry, which is determined as much, or more, by the way the mind works as by the formal schooling in History.		
	Format	Various options are possible: narrative; descriptive; poetic; analysis; essay
	Inquiry	Intuitive or mathematical – e.g. From Pascal: Deductive or inductive
5. Understanding through the material		
What material is covered in the history? What is emphasised and highlighted? What material is glossed over or neglected? Is the historian using original material (primary sources) or a reconstruction of the material (secondary sources)? Is the material religious or secular? Further distinctions could be: political, military, sport, art or culture. For the purpose of this study only the Religious and Secular are integrated into the mode, to save space and to consider what is appropriate for understanding how the central questions are answered.		
	Original material	
	Reconstruction	
	Religious or secular	

None of these five modes, the formulation of which is the result of structuralist thinking, could be considered in isolation and operate in tandem, though emphasis differentiation may occur, especially through the titling of the history: for example: *The Rise and Fall*

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*of the Roman Empire.*⁹

iii. Definition of History and Church History

This study, then, would be hesitant to formulate a definition of History and of Church History.¹⁰ Such definitions capture certain aspects or concerns, but cannot always fulfil the broader orientation. A historian's understanding of history is influenced by more factors than are exhibited within a single definition. In Church History, though, theological orientation is of particular concern.

d. Church History and Theology

Ben Marais was more an evangelically influenced church historian and ecumenical thinker than a theologian, although the theological principles he adhered to were rudimentary to his thought, attitudes and actions (Viljoen Interview 1985).

According to this study's understanding of tradition there were particularly four ecumenical Church Historians, Eusebius of Caesarea, Socrates, Sozomen and Theodoret.¹¹ While the ecumenical Church Historians should be differentiated from the "national" Church Historians of the post reformation era, enlightenment and thereafter, their histories were not free of theological reflection. Furthermore, the roots of the written history of the church are to be found in the Scriptures. For example, Luke, the author of the Gospel Luke and the Acts of the Apostles, is known as the historian of the New Testament. In the Old Testament the Prophets form part of the writings known as "the Histories".

Ben Marais approached the subject Church History through Mission History. Latourette

⁹ The fall of the Roman Empire corresponds with the expansion of Christianity.

¹⁰ The name of the subject itself poses problems and accent differences, whether it is "Church History" or "History of Christianity". Further distinction can be made between the specific fields of interest. For example: The history of doctrine; the history of the interpretation of God's Word. Furthermore, definitions on Church History are influenced by world views and philosophy of life. To consider each of these aspects would be to draw the study in a direction it does not want to. It wishes to be predominantly biography orientated.

¹¹ Rufinus is not considered an ecumenical Church Historian by this study due to his strong orientation to the Latin Church.

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especially advocated this approach (Viljoen Interview 1986).¹² The reformation also played an important interpretative role in the Church Historical thinking of Ben Marais. Bainton influenced Ben Marais' thinking in this regard, as can be seen in *Die Kerk deur die Eeue* (1959a:109-115) where Ben Marais discusses Calvin in relation to Michael Servetus.¹³ The influence of doctrines and heresies and the development of the history of doctrines need to be related. For example: Calvin's *Institute* theology, which is based in essence on a Confession – the 12 Articles, pays particular attention to the Trinity due to the heresies of Servetus. Karl Barth, whose Theology also has a strong confessional orientation, was written under different circumstances. Thus, the particular theology of a church person can be seen to reflect on the church historical circumstances people find themselves in. See also Eusebius' introduction to his *Historia Ecclesiastica* on the person of Christ, where he places the history he is covering within a Christological context and thus within a broader framework.

As Calvin only fully formulated a doctrine on the Trinity in response to Michael Servetus, historic events influenced the development of doctrines. The students of doctrines have particular attitudes towards history. For the development of a doctrine, or teaching on the NG Kerk, or reformed understanding of race relations, under which Apartheid constitutes, the historic events of the 20th century need to be taken into consideration. This study serves then as one orientation to a person, Ben Marais, who influenced the NG Kerk's attitude towards Apartheid.

e. Hermeneutic Perspective

In South African NG Kerk academia, the concept "hermeneutics" was associated most strongly with the biblical disciplines (Kinghorn 1986:55). It is considered to be a technical, theological term that indicates the theory of the interpretation of Scripture, which is distinguished from exegesis, indicating the actual interpretation of specific

¹² The approach of Latourette is particularly evident in the six volume work on *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*. The subtitles of the books reveal his periodisation: *The First Five Centuries* (1937); *The Thousand Years of Uncertainty AD 500 – AD 1500* (1938); *Three Centuries of Advance AD 1500 – AD 1800* (1939); *The Great Century AD 1800 – AD 1914: Europe and the United States* (1941); *The Great Century in the Americas, Australasia and Africa* (1943); *The Great Century in Northern Africa and Asia* (1944).

¹³ Compare to Bainton's work on the relations between Calvin and Servetus (Bainton 1948: 141-149).

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texts.¹⁴ In this study it is considered more in its philosophic-historical orientation, in which the emphasis falls on meaning, representation, understanding, and interpretation of events and people's actions, how they are presented, and how they relate to the present, the future and the past.

The hermeneutic perspective in Church History is based on a inter-disciplinary understanding of Theology, in which the disciplines are seen to be inter-related.¹⁵ When he was questioned on the New Testament by John Eck during their debate on the primacy of Rome and the authority of the councils (*una interna et spiritualis communio fidelium* – Bakhuizen van den Brink & Dankbaar 1967:36), Martin Luther maintained the principle to place the Scriptures at the middle of the church's thought and actions. Borchardt (1984:13) indicates that the church has always been serious about the interpretation of the Scriptures. It has, however, not always been able to give an account of its ideologically biased reading.¹⁶

In short, it could be considered that Hermeneutics has to do with understanding and interpretation; the relating of the worlds to establish common ground to facilitate meaning. There is an inherently associated communication in progress. For the establishing of "original" circumstance of the "source", socio-political, economic individual and religious (in other words historical) background must be considered, as well as of the current reader and audience (receiver). Throughout the ages there has been a continual reinterpretation of Scripture in specific worlds for various reasons. This could be restored under *the History of Interpretation*.

¹⁴ Recently, hermeneutics has also been considered in Homiletics in a Hermeneutical-communicative sermon theory. See Vos (1996).

¹⁵ See esp. Boje (1991) who proposes a transcontextual approach to Church Historiography. He maintains (Boje 1991:iii): "The social sources of our inherited denominationalism are compounded by cultural, socio-economic and racial divisions in South Africa, with the result that cultural contextualization shades into ideological captivity. Thus our hermeneutic 'conversation' with the text is distorted by our context, and our isolation from each other precludes the corrective of intercontextual exchange." This applies equally to an inter-disciplinary dialogue.

¹⁶ It is interesting to note that the hermeneutic model of Ebeling (1947) – Church History is the History of the Interpretation of the Scriptures – and the elaboration of Pillay (1988:86) – "Church History is the history of Christian self-understanding which has been based largely on Scripture and the developing tradition" – places Church History, within a reformational framework, in the centre of Christian experience and Theology. See also Hofmeyr (1995:24-43) for further tendencies in South African Church History. Compare to Bebbington (1995: 57-70) who discusses the trends in British Church History, on the relations between General and Church History, from an Evangelical perspective.

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History of Doctrine considers the development of doctrine, the measure against which Scripture is read, and practices in the church organised and rationalised. Church History, then, is the “consultant” to which each of these interpreters turn when meeting a different world, thus covering the sources and the recipients, the periods and relations between, with an ecclesiastic situation-specific perspective. Church History, distinguished as an autonomous subject, has a common heritage with the various other theological disciplines.

Where it would be a trap to over-simplify the relations between the theological disciplines as: Church History asks the “To be” question; Church Doctrine, Theology the “I am” question; Practical Theology the “To do” question; the Biblical subjects consider “What is written”; and Missiology being different, contains a dimension in each of the others, it is plausible to distinguish between normative, contributing and applicatory subjects. Each use similar tools, though with different accentuation’s. Church History is considered to be a contributing subject which facilitates understanding and interpretation. In short, the disciplines need to understand each other’s questions.

In *The Two Faces of Africa* (1964b:68), Ben Marais expresses a practical approach to Church History, where he applies hermeneutical keys to the social problems of South Africa:

“I have touched on some aspects of the most complicated racial situation on earth. I have discussed some of the basic problems, trends and prospects of present-day South Africa. I am convinced that if and when South Africa finds a key to the solution of its problems that key will be transformed into a beacon of light for all of Southern Africa and for many other difficult human situations as well....”

This study considers Ben Marais to be one such beacon, that if listened to, may also enlighten upon other concerns the church faces.

The following premises for the study can be formulated:

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4. PREMISES

- **On character – personal development**

This study does not regard character development as a growth phenomenon. Rather, it considers character manifestation as an orientation to the understanding of characters. The importance of considering Ben Marais' youth and relating it to his later life is therefore emphasised. And reversibly, reconstructing his youth through the considerations on his later life manifestations and denials should be possible.

- **On the theological orientation of this study**

This study in Church History has a theological orientation even though it is dealing with secular issues. A biography on a churchman does not make it theological because of the designation – churchman. Rather, the contribution this study has to understanding a man, who is an important figure in the Race Relations debate in the church, makes the study serviceable to Theology.

In the modified words of Ben Marais (1946:113): Any attempt at reconstructing a person's life or social conditions, must conceptualise an idea of the purpose and meaning of the person's life. This, in turn, stands in relation to and is determined by the nature of the divinity that is believed in.

- **On the relation between biography and history as an academic study**

A biography on its own does not necessarily qualify it as an academic study. The ideal is to determine a balance between the particular and the general. The style of thinking and writing has a particular influence, whether it is narrative, cryptic, or analytic.

- **On the relation between Church History and Science**

Church History is not a pure science. Though, it does incorporate science and uses scientific methods, and considers the relations between Science and Church. Also, the tradition of Church History is far older than the enlightenment, modernism and post-modernism, and therefore in this study considerations from the older tradition are seen alongside recent trends and fashions.

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▪ On objectivity

Objectivity itself is a subjective orientation, albeit a cold one.

• On Ideologies

This study is particularly wary for it is easier to analyse and discuss the ideologies of others than ones own. Often one is not aware of ones own ideological bearings. Thus in considering Communism and Nationalism as ideologies in negative terms, their positive aspects – as ideologies – could well be overseen.

• On Religions

This study in Church History designates a particular orientation towards the Christian faith. Due to the study being on a churchman of the Reformed tradition, it has a Reformed bearing. Due to his attitude towards Judaism, Islam and African religions, and the constructional organisation of this study, it would have been outside the scope of this study to consider the historiography of the other religions in relation to Church History, as well as their considerations on the problems in the country.

▪ Selection and omission and organising of information and approach

An attempt is made to reflect effectively, using only as much material as is required for this study.

Since this study covers a broad study field, preference is given to material that relates to the life of Ben Marais, or helps to place his life in the context of 20th century South Africa. This study is organised around hermeneutical keys. These keys are not allegorical keys – in which distinction is made between different layers of meaning: For example – Literal, Figurative, and Moral levels of interpretation.

Information is considered and organised according to its contribution to clarify meaning and enhance an understanding of the subject. It is not only about reflection, representation and reconstruction of various possibilities.

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The posing of the problem, the formulation of the hypothesis and the development of the argument assists in the selection of the most appropriate material.

5. FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM

The formulation of a problem and hypothesis, and the proving or disproving of it, is a useful approach in structuring an argument. It helps in the formulation of a central theme and prevents too many side-tracks being developed.

a. Probing the Problems

The following general questions are asked:

- Why base a study on the life of Ben Marais?
- What happened during the 1930s to 1970s in South African politics and the NG Kerk? How was Ben Marais involved in these events? How did what happened affect him?
- Who was Ben Marais? Would it be best to approach a study on his life, by considering him in the categories: churchman; church critic; family man; lecturer; author; radio personality; or ecumenical figure?
- There is hardly any documentation on Ben Marais' childhood. What were the circumstances he grew up in? What early influences helped govern his later perspectives?¹⁷
- Are the decisions made in youth, in terms of thought processes and execution thereof not a blue print to later decisions that are made in life? How can a reflection be made on Ben Marais' youth from decisions and attitudes later in life?
- Ben Marais made calculated study, academic and ministerial decisions. What was the essence of these decisions?

¹⁷ Eddie Brown (1992:480) formulated a similar question (my translation): "Is it the Karoo that helped to make him human? Jovial, spontaneous and well liked ... an approachable open person, a person of broad horizons."

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b. Posing the Problem

The following question is central to this thesis:

What led an ordinary man, of humble background, to the insights he reflected, and guided him through times of transparent opposition to maintain his belief in what was right and just? What was the essence of his theology and understanding of the South African Problem? To what extent could the church leaders of the present, and the future learn from his example and life, in terms of the tribulations faced, different schools of thought, and sentiments, both nationalistic and spiritual?

6. HYPOTHESIS

The following hypothesis is to be argued in this thesis.

a. Orientation to the Hypothesis

Borchardt (1966:vii) points out in the introduction to his doctoral thesis on Hilary of Poitiers: “Every struggle brings great men into prominence, because the slumbering powers inert in them are aroused to action.” This understanding of human nature is central to the study, where Ben Marais is considered a humble and conservative person who came into prominence because the political situation in the church roused him into action. Therefore, it would be possible to understand the complexities of South African nationalism and religion, politics and academia through a closer look at the life of Ben Marais. In this sense he may show similarities to other prophets of the 20th century in South Africa, for example, Desmond Tutu and Beyers Naudé.

b. Formulation of the Hypothesis

Ben Marais can be considered as one of the steadfast and humble prophets of the church in southern Africa during the 20th century, who serves as an example of Christian Brotherhood, regardless of the perplexities, to present and future generations on relations between the affairs of faith, state and society.

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7. TITLE OF THE THESIS

The formulation of the title, *Ben Marais (1909-1999): the Influences on and Heritage of a South African Prophet during Two Periods of Transformation*, implies the thesis' bias concerning its approach and towards its findings. The following explanation is presented to indicate some of the complexities involved.

The beginning of the 20th century, the century Ben Marais lived in, would be easy to demarcate in one sense, the Anglo-Boer War, but the tensions between English and Afrikaner sentiments preceded this war, and only came to full blossom during the 1930s. Furthermore, reference to the 20th century in the title does not do justice to the growing tensions between the various forms of nationalism and the emergence of particular sentiments along the lines of race, language, class, socio-economic and imperial/colonial sentiments. The hazy area of post 1994 is still too young to fully determine the effects of the political changes on the various sentiments. Therefore, the demarcation at the close of the 20th century is open.

Different periods of transformation during the 20th century could be determined according to temporal considerations. For example (dates are approximates):

The unification of Southern Africa: 1901-1960

- 1901-1910: Afrikaner recovery and English strength
- 1901-1912: Indian consciousness and African questions
- 1910-1948: Rise of Afrikaner and African nationalism
Decline of English nationalism

The division of South Africa: 1948-1994

- 1948-1970: Bloom of Afrikaner nationalism
Refocus and regrouping of African nationalism
- 1960-1990: Rise of African nationalism

The isolation of South Africa: 1960-1994

The repair of South Africa: 1990-

While this study considers periodisation of the various forms of nationalism in thematic and not temporal terms, certain confusions are prone to manifest themselves. The two representative periods overlap, depending also on the periodisation policy. Temporal and thematic considerations have influenced the choice made for this study.

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The fact that the country still finds itself within the time and thought frames in which these two periods manifested themselves, makes the task of understanding it virtually impossible, unless they were seen in relation to each other. The two periods of transformation reflect on the rise and establishment of Afrikaner nationalism, and the rise and establishment of African nationalism. The people of the two periods share common dates (interpreted differently), common battles (most times on opposing sides but not always), and common religions – but not religious facilities, besides the forced and unforced differentiation in education, housing, political voice, employment and justice.

Concerning the biographic emphasis of this thesis, Ben Marais did not live through the whole century, 1909-1999. He was only active during a certain period, especially 1940s to 1970s. Thus, due to his inconsequential involvement in the various affairs, reference to the 20th century would be pretentious if not taken representatively.

It would be possible to consider “South African Social Revolution” as a periodisation option, but such a formulation would implicate an in-depth study on a far broader field and scale. However, when considered as a perspective on the selected periods of transformation, “South African Social Revolution”, presents some interesting possibilities.

From the various periodisation models that could be applied to the 20th century, considerations on nationalism are chosen to represent the socio-political developments in the country. To be specific – two periods of transformation (pre and post 1948) are considered. Though we are still within the transformation patterns, and the transformation is not yet complete – there being a third and possibly a fourth period of transformation within the greater pattern besides those that preceded – the idea “prophet” indicates an understanding of the openness in this pattern. The study wishes to concentrate on predominantly two periods of transformation in the country, though to do so in isolation would be restrictive.

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The mentioning of “South African” technically presupposes a post 1961 orientation to the study. Prior to the end of the Anglo-Boer War (1901), the geographic area, now known as South Africa consisted of two British colonies (Cape and Natal) and two Afrikaner republics (Orange Free State and Transvaal). In 1910 these four differently administered political states united to form the Union of South Africa. The Republic of South Africa only came into being in 1961.

8. METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE

To approach Ben Marais’ life, use will be made of hermeneutic keys, which helps direct and structure the study as well as expounding insight. Rather than seeing the inherent restrictions in such an approach, the faculty of demarcation for a study of this scope is welcomed.

A serious consideration in this study is the fear and danger of repetition of facts and information. Caution needs to be practised so that different perspectives on the same events qualify the argument in the different chapters. For example, his travels are covered under his biography, under the factors that influenced him, and in the chapter that considers his contributions during these tours, especially at the conferences.

a. Organisation of Methodology

This study is predominantly a literary study, in which publications, as for example by the subject of this study – Ben Marais, are approached in the same light as primary texts. The distinctions between primary and secondary sources are also difficult to demarcate in terms of how they were treated for the canvassing of information and the way the information was used.

Interviews also played an integral role. Apart from the interviews conducted for the purposes of this study, other interviews, which had other aims, were consulted. This created the idea of organising the research as if in preparation for an interview with Ben Marais.

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b. Research Process

The research process has been multi-faceted. In essence it has been an attempt to work in concentric circles, starting from outside and moving inward, while having access to the kernel, through personal contact with Mrs. Sibs Marais. Thus it has been conducted in dialogue. Questions posed and hypotheses formulated were constantly tested for confirmation or rejection, which helped steer the study within a particular scope of questions and answers.

Due to the broad scope of the study, perhaps too much so, but essential for the line of thought followed, attention was not equally distributed between the different available sources.

c. Presentation of Results

The thesis is intended to grow from a central kernel, the biography of Ben Marais, outwards to the history of South Africa. Though, a particular thematic orientation to Ben Marais has also been identified as necessary to retain the scope of the study. Therefore, the particular event of Ben Marais' correspondence, and then with the general secretaries of the World Council of Churches has been chosen as orientation to Ben Marais' life. Ben Marais is then also seen as a plausible key or window to the history of the twentieth century in South Africa, where he was influenced by certain factors and made significant contributions through his prophetic voice.

Therefore, the chapters follow a pattern, as does the argument, where a balance is maintained between chronological and thematic organisation of research results. This has also influenced the application of different styles, ranging from description to analysis to commentary.

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9. CHAPTER OVERVIEW

The following chapter overview provides a guide to how the argument in this thesis has been developed.

- **Chapter 1: Introduction**

A short orientating synopsis of Ben Marais' life precedes a consideration on the nature of this study. The theological and scientific orientation to biographies and church histories is related within the scope of church and general historiography. The study's premises conclude the philosophical considerations in historiography and introduce the posing of the problem and hypothesis formulation. The formulation of the title is then discussed, along with the methodology and procedure followed in the study.

- **Chapter 2: The Life of Ben Marais**

A biographic relation on the life of Ben Marais is presented. Special emphasis is placed on his childhood. The orientation to his life is taken from the point of his singular communications with the general secretaries of the World Council of Churches during the 1960s and 1970s. It is then suggested that Ben Marais could serve as a key to the history of South Africa.

- **Chapter 3: The Times of Ben Marais**

The biographic relation of Chapter 2 is set within particular climates experienced during the 20th century in South Africa. Thus, where Chapter 2 was more biographic, Chapter 3 is more contextual in nature. The context of the twentieth century Ben Marais knew is approached thematically, being designated under politics, culture, religion, academia, Theology and nationalism. The study is particularly interested in nationalism and in Ben Marais' understanding of its intricacies.

- **Chapter 4: Nationalism: The Two Periods of Transformation**

The considerations on nationalism are approached from a model of rise and fall, or growth and maturity. Thus, it is considered using the model of two periods of

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transformation. The various forms of nationalism prevalent in South Africa is discussed, and it is indicated how they are invariably related.

▪ **Chapter 5: Underlying Principles and Influential Presence**

A closer look at the underlying principles and influential presence of Ben Marais is made. Where Chapter 3 presents various climates, Chapter 5 considers the different perspectives on Ben Marais. This is done from personal, political, ecclesiastic and academic considerations.

▪ **Chapter 6: A Prophet for His Times, But for Others Too**

Chapter 6 deals predominantly with the legacy of Ben Marais. The incomplete pattern in the transformation and rise and fall of a nationalism serves as background to his prophetic voice, which is based as much on Ben Marais' underlying principles as it does on his analysis of the situation.

▪ **Chapter 7: Conclusion**

The Conclusion to the thesis presents a contemplative church historical consideration on the role and significance of Ben Marais. In short, it is found that he was not only a prophet for his times, but that he also adhered to certain principles that cannot be modified by either fashion or political model.

10. CONCLUSION

The reasons for the study and its importance were expressed in this chapter. Church History was presented as a subject and as home to this study within a theological frame. The study, based on a biographical analysis, finds itself suspended between various traditions. Scientific, general historic, theological and church historic traditions were briefly related to this study. The understanding of history was set out in the form of a 5-point model. The premises underlying the study follow, and serve as orientation to the probing and posing of the central questions. The formulation of the hypothesis the study wishes to argue, as well as the formulation of the title are presented before the procedures and methodology followed in the study and presentation of results in the thesis. In the next chapter, a closer look is given to the person, Ben Marais.

CHAPTER 2

THE LIFE OF BEN MARAIS

1. INTRODUCTION

It is hardly ever that people end up where they expect, or are expected, when they have a life's ambition. Parents look upon their babies and imagine their futures. Young children dream. Some people who were expected to become miners on the gold fields ended up as professors at universities. Also, some princes have turned away from their destinies. On the one hand, how different did the life of a son of a distressed farmer turn out? And on the other, to what extent were the qualities that later distinguished the farmer's son from his peers inherent in his character?

In my translated words of Ben Marais (*Wit Huise van Herinnering* 1964c:93):

“The history registers of the world are full of illustrious names. In hours of quiet when our spirit is at rest, we bow our heads and thank God for them. Their lives rise high on the horizon of time like huge trees in the early evening. But, when we read their names and recall their glorious deeds, we often do not realise how many of them tread on roads different to those they originally intended. God and the life intervened and sent their feet on unexpected and sometimes unwelcome roads ... Think of St Paul. We read in Acts that he intended to go to Bethany. But God did not allow him and thus he sailed to Troas ... And thus Paul ... was lead to Europe by no one else but God ... And we remember Paul today because of his exceptional labour in Europe, and we can thank God for this great apostle who carried the gospel of the cross to the ancient countries of the West and so to us.”

How different could Ben Marais' life have been had he succumbed and entered a life of politics, or become a journalist for a leading newspaper? Ben Marais firmly believed that God called him to walk the particular roads he followed, even though they were sometimes unpleasant, and caused him much anguish. Rather than siding with anybody, whether a left-wing activist or a right-wing conservative, he argued for the just cause.

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In this chapter the lonely but fruitful road Ben Marais trod will be traced.¹⁸ Thus, a biographic relation of his life is presented. Special emphasis is placed on his childhood, which would have determined how he walked the way that he was determined to walk. His correspondence with the general secretaries of the World Council of Churches contains compact formulations of his life's work and attitudes towards the current issues (Meiring 1979:86). While they might reveal him to be naïve concerning certain bodies, they do express his wholehearted concern for corrective actions being taken. The biographic relation is set within particular climates – road conditions and scenery – experienced during the 20th century, which are explored in Chapter 3.

Ben Marais' life could be considered in accordance to climaxes and low points that he experienced during his life (Meiring 1979:78-91), or according to a chronological periodisation, as is done. The chronological orientation is preferred above a thematic approach at this point in the argument, because his life is related to the greater 20th century through means of hermeneutical keys (thus thematic) and a chronological/periodised orientation provides a helpful framework.

2. A KEY TO BEN MARAIS

How would it be best to approach the life of Ben Marais? Are there any central moments around which his life could be orientated? How would it be best to organise and relate the vast amount of information and sources in digestible format? Or, to regard the road imagery used, to enable a single lane perspective on his life and not a multi-national, dual-highway network? Though he travelled such roads, it would require several studies to unravel them in detail.

This thesis wishes to work through a window, or a key. While this is restrictive in itself, it helps to focus the attention on particular details. Different options present themselves

¹⁸ In an undated essay titled "An Enchanted World" (Pretoria Archives), Ben Marais writes: "I have often walked along the great highways of the world, – Broadway and Times Square, Piccadilly, Unter den Linden, La Place De La Concorde, Rome, Cairo, New Delhi or the Ouvidor in Rio. I have so often followed the lonely trails in the far away corners of Africa and the Americas...."

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as keys. It could be either a significant document, such as his D.Phil.,¹⁹ a letter he had written,²⁰ a book he had read or written, one of the countless newspaper or popular magazine articles, or it could be found in one of his public pronouncements, for example when he denied that Apartheid could be based on Scripture. Alternatively it could be found in a particular relationship or friendship, for example with Beyers Naudé, or with his old students – especially those who were at the Sonop residence, his wife or adversaries, as for example Dr J.D. Vorster or E.P. Groenewald. The petition of the 13 professors,²¹ signed on 16 May and released on 17 May 1955 could well have served as key, since it signified a particular response to the policies of segregation. However, the petition is more general, political in nature, and does not place Ben Marais in an immediate ecclesiastic or ecumenical context. The protest is important, though, since it states quite clearly that the undersigned are either members of the National Party or are nationalists.²² The petition is also significant since it binds 13 prominent academics from the mid 1950s, in a single voice of protest against the policies of the government in power.²³ Furthermore, it indicates that Ben Marais was not a solitary voice while exemplifying his pertinence to protesting where he saw fit. Also, it indicates that Ben Marais was active in circles other than the church and theological training. The death threats Ben Marais received consequent to the release of the petition are also noteworthy since they express the anxiety and distress the Marais family had to endure as a result of Ben Marais' political and theological stance.²⁴

For the particular angle of inquiry formulated in the Introduction of this thesis, the correspondence between Ben Marais and three secretaries of the World Council of

¹⁹ Ben Marais considers this possibility in Meiring (1979:78): In reference to the Wiehahn and Riekert reports as key reports – “dreams of many years that have become real ... finally it appears that we are opening our windows and doors. Then it seems as if everything one has said and done over the past 40 years was worth the while” (my translation).

²⁰ Ben Marais exchanged numerous letters with Alan Paton and Roland Bainton (Pretoria Archives).

²¹ The petition, based on moral and constitutional grounds was drawn up by the 13 professors to protests against the reconstitution of the Senate on pseudo-legalistic aspects. Seven substantiating reasons for the protest were given (*Star* 17 May 1955).

²² *Nationaalgesindes*. Ben Marais was apparently a member of the South African Party.

²³ In order of signatures: W.A. Kleynhans, P.V. Pistorius, J.J.N. Cloete, J.A. Louw, B.J. Schlebusch, E.F.W. Geyvan Pittius, W.J. de Kock, S.P. Engelbrecht, A.S. Geysers, D.J. Swiegers, B.J. Marais, D. Pont, C. Jacobsz.

²⁴ Specific reference is made to a hand written death threat (Archives, Pretoria Collection), made during May 1955 and addressed to Prof Ben Marais.

Churches, Visser't Hooft,²⁵ Eugene Carson Blake²⁶ and Dr Potter²⁷ is insightful. It appears that Ben Marais had a habit of formulating his concerns with the World Council of Churches in letters. Particular questions that could be asked are: Who was the person (Ben Marais) behind the letters? What are the particular issues in the letters? Why did he take the positions he took? Why was it that he received detailed and reasonable responses?

a. Correspondence with the World Council of Churches

Ben Marais was a prolific letter writer, and received as many or more letters in return. Each of the letters could tell a story. The available correspondence could be grouped according to subject (personal; academic; political; religious), or according to recipients and senders (political leaders; church and ecumenical leaders; friends; press; old students; adversaries; colleagues), or according to temporal considerations (chronologically – earliest to latest; periods of his career), or according to correspondence published in the press.

i. From Dr W.A. Visser't Hooft, 17 October 1956

In this letter, written in Dutch, there is internal evidence substantiating a continued correspondence between Visser't Hooft and Ben Marais. This letter concerns the person of Du Preez (A.B.) who had visited Europe and had held discussions with theologians on the biblical justification of Apartheid:²⁸ “bijbelse fundering van de Apartheidspolitik”. Du Preez had also written an article on the theological foundation of

²⁵ Visser't Hooft was General Secretary of the World Council of Churches from its inception until he retired in 1966.

²⁶ Carson Blake followed Visser't Hooft as the second General Secretary, serving from 1966 to 1972. He was Presbyterian, and was a respected ecumenical leader in the United States.

²⁷ Philip Potter, a Methodist minister from the West Indies, served as General Secretary of the World Council of Churches from 1972b to 1984.

²⁸ Prof A.B. du Preez undertook a European academic tour in the mid 1950s. During this tour he held theological discussions with European academics. The tour had an impact on the situation in South Africa, where he was nominated to head a research committee, which had to study race relations and the church. Ben Marais and B.B. Keet were part of this committee. The letter indicates that Du Preez's visit also had a profound effect abroad, albeit not positive. On 11 December 1958, D. Otto Weber responded to an enquiry by Ben Marais on allegations made by A.B. du Preez (Pretoria Archives). Du Preez alleged emphatically that Weber (then rector of Georg-August-Universität, Göttingen), approved of Apartheid. In the letter Weber mentions, “I am surprised to be known as a supporter of racial segregation even in the church. It only is true that in the course of winter 1955 to 1956 I met here one of your colleagues of Pretoria....”

Apartheid, calling for a justification based on practical considerations. Visser't Hooft thinks Du Preez unscientific and inappropriate, and mentions the need for a relevant historical analysis along the lines of the situational analysis of Barth and Bonhoeffer.²⁹ Visser't Hooft writes, “Men krijgt van buiten af dikwijls de indruk, dat velen in Zuid-Afrika de situatie van 1956 pogen te beantwoorden met een houding die wellicht in 1856 (sic) de juiste geweest is,”³⁰ indicating at once the complexity of the race relations debate in South Africa and the need for a sympathetic historical understanding of the situation (1956).

The crux of the letter is Visser't Hooft asking Ben Marais' point of view on Du Preez concerning the biblical justification of Apartheid:

“Wat ik in verband met Dupreez niet goed begrijp, is dat het bekende rapport van de kerken over het rassen-vraagstuk toch niet meer vasthoudt aan de bijbelse fundering en dat Dupreez dus toch eigenlijk polemiseert tegen dat rapport. Is dit juist gezien?”³¹

A subtle argument could be suggested that such visits by NG Kerk theologians abroad contributed towards the international church community, for example the World Council of Churches, loosing patience with the NG Kerk for its recurrent abstinence, and rather supporting the alternative parties, whose arguments were well formulated, and through whom it was deemed most probable that the race-imbalance-debate would be resolved. The NG Kerk's self afflicted isolation during the 1960s and 1970s did not contribute to the discussions either. Ben Marais, himself, always remained a proponent of resolving the race tensions in South Africa through debate and discussion.

Unfortunately Ben Marais' reply to this letter has not been traced. It is known that relations between the two colleagues, A.B. du Preez and Ben Marais were not always good (S. Marais Interview 2000).

²⁹ Barth and Bonhoeffer: World War II Nazi Germany, the church and nationalism.

³⁰ “From the side one often gets the impression that many attempt to answer the situation in 1956 with the attitude that was prevalent in 1856 (sic).” In 1857 the NG Kerk synod determined that the Lord's Supper could be served separately to white and coloured church members “for the sake of the weaker brothers”.

³¹ “What I do not understand about Dupreez is that the church's well known report on race relations is not substantiated by biblical justification and that Dupreez is arguing against that report. Would that be your impression?”

ii. To the Secretary, World Council of Churches, 25 September 1964

This letter, a copy of a hand-written draft,³² unfortunately had its addressee removed in a photocopying accident. It is, however, certain that the intended recipient was associated with the World Council of Churches. Compared to the other letters Ben Marais wrote, this letter has a sense of urgency reflected in its style and aggressive handwriting.

Ben Marais expresses concern in the letter. He is reacting to a report and states that:

“40,000 dollar (or Rand) has been spent by your committee on refugees etc. to aid refugees from South Africa”

The “etc” is developed in the letter where he asks that distinction be drawn “between refugees and sabotage, violence and communist infiltration”. He wrote the letter to secure clarification – and to protest – against the World Council of Churches apparent indiscriminate aid to refugees (exiles?) from South Africa. Ben Marais’ point is that the World Council of Churches is being accused of “subsidising sabotage in South Africa”. He asks what form the aid took and “who were these refugees?” His concern is that they might be communists, and could well be guilty of acts of violence or sabotage. These concerns are not founded or substantiated in the letter, giving the impression that this is an early draft, written in haste and not well thought through, possibly in a sense of panic or anger. It is most probable that the letter was sent, but no supporting communications have been traced. They are particularly relevant, though, to understanding Ben Marais’ concern for communism, which differed on technical points from the concerns of the proponents of Apartheid.

iii. To Dr Potter, World Council of Churches, 1978(?)

This letter, unfortunately undated, was written on a University of South Africa letterhead, implying a post 1975 date. The most probable date is 1978, since it refers to events that took place in the then Rhodesia, when 20 missionaries were massacred during the civil war. Ben Marais is reacting to allegations that the World Council of

³² It could be established that the letter was addressed to the Secretary of the World Council of Churches, when the original letter was traced (Pretoria Archives).

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Churches “has become ‘Marxist’ and even Godless or ‘diabolical’....” because it was supporting the “liberation movements” in Southern Africa. He states that he understands the World Council of Churches’ “concern for justice and liberation in Africa and elsewhere”, but he seriously questions the wisdom of some of the council’s actions in this regard. It appears that Ben Marais is concerned, in light of the massacre of the 20 missionaries by the freedom fighters (argument substantiated), that the World Council of Churches, which had a missionary orientation in its founding, is contradicting itself and is being self defeatist. The letter is concluded on a personal and, rightfully or wrongfully, on a prophetic tone:

“In conclusion: I hear someone out of your corner say: This is a typical reaction of a white South African. No! You are wrong. I have consistently – all my life, been a critic of much of what is happening in Southern Africa, and of our systems. I have, as a result, often been treated as the filth of the earth and experienced extreme forms of ostracism, organised boycott and loneliness. I could not wish that to happen to my greatest enemy. But, that is life in our sort of world and I have no regrets. A man can only stand up for what he believes. Faced by the same issues I will make the same decisions once again. Freedom for human groups means much to me. But that does not mean that I support or condone any sort of action in the name of freedom. How your support under the circumstances mentioned above, can in any way further the interests of the Gospel in Africa, I fail to see!

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.

Is it not possible that you could in this way, in your crusade for justice, commit a new injustice?”

In retrospect, the letter is written by a white middle class male who held a particular perspective on the political movements representing the poor and oppressed and their ideologies, methods and actions. Media formed this perspective as much as peers and his understanding of the situation. A further consideration is Ben Marais’ deliberate avoidance of taking action against the perpetrators who were causing poverty and oppression in Southern Africa. Regardless, Ben Marais spoke out for what he believed to be right.

Unfortunately the response to the above letter is not available for commentary, unlike the following letter, written much earlier (1970),³³ to which Eugene Carson Blake reacted personally.

iv. To Dr E.C. Blake, World Council of Churches, 3 September 1970

The letter is quoted in full. It is possible to detect certain stylistic conventions in his formulations, which compared to his monographs and other writings, reveal Afrikaans language structures and syntax. Though there appears to be a lack of embellishment, his thoughts appear to be contemplative and sincere. The fear of communism is a recurrent theme in his writings, depicting him also a child of his times. There is a sense of warmth in his writing, while the tone of urgency could be ascribed to the letters being “kairos” or particular opportunity letters:

“UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA.
3 September, 1970.
Dear Dr. Blake,

I write as one who in years gone by was closely associated with the World Council of Churches and fondly remember many wonderful Christian men and women I met and worked with in different areas of the work of the World Council of Churches as men and women of deep Christian conviction and concern for the Kingdom of God.

Though my close associations have as a result of circumstances been broken almost a decade ago I still follow the deliberations and work of the W.C.C. with great interest and not without hope that this great organization may yet be an instrument in the hands of God to revitalise the life of the churches and further the great cause of the unity of the church which is God’s will.

It was with profound shock therefore that I read the announcement that the W.C.C. has been led to decide on financial support to “liberation” or “Terrorist” movements in Africa.³⁴ I still cannot believe what I read and have not given up hope that the report that reached us does not reflect the true picture. This decision is so completely out of character if seen in the light of the responsible statements of the W.C.C. on social or political questions in the past that I wish to disassociate myself from it completely. You make it virtually impossible for a responsible Christian in this part of the world – whatever his race or colour to defend the W.C.C. or its actions.

³³ See also *Pro Veritate*, 1 October 1970.

³⁴ Ben Marais is referring to the fund of the Programme to Combat Racism, which was launched in 1970. US\$ 10.9 million was given to groups involved in efforts to combat racism (See Kinnamon 1997:220-221).

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You played directly into the hands of people in this country and elsewhere who claim that the W.C.C. is moving towards Communism or is already deeply infiltrated. It was not true of the W.C.C. I co-operated with up to 1960. I am very reluctant to believe that it is true now.

The decision to support the so-called “liberation movements” of Africa will alienate responsible Christian leaders. Though these movements may spring from nationalist aspirations they have historically become closely associated with the communist world and its material support. I know that you will claim that it is the Christian church’s duty to be identified with the cause of social justice and to prove its solidarity with groups who suffer some form of political oppression or discrimination especially on grounds of race or colour and that if the church keeps quiet the peoples of Africa may turn to the Communist world in the false belief that only they have any concern for justice and freedom.

In this concern I am with you. The church has a duty and must be willing to take up unpopular causes. Many of us in S.A. have risked our reputations and everything we had in the church or the state to further the cause of justice as we see it and we are willing to do so again if our consciences so dictate.

But by giving your support to movements dedicated to revolution and bloodshed if necessary, you have as I see it betrayed the Christian way in social and political reform. If you had seen some acts of violence perpetrated on innocent people by some of these groups under the banner of “freedom”, you would not have taken this decision. I predict that you will lose much of your support among churches and churchmen in Southern Africa – among them many black church leaders from different denominations.

Fight for justice, stress the full gospel in all its vertical and horizontal aspects, but in God’s name do not give grounds for the church of Christ to be branded as a “subsidiser of terrorism and violence”.

In the long run it could not benefit the progress of the Gospel among the people of Africa. This is a cry from my heart. I hope it is not too late to rescind this fatal decision.

Yours in Christ,
Ben Marais”

It is possible to follow his thoughts carefully, as he constructed it in the quietness of his study. It is important to mention that Ben Marais reacted in similar calm and brotherly fashion towards his colleagues in the faculty and church with whom he disagreed (See for example, his open letter to Beyers Naudé 1986). The above letter received the following response.

v. From Dr E.C. Blake, World Council of Churches, 24 September 1970

The response to Ben Marais' letter is short and well articulated to the point. It indicates, quite crudely, the different attitudes to the problem of race relations in South Africa, where Blake states:

“It is my own judgement that without clear commitment to the cause of racial equality the churches will find themselves under the judgement of God.”

Fear of the judgement of God must surely be far greater than any communist threat? The letter also displaces Ben Marais' argument about the Black churchmen being against the World Council of Churches' decision to support the liberation movements when Blake states:

“There are indications that black Christians in the whole continent of Africa including many who are silent in South Africa itself are heartened in their Christian faith by our action.”

The purpose of Carson Blake's letter is:

“... written in the hope that this whole affair may have the effect of widening Christian understanding of the importance of racism as an attitude which must be combated and overcome.”

Blake's response puts the race debate in the church on a different level. The question is not race-relations but racism, indicating a one-sided attitude of one race group towards another. There is thus no opportunity for negotiations and discussions as Ben Marais seeks. The irony would appear that Ben Marais was outdated in his thinking as far as the World Council of Churches was concerned, but was revolutionary compared to peers and fellow churchmen in the NG Kerk.

b. Further Correspondence

The following letters are also significant in that they emphasise aspects of Ben Marais' life and work not necessarily covered in the above letters.

i. From H.E. Pressley, 2 September 1981

In this informal letter, Henry E. Pressley, an old university friend from Princeton (Meiring 1979:81), wrote a letter expressing his concern over the events in Angola and about Ben Marais' research on racial affairs. Apart from reminiscences on the past and personal matters, the following paragraph appears, expressing the author's paranoia and also the high regard he held for Ben Marais' opinion and insight:

“Ben, when you were doing your research on the racial issues you came to America a number of times and you honored us with a visit also. I have a hazy idea that you told me something about our U.S. situation to the effect that if America should have a major crisis a certain segment of our society would go with the enemy. Did I get your slant on this situation? If that is the case, if that segment would go with the enemy in the event of a major war, please set me straight on the matter ... Please let me know what the facts are in this matter when you write....”

The Cold War between the United States and the Soviet block must be seen as background to this letter, and the enemy would surely be communism, the “Rooi gevaar”, one of Ben Marais' interests. Further background to this letter could be Ben Marais' visit to the United States from September 1968 to January 1969 as part of the leadership exchange programme between United States and South Africa. In his report Ben Marais makes the following observation on the United States (Marais 1969b:3):

“This is a troubled land. I have little doubt that this country faces perilous times and quite possibly a decade of great tension. It is part of the growing process of this people and this civilization and as such natural and normal. But I think a very critical stage in this development has undoubtedly been reached, a sort of watershed. Tensions are going up, especially on the race front and that includes not only the Negroes, or black people of this country, but also minority groups like the Mexicans and Indians. They are all becoming more self conscious and aware of their identities....”

Further comment will not be made on this extract, since the main focus of this thesis wishes to fall on South Africa, though, it becomes pertinently clear that Ben Marais' wisdom was not only of value to South Africa.

ii. From L.C. Malan, 10 April 1989

This informal letter, originally in Afrikaans, expresses an appreciation for Ben Marais not being drawn into joining the left wing liberals and thereby finding protection for his points of view. The consideration of viewing Coloureds as “fellow Afrikaners” is also mentioned in the letter. The letter lauds Ben Marais for being a prophet for his times, and for remaining dedicated to his calling despite the threats of isolation.

iii. From Eddie Brown, 21 September 1992

In an Afrikaans letter on a University of Stellenbosch letterhead, addressed to Ben Marais, Eddie Brown congratulates Ben Marais on the honorary doctorate he received from the University of Stellenbosch, and expresses his gratitude for the hospitality he received as the Marais’ guest two weeks earlier. The former student of Ben Marais also says:³⁵

“Thank you for your ‘being a brother’ towards the NG Kerk and your students.”³⁶

The reference is to Ben Marais being a Christian Brother, and relates to the theme of Ben as a prophet of the church.

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Contrary to the overwhelming image created in the biographic material available on Ben Marais, he did not merely emerge at University. He had a childhood. This childhood is often brushed over in a few references to his date of birth, his completing school, and his love for playing rugby. However, in *Wit Huise van Herinneringe* (1964c) a collection of 31 devotional essays, he gives unusual glimpses into his youth. Two of these recollections are significant.

³⁵ My translation.

³⁶ “...Baie dankie vir u ‘broederskap’ teenoor die NGK en u studente....”

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In the first pastoral recollection (1964c:28) he recalls:³⁷

“I was a shepherd early in my life – or was I? Maybe I just looked after sheep. That at least I did day after day for a few months during the years of the flu when I was only eight years old. I used to herd the sheep out to the field along with my elder brother, care for them and bring them back to the kraal at night. I learned many things about animals and the veld in those months – things I will never forget....”

In the second recollection (1964c:30-32) he recalls:³⁸

“I got to know death when I was a small child. It all happened so quietly that death lost most of its intimidation. My young brother Danie had been sick for some time. He became paler as the days drew out. Then, one morning, my mother called while I was playing with ‘bitterappels’ and ‘dolossies’ to come and say good bye to Danie, ‘because he is going to heaven’. And there I stood in the great enveloping silence and saw how a person dies....

On one sunny morning, many years later, I returned to the old farm graveyard where Danie lies buried. While standing there, reading his name on the small grave stone, I looked up to see the rippling of the white grassland, and it was as if the West wind was chanting from the rite: ‘Thus we let the body rest in the bosom of the earth, but the soul returns to God who gave it’³⁹....”

Daniel Marais, Ben Marais’ baby brother who died a few days after his baptism on 3 May 1914 (born on 7 January 1914), lies buried next to their mother. There is no evidential substantiation of the influence of Daniel Marais’ untimely death on the life of Ben Marais, but as is argued from circumstantial evidence, these deaths, along with that of another baby sibling and an elder brother, Pieter Abraham, and their mother, had a profound influence on his life.

Ben Marais makes a further, indirect reflection on his life in *Die Kerk deur die Eeue* (1959a). In this thematic treatment of the history of the church,⁴⁰ Ben Marais pays particular and interesting attention to Bernardino Ochino (1488-1564) alongside Martin Luther and John Calvin. In *Die Kerk deur die Eeue*, Bernardino Ochino appears to be

³⁷ My translation.

³⁸ My translation.

³⁹ “So lê ons nou die liggaam weg in die skoot van die aarde, maar die siel keer terug tot God wat dit gegee het.”

⁴⁰ The contents are “Die stryd na buite” – The outward battle, “Inwendige stryd” the inward battle, “Rondom die kerkhervorming: enkele hoofmomente in die stryd” – On the Reformation: a few key moments, “Nuwe bane” – New routes, indicating an orientation to battles.

struggling with similar issues to Ben Marais, which had a profound effect on his life. It could be said that Ben Marais found a role model in Bernardino Ochino. The life of loneliness and disappointment Bernardino Ochino experienced is comparable, to an extent, to the life of Ben Marais, as also expressed in the communications with Dr Potter, 1978. Bernardino Ochino found himself suspended between the old world of Rome, comparable to Ben Marais' world of Apartheid, and the new world of the reformation in which he never settled, like Ben Marais who never became an active and aggressive opponent of Apartheid. Ben Marais, though, did not die along a lonely road in Moravia, but in his home in Pretoria, and considering a full church attending his funeral, many mourned his death.

a. A Sketch of Ben Marais' Life

Evidence from the correspondence, and the allusions to the clouds hanging over his youth, indicates that this was not merely another professor of Church History. It is noteworthy that Ben Marais avoided talking about his youth. Thus, when Meiring (1979:79) asked him about his years as a young boy,⁴¹ he mentioned his place of birth, and the fact that the Karoo, where he grew up, was in his blood⁴² and where he felt at home, but then he continued talking about the weather and how soothing it was – one of the reasons for referring to the particular themes in the country under the heading “climates” (Chapter 3).

In this section chronologically organised background information on Ben Marais is provided, which contributes towards a better understanding of him within the scope of this study.

i. From Farm to Town Boy

On 26 April 1909, far from the worlds of the World Council of Churches, universities, synods, the Broederbond and international mission conferences, on a small farm called Frisgewaagd in the Klein Suurberg – in the Steynsburg district – Barend Jacobus Marais was born. He was named after his uncle on mother's side, Barend Jacobus Lombard

⁴¹ Kinderjare – youth – the term is elaborated to emphasise the point that Ben Marais avoids the topic.

⁴² “Dit sal ek nooit uit my bloed kry nie” (Meiring 1979:79).

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Botha, who was one of the witnesses at his baptism on 13 June 1909 in the Steynsburg NG Kerk. His mother was Elizabeth Magdalena Botha (Tant' Lizzie) and his father Willem Frederick Marais (Oom Willie).

13 children were born to Tant' Lizzie and Oom Willie. The oldest, Herculina Johanna (Johanna) was born on 2 November 1898, and the youngest, Mara, was born on 13 February 1917. Tant' Lizzie died shortly after the birth of Mara. Tragedy struck the family the next year when Pieter (Pieter Abraham – born on 26 April 1900) died during the Swart Griep (Black Influenza). The two youngest, Mara and Melvina (Elizabeth Melvina – born on 14 February 1915) went to stay with relatives until their early teens. The other siblings of Ben Marais were: Johan (Johan Samuel Frederick – born 28 November 1901); Martiens (Martinus Prinsloo – born 26 September 1905); Willie (Willem Frederick – born in 1906);⁴³ Nellie (Petronella Christina Susanna – born 17 September 1907); Charles (Charel Francois⁴⁴ – born 9 September 1910); and Jurie (Philippus Jurgens – born 16 April 1912). Ben Marais was just older than Charles. Two more babies were born, one being Daniel⁴⁵ and a second one, of whom nothing is either recorded or known. Tant' Lizzie was buried next to Daniel on the farm Mooihoek.

In 1910, Ben Marais' father, Oom Willie, left Frisgewaagd⁴⁶ and moved to the farm Mooihoek in the Venterstad district.⁴⁷ Ben Marais would then have been just more than a year old, still unable to speak but quite mobile. Mooihoek is now partially covered by the waters of the Gariiep Dam. The farm was previously part of the Vaalbank farm, where Paul Kruger spent part of his youth (Paul Kruger was born on the farm Bulhoek, which falls in the Steynsburg district).

⁴³ Willie was not baptised in Steynsburg, where his parents were members and thus a more accurate date could not be confirmed. Interestingly, Mara was not baptised at Venterstad, in which congregation the family were members at the time of her birth.

⁴⁴ According to the Baptism register, NG Kerk Archives, Cape Town.

⁴⁵ Daniel was named after Daniel Petrus de Bruin, Ben Marais' step grandfather.

⁴⁶ Ben Marais' grandmother had remarried after her first husband's death (Pieter Abraham Marais – the family name is traced to 1790 – P.A. Marais Interview 20 October 2002). He died from appendicitis. Her new husband, Daniel de Bruin, bought the family farm in the Tarkastad district from her four sons in exchange for his farm, Frisgewaagd, in the Venterstad district.

⁴⁷ Oom Willie's membership was transferred to Venterstad from Steynsburg on 9 November 1910. He had been in the congregation of Steynsburg since 6 June 1887.

The young Ben Marais first attended the farm school on Mooihoek, where his father was the teacher. He then attended the Venterstad School until standard 5. He matriculated at the High School in Middelburg, Cape, in 1927 with a second class matric – having failed mathematics. He was mischievous at school, mostly because he was easily bored in class. He thus surprised his school friends, while in Standard 9 (1926), by announcing that he wanted to study Theology, to become a minister. The only ministers Ben Marais would have known would have been the local ministers of the congregations in the North Eastern Cape – one who was Ds Louis J. Fourie.⁴⁸ This is an important consideration for the theme “What have you done with your Troas?”⁴⁹

Not much is known about the years in Middelburg. The Marais family lived on a property that had a large garden. They sold flowers, grapes, and vegetables from the garden and brooms the boys made at the Saturday markets. The children all had to work in the garden on Saturday afternoons, except for Charles – who was excused to practice on the piano. In the evenings they held family worship.

ii. Student Years: Balancing Acts

Ben Marais enrolled at the University of Stellenbosch (Maties) in 1928 to become a minister, under sponsorship of his uncle, Oom Pieter (Pieter Abraham). Thus began his involvement with student life, something that he was to remain involved with, in various capacities until shortly before his death in 1999.

The faculty photos, adorning the walls of the Seminary in Stellenbosch, are quite revealing. One significant photo dates to 1934, and contains some interesting faces carrying significant names. There are eight rows of relatively tightly packed students and lecturers. Ben Marais can be seen standing on the left end of the sixth row, he is holding his body half separate and is looking slightly outwards. He is standing next to H.E. du Toit. J.D. (Koot) Vorster is seated at the far left end of the second row, and can

⁴⁸ Ds Louis J. Fourie was inaugurated on 16 April 1921 and remained in service of the NG Kerk in Middelburg until his death in 1938. He studied in Princeton and the Free University of Amsterdam on completing his initial studies at Stellenbosch (Vermeulen 1952:45).

⁴⁹ Ben Marais would have modelled his concept of the ministry in the NG Kerk on their ministries. Compare also to Nicol (1958), who structures his autobiography around the question posed to him when he was a student with Prof. N.J. Hofmeyr: “Why do you want to become a minister?”

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be seen to be facing inwards. Further students include: A.M.H. Koornhof (1st row); H.J.C. Reyneke (2nd row); in the third row T.N. Hanekom and W.A. Landman are prominent; J.T.M. de Jong van Arkel (5th row); J.J. Lubbe, W.J.G. Lubbe and F.J.M. Potgieter (6th row); and J.S. Gericke, M.S. Daneel and E.A. Venter (7th row). Even though Stellenbosch was the only institution where prospective ministers of the NG Kerk could study, and thus it could be taken for granted that these people would be in the photo, the divergent points of view and opinions and schools of thought followed by the students in their later careers and positions, emphasises the fact that the training at Stellenbosch seminary created the opportunity for personal, theological and ideological development in different directions. Interestingly, the renowned Du Plessis Case (November-December 1931) was still fresh in the memory of the lecturers and senior students.

Ben Marais obtained all his degrees with distinction; his B.A. in 1930, his M.A. in Afrikaans in 1931, and his M.A. in Philosophy in 1935. He completed his M.Th. (Princeton) in 1936. The title of his M.A. dissertation in Afrikaans was *Stylvernuwing by Arthur van Schendel*, while – quite significantly, the title of his M.A. dissertation in Philosophy was *Probleme van die Ontwikkeling van die Onsterflikheid in die Griekse Filosofie*. The title of the M.Th. was along similar lines, *Die Godsidee by die Grieke: Probleme van die Ontwikkeling in die Onsterflikheid van die Griekse Filosofie*. Ben Marais completed his candidate's examination⁵⁰ in October/November 1936 at Stellenbosch, after his return from abroad (September 1936). He became a candidate minister (proponent) at the end of the year.

An interesting anecdote is told (S. Marais 2000) about an oral examination which he had to do for his degree in Philosophy. He was under pressure to complete quickly so that he could be off to Princeton. They needed an external examiner, and the person who was asked to fulfil this duty was non other than the famous sociologist, Dr H.F. Verwoerd. Apparently Verwoerd was not happy with one of the answers Ben Marais gave, and thus gave an exposition of what he thought, working within and expounding his theories. Once Verwoerd had said what he wished to say, the examiner turned to him

⁵⁰ Proponents-eksamen.

and said: "I must agree with the student."⁵¹ Verwoerd was snubbed. The animosity Verwoerd felt towards Ben Marais in later years could be traced to this event.

Ben Marais' leadership qualities were apparent at university. He was chairman of Wilgenhof men's residence for 3 years. He was elected for a fourth term, but did not serve it due to his hastened departure to Princeton. His good friend, Danie Craven, thus served as chairman in his stead. Apart from being chairman of the university Student Representative Council in 1933, he also had interests in the Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniging, the cultural society of the Afrikaner students of the university. He was also quite active, physically, playing for Maties under 19 rugby team, and captaining the university's third team for 3 years. He played in the front row, prop.⁵² He was also a member of the Berg en Toerklub, the Mountain and Touring Club.

Student politics were very intense during the 1930s. Ben Marais was chairperson of the Student Representative Council of Stellenbosch University. He was actively involved in attempting to retain the English-speaking students within the structures of NUSAS (National Union of South African Students).

His love for writing also manifested itself at the University of Stellenbosch. He was university correspondent of the daily Cape newspaper, *Die Burger*, and served as editor of the student newspaper, the *Stellenbosse Student*, for two years. His interest in journalism was thus developed early. Interestingly, he was twice offered employment at the newspaper, but turned the offers down.

His professors at seminary were: E.E. van Rooyen (Old Testament); B.B. Keet (Doctrine and Ethics); D. Lategan (Mission and Church History); and D. Malan (New Testament). Ben Marais had very good relations with B.B. Keet, under whose guidance he later completed his D.Phil., the theme of which was inspired by his visit to Madras in 1938, where he attended the Tambaram International Mission Conference.

⁵¹ "Ek moet aan die student gelyk gee".

⁵² Several of his brothers also played rugby in Middelburg. They can be seen in various team photographs in the Middelburg museum.

Most interesting is Ben Marais' assertion (Hofmeyr 1985:32) that he did not enjoy Church History at seminary. In answer to Hofmeyr's question posed to him during a 1985 interview (Ibid), he asserted that his interest in Church History developed later. He had enjoyed history at school, but it did not go well with Church History as a subject at seminary. Reasons proposed for this pertained primarily to the Du Plessis Case (1931).

iii. The Fashionable Minister: Years in the Ministry

Ben Marais spent several years, 1937 to 1953, in the ministry of the church – in different capacities. These years represent his most active years: travelling; conferences; synods; publications; and ministry to students and members of congregations. Ben Marais was a minister of a congregation from 1949-1953. This would have been the vision of his calling, to be a minister of a congregation, when he notified his friends and family that he wished to study Theology. Thus, also in Ben Marais' life, the theme of his sermon, "What have you done with your Troas?" is quite true. Ben Marais ended up travelling other roads from those he expected to travel upon, but also, he did "visit" his original destination.

The University Chaplain/The Policy Protestor

During his 12 years as university chaplain⁵³ of the Ned. Herv. or Geref. Kerk⁵⁴ students, Ben Marais could be seen walking in the streets of Brooklyn, Pretoria, wearing an English blazer and coloured tie – not black suit and white tie, as was the customary dress of reformed clergy. An interesting comparison could be made to Ghandi, who rejected English fashions for traditional Indian attire.

Ben Marais' first responsibility, though, early in 1937, came when he relieved Ds Malan, minister of the new church in Graaff Reinet for two months. He would have had to fulfil all the ministerial responsibilities except for baptism and serving Eucharist, and raising his hands when saying the benediction at the end of the service. He spent a further two months of the same year in Riversdal, after Ds Hugo had retired from the

⁵³ See Landman (1984:117-128) for an overview and general evaluation of Ben Marais' ministry to the students of the University of Pretoria.

⁵⁴ Nederduitse Hervormde or Gereformeerde Kerk.

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ministry in that congregation. Later, still the same year, Dr Willem Nicol, minister of the Johannesburg East congregation (old Irene church) of the Ned. Herv. or Geref. Kerk, travelled down to Stellenbosch to find a suitable candidate minister to relieve him for six months, because he had been appointed as chairman of the Education Commission of the Synod. He asked Ben Marais to relieve him. Thus a friendship developed between the elder Dr W. Nicol and Ben Marais. Ben Marais started his relief work in the old Irene church in September 1937. Only six days after he had started he was called by the synod of Transvaal to minister the students in the province of Transvaal. Before accepting his new responsibility he completed his obligatory six months relief work in Johannesburg.

Thus, in March 1938, Ben Marais returned to the world of students, now as a chaplain, after only short periods of service in various congregations. He was responsible for ministering to students of all the universities and colleges in Transvaal. He worked from the Pretoria East congregation, spending much time on the road – Heidelberg, University of Witwatersrand, Potchefstroom – while also attending to the students in Pretoria, whom, he was told, were the most difficult (Marais 1955[?]).

Two further events in 1938 were to leave a remarkable impression on his life. The first was when he was elected to serve on the Sonop Council. Sonop was a men's residence of the Ned. Herv. or Geref. Kerk. Thus started a life-long relation between Ben Marais and the hostel residents, a relationship that was upheld even though there might have been different political or nationalistic points of view.

The second event in 1938 that left an impression on his life, was when the Transvaal synod of the Ned. Herv. or Geref. Kerk nominated him to attend the Tambaram International Mission Conference. The conference was held in January 1939. He left, just before Christmas in 1938 for the conference. After the conference he went on a tour, which had as lasting an effect on him as did some other incidents, directly associated with the conference. Other delegates from South Africa were Revs John du Toit, A.F. Louw, and Prof. H.P. Cruse. Most significant was that Albert Luthuli was also aboard the same boat. It was summer, and hot. Ben Marais and the other white

delegates were allowed on the deck, but Albert Luthuli was not.

An interesting choice that Ben Marais made, which he was to regret later in life, was to travel to the Taj Mahal after the conference, and miss an opportunity to meet Mahatma Ghandi.

The young dominee (reverend) was on the road for extended periods of time. This afforded him much time to think and ponder on life. On 29 April 1939 he married Sibs (Sebastina) Botha. She taught Afrikaans at a girls' school in Worcester. Her father, S.J. Botha from Kuruman, was the founder of the former Seodin Farm School, which so impressed Dr H.F. Verwoerd. Ben Marais was blessed with a daughter on 27 May 1940. She was named Augusta after Sibs's mother. Augusta married Koos Marais (Jakobus Martinus – born 26 October 1939) on 28 June 1963.

The distances between the towns were long, the number of tertiary institutions grew, the number of students increased; the work of the students' chaplain necessitated the calling of a second reverend to minister to the students in Transvaal. Ds Johan Bezuidenhout was called in 1940. The work was divided, Johan Bezuidenhout was responsible for Potchefstroom and the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), while Ben Marais was responsible for the students in Heidelberg and Pretoria. Ben Marais was in service of the synod, as chaplain to the students, until 1941, when he was called to the Pretoria East congregation as a minister. Though he carried the title "ds", he had not been affiliated with any congregation. From 6 March 1941 on, he was. He was responsible for the students in the congregation, and thus his work as chaplain continued, now reporting to the church council of Pretoria East congregation and not the synod of the Transvaal church.

In 1944, Ben Marais, now an ordained delegate at the Ned. Herv. or Geref. Kerk Synod, objected against a report – policy – prepared by the commission for current affairs in April 1942⁵⁵ on the scriptural justification for not issuing weapons to black and coloured soldiers fighting in the Allied forces (World War II). The synodical

⁵⁵ The statement was delivered on 22 April 1942 (Ned Herv. or Geref. Kerk Synod Report 1944:57).

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commission was reacting against the statement by the Prime Minister that under certain conditions – if the country were to be invaded – he would consider issuing weapons to Africans. The relations between church and state are clearly discernible, as is the relations between the races and the justification thereto, in the following extract: (Ned Herv. or Geref. Kerk Synod Report 1944:57).⁵⁶

“The Synodical Commission wishes to indicate in all earnestness that the policy of the church is based on the principles of God’s Word that teaches race apartheid and guardianship of whites over Africans, that these principles form the basis for the laws regarding Africans in the Union and is in accordance with the best tradition of the Afrikaner nation, consequently it was not the policy of the Christian government of South Africa to make use of the services of Africans and coloureds in any organised form except in totally second rated services, when the country was at war ... The church must warn against the issuing of weapons to Africans and Coloureds.”

Certain tendencies in Ben Marais’ behaviour are detectable. It could be said that he loved to speak out, or that he had found a fault in the church and was using it for political gain. However, Ben Marais was never interested in entering politics. This tendency would also accentuate the distress he experienced during his years of isolation. This consideration could explain his directing written protests to the general secretaries of the World Council of Churches, and his mentioning his personal torments. Ben Marais verbalises his sentiment in his letter to Dr Potter (1978):

“I hear someone out of your corner say: This is a typical reaction of a white South African. No! You are wrong. I have consistently – all my life, been a critic of much of what is happening in Southern Africa, and of our systems. I have, as a result, often been treated as the filth of the earth and experienced extreme forms of ostracism, organised boycott and loneliness. I could not wish that to happen to my greatest enemy. But, that is life in our sort of world and I have no regrets. A man can only stand up for what he believes. Faced by the same issues I will make the same decisions once again.”

Ben Marais’ objections to the Scriptural justification of policies which he found unqualified at the synods of 1940, 1944, and especially 1948 are insinuated, as well as the publication of his books, *Colour: Unsolved Problem of the West* (1952a) and *The Two Faces of Africa* (1964b). Also during 1944, Ben Marais enrolled for his D.Phil. in philosophy at the University of Stellenbosch, under Prof. Brunner. He completed it

⁵⁶ My translation.

under Prof. B.B. Keet, because Prof. Brunner had passed away. The title of his thesis was: *Die Christelike Broederskapsleer en sy Toepassing in die Kerk van die Eerste Drie Eeue*. It is not necessarily to be considered a document of outspokenness, but it does represent an indication of major influences on his thought.

Ben Marais was once more outspoken against Apartheid in April 1947. He was invited by the *Curatorium* of the Faculty of Theology of the University of Pretoria, to speak at a conference of ministers. He declared in his speech that there were no scriptural grounds for Apartheid (*Op die Horizon*, June 1947).

In April 1948 Ben Marais questioned the validity of the report on the Scriptural grounds of Apartheid, prepared by the Commission of Current Affairs.⁵⁷ In June the same year, the National Party won the elections.

A new dispensation was starting in the country, but the years Ben Marais had spent as chaplain of the students were drawing to an end, because for the second time in his life he was to follow in the footsteps of Dr W. Nicol. Ben Marais was called to the Pretoria East Congregation, as a minister of the congregation – not students – in April 1949. Dr W. Nicol had left the ministry to become the Administrator of Transvaal. These events illustrate the close affinity Ben Marais had to Afrikaner Nationalism, while illustrating the tensions that must have prevailed because of his probing questions.

Ben Marais placed particular emphasis on room visitations, on personal contact with the students. Apart from initiating Pentecost services on Pretoria campus and a mission week during 1940 at Wits (which was opened by Mr Raikes – a former rector),⁵⁸ he helped with and encouraged the establishment of branches of the Christian student society (C.S.V.) at the various campuses. In his chaplain's report (1955[?]) he relates many happy moments, and reflects on his good relations with students, as well as the difficulties and sorrow of dealing with the families of students who had died. His ministry also had less pleasant aspects. These were the years where Ben Marais had to

⁵⁷ Leer en Aktuele Sake.

⁵⁸ See *Beeld*, 31 July 1940.

find a balance between his personal studies, the synods of the Ned. Herv. or Geref. Kerk and his ministry.

The Minister of a Congregation and a World Traveller

It appears that Ben Marais spent much of his time, while he was a minister of the Pretoria East congregation – 1950 to 1953, on the road. These were thus formative years in which he made extensive contacts abroad.

In June 1953 Ben Marais left for study purposes to Yale University. Enroute he attended the Reformed Ecumenical Synod in Edinburgh, where he addressed the synod on behalf of the South African delegation. Later in August of the same year, 1950, Ben Marais attended the meeting of the World Council of Churches in Toronto as an observer. Due to the numerous motions against the reformed churches in South Africa and the countless questions posed by delegates, Dr Visser't Hooft (General Secretary) requested Ben Marais to answer the questions. This was quite unexpected, but in a 35 minute speech, Ben Marais presented his case. A question session followed, which lasted for two hours. The result was that all the motions against South Africa were withdrawn, and appreciation was expressed for his Christian conduct. He was then requested to serve on the study group for "Church and Race".

Ben Marais did not always travel alone. In October 1950 his wife joined him, and she was thus able to accompany him on his journey through the West Indies, which commenced in July 1951. This study tour was made possible by a scholarship awarded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. He was to study race relations and the church.

Though Ben Marais was no longer responsible for the ministry to students at the University of Pretoria, the World Federation of the Christian Student Societies invited him in 1951 to visit the various universities in South America to organise the Federation's work at these institutions.

Ben Marais' period as minister of the Pretoria East congregation also saw the publication of the book for which he is most acclaimed: *Colour: Unsolved Problem of the West*, appearing in October 1952. A second book, an inspirational, '*n Groet op die Pad* (1952b), also appeared. The publication of *Colour: Unsolved Problem of the West* was not without controversies. Insight into Ben Marais' character can be gained from his reaction to Dr W. Nicol who recommended he wait another six months before publishing. Ben Marais submitted the manuscript to the National Press the following day for publication. The National Press rejected the manuscript because it did not support Apartheid. Dr W. Nicol wanted him to wait, because he feared that the book could hamper Ben Marais being appointed chair at the University of Pretoria. Indication is given of Ben Marais' not being easily intimidated, his primacy of what was right above personal aspirations, as well as the fact that he was regarded highly by the leaders of the Afrikaner establishment (Dr W. Nicol), despite his troublesome outspokenness about the country's race policies. Ben Marais was thus well capable of distinguishing between personal friendships and political differences, an attribute that served him well as professor.

iv. Whistling in the Faculties of Learning

Ben Marais was a popular professor, indicative of his approach to classes and student affairs. Many students remember him whistling in the hallways of the university (Van Niekerk Interview 2000).

Pretoria:⁵⁹ 1953-1974: Contacts and Isolation

Ben Marais was called to the chair of History of Christianity and Church Polity⁶⁰ to replace Prof. D.J. Keet who had retired. Prof. D.J. Keet had prepared students for the ministry since 1938, after taking demission from the Ned. Herv. or Geref. Congregation, Pretoria East. The close relations between this congregation and the Faculty of Theology – Department of History of Christianity and Church Polity – are thus very evident. Ben Marais was called after the Electoral College voted in his favour by one

⁵⁹ For an overview of the history of the Faculty of Theology and biographic sketches of the lecturers see Van der Watt (1989).

⁶⁰ Geskiedenis van die Christendom en Kerkreg.

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vote. He was appointed on 4 June 1953, accepting his demission from the Ned. Herv. or Geref. Congregation, Pretoria East on 1 November 1953. He started teaching on February 1954, being responsible for Church History, Ecumenism, and Mission History. His inaugural lecture was held in April 1954: “Rondom die Studie van die Kerkgeskiedenis”⁶¹ at the Transvaal synod.

But first, in August 1953, Ben Marais travelled to Geneva in order to attend the World Council of Churches’ study group “Church and Race”, in preparation for the World Council of Churches’ meeting in Evanston the following year. On his way back, he toured Greece and Italy, returning in mid September.

Ben Marais attended the meeting of the World Council of Churches in Evanston during August 1954 as an advisor and a member of the panel of main speakers. He was accompanied by Ds C.B. Brink, and delivered one of the principle reports of the study group “Race and Church”. While in Evanston, he also attended the Conference of Christian Youth of the USA as a speaker. He spoke on “Race Tension in South Africa”. Ben Marais did not only travel to Evanston. En route to the meeting of the World Council of Churches he presented a series of lectures on “Group relations” in Chicago. On his way back, he returned to the McCormack Theology Seminary to present a series of lectures. He returned to a volatile situation in South Africa. The press had been unjust in its report on his speech at the World Council of Churches. Ds C.B. Brink reported on the events at the meeting of the World Council of Churches in Evanston at the synod meeting on 3 November 1954, and attempted to present a correctional version of what actually happened. This storm affected Ben Marais deeply, where many of his friends and acquaintances turned their backs on him.

Ben Marais always worked with students, always getting along – even when opinions differed, as for example during the stormy years of World War II while he was still chaplain of the students and pro German attitudes amongst students – anti English – were strong. He never gave class notes (an influence he ascribed to Bainton, Viljoen Interview 1986) except for a typed “summary”. He preferred free lectures and students

⁶¹ “On the study of Church History”.

had to make their own notes.

His years at the University of Pretoria were associated with rising nationalism and he experienced them as difficult (Hofmeyr 1985). He considered himself an Afrikaner but could not identify with Afrikaner nationalism. He had many questions and doubts on various aspects, and differed from his colleagues on issues relating to colour relations.

Ben Marais was one of the so called “13 heretic lecturers”.⁶² These 13 lecturers signed a petition on 16 May 1955; protesting against the government’s planned legislation on the restructuring of the Senate for political reasons, and against the removal of coloureds from the electoral list. The petition stimulated a thunderous reaction, the signatories receiving serious threats. Ben Marais was informed by *Huisgenoot* that his regular religious column would be terminated due to his association with the protest against government legislation.

In May 1957, a recommendation was made at the Northern Transvaal Synod of the NG Kerk that a ban should be placed on the appointment of freemasons in church positions, because of the secrecy of the organisation. Ben Marais then suggested in a motion of principle that the Synod speak out against all secret societies, as for example also the Broederbond. Ben Marais’ motion was not accepted. This action by Ben Marais led to a further accentuation of his growing isolation. Invitations to talk on the radio ended, as did requests to preach in different congregations. He was ignored by the press. However, in contrast to this growing isolation, Ben Marais became more involved in student activities, and in 1957, he was elected chairperson of the council of Sonop residence.

In 1958 Ben Marais attended the Reformed Ecumenical Council in Potchefstroom as a delegate of the Northern Transvaal Synod of the NG Kerk. Thus, even in his isolation, Ben Marais was still highly esteemed in ecumenical circles within the NG Kerk.

Ben Marais managed to distinguish between social affairs of the country and his

⁶² Dertien dwalende dosente.

lectures on Church and Mission History. Though, in his book, *Die Kerk deur die Eeue*, which was intended to be a thematic orientation to the broader history of the church, Ben Marais considers social – religious – threats that were experienced during the mid 20th century in South Africa; these being, Communism, Modernism, Secularism and Islam.

From 1960 to 1965, commotion against Ben Marais entered the enclosed area of his safety, the university, and equal to the onslaught, his rescue was found in the loyalty of students residing at Sonop Residence. Rightwing groups – including students – made attempts to make Ben Marais suspect, to degrade him and to have him dismissed from his chair. There were two groups of students, one called the “liberals” – who supported Ben Marais, and the other referred to as the “conservatives”, who opposed him. Ben Marais was accused of indoctrination and liberalism. The *Curatorium* received a complaint against him, because *The Two Faces of Africa* was written in English and not in Afrikaans. A propaganda campaign against him, which distributed pamphlets on campus, failed, because students from Sonop Residence rose early in the mornings and removed them from where they had been scattered. A mass march, which was planned, was also unsuccessful. His classes went on, and so did his publications.

In 1962 he published *Kerkgeskiedenis: Beknopte Aantekeninge ter Aanvulling van Klaswerk*.⁶³ In the same year, 1962, *Stimme aus der Ökumene* (1962a), a festschrift commemorating the retirement of Dr W.A. Visser't Hooft as General Secretary of the WCC, appeared, which contained a contribution by Ben Marais, “Eine Stimme aus dem Südliche Afrika”. Thus, Ben Marais was writing for particular readers – his students, for the general public (*The Two Faces of Africa*) and for the broader church community (*Stimme aus der Ökumene*).

On the general public front once more, very often studies on race and nationalism concentrate on only white-black relations. However, the plight of the Indians, Asians, Coloureds and other race groups in South Africa during their years of oppression should not be disregarded. Moreover, often by studying these groups and their experiences, a

⁶³ “Church History: short notes supplementary to class work”.

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more accurate account could be possible. On 28 January 1959, a letter of Ben Marais was published in *Die Kerkbode*, in which he requested the church to formulate a point of view on the forced moving of Indians as part of the execution of the Group Areas legislation. According to Ben Marais, this was unfair and was not defensible according to Christian principles. Determined by the same set of principles, Ben Marais wrote an article, “The church Must Win the Masses”, which appeared in *Rand Daily Mail* on 19 June, 1959. In this article Ben Marais asked whether Christianity was not – for many – secondary to nationalism.

These two instances illustrates why Ben Marais was not popular with the Afrikaner Press, which was pro-Afrikaner nationalism – and almost totally ignored him, but why the more liberal English Press, especially *The Star* and the *Rand Daily Mail*, published his contributions on a variety of topics. The opposition party and liberal movements, though, were unable to canvass Ben Marais’ support. Ben Marais remained true to his principles.

The debate on the justification of Apartheid on Scripture continued, and in 1960 a book, *Delayed Action: an Ecumenical Witness from the Afrikaans Speaking Church*⁶⁴ (Geyser et al 1960), appeared. Ben Marais was one of 11 contributors. The book makes a call to the conscience of the church to reject the scriptural justification of Apartheid. In Ben Marais’ chapter, “The Church in the Contemporary world”, he declares: “Refusal to Pray with Blacks is a Sin”.

The book was well timed, appearing in the same year that the famed Cottesloe Consultation was held, December 1960, during which Christians from different church affiliations and racial orientations prayed together. Ben Marais was invited to attend the Consultation, but could not, because he had already committed himself to a lecture tour in the USA, which commenced in March 1961. He departed from South Africa in December 1960, and first visited a few African states before spending a few days in Amsterdam. He met with students at the Free University in Amsterdam. On his return he passed through Rome, and continued his visits to African countries, visiting

⁶⁴ *Vertraagde Aksie. 'n Ekumeniese Getuienis uit die Afrikaanssprekende Kerk.*

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Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Ethiopia. In Ethiopia he held lengthy discussions with the grandson of Haile Selassie. Further countries visited includes Kenya, Tanzania and Nyassaland (Malawi), where he met President Banda. He returned to South Africa on 11 July 1961.

Ben Marais was also involved in Mission activities. During August 1961, he was one of the main speakers at the NG Kerk Mission week, held in Pretoria. He spoke on, “The Challenge of the New Africa for Mission”.⁶⁵ “New Africa” was a theme he used in many speeches, echoing the optimism he experienced during his Africa tour. Interestingly, during May 1962, he spoke on “Living in the New Africa”, at the “Joint Conference of Municipal Associations of Northern Rhodesia and Nyassaland”. (He visited Southern Rhodesia [Zimbabwe] in 1965, where he addressed the Local Government Association of Southern Rhodesia, and talked on various actuality topics relating to Africa.) In November 1961, he was invited to a meeting of the “International Missionary Council” as a member of the council’s “Commission for Theological Training”. The meeting was held in Delhi. During the conference, he was nominated to serve on the Committee for Peace, but he turned it down.

For someone to be travelling so extensively, and to have to cope with so much conflict in South Africa, it is not surprising that Ben Marais fell ill during his visit to Bangalore in 1961. He was attending a meeting of the “Christian Students of Asia and Africa”. The visit was not in vain, since he had made contact with students at the university in the days prior to his ailments commencing. Nor was Ben Marais able to attend all the meetings he was invited to. Like the Cottesloe Consultation, he also had to turn down an invitation from the “World Council of Christian Education and Sunday School Association” to attend a “Theological Education Seminar” from 30 June to 7 July 1962. Due to the matter of principles – because he felt he could not accept an invitation if his church was not invited – Ben Marais did not attend the “All Africa Conference”, scheduled for 20-30 April 1963 at Kampala. It was hoped that he would be able to deliver a paper, “The Church in the Bible and the Church in Africa Today”. This is an indication of how Ben Marais isolated himself from the outside world, a world that had

⁶⁵ Die uitdaging van die nuwe Afrika vir sending.

been friendly towards him and where he had experienced widespread acknowledgement while at home he was experiencing increasing hostility.

In 1963, along with Beyers Naudé, Ben Marais was a founding member of the Christian Institute. The Christian Institute was founded, on the one hand as an outflow of the Cottesloe Consultation to continue the dialogue between Christians from different churches, and on the other to facilitate the formulation of alternative statements to the official policy of the NG Kerk. During the South Transvaal Synod of 1963, the synod had determined that no criticism of the church's policies by its members would be allowed, unless made so through the official channels. The Christian Institute did not have any political orientation or aspirations at its founding.

In 1963, Senator McCarthy (USA), made a speech in which he claimed to have a list of names of people in the United States government who were communists. Thus the great witch-hunt for communists started in America.⁶⁶ The threat of communism was very real in South Africa also, however, Ben Marais spoke out against McCarthyism as a method of defeating communism. His opponents interpreted the stance taken by Ben Marais against McCarthyism as an indication that Ben Marais was supporting communism and served as further proof of his liberalism.

In contrast to Ben Marais refusing to attend international church meetings in the mid 1960s, Ben Marais readily went on study and lecturing tours abroad, and maintained correspondence with leaders of the World Council of Churches. On 16 January 1964, Ben Marais departed on a 10 week lecturing tour to the USA. He visited about 10 tertiary institutions and presented lectures on Africa and Southern Africa. His themes – indicative of his primary concerns – included: “Which Road South Africa?”; “The Two Faces of Africa”; “Africa – Battlefield of Religion and Ideology”; “The Christian Church in Africa – Historical Problems and Prospects”; and “Political Loyalty and Christian Practice in a Multi-Racial Society”. The one theme served as a title to his book, which appeared two months after his return, in May 1964, called *The Two Faces*

⁶⁶ See Miller, *The Crucible*, which makes a parody of the hunt for communists in the 1960s and the witch-hunt in New England in the 19th century.

of Africa. As is to be expected, this book received a predominantly negative reaction from the press, contributing to Ben Marais' further local isolation. Due also to his "liberal views", the editors of *Dagbreek en Sondagnuus* terminated his regular column "prediker" (the preacher), which he had managed for many years.

Ben Marais did not keep quiet during his years of isolation: in October 1964 he addressed teachers of Natal in Durban, during the "Conference of the teachers' Association", as he did in May the following year when he addressed The Local Government Association of Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe).

It is most interesting, and characteristic of Ben Marais, that in 1965, when interest groups in the church were campaigning in the local press against alleged liberal ministers, Ben Marais protested in earnest. Internationally, in contrast, The Dutch Christian Radio Society (NCRV)⁶⁷ invited Ben Marais to participate in a television programme they were planning on South Africa in conjunction with the Free University of Amsterdam. Though it was not possible for him to attend – he had participated the previous year in a NCRV documentary (6 episodes) on South Africa, the invitation accentuates the differentiated appraisal Ben Marais experienced: conflict and isolation at home; welcome and appreciation abroad.

From about August in 1968, Ben Marais undertook another study tour through Central and East Africa. His costs were covered by a scholarship received from the Ernest Oppenheimer Memorial Trust. He travelled through Kenya, Mozambique, Zambia, Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), Malawi and mission posts in Botswana. Shortly on his return, the same year – 1968 (20 September - 15 November) – he flew to the United States on a ten week lecturing tour. He was invited by the "Arts Program of the Association of American Colleges", sponsored by the Danforth Foundation. The general theme of his lectures was "The African Dream: a Realistic Assessment". Thereafter, from 15 November 1968 to middle February 1969, Ben Marais was invited by USSALEP Exchange Programme, United States South Africa (Leader Exchange Programme Incorporated) on a three month study tour to the United States. He was interested in the

⁶⁷ Nederlandse Christelike Radio Vereeniging.

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role of the American churches in the socio-economic field and their theological motivations and approaches.⁶⁸

The following year, on 3 September 1970, Ben Marais wrote a letter to Dr Carson Blake, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches. Ben Marais protested against the World Council of Churches' financial and moral support for resistance movements in South Africa. In the same month, Ben Marais protested against the policy of detention without trial, and two months later, during the general synod, he expressed his concerns on a report on the relations between mother and daughter churches of the NG Kerk family. According to him the document does not promote community between believers. Also, at the same general synod, he warned the synod that their actions would lead to the severance of ecumenical ties with all reformed churches world wide. Members of the synod expressed strong differences from the Dutch representatives at the synod.

Within the context of Ben's participation in church affairs, his comprehension of international affairs, and his relations with international figures, his correspondence with the general secretaries of the World Council of Churches comes as no surprise. It was in his character to protest. It was also in his character to maintain good relations with people that could be considered to be his adversaries. He did not consider them as such.

In 1972 Ben Marais travelled in the company of Drs J.D. Vorster and J.S. Gericke and Di Beukes and P. Smit to Sydney to attend the Ecumenical Synod as delegates of the NG Kerk. The relations must have been tense, especially because the Ecumenical Synod determined that no person could be denied access to a church based on the colour of the skin. This decision would be presented to the 1974 General Synod of the NG Kerk for consideration.

In October of the same year, 1972, Ben Marais became Dean of the Faculty of Theology of the University of Pretoria. He was then 63 years old.

⁶⁸ See *Dagbreek en Landstem* 16 March 1969.

The year 1973 passed by relatively quietly, almost waiting for the General Synod of 1974, allowing Ben Marais to pay attention to his duties as Dean of the faculty and lecturer in the History of Christianity, and to publish. His book, *Die Verre Horison: Gebede vir Soggens en Saans*,⁶⁹ appeared in 1974.

Midst the sad news of the death of his mentor, Professor B.B. Keet, on 21 June 1974, Ben Marais decided to retire from the chair of Church History and Polity at the University of Pretoria. He stayed on to the end of the year to fulfil his duties as Dean of the Faculty of Theology.

The General Synod of the NG Kerk convened in October 1974. Ben Marais was no longer the young man who stood up at synods and protested against misappropriations of Scripture, he was now the wise and elderly professor, and still he maintained the same points he emphasised in his youth. The world had changed around him, and was in the process of undergoing tremendous changes, and he felt that the NG Kerk was not abreast of these changes, but still, he remained a loyal member of the church. Important decisions by the synod included: a decision to send an ultimatum to the churches in the Netherlands; against strong opposition, it was decided that communal worship between race groups was permissible, but that decisions in this regard remained the fortitude of the congregations. Church halls and buildings could be used by other race groups in accordance to the implicated congregation's discretion.

It could have been assumed that an end of an era had been reached, that at the age of 66, Ben Marais would have withdrawn into the background. This was not the case. He was far too appreciated by his students and like minded colleagues for this to happen. Ben Marais accepted a temporary position in the Department of Church History, Missiology and Religious Science at the University of South Africa (Unisa). Thus started the second leg of his academic career.

⁶⁹ "The Far Horizon: Prayers for Morning and Evening".

University of South Africa: 1975-1986: Years of Joy

Ben Marais experienced his students at the University of South Africa positively, as “a sheer joy” (Hofmeyr 1985). It is interesting that he considered his years at the University of South Africa as an unqualified joy, where his colleagues were, almost all, former students!

He still travelled, but not so far anymore. In September 1975, Ben Marais was invited by the Salisbury South (Harare) congregation of the NG Kerk as guest speaker during a retreat weekend of the congregation. He spoke on “Threats on the Church in Africa”. Slightly closer to home, in April 1976 during a mission camp in Warmbaths, Ben spoke on “The Current State of the Church in Africa”. The theme of threats to Christianity: Islam and Communism, was treated by Ben Marais in a paper delivered at a mission conference of the NG Kerk during May, 1976. And in the same month, he once again travelled across the Limpopo to present a paper at Victoria Falls in a Local Government Association Conference.

Ben Marais was not only active in academic and church circles; in 1976 he helped the Lynwood congregation of the NG Kerk on a temporary basis, conducting home visitations.

The time for reflection had commenced, and while still active in academia and ecclesiastic affairs, he was honoured by colleagues at the University of South Africa with a *Festschrift*, *Scripture and the Use of It* (1979). W.S. Vorster was editor. The *Festschrift* is a compilation of contributions and papers presented at the 2nd symposium of the Institute for Theological Research of Unisa, held on 19 and 20 September 1978 in Pretoria. A second *Festschrift*, edited by A. Viljoen, was presented to Ben Marais on his 70th birthday. The title of this *Festschrift* was *Ekumene Onder die Suiderkruis*.⁷⁰ These two *Festschrifte* indicate the diversity of academic interests Ben Marais maintained, and interestingly, these interests were also heard in ecclesiastic circles, as early as the synod of the Ned. Herv. or Geref. Kerk in 1940.

⁷⁰ Ecumenism under the Southern Cross.

Midst the honorary degrees, D.Th. – Unisa (1979) – which provided him with much pleasure (Meiring 1979:78), L.L.D. – Witwatersrand (1983), D.D. – Pretoria (1988), D.Phil. – Stellenbosch (1992), and further *Festschrifte* in his honour (for example, *New Faces of Africa- 1984*),⁷¹ and honorary memberships (Church History Society of South Africa – 1982), Ben Marais maintained his outspokenness on issues he felt strongly about. In January 1982, Ben Marais' signature was one of 123 signatures of church officials, undersigning an open letter to the Synod. The open letter calls for unity between the mother and daughter churches in the NG Kerk family, and for the rejection of Apartheid.

Ben Marais finally retired from Unisa in 1986. However, he continued to be interested in academic and ecclesiastic affairs, and was often consulted by his former students, who had become leaders in the church. It was also fortunate that he could experience the changes he had advocated for, and for the adherence to basic principles being effected through the diligence of his students. As his students rose to 'greatness' and he remained in the background, so he had lived his life, always humble and never drawing recognition to himself. He was fortunate to hear that the General Synod of 1990, held in Bloemfontein, had accepted the policy document "Kerk en Samelewing".⁷² The ideal of one church body for the NG Kerk family was expressed as well as the structural openness of the NG Kerk.

In August 1993, Ben Marais was asked to participate in the first Ben Marais Memorial Lecture, held at the University of Pretoria. The following month, September 1993, he addressed an audience at the Theological Seminary of Stellenbosch. This was to be his last public performance, because in 1994 he was involved in a car accident and suffered numerous injuries. He suffered a further set back in 1994, and spent his 85th birthday, on 26 April, in the hospital. His leg had to be amputated at the knee due to a thrombosis. Though, *Die Beeld* (26 April 1994) reported: "Prof Ben receives a New South Africa for

⁷¹ Edited by W.S. Vorster and J.W. Hofmeyr.

⁷² Church and Society.

his birthday”!⁷³ And, on 18 October 1994, Ben Marais received a standing ovation at the General Synod of the NG Kerk, when he visited one of the sessions whilst in his wheel chair! Ds Freek Swanepoel, Moderator of the synod, spoke on behalf of the General Synod, honouring him “as a prophet within the walls of the city ... a prophet who remained in [the church] and conducted himself in a Christ-like fashion”.⁷⁴ Ben Marais was officially given an apology, during the session of the General Synod, for the injustices he had suffered.

v. More Time for the Garden and Grandchildren

His years of isolation during which he experienced countless injustices were not without happiness. This was often of a more personal nature. Ben and Sibs Marais were blessed with three grandchildren, and he had the privilege of baptising his eldest great grandson in 1993.

The eldest grandchild to be born was Simon Christofel (17 August 1964), named after his other grandfather. Simon married Corena (Loubser), and to them was born Jacobus Martinus (14 January 1993), whom Ben Marais baptised, Johan Willem (19 October 1994), and Simon Barend (30 August 1994). Sebastina (6 October 1966), also called Sibs, was the second child born to Ben and Augusta. Sibs (Junior) married Pieter Bothma, and they currently (2002) have two children, Hendrik Malan (25 April 1999) and Augusta (15 December 2000). Ben Marais did not know them. Koos and Augusta’s youngest child, Barend Jacobus (28 February 1970) married Karen (Friedmelt). They have two children, Riegert Carl (29 March 2000) and Jakobus Marthinus (29 Mei 2002).

The family spent time together especially at Christmas time, when they all stayed in the family holiday home in Kleinmond. Here many happy hours were spent, stories created and told, and games played. The family is very close. It is important to note that Ben Marais had a very happy family life, and was as much a family man as he was active in his calling.

⁷³ My translation.

⁷⁴ My translation.

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Augusta, Ben Marais' daughter, told of the happy memories working in the garden with her father (Interview 17 December 2002). Clad in matching clothes to her father, Khaki shorts and shirt, they toiled in the garden in the mornings. They would then settle down for breakfast together. Less pleasant, though, was the victimisation she sometimes experienced at school, when she was taunted about her father being a Communist, ironically – considering his concern over them as a threat to Christianity. However, she also learned to deal with such taunting. Her father had taught her how to deal with it.

Away from the halls of learning and troublesome synods and inflicting colleagues, the far off lands he enjoyed travelling to, Ben Marais found peace in his garden. He was especially fond of his aloes (probably from his childhood days in Middelburg) and he was well known for his rose garden. During his retirement, old students, colleagues and friends often came to visit. Then over tea and biscuits or cake, prepared by Maggie (Ben Marais' loyal servant), they would discuss the old days, the issues of the day – ecclesiastic and political, the plight and successes of the national rugby and cricket teams.

Ben Marais died on 27 January 1999, after being bed-bound for several months, and was buried on 1 February 1999. The service was held in the Pretoria East Congregation of the NG Kerk – the church with which much of his adult life was associated.

b. Alternative Courses

Ben Marais mentions in an interview (Viljoen Interview 1986) that there were two opportunities when he could have entered politics, but that each time his calling to be minister of religion was determinant (see also Meiring 1979:86). He was also offered employment in the media while he was a student. He turned down offers to talk at international conferences where his church was not welcome. Ben Marais was loyal to the calling he received to become a minister. Midst his extensive world travels, he always returned home, to Pretoria.

When asked (Viljoen Interview 1986) whether he would have written anything different, or protested differently, Ben Marais replied that he would not have. If he had

his life over, he would have done the same. One particular reason for this is that he came to his particular insights at a particularly young age. But how was he able to withstand the temptations offered to him by the securities in Afrikaner Nationalism, like so many of his contemporaries (e.g. J.D. Vorster)?

It is contended that the particular course Ben Marais set out on has its roots in his youth, the way he was brought up in, and the steadfastness of his character.

c. Ben Marais as Key to His Times

Ben Marais can be seen to be a person who personalised the problems of race relations in South Africa. The problems of race relations are central to the 20th century history of South Africa, though not in its entirety – there are other themes. While this study does not wish to present his life in allegorical terms, in studying the life of Ben Marais, central themes in South African history are touched, directly and indirectly through a consideration of his life.

Midst the focus on the broader country and its socio-political problems and the difficult to disseminate Church-State relations, and midst Ben Marais featuring in international ecumenical circles, he is quoted in a publication *Middelburg Pays Homage* (Pretorius et al 1991:29) where he remembers his youth:

“How often I still see the purple-blue of Renosterberg in the late afternoon ... I have travelled to, seen and experienced the ends of Africa and almost the rest of the world, but in my heart I am and will always remain a son of the Great Karoo. That is where I belong ... Greet Renosterberg for me.”⁷⁵

It can thus be indicated that Ben Marais was neither aloof nor in denial of his roots, thus making him an ideal person, in whose own and family history, much of the history of South Africa is written. By studying the history of Ben Marais, the history of South Africa is also told. In order not to rewrite the history, but to present a calculated perspective, aspects of Ben Marais’ life, works and influences can be presented through the dual experiences in South Africa which during the 20th century can be illustrated.

⁷⁵ My translation.

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While benefiting from the Apartheid system⁷⁶ and remaining within the church he criticised so strongly,⁷⁷ Ben Marais' correspondence with Dr Carson Blake indicates, on the one hand, his insistence on the church (and the W.C.C.) remaining true to its calling of Mission, his concern for the plight of the poor and disadvantaged, but on the other his fear of communism and of the practical involvement of the W.C.C. (and therefore its member churches) in the battle against Apartheid. Ben Marais would not be the only person who fits this profile, but in his person and life, a useful key to the issues and sentiments – religious, cultural and political – current to his times, extending back into the 19th century, are still of concern today.

4. CONCLUSION

This chapter on “the life of Ben Marais” presents biographical information chronologically. It also contains the correspondence with the World Council of Churches, which serves as an orientation to his person and work, and indicates how his personal history is a means to understanding the history of South Africa in the 20th century. The history of South Africa and the pertinent themes are considered within an ecclesiastic framework, since this was Ben Marais' primary framework.

In the following chapter, Chapter 3, the emphasis falls on “the times of Ben Marais”. The issues that occupied the thoughts of Ben Marais, were mentioned, or referred to in Chapter 2 in the short reflection on his life. While the life and times of Ben Marais are impossible to separate, in Chapter 3 biographic allusions are made to his life and thoughts. Once a structure for understanding the issues has been presented in Chapter 4, it will be possible to understand the significance of the influences on Ben Marais, which contributed to the formulation of his point of view, and encouraged him to raise his prophetic voice.

⁷⁶ Criticism against Presbyterian, Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches.

⁷⁷ Comparable to Beyers Naudé and other members of the Christian Institute who left the NG Kerk in their protest against Apartheid.

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 Taboureur, 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, vrugteloois 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.”

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’a’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.

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..

THE TIMES OF BEN MARAIS

“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 amidst 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 receptive 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).

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.

“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 godsdienstige 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.

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.

CHAPTER 4

NATIONALISM: TWO PERIODS OF TRANSFORMATION

1. INTRODUCTION

The heading “The two periods of transformation” could be considered an alternative to “Nationalism in South Africa”. While the second heading would be more precise, it is deemed too general and does not convey the significance of change – development, tensions, rise and fall, stagnation – affecting various forms of nationalism that shared the same geographical area – Southern Africa – though attempts were made to modify this – through Apartheid. Thus, central to the theme of nationalism is the theoretical – policy orientated – framework in which each nationalism was to be provided for. This in itself, as it is indicated in Chapter 3, is also subject to certain nations sense of superiority, patronage and fears at different times in the history of South Africa during the 20th century. The heading “Nationalism: Two Periods of Transformation” contains an indication of a thematic treatment and a temporal structuring of the period with further thematic undertone “transformation”.

In this chapter, the central theme of “nationalism” is considered as a typical socio-cultural and political concern which influenced all aspects of life, including the relations between people, the religious institutions, and which considered a major dilemma for many, like Ben Marais, who considered himself an Afrikaner, but could not identify with Afrikaner nationalism and its political policies.

2. THE FIRST PERIOD OF TRANSFORMATION

When Ben Marais was a year and some months old, in August to September 1910, five consecutive articles on “The Race Question”¹⁴⁹ appeared in *De Kerkbode*. After indicating the significance of the race question, or concerning the Africans, the first

¹⁴⁹ Naturellen Vraagstuk.

article (25 August 1910:115 emphasises the disproportion between the population groups. Only two are considered – whites one million, and Africans 9 million. Furthermore, the task of the church to evangelise the Africans is emphasised, indicating the relevance of the prominence given to the Mission Policy of the NG Kerk. Besides the responsibility to evangelise the Africans, the responsibility of the “Christian nation”¹⁵⁰ is emphasised. That is, “the responsibility to govern the Africans that encircle us in a Christian way.”¹⁵¹ The “evangelised heathendom (sic)” were to be governed according to Christian principles. The article also indicates the essence of the race problem – African problem: How best to govern the Africans? The alternatives that are considered indicates the paternal attitude of the white Afrikaner church towards the Africans living in Southern Africa.

Each of the other four articles then looks at particular aspects of the problem of race. In the second article (1 September 1910:130), attention is paid to “the indigenous in their social condition”,¹⁵² in which a negating view is taken on African civilisation. In the third instalment (8 September 1910:146), it is asked what rights, if any, should be granted to the Africans. In clever rhetoric, in which the name of Booker Washington is used regarding responsibility and word play between rights and privileges (recht en voorrecht), this article indicates that Africans cannot be granted rights because they are not able to fulfil certain duties, and like the second instalment (1 September 1910:130) has a higher regard for European civilisation than African civilisation. The fourth article in the series on the African Question (15 September 1910:163) considers one right that should be granted to blacks, which is, education. Apart from restricting the education possibilities to primary education (secondary to a few and no mention of tertiary), and emphasising that education must be conducted in the mother tongue – contrary to education policy in the early 1970s, and considering African educational needs in terms of the labour class, and condemning the Gam Theology of the cursed nations, the article states (15 September 1910):

“But the black races have not – to use scientific language – reached the stage in evolution, the level on which development takes place, on which

¹⁵⁰ Christen volk.

¹⁵¹ “... de verplichting om de naturellen die ons omringen op Christelijke wijze te regeeren.”

¹⁵² “De inboorling in zijn maatschappijliken Toestand.”

the Christian nations find themselves, and therefore the black races are necessarily, when considering the white races, in a position of being the lesser.”¹⁵³

A second right is considered in the last of the articles in the series (22 September 1910:179), being the right to vote. In the voice of the church (NG Kerk), the emphasis moved progressively away from considering the race problems in the context of the church towards a statutory and political context. This is indicative of the shift in ecclesiastic contemplation on race issues in the NG Kerk during the first period of transformation, in which Africans became more negated and the interests of the Afrikaner nation promoted at the cost of the African people.

Within the demarcated first period of transformation, 1900 to 1948, there was not only a consolidation of Afrikaner Nationalism but also of African Nationalism. There was a distinction between Afrikaners promoting Afrikanerdom and Afrikaners who were English orientated, as experienced in Graaff-Reinet, where two NG Kerk congregations existed within the same geographic boundaries, and two Afrikaans High Schools were functioning, the distinctions based on political affiliations, which coincided between being Anglo-orientated or Ultra-Afrikaner orientated (Naudé 1995), and in Steynsburg, where clear lines were drawn between church and school along political affiliation (Aucamp Interview 20 September 2002).¹⁵⁴

The first period also saw the consolidation of Africans, forming a political platform in the form of a political party, based on the Indians early protests against discriminatory laws and treatment, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. The first leaders of the African political voice, with which African Nationalism is associated, came from the ranks of the church, similar to the leaders of the Afrikaner nationalism, though the Afrikaners had a stronger military orientation due to reflection on the Anglo-Boer War and because their leaders were generals in this war.

Apart from the two world wars, the Anglo-Boer War, the process of deruralment and

¹⁵³ My translation.

¹⁵⁴ See also Roodt (1976) for a general overview of the history of the NG Kerk congregation of Steynsburg.

urbanization, the 1st period experienced severe poverty, resulting in the “Poor white Question”¹⁵⁵ and tensions with Africans in the labour market (Macquarrie 1933). The period also saw the emergence of strong labour unions and the emergence of a labour market shift, from white to more commercially feasible black mine workers. The country’s infrastructure was also developed more fully, with improved railway and road facilities.

3. THE SECOND PERIOD OF TRANSFORMATION

The 2nd period, 1948 to date [open ended] saw not only the industrialisation of many more towns taking place, but also the technologicalisation, and in the last decade the computerisation of telecommunications, industries, commerce, education and the civil service, not to mention the emergence of television and video in the media. The advancements in progress have been immeasurable, save in comparison to the European countries and Northern America, and other African countries that did not experience growth. Much of this development was due to the major sales of gold and diamonds.

During the second period of transformation there were Afrikaners who consolidated their endeavours to promoting Afrikanerdom, their language and culture, and there were Afrikaners who were becoming more aware of the other, of the plight of the other races. At the same time, many of these endeavours had their origins in the first period, especially the 1930s, indicating the restrictions of the transformation model being used.

Where the 1st period saw the rise of Afrikaner nationalism, the 2nd period saw its consolidation, a greater rift taking place between its original close relationship between church, media, society and politics, each perusing its own interests. For African Nationalism, the 2nd period saw the emergence of a greater awareness of international and Pan-African awareness, the militarisation of their attitudes towards other nations, and greater emphasis being placed on cultural heritage than on progress. The 2nd period also saw the emergence of a rich African class and a polarised poverty stricken mass, where the Afrikaners had a smaller poverty problem and a stronger middle class and a powerful rich class.

¹⁵⁵ Armblankevraagstuk.

4. OVERLAP IN THE PERIODS OF TRANSFORMATION

It is contended that in South Africa the whole 20th century can be termed as a time of transformation in the country. This would be akin to the diverse peoples in the country coming to terms with themselves and others, thus, transformation in human relations. Each generation has had to come to terms, not only with their predecessors, but with the other. As the generations overlapped, so the two periods could be seen to form part of a greater whole.

5. THE VARIOUS FORMS OF NATIONALISM

In *The Two Faces of Africa*, Ben Marais (1964b) considers Afrikaner and African nationalism under the same banner of African nationalism. According to Ben Marais, Afrikaner and African nationalism are not dissimilar. He distinguishes African Nationalism from Tribalism (Marais 1964b:110):

“It is, I think, essential to point out at the very outset that much of so-called African ‘Nationalism’ is in fact not nationalism at all but tribalism pure and simple. In every state or part of Africa there is a general reaction against colonialism or white domination, but within most of the African State there are very deep tribal rivalries ... Nationalism is the modern trend. Where the tribal loyalties become loose or obsolete, nationalism flourishes. Nationalism epitomises the new African’s desire to rediscover his dignity by projecting himself into the modern world...”

Nationalism is seen by Ben Marais, in this context, to be a phenomenon of Western Culture, thus of western civilization. This consideration is made more complicated by Ben Marais’ view that nationalism should fall away within the church (1964b:139), which as it was constituted during the greater part of the 20th century, was a western orientated institution.

The idea of Afrikaner and African nationalism being related, though in tension is expressed by S. Marks and S. Trapido in their article, “The politics of race, class and nationalism” (1987:1). They claim that the objective of “white Afrikaner nationalism”, during the 20th century in South Africa, was “the capture of the state by the white Afrikaner nation”, and in so doing, “has confronted its counterpart, a pan-South African black nationalism”. The objective of Black Nationalism was the search for “the

incorporation of Africans into the body politic”. The minority communities – Coloureds and Indians, then, according to Marks and Trapido (1987:1), have constructed an own sense of community as a response resulting from a “deliberate manipulation of group differences to prevent interracial class solidarity”.

Where Shillito (1933), maintains that nationalism should be considered in religious terms, it could as easily be considered in political, cultural, historical, philosophical or sociological terms. To understand the nationalistic climates in South Africa, prevalent during the twentieth century, consideration would have to be given to each of these aspects. To undertake such a enterprise would take up several volumes, and would not be conducive to understanding Ben Marais as a prophet of the twentieth century. However, it would be most important to indicate that political, religious, social, economic, cultural and ethnic/race, considerations all play a part in the nationalistic climates of South Africa in the 20th century. Furthermore, the various forms of nationalism share a common history, though interpreted differently.

While Ben Marais only considered two forms of nationalism, Afrikaner and African, there are more forms of nationalism present in Southern Africa. The consideration of only two forms of nationalism in the South African context is restrictive. Afrikaner and African nationalism did not come to being in a vacuum, moreover, many of the impulses within Afrikanerdom and African nationalism came from other nationalities. It would be most simplified to state that the Afrikaner and African nationalism developed in reaction to English colonialism. The inter-influences are a bit more complex, where distinction, concerning Afrikaner and African nationalism is concerned, must be made between British Imperialism and English Colonialism. Furthermore, the role of differentiated Afrikaner attitudes in the distinguished geographic regions should be considered, including the role of the Germans in South West Africa (Namibia) and the Indians in Natal and Transvaal. By treating the various “other” nationalisms in this section, the complexity of the South African society regarding nationalism is emphasised, but more importantly, a better understanding of the two selected forms of nationalism can be achieved.

Ben Marais (1964b:7) relates the problem of nationalism and colonialism to his youth, and also draws an abbreviated comparison of situation and influence to America:

“When I was a child in the Great Karroo (sic) in the heyday of colonialism in Africa hardly any questions were ever asked about matters of race or subject races. The Good God had set the patterns and ordained the white man boss. Then slowly through two world wars there was the dawn of a new day. The problem of races, of subject peoples or minorities, suddenly moved to the centre of the world’s interest. It is occupying the minds of Africans to such an extent that what happens in connection with the solution of America’s race problem is of far more consequence to the African mind than all the untold millions America pours into Africa.”

Financial and material relief is temporary in nature, only a comfort, but does not substitute for the violations of one people against another. In the Viljoen interview (1986), Ben Marais considered colonialism in the light of paternalism, which gave rise to the feeling that whites were superior.

In considering the problem of land in Natal, Swanepoel (1997) presents an African perspective on nationalism in South Africa. He claims that the conflicts between the different people go back far further than Apartheid. Thus as a criteria for considering the history of South Africa, Apartheid is quite restricting. This is working within the scope of this restriction, with the knowledge that Apartheid and the forms of nationalisms form only part of the greater whole, albeit important.

It is important to consider what is understood under nationalism since it is used differently by different people and in different ages, some see it positively and other negatively.

6. THE TERM “NATIONALISM”

Nation (*The Pocket Oxford* 1977):

“ ... A people or race distinguished by community of descent, language, history, or political institutions.”

Nationalism (*The Pocket Oxford* 1977):

“ ... patriotic feeling or principles or efforts, policy of ~ independence....”

Thus distinguished, by denotation is that “nationalism” signifies a group set against another due to its inherent facilities; and by connotation that “nationalism” is a collective term identifying communality by that which the use of the term indicates.

Kriek (1971:12) considers the Latin root of nation, *Natio*, which he suggests originally implied an undeveloped tribe. It, then, was a group of people that belonged together due to a common heritage. As a social unit it would have been larger than a family but smaller than a “clan”. The use of the term would thus have changed over the years, to eventually serve as a collective word indicating a group of people that have a communality of sorts. As Kriek (1971:13) aptly quotes from a report by the Royal Institute of International Affairs:

“... the word ‘nation’ has meant different things to different people at different times and in different languages.”

According to the study of K.W. Deutsch (Kriek 1971:17), the following conclusions could be reached on the term “nation” with which “nationalism” is associated:

“... that the term ‘nation’ does not contain a biological content and has little or nothing to do with race; that a general relation is emphasised concerning a people’s physical environment, and events in the past (common history); that a communal and unique thought world is present with the individuals of the same ‘nation’ and that values, thoughts and emotions are shared; that there are linking habits and practices and memories in the thought world of such individuals that encourage them to participate in specific roles such as leaders and followers; that these linking practices and roles are institutionalized in the form of social institutions; that there is a communal attraction to the symbols that a positive relation is established between those who manipulate the symbols and those who accept it; that all these aspects – that is: relation to environment, past, leaders, institutions and symbols – form structures that strengthen each other and maintain the whole; that these clear formations of social behaviour are called collective personality or culture; that these social patterns have bearing on the personality structures of individuals; that the personality of every person and to a certain extent his ‘nationality’ contains his “conscience” or “will”; that every individual can change his nationality, or at least his position therein and attitude towards it, but that this is a very long process; that nationalism and nationality has a historical origin and development.”

Central issues of concern to “nationalists” (besides the use of the masculine case!) appear to be: land; the preserving of biological heritage; appreciation of symbols; leadership styles; common history; cultural heritage and traditions; and communal personality and thought world. Furthermore, it is believed that a nation comes to being, to stand in contrast to another entity.

7. THE DIFFERENT FORMS OF NATIONALISM

The rise of nationalism, in relation to the reaction against English rule, on the one hand Afrikaner, and on the other African, can only be understood in the South African context if Indian nationalism in South Africa were also taken into consideration. Indian nationalism fell greatly outside Ben Marais’ primary concerns. It is treated here in broad strokes, to indicate its essence and the inter-relatedness of the various forms of nationalism in South Africa.

a. Indian Nationalism

Within the history of nationalism in South Africa, the history of Indian Nationalism takes in a most prominent position for its organised opposition to both English and Afrikaner authorities and serving as an inspiration to African Nationalism. The central character, associated with the rise of Indian Nationalism in South Africa is Mahatma Gandhi, who arrived, when he was 23 years old, to represent an Indian settler in a court case. He set sail from Bombay in 1893.

The threat of the “Mohammedans” – Muslims was not as prevalent a theme in the discrimination against the Indians after their arrival in the Natal Colony in the 1860s and in the Republic of Transvaal after 1881; neither was there concern over their commercial thrift. Thus, Gandhi ascribed the problems of race to the economic system on which South African Society is based (Ali 1994:14), and not to matters of religion, culture or education. Though, these aspects were used in legislature, like the 1911 law restricting Indian passage on grounds of education, and the 1913 Marriage Act which implicated that Indian traditional marriages were no longer recognised.

The prominent theme in the political aspects of Indian Nationalism that was owned by Gandhi, and which he introduced, was the concept *Satyagraha*, which was an effective weapon of non-violence, in which the effective instruments of influence were passive resistance, non-cooperation and civil disobedience. Thus, the first resistance, effective as it was, against racial discrimination in South Africa was organised in the Indian community.

Apart from starting a newspaper through which the Indians could voice their grievances, Gandhi organised an Indian Ambulance Corps in the Anglo-Boer War. However, he realised that the anti-Asian laws, casual as they were under the Boers, were diligently implemented by British officials. Chamberlain would not help the Indians of Transvaal (Ali 1994:14). Gandhi though had a dilemma during the Anglo-Zulu wars of 1906, which as a British subject, he resolved by identifying with the British and choosing to serve the wounded Zulus.

A further consideration of Indian Nationalism and the forms of nationalism prevalent in South Africa is the fact that Indian Nationalism clearly defines the differences in the triangular struggle between the British, the Boers and the Africans for South Africa. It is also interesting to note that the Indians were seen as a threat due to their positioning between the whites and blacks. One of the problems was that the daughters of poor whites often times found employment in Indian shops, and thus ended up being drawn into Indian families, while Indians inter-married quite freely also with black people.

Through the Indians, Gandhi's perspective of the Zulu people, distinguished from the European sentiments, it is also discernible to appreciate the diverse attitudes towards black people on the one hand, and raises the question asking about the true nature of African culture, and whether it was as backward and barbaric as implicated. Gandhi saw (Ali 1994:19) "that they [the Zulus] were at once noble at heart, of dignified bearing, with refined manners and learned in natural science." This positive appreciation differed from the European consideration of the Africans as "so primitive that for civilising purposes they are almost a clean slate" (Ali 1994:19).

While Gandhi was a deeply religious man, considered by Ben Marais to be a polytheist, as well as a political figure, whose struggles lay the foundation of the African National Congress – through the activities of the Natal Indian Congress, it appears that Ben Marais only considered him in the light of his religious life and not concerning his political and legal endeavours in South Africa (Viljoen Interview 1986). Though, in 1958 when the Indian population was subjected to forced removals, they drew up a petition. Ben Marais was one of the people who objected to the removals and the law enforcing the removals. On 28 January 1959, a letter of Ben Marais was published in *Die Kerkbode*, in which he requested the church to formulate a point of view on the moving of Indians as part of the execution of the Group Areas legislation. According to Ben Marais this was unfair and was not defensible according to Christian principles.

On the eve of India's independence in 1946, Nehru raised the banner of revolt against racial discrimination in South Africa at the United Nations (Ali 1994:25).¹⁵⁶ This set the scene for international attitudes towards South Africa, and concretised in 1975 when South Africa was totally isolated in accordance to a resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations. Resolution 3411 (XXX) unequivocally declared that "the racist regime of South Africa is illegitimate and has no right to represent the people of South Africa" (Ali 1994:25). Nehru also supported the petition of Julius Nyerere¹⁵⁷ of Tanzania to exclude South Africa from the commonwealth, directly as a result of the events at Sharpsville (1961).

Thus, not only Indian Nationalism in South Africa, but also the Indian Nation it influenced, contributed towards the resistance to and breaking down of a political dispensation.

¹⁵⁶ It is interesting to note that Ben Marais heard Nehru speak at the Taj Mahal during his second visit to India in 1960. He had previously, in 1939, chosen to visit the Taj Mahal instead of conducting an interview with Mahatma Gandhi (Meiring 1979:82).

¹⁵⁷ "To vote South Africa in, is to vote us out" (Ali 1994:26).

b. English Nationalism

Besides considerations on the lesser and greater of the evils between English Colonialism and British Imperialism as experienced in South Africa (Ross Interview 27 November 2001), and the NG Kerk's opposition to imperialism (Hofmeyr & Pillay 1994:165), the presence of English nationals in South Africa had a major effect on the relations between the different people, the Boers, Africans and Indians, also geographically determined: Western and Eastern Cape, Natal, Transvaal and Orange Free State. To unravel these sentiments in the attitudes between the nations and their reaction to colonialism, would only be to consider an aspect of the tensions between the groups. Intermarriage and co-habitation also took place – though on a small scale. The attitudes of influential individuals, though, cast the inquiry on a very different level.

At the Cottesloe Consultation (December 1961), Joost de Blank, archbishop of Cape Town, kept himself one side, according to Beyers Naudé (1995:50) fostering his prejudices against the Afrikaans speaking delegates at the consultation. He later asked an apology for these prejudices. These prejudices would have developed over several generations and would have stemmed from the lack of contact between the churches and the English and Afrikaners, dating back to the previous century (Streak 1974).

The prejudices the English held for the Afrikaners also steamed in the World Council of Churches, though under the pretext of the Afrikaans churches' support of the discriminatory policies of the National Party and South African government in the period following the events at Sharpville and Langa. A very weak case could be made out that the English were using the turmoil of the African people to instigate international action against the Afrikaans churches.

Joost de Blank requested the World Council of Churches in an attacking article in the *New York Times* (Van der Watt 1987:104) to ban the NG Kerk from the World Council of Churches if the NG Kerk did not openly distance itself from Apartheid, and requested that the Council send a commission of inquiry to South Africa. Further tensions were

created through the pronouncements of Ambrose Reeves of Johannesburg and C.T. Wood.

c. Afrikaner Nationalism

One of the central questions that could be posed to a study on Ben Marais is: How did he avoid being swept along by the winds of Afrikaner Nationalism? There is no direct answer to this question, but from this study, the answer would be sought in the influences in his life, that is, his youth and student years, also in his personality and social orientation.

From the interview Viljoen (1986) conducted with Ben Marais, the conversation ventured to his formative years as a person and as an intellectual. The topic of nationalism was breached, which Ben Marais considered in relation to religion, and more specifically to his own faith.¹⁵⁸ He reasoned: nationalism versus faith. This he reduced to a matter of principles: Interpretations from reading Scripture; and he asked the question: What is the church's calling? Which he answered with a rhetorical question: To protect a people's identity? The relation between religion and nationalism cannot be denied. In the context of South Africa, the one can only be considered if the other is taken into account.

Afrikaner Nationalism is a subject that has been written on extensively. This thesis does not intend to bring new insights to the fore, rather, it wishes to use it as an orientating reference to the life and work of Ben Marais. It will therefore not be necessary to provide a critical analysis on the subject, but it is crucial to indicate trends and relations, differences and similarities between the various forms of nationalism as phenomena and as experienced within 20th century South Africa.

Afrikaner nationalism is considered under the convenient, but not at all conclusive, model of "rise and fall" – or development and disablement. Distinction must also be drawn between progressive historical sequencing and retrospective historical

¹⁵⁸ Ben Marais always maintained his being an Afrikaner, and detested it when people wanted to make an Englishman of him (Meiring 1979:85)!

perspectives. For the purposes of this study, considerations on the origin of Afrikaner nationalism are categorised into five schools of thought.

1. Socio-economic reasons: especially 1930s: similar to revolution – education power wealth

Afrikaner nationalism could be considered to be “a broad social and political response to the uneven development of capitalism in South Africa” (Hofmeyr & Pillay 1994:195). In line with this, the period when economic models (communism and capitalism and socialism) were being compared and determined which were the most suitable, there was a marked increase in urbanisation, a focus on unions (especially mine and rail workers), and access to education, amidst drought and extreme poverty.

2. Reaction against Anglicising policies of government administration

The Anglicising programme of Milner, where English was the language of preference (Marks & Trapido 1987:102), in reaction to which a surge in the Afrikaans language and literature, took place in its proponents pursuit of its acknowledgement.

3. A natural historical phenomena – a group of people with a shared history

Comparisons could be made to the Americas and to Australia, as well as to other comparative settlements of people in history, often from diverse backgrounds, who amalgamated in a common cause or goal.

4. Cultural religious arguments with ideological base

Afrikaners had an own language: Afrikaans, they had a common history (self perceived and to be argued) – the Great Trek, Slagter’s Nek, and a common religion (Calvinism or reformed – depending on perspective). They had a romantic notion of land and self-reliance.

Concerning the Afrikaner’s perceived common history and unity, Pont (1985:59) argues:

“... that the Afrikaner was born and grew up as a unique people (volk) within the framework and *atmosphere* of Calvinistic theology. This theology finds its life force in the fact that it is a biblical theology that wishes to communicate the Word of God without fraud and without additions.”¹⁵⁹

Pont continues to conclude that the primary unit within a nation is the family, which is also the “home-congregation” of the church, and thus the borders drawn up around the Afrikaner family, in the past, was a divine act, and served to facilitate the establishment of the Afrikaner nation.

5. An absolute desire for self determination and freedom

Associated with the striving for self determination is pride and sense of being. Furthermore, a sense of superiority and accomplishment is also present.

These can in turn be grouped under reactionary and progressive arguments, all focusing on especially the 1920s to 1930s when Afrikaner Nationalism was growing in stature. It is considered that all the arguments are valid, and that it is difficult to determine the most prominent influence. Such an exercise is circumstantial, as in this study, where the focus falls on reactionary arguments, especially against Anglicising policies and English government policies. From this perspective, the other arguments are incorporated. Thus, it can be indicated how Ben Marais, an Afrikaner, interacted with Afrikaner nationalism, while also keeping perspective of the current events in the country – concerning African nationalism, during two periods of transformation.

Instead of attempting a narrative of reconstruction, the following contributing factors are mentioned, as are orientated in the life of Ben Marais: depression and poverty, drought and plagues (Ben Marais experienced a locust plague lasting eight days – Viljoen 1986); politics and culture – the outbreak of World War II – influences blew in: on one hand internal views on colour crises (*Rassebakens*), and the division of views between open and conservative – resulting from the Du Plessis Case. On the other hand external views on race from German ideology (the hope that Germany would win the

¹⁵⁹ Onvervals en onvermeng. My translation.

war); furthermore the student leaders: Diedericks and Meyer who propagated race purity; the retaliation against Anglicising – the “Engelse gevaar” (shake off the English yoke – stems from Anglo Boer War and would be lifted in the formation of a Republic); religion – Scripture – especially Old Testament. Afrikaners identified many similarities between the Old Testament people of God and themselves. Esp. the older generations of Afrikaners.

The following rhetorical questions could be asked: Could “Afrikaner bewuswording”¹⁶⁰ (Viljoen Interview 1986) and the F.A.K. (Federasie Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniging) established in 1929, be compared to the Black Consciousness Movement prevalent during the 1960s and 1970s in South Africa? On rhetoric, Ben Marais refers to the terms race, nationality and identity as emotional concepts (Viljoen Interview 1986). Would these concepts be theologically circumscribed? On Afrikaner nationalism: What about the coloured Afrikaners? And what about their Afrikanerdom? Would another history of Afrikaner be foreseeable? Would a study of the role of Islam in Coloured nationalism not be important? On influences from Scotland and Ireland: Could a comparison be drawn between the Irish Catholics and the Boers in the Anglo Boer war? Is a comparison possible to when the French Catholics assisted keeping the English out of Table Bay when the English threatened the Cape Town harbour in the 18th century. What is the influence of Scottish evangelical piety, and not being strongly influenced by the enlightenment as a result of the Scottish Presbyterian ministers? What was the influence of the upcoming Afrikaner intellectuals who studied abroad and were thus affected and influenced. For example by Kuyper, or, those who went to study at Oxford and Cambridge (Ghandi was a contemporary of Jan Smuts at Cambridge).

In the Viljoen interview (1986), Ben Marais maintained that on the one hand there was Black frustration, and on the other White fear. He reasoned that the frustration and fear transformed into hatred for the other.

¹⁶⁰ The rise of Afrikaner conscience.

d. African Nationalism

P.B. van der Watt (1987:75), in his treatment of the race questions in the NG Kerk, considers the role the ANC, thus African Nationalism, and the urbanization of the Africans, played in stimulating the momentum of the NG Kerk's formulation of a substantial race policy.

In considering African Nationalism in relation to Afrikaner Nationalism, light is shed on both phenomena. Ben Marais, a child of his times (1940s) distinguished between tribalism and nationalism (Marais 1964b:99). In his consideration, African nationalism is seen as a continental phenomenon, and not only South African.¹⁶¹ An argument could be defended that the phenomena is much broader and should also encompass African-American nationalism. However, this – like the continental orientation – is too broad for the purpose of this study. Though, it is considered a worthy thought to consider the relations and identifications between the different African groups as comparable to the Afrikaners unification in their past, religion and language.

Ben Marais was isolated from Africans, principally because the Apartheid system he came to oppose shielded him. His exposure was limited to his servants and a few church and academic people. His principle influences came from his visits through Africa, and thus these visits influenced his thinking more than did the situation in South Africa.

The roots of the current tide of African nationalism could be sought in the Anglo Boer War (Hofmeyr & Pillay 1994:148, Ross Interview 27 November 2001). Hofmeyr and Pillay (1994:153) also indicate claims that a British victory would ensure justice for Africans was repeated continuously in sermons, articles in church newspapers and on political platforms. Little attention was paid to the prospects of Africans once the war was over in 1902.

¹⁶¹ See Marais in *Werda* 1 August 1961.

The Eastern Frontier wars belonged to a different transformational period. In this perspective on the war, the English required a reason to take over the Republic of the Orange Free State and the Republic of Transvaal. The Anglo Boer War could also be considered a media war, where home opinion (England) helped determine the outcome of the war. If the war were justified and evoked common sympathy, the antagonists would have a ready supply of willing men and bandages. The plight of the Afrikaner's black farm workers was used for the humanitarian justification of the English involvement beyond the borders of the colonies of Southern Africa, where there was gold and diamonds. The correct administration of these assets was also a consideration. The presence of English and other farmers in these Republics and their treatment need not be compared, nor in other parts of the world. What is important is that particular expectations were created amongst Black people in Southern Africa, which were not met either at the closure of the war, or at the forming of the Union of South Africa in 1910. They thus needed a unified black political organization to represent their political needs (Hofmeyr & Pillay 1994:148).

The organisation that came into existence in Bloemfontein in 1912 was first known as the South African Native National Congress, and later as the African National Congress. The first leaders were church leaders. It would be an interesting question to ask about the influence of missionary education. To which may be answered that there were both developments and tensions between mission, the church and the political awareness of Africans (Hofmeyr & Pillay 1994:184). The origins and early progression of African Nationalism could be concretised in one of the founder members of the South African Native National Council, John Dube.

Hofmeyr and Pillay (1994:184) indicate that Dube was detained during the Anglo-Boer War because he had expressed the view that Africans should rule. Dube, who was associated with the American Zulu Mission at Inanda (he was pastor until 1908), received his education at the mission. He believed that the way to "change the sorry state of black South Africans was through education, the adoption of Christian values, working through whites sympathetic with the black struggle and through Western-type political organizations" (Marks 1975:180). Hunt-Davies (1975:497) quotes Dube, from

his acceptance of his election to be president of the South African National Native Congress in 1912, indicating his close affinity to the American activist, Booker T. Washington: “I take for my motto ... *Festina lente*: Hasten slowly, and for my patron saint I select that great and edifying man, Booker Washington.”

Hofmeyr and Pillay (1994:184) point out that Dube was not the only African leader to have had an appreciation for Washington’s programme of spiritual and social upliftment of black people. They (Hofmeyr & Pillay 1994:184) mention that John Tengo Jabavu, Rev. P.J. Mzimba, Pixley ka Izaka Seme and Sol T. Plaatje also had reverence for Washington. It is interesting to note the similarities between the programmes of John Dube and Mahatma Ghandi, and to the plea by Ben Marais for peaceful resolutions to the crisis in South Africa. Like Ben Marais later, Dube was apt to raise his grievances, but unlike Ben Marais, he functioned in a broader context. Three main emphases are distinguished in Dube’s work (Hofmeyr & Pillay 1994:185), which indicates that the rising African Nationalism was not only concerned about political issues. The first was education; secondly he was a political leader – one of the protesters against the 1913 Native’s Lands Act (He accompanied a delegation to London in 1914 to protest to the British government); and thirdly he sought peaceful co-existence between black and white South Africans. Dube represented Natal on the Native Representative Council until his death, and was succeeded by Chief Albert Luthuli (Hofmeyr & Pillay 1994:186).

In his Address to the Annual Conference of the Natal Branch of the African National Congress – 23 November 1951, originally in Zulu, Albert Luthuli stated (Pillay 1993: 35):

“Although our greatest concerns are our domestic needs, the culling of our stock, the influx laws that prevent us from taking employment in towns, the expulsion of Africans from the farms and many similar things, as a leading national organization, we should be the scouts of the nation and point out the trends affecting us in the whole country.”

The speech by Luthuli gives an important insight into the socio-political concerns of Africans at the beginning of D.F. Malan’s administration. Luthuli pleads for co-operation between all people, black and white, and calls for unity among Africans. In

the speech, he encourages Africans to do something about their lot. Pillay (1993: 34) also indicates that Luthuli re-defines the challenges facing blacks in South Africa, in the face of the new legislation being introduced by the Malan government. This indicates an emphasis or focus change in African nationalism, which this study considers the onset of the second phase of African Nationalism.

An important perspective on African nationalism is that Afrikaners of the 1960s and 70s identified African nationalism and communism as being dangerous, thus the “Rooi Gevaar” – communism was working through the “Swart Gevaar” – African nationalism. In *Colour: Unsolved Problem of the West* (1952a) Ben Marais alludes to the confusion between Bantu nationalism¹⁶² and communism, a matter he considers in statement 33 of *Colour: Unsolved Problem of the West* (1952a).

In the Viljoen interview (1986) Ben Marais maintains that communism played a role in African nationalism. In the interview, interestingly, he refers to Albert Luthuli. Ben Marais, quite rightly, considered his being a black nationalist and a Christian, but I believe ignorantly – even though he claims to have known him – considered him a communist. While Ben Marais’ consideration was the source of funding of the ANC – compare to his correspondence with Dr Potter and Eugene Carson Blake – which was communist, Albert Luthuli had a different orientation to communism. While Ben Marais’ opinion was well possibly influenced by the South African media, which would have made such a correlation, Luthuli considers the economic alternatives differently (Pillay 1993).

Albert Luthuli considers the problems and economic solutions of African impoverishment in his speech at the 44th Annual Meeting of the ANC held in Bloemfontein from 16 to 18 December 1955. While the freedom charter of the ANC could be interpreted as advocating either an extreme Marxist position or a form of moderate socialism (Pillay 1993:82), Luthuli indicates his preference for a “mixed economy”, not communism, as he states (Pillay 1993:84):

¹⁶² African Nationalism.

“My own personal leanings are towards the modified socialistic state, patterned on the present-day Great Britain, a middle-of-the-road state between the extreme ultracapitalistic state as we see it in the United States, and the ultrasocialistic state as we see it in Communist Russia ... My advice to the conference would be to accept the charter with the qualification that it does not commit itself at present until further discussion on the principle of nationalisation, of means of production, as visualised in Section 3 of the charter....”

A most important consideration is Ben Marais’ observation (Viljoen 1986) that most black people came from the working class.

After considering the broader tenants of the broader different national groups, attention can now be focussed on a shared tenant: the shared political and religious scenario.

e. National Gods and Political Suppliants

At the World Mission Conference in Tambaram, 1938, John R. Mott gave the following warning (Brown 1992b:175) before calling for the establishment of justice among all people:

“National gods of any kind, gods of race or class, these are not large enough to save us.”

After the conference, at which the fact of war, race hatred and the greed of money were issues that were discussed, Ben Marais was asking whether the international community understood the complexity of the race issue in Southern Africa, whether they would not be more sympathetic towards the Afrikaners if they understood the situation – he believed that they were not properly informed (Brown 1992b:178). From the letter of E.C. Blake (1970) it is obvious that the international community had a particular understanding of the race issue in Southern Africa, and was by no means sympathetic towards it.

A further understanding of the relation between nationalism and religion is found in Shillito (1933), who greatly influenced the thoughts of Ben Marais on the subject. Shillito has a strong opinion on the relation between nationalism and religion and the nature of nationalism (Shillito 1933:2):

“It is not enough to discuss nationalism as a political theory – to many it is another

religion – to some the only religion.”

i. Understanding Apartheid

The history of Apartheid lies in the time before 1948. Ben Marais gives a brief summary of this history (1964b:10):

“During the 300 year history of South Africa a policy of some form of segregation has always been followed, by the Dutch – except during the first thirty years – as well as by the English. From time to time territorial boundaries were fixed. After the Union of South Africa was formed in 1910 this policy was once more pursued. In 1913 the Land Act was enacted and 10 million morgen of land set apart for Africans. In 1936 this was increased to 20 million morgen. What are called the ‘African homelands’ today have thus been part and parcel of the South African policy as it developed.”

Ben Marais indicates sensitivity towards the situation where he indicates in the next paragraph (1964b:10): “In the meantime, however, an opposite trend set in.” The use of the two contradictory conjunctive devices emphasises the vast cleft between a social control theory and its execution. He indicates that more and more Africans were drawn into the “so-called ‘white areas’ as agricultural workers, domestic servants and industrial workers”. Ben Marais then indicates that there were more black people outside their allocated areas than within, and that this disturbed “many white South Africans”. Fear for inundation in their own areas then set in. Ben Marais mentioned in the Viljoen interview (1996) that the two driving sentiments behind Apartheid were fear and hatred.

According to Eiselen (1967:1), the principles of the policies on race in South Africa were first formulated by General Hertzog as early as 1911.¹⁶³ This policy was then renamed under each prime minister, “the brain child” of that leader. Eiselen (1967:1) indicates that under the administration of Malan this policy was known as “Apartheid”, during the regime of Strydom “separate development”,¹⁶⁴ and Verwoerd called it “self determination”.¹⁶⁵ To continue Eiselen’s argument, formulated in 1967, the ensuing leaders renamed the policy, or advocated it under different terminology. In retrospect,

¹⁶³ The “Naturellen Grondwet” of 1913, which determined the principle of territorial segregation, was formulated by Hertzog in 1911. He left the Botha Cabinet in 1912. See Eiselen (1967:5).

¹⁶⁴ Andersoortige ontwikkeling.

¹⁶⁵ Selfbeskiking.

the policy determining that people were to be distinguished along arguments based on race is referred to as “Apartheid”, irrespective of the refined nuances and political-social rhetoric.

In Theory and Practice

Deliberations on the theory of Apartheid are based on considerations forthcoming from its proponents within the church, such as the influential book by G. Cronjé, published in 1947 (on the eve before the 1948 election) providing a justification of Apartheid.

The comprehensive 207 page book of Cronjé (1947), in which he was assisted by Wm Nicol and E.P. Groenewald, covers all aspects of Apartheid, considering it a calling¹⁶⁶ (Chapter 1- Wm Nicol), providing a Spiritual basis and justification¹⁶⁷ (Chapter 2 – E.P. Groenewald); principle arguments¹⁶⁸ (Chapter 3); argues for responsibility and guidance¹⁶⁹ – paternalistic (Chapter 4); and considerations on the reality and ideal.¹⁷⁰ The chapter of E.P. Groenewald on the scriptural justification is of primary interest to this study (considered in greater detail elsewhere in this thesis under the heading “Justification of Apartheid”), considering the fact that it was on the wrongful justification of Apartheid on Scripture that Ben Marais first raised objections to the political model. The other chapters provide an elaborate insight into how the churchmen were thinking about Apartheid, about other nations and about themselves as Afrikaners.

It is not deemed necessary to provide a detailed analysis, but rather to establish sufficiently some kernel thoughts on the policy of Apartheid, its implementation and its effects, that the concerns and protests of Ben Marais can be placed within context. What needs to be emphasised though, is that during the early days of the rise and glory of Apartheid, reasoning and contemplation on this political model, concentrated more on its justification, theory and advantages, while during the dismantling of the systems created by Apartheid (1980s-2000s), emphasis was placed more on Human Rights

¹⁶⁶ ‘n Grootse Roeping.

¹⁶⁷ Apartheid en voogdyskap in die lig van die Heilige Skrif.

¹⁶⁸ Die kern van die vraagstukke.

¹⁶⁹ Verantwoordelikheid en leiding.

¹⁷⁰ Werklikheid en ideaal.

violations, atrocities, distortion of human relations, disadvantages, reconciliation, nation building and affirmative action. These aspects are mentioned only, where this paragraph illustrates how a political model, Apartheid, was used by a self-claimed national group, Afrikaners, to promote its position within a political, religious and academic sphere. As is stated by H.B. Thom in the Foreword to the collection of papers on race relations (*Grense* 1961), where he calls on Afrikaners and English – for different reasons – to read the book in which problems of society are analysed and considered and accounts are given of positions held.

In his positive assertion that Apartheid is morally justifiable, F.J.M. Potgieter (1961:24)¹⁷¹ refers to Rhodie and Venter (1960:19-22) who claim that the *idea* of Apartheid is the source of the practical regulations regarding the policy of Apartheid, because the *idea* of Apartheid is the synthesis or totality from which the policy of Apartheid derives.

The *idea* Apartheid could be considered under the heading “race relations”, or “human relations”, or “forms of government of pluralities”, while the policy of Apartheid could be understood as an alternative to full integration, or synonym to total segregation, or an alternative to parallelism.¹⁷² In this study Apartheid is understood under “race relations”, since this best asserts Ben Marais’ thesis on Christian Brotherhood (1946).

The question that political theorists were contemplating, the question of race, was how to structure a political model which was theoretically justified and immaculate, and also practical and of benefit to the better of the country. The theorists, considerations of what was best, their ideological orientations and their fears and prejudices should not distort the argument here. The distortions are inherently human, and powered by emotion, conviction, aspirations and hatred. The various political models that were considered, along race relations, were: “Parallelism”. “Total Assimilation” and “Total Separation”. Ben Marais considers these models in *The Two Faces of Africa* (1964b).

¹⁷¹ In the symposium on race and other relations (*Grense* 1961).

¹⁷² See Hoernlé (1939:157).

The political model Parallelism, or more specifically, differentiation without territorial segregation (Potgieter 1961:24), accepted a multi racial society in which the participant race groups were co-ordinated in totality. In the words of the liberal Hoernlé (1939:160), as quoted by Potgieter (1961:24):

“It accepts the fact of race difference, elevated by articulate consciousness, and mutual appreciation, of race difference into a principle of mainly voluntary organisation (‘birds of a feather flock together’). Subjecting no racial group to legal or other discriminations, it credits each with the desire to preserve its own integrity, and hence to maintain, by mutual consent, all necessary distances between itself and other groups. Given such desire and consent, intergroup differences may be re-enforced by legislation. But, the main principle is that the members of each group should, proud of their group, marry only among themselves; have their own schools, hospitals, churches, clubs ... enjoying their own circles of social intercourse, whilst, at the same time, enjoying the same political rights and sharing a common citizenship.”

The regulation of society through race orientation in this model is quite evident, as is the concern over inter-marriage. The determination to ensure the continuance of the own race is not accounted for in the model advocating total assimilation, or – “the melting pot”. In maintaining pro-Apartheid deliberations on Apartheid, and their use of the arguments of alternative views,¹⁷³ the following deliberation by Potgieter illustrates the manipulation of fears and concerns and the reorganising of arguments of opponents to suit his own intentions. In this light, total assimilation is cast in a negative light (Potgieter 1961:25). The quotations from Hoernlé (1961) are in italics:

“Total assimilation firstly involves: *cultural assimilation, and, where a higher culture is in contact with one more primitive, the displacement, more or less complete, of the latter by the former.*

This inevitably gives rise to economic assimilation. On the question whether the Bantu has been integrated as yet, it is interesting to note what has been said. In the economies assimilation Hoernlé understands: *The admission of Natives to earn their living by the exercise of their trained skill and the use of their professional knowledge alongside of, and in competition with, Whites similarly trained.* Applied consequently, it would give rise to the following: *Natives ... earning salaries in banks and business-houses, which, themselves, might be run by mixed White-Native Boards of Directors.*

¹⁷³ See Hoernlé (1935:172) in which the renowned professor of Philosophy reacts critically against a publication, *Koers in die Krisis*, in which “a group of our ultra-Calvinist friends ... expound their conviction that Calvinism provides a complete philosophy of life which enables us to steer, not only a ‘course’, but the only true course’ in regard to all problems with which the world confronts us, including the problem of race relations here in South Africa.”

Total assimilation, with everything it implies, would result.

According to Hoernlé, simultaneous to this, political assimilation would be inevitable, which even includes the possibility of a black premier.

He argues logically from point to point: *And, lastly, with assimilation in all these spheres, there could not fail to be also racial assimilation, i.e. inter-marriage, and thereby race fusion.*”

Potgieter’s treatment (1961) on total assimilation is treated in full to illustrate how Ben Marais’ contemporaries in the NG Kerk were deliberating on political issues, emphasising their fears, and making caricatures of their opponents arguments. The deliberations of Potgieter formed part of a symposium on race relations (*Grense* 1961), and in the original presentation (to an audience of like-minded, white, middle class theologians and church ministers), references to economic integration, a black premier and inter-marriage, would have been received in jest. This observation is substantiated by the fact that no further elaboration is made on the crucial points, indicating how the human factor infiltrated the reasoning on the idealised thinking on Apartheid. At the same time, a basic understanding on what was understood under total assimilation is provided, showing also why it was possible to reject it as a possible alternative.

Such argumentation could possibly be one of the reasons why Ben Marais insisted on arguing from an orientation to basic principles, scriptural principles – as compared to the need to justify the political model (Apartheid) on Scripture, and not being caught up in societal concerns, though, as his letters to the secretaries of the World Council of Churches illustrate (1970, 1978[?]), he himself was not free of these considerations, on, for example, the threats of communism and Islam.

Potgieter (1961) is warming to his deliberations on Apartheid. He uses the words of Hoernlé to argue his point, in the same way I am using Potgieter to carry my argument.

Potgieter deliberates (1961:25):

“The third possibility is *total separation*. He [Hoernlé] immediately distinguishes between ‘Separation’ and ‘Segregation’. The latter he types as *an instrument of domination*; segregation which retains the segregated in the same social and political structure with the dominant White group, *but subjects them to the denial of important rights and keeps them at a social distance implying inferiority*.

Regarding the policy of segregation minister Nel declared in a paper¹⁷⁴ read at Stellenbosch that Hoernlé and his liberal contemporaries rejected it ‘and correctly so, because if our South African policy on the Bantu (sic) were actually directed hereto, no moral grounds or justification could be found for it and I [Nel – Potgieter] would never be able to support it’”

It is essential to interrupt the argument at this point, and to draw particular attention to how the speaker (Potgieter), asserts himself directly after a reference to the minister – and in his words – who neutralised the liberal voice on the policy on a particularly sensitive aspect of the deliberations; that of domination by the White group and inferiority of other race groups, and “the denial of important rights” (Potgieter 1961:26). The deliberations by Potgieter continue (1961:26):

“By ‘separation’, on the other hand, Hoernlé continues, is meant literally a sundering or dissociation so complete as to destroy the very possibility of effective domination. He mentions a noteworthy thought in this regard: To entertain the thought of Separation in this sense implies willingness to consider whether muti-racial societies have not shown themselves, in our experience of them [1939] to be a tragic mistake. He declares in more detail: ‘Total Separation’ envisages an organization of the warring sections into genuinely self-contained, self-governing societies each in principle homogeneous within itself, which can then co-operate on a footing of mutual recognition of one another’s independence.”

Total separation and Apartheid are considered to have the same goals concerning the separate home lands (Potgieter 1961:26). Apartheid was considered to hold advantages for all people of different race groups, though the domination and submission mentality was also present, in the words of the then state president as quoted by Potgieter (1961:26):

“If it is in the ability of the Bantu (sic) and if the land that has been given to him for emancipation, or rather which already belongs to him, can develop to full independence, then it will develop in that manner ... There are those despised control mechanisms that the guardian currently applies to instruct them along that road, but which will lapse from stage to stage.”

¹⁷⁴ Delivered to *Die Calvinistiese Studentebond* (Calvinistic Student Board) the paper by the minister of Bantu Administration and Development – Dr M.D.C. de Wet Nel, titled: “The Moral Foundation of our Apartheid Policy” (“Die Morele Grondslag van ons Apartheidsbeleid”).

On a last point, in 1950 the Federal Council of the NG Kerke (Dutch Reformed Churches) made the following statement after a congress meeting in Bloemfontein (in Potgieter 1961:26):

“The policy of separate development is accepted as the healthy grounds on which both whites and Bantu (sic) can live happily without the interests of the one colliding with the interests of the other and without the one experiencing the development of the other a danger or threat to himself.

... In his own area the Bantu (sic) must be guided along natural means to develop into full nationhood, in accordance to his own national background, enriched with the Christian civilisation.

The Bantu (sic) will be taught that he cannot claim direct political rights in the white’s areas; as equally whites will not be able to claim political rights in the areas belonging to Bantus (sic).”

Thus the principle tenants of the theory of Apartheid, along with how it was reasoned. The remainder of the argument of Potgieter (1961) will not be referred to, save that he concludes with a reference to the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20), which emphasises the distorted lines between matters political, national and religious:

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”

Thus, Potgieter (1961:35) concluded on an emotional note, with a call on higher authority and scriptural justification. Such argumentation could not be easily disputed, save by persons like Ben Marais and those people who experienced the brunt end of the Apartheid policies; its implementation.

Several laws are associated with the Apartheid era. These laws were passed by the post 1948 parliament (National Party Government) – tough earlier laws along similar lines had previously been in existence, and were implemented to varying degrees of success, and were recanted, most in the dying days of Apartheid and in the early days of the New Republic (post 1994 – African National Party Government). Post 1948 considerations on Apartheid concentrate more on the laws passed under the policy of the Apartheid government than on the *idea* Apartheid.

The most important pre 1948 laws, with a racial bias, passed by parliament are: The “Naturellen Grondwet” – Native Land Act of 1913; Native Tax and development Act of 1925; Native Administration Act of 1927; and, the 1936 Native Land Act. The significance of these laws must be seen in conjunction to the removal of coloured voters of the Cape province (old Cape Colony) from the voter’s role.

A few of the more significant Apartheid laws, post 1948, are listed, and are placed in the chronological context of the reactions against their implementation. It is then also possible to see the disjointed relation between the different parties in South Africa; those contemplating the virtues of Apartheid (*Grense* 1961), and those that were affected negatively by the Apartheid laws. A fuller analysis and discussion are not made, since this would direct the attention away from the primary focus of this study. Rather, their inclusion here helps create a picture of the disjointed reality in South Africa during the years Ben Marais was actively engaged in church matters.

The Group Areas Act was enacted on June 13, 1950. It gave rise to the segregation of communities along lines of race (colour), and gave rise to large-scale forced and voluntary removals and relocation of people.

The Population Registration Act was enacted on July 7, 1950. This law required all people living in South Africa to register their race with the government.

The enactment of the Pass Laws took place during 1952. The laws required black people to carry pass books, which were used to regulate their travel and residence in the country.

The Separate Amenities Act was enacted during 1953. This law made provision for separate public facilities for whites and non-whites.

On June 26, 1955, the African National Congress and other opposition groups adopted the *Freedom Charter*, which calls for equal political rights for all races.

Between March 21 and April 5, 1960, uprisings took place in Sharpville and in Langa. Several unarmed protesters were killed. The government reacted by banning all opposition groups. Many of these started working underground.

Cottesloe, 7-14 December 1960. The Consultations held between the South African members of the World Council of Churches.

A significant political development needs to be mentioned within the confines of the Apartheid laws and the reactions against them. On May 31, 1961 South Africa became a Republic. The decision to break from the Commonwealth was prompted by the Asian and African Commonwealth member states denouncing the Union of South Africa's Apartheid policies. Two years later, in November 1963, South Africa was suspended from participating in assembly sessions of the United Nations. The South African government responded by recalling its ambassador to the United Nations and freezing its annual contribution to the organization.

On June 12 1964, Nelson Mandela was convicted to life imprisonment for sabotage and high treason.

On June 16, 1976, students in Soweto protested against the mandatory education in Afrikaans. During the suppression of the unrests, several hundred people lost their lives.

Transkei became the first homeland to be granted nominal independence on October 26, 1976. There were to be 10 homelands.

Possibly the person whose life and death most personifies the reaction against Apartheid, Steve Biko, died on September 12 1977, while being held in police custody.

On November 2, 1983, white voters approved a new constitution, which created new chambers in the legislature for Asians and Coloured people – but not for Black people.

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A national state of emergency was announced on June 12 1986, following widespread strikes and riots in different centres across the country. Restrictions were imposed on the press and the security forces were granted tremendous powers.

On July 1, 1986, the pass book laws were scrapped, implying that Black people could move freely throughout the country.

On September 29, 1986, the United States Congress imposes strict sanctions against South Africa, overriding Ronald Reagan's veto.

On November 16, 1989, just before the summer holidays in South Africa, the president, F.W. de Klerk announced plans to scrap the Separate Amenities Act.

On February 2, 1990, F.W. de Klerk lifted restrictions on 33 opposition groups.

On February 11, 1990, Nelson Mandela was released from prison.

On October 18, 1990, the state of emergency was lifted in Natal, the last province where it was still in effect.

On January 9, 1991, at the start of the new school year, black students entered schools that had previously been reserved for white students.

On June 5, 1991, The Lands Acts of 1913 and 1936 and the Group Areas Acts of 1950 were repealed. The Population Registration Act of 1950 was repealed on June 18, 1991.

Economic Sanctions against South Africa were lifted on July 10, 1991 by George Bush, and the United Nations lifted most of the remaining sanctions on October 8, 1993.

Between April 26 and 29 1994, South Africa held its first free elections in which race played no role. Subsequently, Nelson Mandela was sworn in as president on May 10, 1994.

It has been attempted to give as brief as necessary overview on Apartheid, as it affected the second half of the 20th century in South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War, the Two Great Wars, and socio-economic problems in the country dominated the first half. Ben Marais is better known for his outspokenness against Apartheid, especially on its advocates' insistence on giving it a scriptural justification, and thus divine ordinance.

For purposes of presenting a more complete picture, two important developments in the 1960s are considered. These developments were initiated from within ecclesiastic circles, and Ben Marais was involved in the founding of one of them – the Christian Institute. Though he was not present at the other, Cottesloe, it is of vital importance to both the founding of the Christian Institute and the reaction against Apartheid from a Christian perspective.

Two Reactions Against Apartheid

The two selected reactions, themselves inter-related, against Apartheid have been selected for topical reasons only. There were more than two reactions, and spreading across the extent of the accumulated experiences. Thus, the press and literature could be mentioned, as could the heightened and intensified actions of the ANC and its military wing.¹⁷⁵ Furthermore, mention needs to be made of the reactions at Langa and Sharpville in the early 1960s as well as the Soweto uprising, which, probably drew most attention to the inequities prevalent in the country. It could be argued that the inclusion of only two reactions reflects on the limited scope of Ben Marais, as a loyal member of the NG Kerk, living in suburban Pretoria, and enjoying a comparatively prestigious post at the university of Pretoria. Though, despite these restrictions, Ben Marais was able to nurture an awareness, through his students, his publications, and other appearances, within his limited scope, that led to the NG Kerk rejecting Apartheid, and embracing

¹⁷⁵ See for example *Beyond the Barricades: Popular Resistance in South Africa in the 1980s. Photographs by Twenty South African Photographers* (Hill & Harris 1989). The book and photographs presents “a testimony of the communal struggle for freedom ... [it] presents the voice of the tyrannised through disturbing testimony ... of police oppression, vigilante violence, and legalised racial discrimination.”

rather an approach of acceptance and reconciliation.

1. The Cottesloe Consultations: 7-14 December 1960

The Cottesloe Consultation is most interesting and revealing as a reaction against Apartheid, because it drew diverse reactions. It could be considered as the event which led to the watershed distinction in the church towards, on the one hand, a clearer refinement of policies in support of Apartheid, and on the other, led the way to increasing objections against church policies from churchmen. Alternately, it influenced the NG Kerk's relations with other churches in and outside South Africa.¹⁷⁶

The Consultations were made up of delegates from the member churches in South Africa of the World Council of Churches. Representatives of the World Council of Churches also participated in the proceedings. The purpose of the consultations was "to seek under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to understand the complex problems of human relationships in this country, and to consult with one another on our common task and responsibility in the light of the Word of God" (Lombard 1981:274). The general theme of the consultations was the Christian attitudes towards race relations.

Attention is drawn to three reactions to the consultations in the form of statements. These statements are rendered in full due to their importance and relevance to this study. The statements of two reveal the delegates of the different churches' attitudes towards each other, the World Council of Churches, and towards the problems in the country and the official policies of the government. Internal witness is also given to the routes taken by the churches and their resultant isolation, self inflicted and imposed and to their increasing disunity from events in the country. That is, the statements by the delegation of the Ned. Herv. Kerk and the delegation of the NG Kerk of the Cape and Transvaal. In contrast this statement by Joost de Blank, Archbishop of Cape Town (Lombard 1981:280) testifies a sombreness and disappointment and reaffirms relations with the World Council of Churches and identifies strongly with the plight of many:

¹⁷⁶ See *Handelinge van die Algemene Sinode van die NG Kerk 1962* for the NG Kerk's reaction to the Cottesloe Consultations and on the breaking of relations with the international ecumenical community, as well as the relations with other church groups in South Africa.

“The representatives of the Church of the Province of South Africa wish to declare their gratitude to Almighty God for the privilege of sharing in these consultations. Under God, they would record their thanks to the World Council of Churches for their part in them, and in particular to its officers and its delegation who have served us so admirably and tirelessly. Then we desire to register our humble appreciation to all our fellow-members of the World Council of Churches in this country who have so generously and warmly associated with us in these conversations.

We are, of course, grateful to the English-speaking churches for their fellowship – a fellowship that is an extension of our co-operation within the Christian Council of South Africa. But in particular we are appreciative of the participation of the Dutch Reformed Churches and especially for the courtesy, understanding and patience of the delegates of the Dutch Reformed Churches of Transvaal and the Cape.

We want to emphasise this point with all the earnestness at our command because we are aware that there have been times when we have felt it right to speak strongly on the urgency of the situation in this country. In such statements we have called upon all Christian people to be true to the Faith that is in them, both in witness and conduct.

In our conviction that acquiescence in a policy of discriminatory segregation gravely jeopardises the future of the Christian Faith in South Africa, we believed – and still believe – that it was right to speak urgently, clearly and uncompromisingly. But in the light of what we have learnt here and the information now put at our disposal, we confess with regret that in the heat of the moment we have at times spoken heatedly and, through ignorance (for which ignorance we cannot be altogether held responsible), have cast doubt on the sincerity of those who did not accept the wisdom of such public action.

Nevertheless the delegates of the NGK¹⁷⁷ have met with us in the fullest fellowship and we have been deeply moved by this spirit of brotherly goodwill. Where, in the past, we have at any time unnecessarily wounded our brethren, we now ask their forgiveness in Christ.

During the Consultations we have been immensely encouraged by the virtually unanimous agreement on many matters affecting the work and worship of our churches as also on many matters concerning social justice; and we believe that in consequence a new era of consultation and possible co-operation in many fields opens up before us. We are delighted that the Consultations begun at Cottesloe and should be leading to the establishment of some permanent machinery for continuing contact and conversation among the churches.

In addition we would place on record our appreciation of certain other happenings of these days. We discovered for instance that those who worshipped together and studied the Bible together found it possible to speak the truth in love across the barriers that divided them; and as a result the widest divergences of conviction could be, and were, expressed without breaking our fellowship in Christ.

¹⁷⁷ NG Kerk.

Further, we proved that personal contact and personal exchange almost always led to mutual understanding, respect and friendship – and great as our differences may be, we no longer question the integrity of those who differ from us. It is indeed our hope that friendships made here will be fostered and deepened during the coming days....”

The constant mentioning of and allusions towards the differing English and Afrikaans churches is quite apparent. This could be seen in the context of the representative nationalisms – Afrikaner and English, and in the absolving of conflicts between the English and Afrikaners in South Africa through worshipping together. This is considered beside the social injustices and discriminatory policies that the Afrikaner churches supported officially.

Where Joost de Blank placed the emphasis on the fellowship between the participating churches, the statement by the delegation of the Ned. Herv. Kerk reconfirms its primary orientation towards the government, and thus denies the possible continuation of fellowship with the English churches (Lombard 1981:279):

“We as delegates of the Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk are grateful for the opportunity we had to listen to, and partake in, the witness of the different churches.

We wish, however, to state quite clearly that it is our conviction that separate development is the only just solution of our racial problems. We therefore reject integration in any form as a solution of the problem. The agreement that has been reached contains such far-reaching declarations that we cannot subscribe to it. We can therefore not identify ourselves with it.

We further wish to place on record our gratefulness to the Government for all the positive steps it has taken to solve the problem, and to promote the welfare of the different groups.

The Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk will in future as in the past accept its responsibility to witness to the government and people in accordance with the word of God.”

The orientation to Scripture is a striking feature of this statement. The statement clearly indicates a denial of the severity of the problems caused by the policies promoting the forced separation of people. In the following statement, the NG Kerk of the Cape and Transvaal indicate their enforcement of the policies of segregation (Lombard 1981:229-280):

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“The delegations of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerke of the Cape and Transvaal wish to state that we have come to consult with other churches under the Word of God and with deep concern for the various and complicated problems of race relations in the country. We realise with deep Christian concern the needs of all the various population groups and that the Church has a word to speak to them.

We wish to confirm that, as stated in the preamble to Consultation Statement, a policy of differentiation can be defended from the Christian point of view, that it provides the only realistic solution to the problems of race relations and is therefore in the best interests of the various population groups. We do not consider the resolutions adopted by the Consultation as in principle incompatible with the above statement. In voting on Resolution 15 the delegations of the two churches recorded their views as follows:

The undersigned voted in favour of Point 15, provided it be clearly understood that participation in the government of this country refers in the case of White areas to the Bantu who are domiciled in the declared White areas in the sense that they have no other homeland.”

It would appear in reflection on the fellowship shared at the Consultations that the above statement was constructed independently of the delegates at the Consultation, or had been manipulated (Van der Watt 1987:111), through the stress placed on a particular point of grievance, which would have been resolved at the Consultations. There appears to be no consideration for the reasons that led to the Consultations being held in the first place.

On 21 March 1960, the South African police shot a number of protesters at Sharpsville. International protest was one reaction, another, the calling of a State of Emergency in the Union of South Africa, and finally, the Governor-General, adv. C.R. Swart, called a commission of enquiry into the events. Lückhoff (1978:1) sees the events at Sharpsville and Langa leading to the Cottesloe Consultations along with the visit of Robert Bilheimer¹⁷⁸ to the member churches in South Africa of the World Council of Churches.

The Consultation Statement, the rectory statement above refers to has three parts. Part I contains an overview of the proceedings of the Consultations and concludes with an appeal to the churches and to all Christians, “calling on them to consider every point where they may unite their ministry on behalf of human being in the spirit of equality”

¹⁷⁸ Bilheimer stayed over at Ben Marais on Sunday 24 April, 1960. They discussed various issues (Lückhoff 1978:25).

(Lombard 1981:275). Part II contains 17 points, of which point 15 was highlighted by the Statement of the NG Kerk delegates. Attention is drawn to point 17 (Lombard 1981:276):

“In so far as nationalism grows out of a desire for self realisation, Christians should understand and respect it. The danger of nationalism is, however, that it may seek to fulfil its aim at the expense of the interests of others and that it can make the nation an absolute value which takes the place of God. The role of the church must therefore be to help to direct national movements towards just and worthy ends.”

The two statements of the Afrikaner churches appear to contradict this last point, and to fall trap to the fear expressed in it.

Part III of the Statement of the Consultations, contains ten points of more pertinence to the problems experienced in the country, grounds for further conflicts unless resolved. The first nine points are: 1. Judicial commission on the Langa and Sharpville incidents; 2. Justice in trial; 3. Position of Asians in South Africa; 4. Freedom of worship; 5. Freedom to preach the Gospel; 6. Relationship of churches; 7. Mutual information; 8. Co-operation in future; and 9. Residential areas. Point 10 contains a request to examine the migrant labour system; thanks for the fellowship and prayer and consultation; a resolution to continue the fellowship; an acknowledgement of the feebleness of the divided witness; and a dedication to work in the ministry of reconciliation in Christ.

Ben Marais, who missed both the consultation and the following synod due to prior commitments in U.S.A., calls it “a moment of hope” (Viljoen 1986). The World Council of Churches had a honest desire to help. The failure of the Cottesloe Consultations meant also the end of ecumenical contact. It also gave rise to the founding of the Christian Institute in Johannesburg, in order that the dialogue entered at the consultation continue. Ben Marais was present at the founding of the Institute.

2. The Christian Institute (1963-1990)

While Ben Marais was a founding member of the Christian Institute, believing that it would serve as a platform for continuing the dialogues and discussions between the churches in South Africa, and be a means to retaining ecclesiastic contact with international ecumenical bodies (Viljoen Interview 1986), he resigned as a member after it became, as he called it, politicised, after Beyers Naudé, the president of the Institute, was associated with the leaking of private Afrikaner Broederbond¹⁷⁹ documents to the press (Viljoen Interview 1986).

This then, formed one of the bases of Ben Marais' two points of critique against the Christian Institute:

1. The Christian Institute became politicised when a connection was suggested in the *Sunday Times* (appearing from April 1963) between leaked papers on the Afrikaner Broederbond and Beyers Naudé and Albert Geysers. Such an act constituted treason, even in the eyes of Ben Marais (Viljoen Interview 1986).
2. The source of funding of the Christian Institute was disputable (Viljoen Interview 1986).

The second point, which Ben Marais mentioned as his first (Viljoen Interview 1986), shows consistency with his correspondence with the General Secretaries of the World Council of Churches (Blake and Potter), but with the difference that he was concerned in his letters with the destination of the funding (indicated by Naudé [1995:92] to be the ANC, PAC and SWAPO), the Christian Institute, and with the financial sources thereof. Other points of criticism against the Christian Institute included its association with the banned African National Council and thus with communists and Pan African Congress and Black Consciousness (Naudé 1995:75,86,92), being considered to be an instrument serving the cause of opposing the government and undermining its authority, as one view could see it, or, helping and promoting the cause of bringing justice to an unjust society, seen from another view.

¹⁷⁹ Afrikaner Brotherhood.

Ben Marais was far more optimistic about SPROCAS (Study Project on Christianity in an Apartheid Society, established early in 1966), the official mouthpiece of the Christian Institute (Naudé 1995:91), when he wrote in *Pro Veritate* (1972), that although he did not agree with everything, he wished that there was a way in which more South Africans could be encouraged to read SPROCAS.

Beyers Naudé (1995:92-93) had to answer the question, “Can a Christian support violence? And if so, under what circumstances?” after the World Council of Churches had launched its Programme to Combat Racism in 1970. Within his reasoning, Beyers Naudé (1995:92) contemplates on the reasons why the Boers took up their weapons against the British Empire. He also considers the fact that his father, a theological student, also took up arms, as well as three distinguished streams in the church’s history: firstly, pacifism; the second point of view stated that, if your country was involved in a legitimate war, then you have to make yourself available to take part; and the third view states, “It is an individual decision, from Christian to Christian, but where it is an individual decision, you may only revert to violence if all other avenues have been perused to find a peaceful solution and they have been found to be ineffective and unattainable” (Naudé 1995:93). Beyers Naudé (1995:93), indicates that he helped people into exile, and helped distribute literature of the African National Council, especially the Freedom Charter.

The significance of the Christian Institute is to be found especially in the influence it exerted over foreign opinion on South Africa (Naudé 1995:95). Furthermore, it helped in developing an awareness amongst African Christians that the white dominated Theology in South Africa, which predominantly supported Apartheid, was not the only, or the representative voice of the church in South Africa. This is substantiated by the role the Christian Institute played in promoting and initiating inter-racial and ecumenical Bible study groups throughout the country, and also reached out and entered strong relations with many AICs, where the Christian Institute helped establish a small Bible School, which led to the establishing of the African Independent Churches Association in June 1965 in Queenstown (Naudé 1995:83).

Brief attention is drawn to the reactions of the NG Kerk, through its embodiment in its General Synod (post 1962) against the two reactions against Apartheid treated above from the retrospective point of view after 1994, when the church had to give an account of its involvement in Apartheid (Algemene Sinode 1997).

Besides the elective points that are considered in the retrospective study, in which “the story of the NG Kerk’s journey with Apartheid”¹⁸⁰ is told (Algemene Sinode 1997), which I believe is to soften the church’s involvement in Apartheid – while not denying it,¹⁸¹ testimony is given on the church’s reactions against the Cottesloe Consultations and the Christian Institute, while also considering the church’s role in a new democracy (Algemene Sinode 1997:77-80).

ii. Policy, Piety and Religious Control

Tamaram (1938), had taught Ben Marais that the church should not allow itself to be dictated to. Hendrik Kraemer’s book, *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*, substantiated this fact, also that no political influence by the church should be allowed. The NG Mission Policy was one of the supporting pillars of Apartheid (Van der Watt 1987:79).¹⁸² It was with horror that Ben Marais realised that there was no foreign support for the policy, nor, was there any scriptural basis for it.

He returned home, to meet a strong anti English sentiment amongst the university students, many of whom were hoping that the Nazis would win the war. Furthermore, five years later, in 1944, he was to stand up during a synod meeting of the Transvaal Ned. Herv. or Geref. Kerk, and question the scriptural foundation of another policy.

¹⁸⁰ *Die verhaal van die Ned Geref Kerk se reis met Apartheid.*

¹⁸¹ This assertion is based on the presentation of the material through questions and answers (1997) – in the form of a didactic confession, and in the choice and formulation of the questions, and references, e.g. “Segregasie kom in Suid-Afrika van ver af. Dit was die beleid van al die regerings van Suid-Afrika tussen 1910 en 1948. Wat meer is, dit is onderskryf deur vooraanstaande swart leiers onder wie presidente van die African National Congress – hoewel met sekere voorbehoude” (Algemene Sinode 1997:4). This is also seen on the restriction to post 1960, and not 1940 -1960 during which period the church was actively promoting and substantiating the policy of Apartheid.

¹⁸² See esp. Van der Watt (1987:75-81) for the placement of the Mission Policy in the discussions leading up to the implementation of Apartheid. Specific emphasis is placed on the key issues of the Mission Policy. Attention can be drawn to the creation motif, the three selves approach, and the formulations on nationalism.

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This policy was prepared in April 1942 by the Commission for Current Affairs, and concerned weapons being issued to black and coloured soldiers fighting in the war. The wording was changed but the principles retained.

The complexities and confusion about what the borders are between nationalism, church, culture and state were matters that Ben Marais had to work through and resolve for himself. It is far easier to unravel and reconstruct these sentiments today than it was during the 1940s.

8. EFFECT OF POLITICAL, CULTURAL AND NATIONALISTIC CLIMATES ON CHURCH AND THEOLOGY

Communism (Rooi Gevaar) was seen as a political and religious threat. Integration with Blacks (Swart Gevaar) was seen as a political threat, which was transposed to the religious arena. Islam was seen as a religious threat, mostly in other parts of Africa and in Europe. One of the driving forces was fear. Another driving force was survival. A third driving force was greed, for power and wealth. Church and Theology found themselves in service of political, nationalistic aspirations, willingly and unwillingly. The Afrikaners were hearing what they wanted to hear. They had rebuilt their farms after the Anglo Boer War, they had managed to send their children to institutions of higher education, their leaders were influential in country politics, they had matched the English on all fields, but black miners were taking their work. The church represented the people, and thus had to speak out and formulate a solution. The political, cultural and nationalistic climates thus had effects on Church and Theology, because they effected its members. These effects were not uniform, nor were they experienced uniformly. They affected the various race groups differently, as they affected the different classes differently and also individuals.

This was the immediate political world Ben Marais lived in.

9. CONCLUSION

In this chapter on nationalism over two periods of transformation in South Africa, a

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thematic treatment of the relations between religion and ideology and between the different groups of people in South Africa was considered. The theme of Nationalism was considered against the background of transformation, where the specific concerns of the particular group of people needs to be taken into account as well as its relations and attitudes towards the other groups, whether it be a sentiment of fear, or a feeling of superiority.

Afrikaner Nationalism, distinguished from African Nationalism, and affected by Indian and English Nationalism, has been found to be far more complex an issue than is signified by its denotation. The periodisation of South African twentieth century history into periods cannot be done without ideological or sentimental prejudices. Within the concept “transformation”, therefore, allowance must be made for a state of decadence.

In the next chapter, the underlying principles that governed the ministry of Ben Marais is considered in conjunction with an appraisal of his influential presence.

CHAPTER 5

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES AND INFLUENTIAL PRESENCE

1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter various influences on Ben Marais are considered. Several issues come to light in his letter to Blake (1970, 24 September), which indicates the presence of diverse influences. The essence of these influences helped form his principles, and was present in his early childhood, and is founded in his deep-rooted faith in God, and was formed by his personal studies and influenced by the people he met. Furthermore, Ben Marais was influential within the circles he moved, and while being part of these circles, was also detached from them.

Ben Marais was a child and a product of his times. Many of the influences on him and his attitudes were formed and channelled by the media. As Pillay (1993) formulates the situation in the foreword to his biography on Albert Luthuli:

“The racially based ideology that has structured South African society ... was maintained in many ways, one of which was the controlling of the freedom of speech and the flow of information. Even the nature and scope of ostensibly ‘scientific research’ did not escape influence. Inevitably, over a period this South African society has become divided against itself: ‘us’ versus ‘them’; ‘maintainers of law and order’ versus ‘communists’, ‘believers’, ‘secularists’ and so on. These categories bedevilled the recording of South African history....

... Indeed, the struggle made strange bed-fellows: Christians, Hindus, Muslims and Jews, communists, pacifists, African nationalists, feminists, trade-unionists, Pan-Africanists, English liberals and human rights activists among others.”

Communism, Mohammedanism (Islam),¹⁸³ and modernism, were external threats, threatening the world of Ben Marais. These threats were, interestingly, used by the media to consolidate the Afrikaner people, and, like many Afrikaner people, Ben Marais

¹⁸³ Ben Marais referred to Islam as Mohammedanism.

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saw them in a negative light, these labels were of less importance to many people involved in the struggle against injustices in South Africa. Thus also, Ben Marais would have been concerned about the source of financial support for the Christian Institute and the application of W.C.C. funds, due to associations with communism and violence, while also advocating for negotiations to bring about equality.

Eddie Brown (1992b:480) asks the question: Was it or was it not the Karoo that helped to make him a person ... “jovial, spontaneous and pleasant ... an approachable open person, a person of wide horizons”? Also, during his early youth the Swart Griep, the Black Flu (influenza), claimed the lives of countless people. How did his early exposure to death help form his person?

During his student years – the depression and the Du Plessis Case were major events (Meiring 1979;79), the one social, the other theological. After the Du Plessis Case there was an aggressive reaction against critical thinking. How did the Du Plessis Case influence Ben Marais’ theological thinking? How did the “arm blanke vraagstuk”¹⁸⁴ influence him? Further, what was the influence of Afrikaner pietism and evangelicalism (Scottish, German, Dutch and American) on his thought?

What did Ben Marais read? Who did he meet? What experiences influenced him? Significant, influencing factors, based on his life’s experiences and personality, are considered to determine who Ben Marais was, which influenced his actions. The various considerations are structured as follows, building on insights gained in the previous chapters. The first section considers his life chronologically, under the headings: youth; student years; marriage; and, in the ministry and faculties. The following sections consider particular influential experiences, his travels and conferences attended and significant people he met and knew who helped form his thinking.

¹⁸⁴ Poor white question.

2. PERSONAL CONSIDERATIONS

How did it come that a man coming from a pietistic, conservative background was able to detach himself from his peers' ideological and religious thinking – while remaining friendly with them – and proceed in the direction he did? Looking at his life chronologically, the gradual development of his thinking is detectable, as well as the presence of firm principles, many of which were imprinted during his youth. It is contended that the development of his thinking was evolutionary, supported by life experiences and measured against his principles – Christian and based on Scripture, while the essence of his personality, which remained constant, channelled the development of his thought.

a. Youth

During a video interview with Ben Marais, which commemorated his 11th year at Unisa and his being 77 years old, Abraham Viljoen (1986) asked him about important influences from his youth. Viljoen mentioned the significance Psychology and the Behavioural Sciences place on development during the formative early years. Interestingly, Ben Marais indicated displeasure with the question, negating the importance of his early years. He mentioned his conservative, rural Afrikaner background – the thought world of the Afrikaner of the Eastern Cape – making it sound on the one hand, a world away from the world of academia and the contemporary issues of church, politics and race, and on the other, making it sound as if his early experiences were less influential than his studies and experiences at university, his tours abroad and into Africa, and the people he met and knew. He mentions that his later insights were not from childhood, but picked up along the way. This is referring to the first two decades of the twentieth century. However, his mother, Tant' Lizzie (Elizabeth Magdalena Botha),¹⁸⁵ was English orientated, having studied in Stellenbosch. Her father had been a gunsmith in the Cape, before selling his business and moving out to the frontier. The relations between the political parties (South African Party & National

¹⁸⁵ Elizabeth is a family name, coming from the Murdocks.

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Party) were tense. The Marais family – Afrikaners – were known to support the South African Party (Aucamp, Interview 17 September 2002). Thus, political disputes, conflict and tension resolution would have been primary concerns to the family.

This study wishes to emphasise the importance of his youth, his formative years, the years during which his basic tenants of dealing with problems and new ideas were formed. His personality also manifested itself during his youth.

In the Viljoen interview (1986) Ben Marais mentions a few influences. These influences are not explored, only stated in brief. The first influence he mentions is his parents. He does not elaborate, neither does he mention his mother's death, nor of the circumstances under which they had to leave the farm. He mentions that he learned to love and appreciate all, which was rather general. Secondly, he mentions his uncles. The one uncle, was a founder member of the National Party, another, was a Manie Maritz rebel, a further two were Botha-Smuts supporters. He learned, within his broader family, how to deal with people who differ from each other. This would be an important consideration in his later ecumenical thinking.

Ben Marais' mother died shortly after the birth of Mara in 1917. She had been bleeding and the doctor was not capable of helping. The traumatic experience of his mother's death, and the subsequent breaking up of the family (Mara and Melvina went to live with family) must have left a mark on the then eight year old Ben. His father mourned his wife's death, and according to Pieter Marais, Ben Marais' nephew (Interview 20 September 2002), he never came out of the mourning, part of the reason he sold the farm and moved to Middelburg. Charles, Ben Marais' brother, stated that he wished to become a doctor after experiencing the trauma caused by the incompetent doctor. This he did.

The circumstances surrounding and under which Ben Marais' mother died, and the subsequent manner in which the Marais family dealt with it – most certainly governed by their religious convictions – would have affected the way Ben Marais would deal with loss, incompetence and trauma. On the one hand this experience, along with losing

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his elder brother, Pieter, the following year (1918), and his father's inability to cope with the death, would explain to a large degree why Ben Marais never spoke much about his youth. According to Alida Hattingh, a younger cousin of Ben Marais (Interview 17 September 2002), Ben Marais father, Oom Willie, was a quite person who did not have much to say. Apparently he drank aloe juice every Saturday, claiming that it was good for his health. Jean Du Plessis, Ben Marais' nephew (Interview 04 October 2002), claimed that his grandfather never came out of mourning after his wife's death. Jean Du Plessis told of how his grandfather was a broken man in old age and had difficulty in recognising his daughter, Mara – Jean Du Plessis' mother. The reference in *Wit Huise van Herinneringe* to the nameless elder brother whom he accompanied to the veld, could in all probability have been Pieter. On the other, Ben Marais' instance on not provoking animosity could also be ascribed to these events. Thus, the tolerance that Ben Marais exhibited towards others could be attributed to the way in which he dealt with the traumas surrounding the family traumas between 1917 and 1918.

It is also told (C. Du Plessis Interview 12 September 2002) that Ben Marais was an active and inquisitive child. The story is told that he once, at the age of two, poured sand into the butter machine. Apart from this causing much distress and fury, the way in which he was punished would also have contributed to the manner in which he acted towards those who wronged him. The self discipline taught in the Marais household, the openness between the siblings and the religiously determined disciplining would have contributed towards and accentuated the manner in which Ben Marais dealt with disputes, he talked about it. This fact is exhibited in Ben Marais writing to the secretaries of the World Council of Churches, voicing his concerns at the synods, and is substantiated by the fact that the Marais family is known for being verbal about injustices and involving themselves in causes they deem worthy (J. du Plessis Interview 04 October 2002).

Many of the personality traits exhibited in Ben Marais were also present in his siblings and other close family, making it most probable that a common orientation would have contributed towards his attitudes. Ben Marais was thus not a unique individual, but rather a person who acted according to the behavioural patterns imprinted upon him

during his youth.

Education played an important role in the Marais' household. Before taking over the responsibility of caring for the younger children after her mother's death, Johanna had studied to become a teacher. Ben Marais' mother had received tertiary education in Stellenbosch, and his father was involved in the farm school on Mooihoek. One of the reasons why the family moved to Middelburg in 1922 was due to the high school. In the early 1920s it was the largest school in the Cape Province.

English was the language of the British government and proponents of Afrikaans were aspiring for its official recognition and for its use as the medium of instruction in schools. Ben Marais was part of one of the first groups to receive tuition in Afrikaans. The Marais family was not anti-English, as were many Afrikaners in the post Anglo-Boer War era in the Middelburg district. The Afrikaner and English farmers had got on very well before the Anglo-Boer war, and many had inter-married. In Middelburg, though, a large Town Guard, stationed at Grootfontein had to be deployed after the war to maintain the peace.

There were religious revivals in Middelburg during the 1920s. These could have contributed towards Ben Marais becoming aware of his calling to become a minister. He does not mention these revivals anywhere, but the coincidence is very big.

b. Student Years

The leadership skills of Ben Marais were well groomed at Stellenbosch. While race was not a controversial issue during the late 1920s and early 1930s, he developed his skills as a journalist and spokesperson, as well as a historical-philosophical line of inquiry. In his chairmanship of the men's residence, Wilgenhof, and of the Student Representative Council, he had developed into a strong leader. The Du Plessis Case took place during his student years, and in his experience of this, he developed an aptness at discerning the various issues, and striving to understand the underlying principles, and to measure these against the religious principles as he determined them from Scripture (Meiring 1979:79).

c. Marriage

Ben Marais' wife, Sibs (born Botha) was always very supporting of her husband. In the early years of his ministry as chaplain at the University of Pretoria, she was involved in his activities, conducting the sensitive room visitations in the women's residences. She was also engaged in her own activities, besides being a proficient flower arranger, she was involved in the S.A. Vrouefederasie¹⁸⁶ and Mission activities of the NG Kerk.¹⁸⁷ She held leadership positions and was well respected by Ben Marais' students and colleagues.

It would be impossible to analyse the role that Sibs Marais played in the life of Ben Marais. She (S. Marais 2000) often gives the impression that she learnt much from him, concerning humbleness and dealing with victimisation and isolation, but due to her loyalty and encouragement, and excellent taste in clothes and dress, Ben Marais was able to weather the worst storms he experienced as a result of the stand he took against the discriminatory policies of the NG Kerk and its grounds of justification.

3. TRAVELS

Ben Marais was a world traveller, as far as and as long as his South African passport would allow him. His first long journey would have been to Stellenbosch in 1928. This would have been a major event in his life. His subsequent international travels were either study or conference orientated. His extended lecture tours through the United States of America also afforded him time to study societal issues in the Americas.

Once a year, at Christmas time, when they were in the country, the Marais family made a pilgrimage to Kleinmond, where they rested. In the early years of his ministry as chaplain in service of the synod of the Ned. Herv. or Geref. Kerk, Ben Marais spent many hours on the road, travelling between the various tertiary institutions in Transvaal. It is not sure how much rest these travels afforded him, or preparation time, but it is known that due to the tremendous work load, a second minister was called to serve as

¹⁸⁶ S.A. Women's Federation.

¹⁸⁷ See Sibs Marais' publication, *Hulle het die Driwwe Oopgemaak* (1977) for an example of her involvement in the mission activities of the church.

chaplain alongside Ben Marais, and their positions were better constituted.

a. World Academic Tours

Certain highlights of Ben Marais' world academic tours can be made to illustrate how these had left an impression on him.

i. USA – Princeton 1934

Ben Marais' first international contact came when he travelled to Princeton under the auspices of furthering his studies. He would have been 25 years old. Although he would most certainly have had further opportunities of pursuing formal post graduate studies abroad, he returned home, to be a minister of the church.

In 1936, on his way back to SA he toured through Europe. Of special note is his visit to Nazi-Germany, where he came under the impression how the voice of one man, with an ideology behind him, could lead a whole nation astray (Viljoen Interview 1986).

ii. Travels to the Americas

Ben Marais' tour to and study especially in the southern states of the United States led to the writing of *Colour: Unsolved Problem of the West* in 1952 on the eve of his nomination for the chair in the History of Christianity at the University of Pretoria.

In 1951, Ben Marais travelled through the West Indian Islands and South America – especially Brazil – on a Carnegie Scholarship. In Brazil he had access to the universities of Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo through Dr Rudolfo Anders. Here Ben Marais studied Anthropology and South American Race Issues.

The same year, 1951, Ben Marais was invited by the World Federation of Christian Student Societies to visit the various universities in South America. Ben Marais was to organise the Federation's work at these institutions (*Vaderland* 28 July 1951).

In December 1960, Ben Marais left for the USA on a lecture tour. En route he visited the two Congos in Central Africa. He also visited Nigeria for a month and spent a few

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days in Amsterdam. The tour was organised by the “Cultural Exchange Program of the US Department of State”. He visited 20 universities and colleges, addressing students on the race problems in South Africa and other issues on Africa, especially on the Congo. He also visited the South and studied the relations between the Roman Catholic Church and Protestant churches.

Then, a few years later, on 16 January 1964, Ben Marais departed on a 10 week lecturing tour to the USA. The tour was arranged by the Cultural Events Program of the Danforth Foundation in conjunction with the Association of American Colleges. He visited about 10 tertiary institutions and presented lectures on Africa and Southern Africa. His themes – indicative of his primary concerns – included: “Which road South Africa?”; “The two faces of Africa”; “Africa – battlefield of religion and ideology”; “The Christian Church in Africa – historical problems and prospects”; and “Political loyalty and Christian practice in a multi-racial society”.

A few years later again, and Ben Marais left South Africa for a 10 week lecture tour through the USA on 20 September 1968. He was invited by the Danforth Foundation’s Arts Program of the Association of American Colleges. His lectures were mainly on “The African dream – a realistic assessment”.

On completion of the lecture tour he remained in the USA for a further three months to study the role of the American churches in the socio-economic sphere and their theological motivation and approach. He was invited by US SALEP Exchange Program, US-SA (Leader Exchange Program Incorporated). He spent three weeks of these three months in “Indian Country” in Arizona and New Mexico.

The significance of these tours is the wealth of insight he gained, though he went to lecture he also found time to experience and to digest and determine differences between the social problems in the different countries. These differences were especially pronounced during his tours through Africa, where he became very aware of his prejudices as a white Western orientated Afrikaner (E.G. in *The Two Faces of Africa*).

b. African Information Tours

Ben Marais wrote *The Two Faces of Africa* after his tour through Africa in 1960. He made extensive contact with political leaders and attempted to contextualise the problems and issues facing the continent through his orientation to South Africa. He toured Africa in 1960-61, 1964 and 1968, as well as in 1953, when he delivered a sermon at a congregation in Lusaka: “The just shall live by the faith”.

He experienced the awakening in Africa, the time of hope of the early 60s, and the feelings of despair of the late 60s. Against this, he experienced how disjointed South Africa had become. In the Viljoen interview (1986) Ben Marais makes special mention of his meeting with Banda in 1964. Ben Marais asked him about the anti-white/anti-missionary statements he had made in public. Banda had replied, according to Ben Marais (Viljoen 1986) that because he had been absent from the country (Malawi) for 17 years while he lived in Scotland, he had to take a strong position to prove himself as a capable leader. Secondly, on the missionaries, Banda mentioned that he had great reverence for missionaries – he had strong personal ties with the missions in Malawi – but that particular NG Kerk missionaries had abused their positions and had encouraged the people in their congregations not to vote for him, Banda.

The tours of Ben Marais were romantically modelled on the 1914 Mission tour of J. du Plessis through Africa (S Marais 2000). This is also perceptible in Ben Marais concerns and topics of interest during his African tours, history, mission and topical issues. Ben Marais interests in mission and in ecumenical relations were channelled through his travels abroad to attend international mission and ecumenical conferences.

c. Conferences: Mission and Ecumenical Tours

More than his attendance in 1936 of the “Conference of Student Volunteer (Missionary) Movement” held at Indianapolis, and the 1938 New Delhi Mission conference, the journey to the 1939 Tambaram Conference made a profound impact on Ben Marais (Meiring 1979:81).

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At the Tambaram Conference, Ben Marais made contact with many Christians from different parts of the world, and came under the impression that Christianity is an international affair and is not restricted to any isolated and elite group.¹⁸⁸ The conference took place just before the outbreak of World War II and race relations were talked about in great depth. Ben Marais heard an attack on South African race attitudes for the first time at this conference. His experiences at Tambaram stimulated him to pursue doctoral studies on race relations within the church in the context of Christian brotherhood.

Of particular note, in the midst of the summer heat – when the South African delegation was returning to South Africa, Ben Marais became aware of the prejudices against people of other race groups. Albert Luthuli was also on the ship. They were in different classes, race determined, and when they wished to go up onto the deck for a breath of fresh air, a sailor said to Ben Marais and Albert Luthuli: “You white you alright, you black you stay back.” This phrase had a paramount effect on Ben Marais.

Ben Marais, en route to the United States in 1950 to study at Yale University, attended the Reformed Ecumenical Synod in Edinburgh. He was requested to do so by the Central Committee of the Transvaal Synod. At the synod in Edinburgh, Ben Marais presented the South African issue on behalf of the Afrikaans churches, and became aware of the growing hostile attitudes towards the NG Kerk. He attended a series of conferences, each contributing to his awareness of the lack of discrepancy in the social orientated policies of the NG Kerk. In 1950 he attended the Conference of the World Council of Churches at Toronto as an observer, as requested by the central commission of the synod of the Ned. Herv. or Geref. Kerk van Transvaal. He so impressed them with the way in which he presented his arguments on the race issues that he was asked to serve as a member of the central committee. Ben Marais was approached by Visser’t Hooft to talk about South Africa and answer vital questions (Meiring 1979:86). Thus, his influential presence was felt at the highest levels.

¹⁸⁸ “Christendom is ‘n wêreldverskynsel en is nie beperk tot net ‘n geslote en uitgesoekte groep mense nie.”

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In consequence, in August 1953 he travelled to Geneva, where the World Council of Churches' study group "Church and Race" met. This was a preparing meeting for the World Council of Churches meeting in Evanston, which was to be held in 1954. This is noteworthy, considering his involvement in the structures of the conference during the 1950s, his subsequent isolation from the activities of the World Council of Churches in the early 1960s, the changing attitudes within the World Council of Churches towards the 1970s, and the subsequent reducing of influence of Ben Marais in the World Council of Churches to open letters addressed to the general secretaries of the Ecumenical body. In 1954 in preparation of the Evanston Conference, interestingly, Ben Marais helped to prepare a report on opinions: "The Churches Amid Racial and Ethnic Tensions" (Brown 1992b:488). Dr Visser't Hooft had let him know in October 1952 that he had been nominated to serve on the Study Committee for Race Relations of the World Council of Churches. Ben Marais also attended the Conference of Christian Youth of the USA in Evanston, 1954. He spoke on "Race tension in South Africa".

Though not abroad, but of significance, on 6 August 1958, Ben Marais attended the Reformed Ecumenical Council in Potchefstroom as a delegate of the Northern Transvaal Synod of the NG Kerk. Thus, even in the isolation he experienced as a result of the queries he made and his outspokenness on government and church policies, Ben Marais was still highly esteemed in ecumenical circles within the NG Kerk.

Ben Marais made many contacts during his tours. Apart from many of these people influencing his opinions and points of view, there were also friends, and other people who helped him formulate his points of concern more clearly. Simultaneously, in the biographies of influential people of similar standing – in varying degrees – to Ben Marais, as either ministers or theologians or on points of digression, interesting perspectives on the person and work of Ben Marais can be revealed.

4. FRIENDS AND ACQUAINTANCES: INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE

During his interview with Ben Marais, Hofmeyr (1985; see also Meiring 1979:90-91) asked him who the major influences on his life were. To this Ben Marais answered first of all Berkhof, who was involved in Church History and in Systematic Theology. Ben

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Marais had contact with him through the World Council of Churches, in India, Europe and Canada. Ben Marais appreciated his broad approach to many questions. A second person mentioned was Bakhuizen van den Brink, the Dutch Church Historian, whom he once met. Furthermore, Stephen Neill, who was not principally a Church Historian, but whom Ben Marais claimed had made a major effect on him. Ben Marais mentioned to Hofmeyr that Neill was a versatile person, and that he was more at home in Mission History. During the same interview, the two Americans – Latourette and Bainton,¹⁸⁹ were mentioned as major influences, and two South Africans, Van Jaarsveld, and Herman Giliomee, for opening new roads which was necessary.

The list of people who influenced Ben Marais' though could be divided between those with whom he found affinity, and with those whose ideas he used to better formulate his own. Ben Marais did not believe in maintaining enemy relations, he rather learned from those who differed from him, and used the opportunity to better formulate his own thoughts. A similar principle could, for example, be found in the *Institutes of the Christian Faith*, in which Calvin develops his doctrinal thought in reaction to particular heresies. If one person could be mentioned who made life difficult for Ben Marais, then the name of A.B. du Preez could well serve a good purpose. Ben Marais makes a reference to him in his autobiographical notes prepared for the University of Pretoria Archives (1976), though without indicating any sense of their strained relations. Ben Marais is providing short character sketches of a few of the older professors at the University of Pretoria (1976), then of A.B. du Preez he writes:¹⁹⁰

“Prof A.B. du Preez was of a different stroke – dogmatic and self assured. He knew precisely. On one occasion in his dogmatics class he was busy discussing man being created in the image of God. He then used a very risky example. Man looks up – he is directed to community with God. Animals, on the other hand, are matter, of the earth with their view downwards.¹⁹¹ That is when Willem van Eeden, one of the most comical students we ever had, stood up and asked, ‘But professor, what about a chicken?’ The class had finished!!”

¹⁸⁹ Ben Marais and Ronald Bainton were in correspondence, Ben Marais often receiving advice (letters in Pretoria Archives).

¹⁹⁰ My translation.

¹⁹¹ Die mens sou sy aangesig na bo hê – hy is op gemeenskap met God aangewys. Die dier daarteen is aards, van die aarde met sy aangesig na benede.

Several influential people, who are not necessarily the same as determined by Ben Marais himself, have been identified. The treatment given of these people in this thesis has been individualised, and is intentionally constructed and presented to highlight different characteristics of Ben Marais' relations with his contemporaries. More could have been chosen, but it has been determined to restrict to the necessary to avoid duplication and to highlight particular aspects, which would be lost in an exhaustive study.

a. A man of Controversies: Albert Luthuli

Ben Marais claims to have known Albert Luthuli well, and had both great respect for him as well as being disappointed by some associations he made (Viljoen 1986). Criticism by Marais against Albert Luthuli might be too harsh.

John Albert Mavumbi Luthuli was born in 1898 in former Rhodesia, and died, under mysterious circumstances, when a train struck him down on 21 July 1967.

According to Pillay (1993:28), Zulu tradition and Christianity were the two forces that moulded Albert Luthuli's thinking. He was also similar to Ghandi, first by his advocating of non-violence, and secondly by his practising some of the key injunctions of the Sermon on the Mount. Different to Ghandi, though, Albert Luthuli's socio-political work was an extension of his Christianity. It was because he was a Christian that he felt he "could not obey laws which affronted his essential dignity" (Pillay 1993:28).

Albert Luthuli was a lay preacher, a school teacher, a winner of the Nobel Peace Prize (1961), President-General of the African National Congress, and a Chieftain of the Zulu people.

His statement, "The road to freedom is via the cross", was a response to his dismissal as chief after he refused to choose between his membership of the ANC and his Chieftainship (Pillay 1993:46-50). He said of the ANC (Pillay 1993:49):

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“The African National Congress, its non-violent Passive Resistance Campaign, may have nuisance value to the government but it is not subversive, since it does not seek to overthrow the form and machinery of the state, but only urges the inclusion of all sections of the community in a partnership with the government of the country on the basis of equality.”

He continues (Pillay 1993:49):

“Laws and conditions that tend to debase human personality – a God-given force – be they brought about by the state or other individuals, must be relentlessly opposed in the spirit of defiance shown by St Peter when he said to the rulers of his day: Shall we obey God or man? No one can deny that in so far as non-whites are concerned in the Union of South Africa, laws and conditions that debase human personality abound. Any chief worthy of his position must fight fearlessly against such debasing conditions and laws....”

It is interesting to note how strong the similarities are between Albert Luthuli and Mahatma Gandhi, and it is not difficult to discern who had influenced whom. It is also of particular interest, as a point of contrast, that as churchmen, Ben Marais refused to become politically involved, while Albert Luthuli did, though, it must also be emphasised that Albert Luthuli was a chief of a discriminated against people, while Ben Marais was a protected minister serving in the community of the discriminating people.

b. A Friend with a Different Temperament: Beyers Naudé

The name of Beyers Naudé (10 May 1915) is often heard in association with Ben Marais. Comparisons, often over-simplified, between the two are often made. For example: where Ben Marais remained within the church and the church structures, Beyers Naudé left the structures of the white NG Kerk; where Beyers Naudé was better known internationally, Ben Marais was working more locally. The fact is that Ben Marais travelled abroad extensively, but in a different time frame. It is true that Beyers Naudé left the structures of the NG Kerk to become a member of the Reformed Church of Africa, but this is not an intrinsic difference, rather, it is indicative of a different temperament and personality to Ben Marais.

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The references in the autobiography to Ben Marais are rather aloof (Naudé 1995:38-39), almost creating the impression that they hardly knew each other.¹⁹² Though, it must be remembered that the autobiography is, in large parts, a personal treatment of the Christian Institute, with whom Beyers Naudé is intrinsically associated.

Ben Marais was disappointed in Beyers Naudé on numerous occasions. The first was in Beyers Naudé not supporting him stronger at the synods on the positions of Apartheid (Naudé 1995:38-39; S Marais 2000). Further disappointments were on the alleged leaking of Broederbond secrets, breaking with the church, and, on the Christian Institute activities, regarding its friends and associates. Ben Marais especially had concern over the source of funds (Viljoen Interview 1986), reminiscent of his correspondence with the general secretaries of the World Council of Churches.

An interesting photo (Naudé 1995:inter64-65) indicates a different sentiment. The photograph depicts the house committee of Wilgenhof residence of 1935. Beyers Naudé can be seen front row far right, and next to him Ben Marais. Next to Ben Marais' name, in brackets, stands "primarius, 1932 tot Junie 1935",¹⁹³ indicating a deep rooted respect which could be traced to their student years. Beyers Naudé was a freshman when Ben Marais was in his final year. Alongside Ben Marais sits the chairperson, who took over from Ben Marais in June 1935, when he left for Princeton. The chairperson was Danie Craven. Alongside Danie Craven sat Hubert Coetzee, and behind stood Amie Visser, Dick Nel and Thomas de Jongh van Arkel.

Apart from Ben Marais and Beyers Naudé sporting similar hairstyles (middle path – in later years Ben Marais' was hard to detect while Beyers retained a fuller crop of hair, combed straight back), they shared many student interests. The most notable being journalism, though Beyers Naudé was never as accredited as Ben Marais. Another common interest was the hiking club, of which Ben Marais was the chairperson. A

¹⁹² Ben Marais was also a founding member of the Christian Institute, but resigned after it became politicised, as he saw it. This is an interesting turn of events, since as Ben Marais was disappointed in Beyers Naudé not supporting him at the synods and on the publication of his *Colour: Unsolved Crisis of the West* (1952) (Naudé 1995:38-39), so Ben Marais did not support Beyers Naudé in his endeavours against the Apartheid policies through the Christian Institute.

¹⁹³ Chairman 1932 to June 1935.

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further strong association was a deep respect for Professors J. du Plessis and B.B. Keet. Beyers Naudé (1995:28) is rather negating towards other professors of the seminary.

A further difference was their attitudes towards their calling to the ministry. While Beyers Naudé went to study under pressure of his determined mother (Naudé 1995:25-26), rather wanting to become a lawyer, Ben Marais was known to practice hymns in the loft of their house on Saturday afternoons during his school years – because he was preparing to become a minister (C. Du Plessis Interview 12 October 2002). Beyers Naudé only developed a sense of his calling at a later stage, almost indicative of his gradual realisation the ailments in the NG Kerk compared to the more clear cut determination by Ben Marais (Naudé 1995:38-39). Of particular interest in this regard is their diverse backgrounds. The father of Beyers Naudé was a founding member of the Afrikaner Broederbond, was a close friend of the rebel General Christian Frederick Beyers (after whom Beyers Naudé was named) and General Jan Kemp, who featured strongly in the Anglo Boer war and protested through military action against the Botha government in 1914 for fighting against the Germans in German South West Africa, while the family of Ben Marais were known to be supporters of Jan Smuts and General Botha. It is almost more significant that Beyers Naudé came to different insights from Ben Marais.

Schalk Pienaar, who was considered a controversial and unconventional journalist and political commentator (Mouton 2002),¹⁹⁴ criticised Afrikaners who were leaving the fold, laager, and joining forces with foreign pressure groups in 1974. This made him unpopular with many Afrikaners. Pienaar's aggression was especially directed against Beyers Naudé, who was receiving a hero's welcome in the Netherlands (It needs to be remembered that Ben Marais had just resigned from the Faculty of Theology of the University of Pretoria). According to Mouton (2002:150), Pienaar's argument was that Beyers Naudé's solidarity with foreign pressure groups was a barrier on the road of internal reform (*Beeld* 11 October 1974). He later wrote (*Beeld* 15 October 1974) that

¹⁹⁴ Schalk Pienaar was the establishing editor of *Die Beeld*, one of the forerunners of the Sunday Newspaper *Rapport*, and chief editor of *Beeld*. He is considered (Mouton 2002) for bringing injustices to the fore, and for his many conflicts with Afrikaner establishment, including Verwoerd, and for the development of an independent Afrikaans newspaper that criticised the policies of the National Party, while he remained a member of the party.

there was a fine line between criticism and disloyalty and that Beyers Naudé had crossed the line and was unpatriotic. Mouton (2002:150) then indicates that Pienaar referred to General Koos de la Rey, who is pointed out as an example of a critical Afrikaner who disagreed with President Paul Kruger's policies, but who fought to the very end – for the cause of the Afrikaner. In his attempts to highlight Beyers Naudé's faults, *Beeld* (19, 20, 21 Oct. 1974) published three long consecutive articles by Ben Marais, who Mouton (2002:151) considers to be an enlightened theologian. Ben Marais is portrayed also as having undergone ill treatment, being belittled and being seen as an deserter,¹⁹⁵ communist and liberal due to his standpoint that there were no Biblical grounds for the justification of Apartheid – but as Mouton (2002:151) emphasises, Ben Marais never turned his back on either his church or his people, nor did he become embittered. I believe these differentiations contributed to heightening the strains in the friendship between Ben Marais and Beyers Naudé.

The one particular aspect of the autobiography of Beyers Naudé that needs to be mentioned, and which contributes towards a better understanding of Ben Marais, is the fact that Ben Marais wrote the foreword to the autobiography (Naudé 1995). In the foreword Ben Marais writes in characteristic personal style, building in humour – a jest on the nature of autobiographies, his student years – and his personal acquaintance with Beyers Naudé (“from the first day he was a student”), the significance of this autobiography in the history of South Africa, his own involvement in the struggles and hints at the differences between himself and Beyers Naudé. Most important, though is the feeling of reconciliation between these two friends who misunderstood each other, I believe, as expressed in the recommendation given by Ben Marais (Naudé 1995:9).¹⁹⁶

“Humans disrupt, but God resolves.¹⁹⁷ Who would be able to say who judged correctly? ... Here we have an interesting and important book that every South African must read, can benefit from, and enjoy. Thank God for what happened in 1994! We are on the road together in grateful appreciation for people like Beyers Naudé for their courage, insight and determination despite their hardships and unmentionable discrediting.

May the Lord be with him on his road forward. Our nation in all its shades needs such people in our times.”

¹⁹⁵ Verraaiër.

¹⁹⁶ My translation.

¹⁹⁷ Die mens wik, maar God beskik. Ben Marais had a poetic flair!

The open letter¹⁹⁸ Ben Marais wrote to Beyers Naudé while they were still estranged reflects on their differences and contains specific historical references and interpretations. This letter could well have served as key to Ben Marais, in which he discusses approaches to effecting reform in the country, rejecting Beyers Naudé's call for civil disobedience. Ben Marais rather continues to set his hope in the power of the gospel and Christian conviction, and believes that the initiative for change must be taken by the government.¹⁹⁹ The letter has a significant hand-written postscript dated 26 July 1985, in which Ben Marais expresses his happiness that Desmond Tutu had rejected violence – in the letter Ben Marais questions Beyers Naudé's association with Desmond Tutu (he mentions that he knows little about him).

c. Justified Differences: E.P. Groenewald

The differences between Ben Marais and E.P. Groenewald came to a head in the 1948 synod of the Ned Herv. or Geref. Kerk. They were later to be colleagues at the Faculty of Theology of the University of Pretoria!

Evert Philippus Groenewald (2 June 1905- 22 August 2002) came from the Southern Cape, born in the district of George (Van der Watt 1989:82). After completing his studies at Stellenbosch (1929) he obtained his D.Th in 1932 at the Free University of Amsterdam. He was called to the chair in New Testament in 1937, and retired in 1970.

In 1947, E.P. Groenewald had been commissioned to prepare a report, under the auspices of the Commission for Current Affairs²⁰⁰ of the Council of Churches.²⁰¹ The title of the report, which is treated here due to the implied differences between E.P. Groenewald, and the resulting years of subdued tension, could be rendered as

¹⁹⁸ Pretoria Archives, a shortened version was published in *Rapport* 28 July 1985.

¹⁹⁹ “Laat ons druk op regeringsinstansies en kerklike instansies volhou om ‘n beter en meer regverdige Suid-Afrika vir almal te skep, maar laat ons maar versigtig wees met oproepe tot burgerlike ongehoorsaamheid, veral in ‘n tyd waar chaos reeds oral heers. Ek weet jy sien dit as ‘n moontlike pad tot vrede – maar ek betwyfel dit. Ek het nog nooit gewanhoop aan die krag van die evangelie en van Christelike oorrading by enige mensegroep nie. Die sleutel lê by ons blankes. Dramatiese aksie is nodig van regeringskant (Ope Brief aan Beyers Naudé, 19 July 1985 – Pretoria Archives).

²⁰⁰ Kommissie vir Aktuele Vraagstukke.

²⁰¹ Raad van Kerke.

“Apartheid (separateness) of the nations and their calling to serve each other’.²⁰² The Council accepted the report in its entirety. The report correlated strongly with E.P. Groenewald’s treated chapter in the publication of Cronjé (1947). According to the report, Scripture taught about the unity of humanity as well as the differentiation of race and nations. Important is the assertion that the establishment of separate national churches is scripturally justified, and out of the “rich variety of nations that serve one God together, his Name is honoured all the more”²⁰³ (*Handelinge van die Raad van Kerke* 1947:56). While the report could not present direct proof from Scripture in support of guardianship, two principles of Scripture gave guidelines. That is, the relation between authority and piety, and responsibility towards fellow humans. Furthermore, “According to the Council of God it often happened that one nation was sometimes subject to another nation. In such a case, the stronger and higher developed has a responsibility towards the weaker” (Lombard 1981:80). The report was presented to the synod of the Ned. Herv. or Geref. Kerk with a few modifications.

The tensions were taut, E.P. Groenewald felt personally offended when the report was referred back to the Commission of Current affairs, under the recommendation of Ben Marais. Ironically, as Lombard (1981:81) points out, the synod took note of the report with appreciation. The ground for the referral back to the commission for revision were (*Handelinge van die Sinode van die Ned Herv of Geref Kerk* 1948:369), “taking into consideration the seriousness of this problem and the large degrees of difference between the grounds here given”. A new approach was suggested by the protagonist, Ben Marais, from a different point of view implying that the church is forced²⁰⁴ into the policy of Apartheid in the interest of the Kingdom of God and the future existence of Christianity in South Africa (Ibid).

The reaction of E.P. Groenewald the next day concerns this study most. He experienced the referral back for review as a personal rejection of his ability as an exegete (sic) as a professor in New Testament Studies of the University of Pretoria.

²⁰² Die Apartheid van die Nasies en hul roeping teenoor mekaar.

²⁰³ My dynamic translation.

²⁰⁴ Gedwing word.

Though the objections of Ben Marais were superseded by the synod, in a special session, the offence taken by E.P. Groenewald characterised his attitude towards Ben Marais throughout the remainder of their association. Principle differences need to be pointed out. While both churchmen were sincere in their search for truth and in the execution of the will of God, they were very different concerning their orientation towards the establishment, on the one hand, and in the way they viewed reality. As has been indicated, the early and formative years of Ben Marais played a particularly strong role in helping him to have clarity in matters of the day.

d. A Contrasting Shepherd from the Other Fold: J.D. (Koot) Vorster

It would be pretentious to seek how Jacobus Daniël Vorster influenced Ben Marais. It is, however, illuminating to compare these two formidable and very different men of the church. They were both born in 1909, both into large families, in the North Eastern Cape (Koot Vorster was born in Jamestown, and interestingly is buried in Steynsburg,²⁰⁵ where Ben Marais was born), and were at Stellenbosch at the corresponding time. Yet, two more comparable and opposing personalities in the NG Kerk during the 20th century, concerning conviction, dignity and interests would be difficult to find. Though, significantly, two noteworthy politicians of South Africa who had very different sentiments – but also many similarities, Jan Smuts and D.F. Malan, grew up on farms that were a few miles apart near the two towns Riebeeck-Kasteel.²⁰⁶

Through a closer look at Koot Vorster, something of Ben Marais can be understood. While a whole study could be based on a comparison between Ben Marais and Koot Vorster, this study refers to a few brief points in order to indicate the intricacies of personality, experiences, influences and background, and how these affected the church. This study does not wish to emphasise either the similarities or differences between the two persons to either praise the one or denote the other, rather the intention is to exemplify the differences to highlight certain characteristics of Ben Marais.

²⁰⁵ The inscription in Afrikaans on J.D. Vorster's tombstone comes from Isaiah 51:1: "Look at the rock from which you were hewn" – "Aanskou die rots waaruit julle gekap is".

²⁰⁶ It is of interest that D.F. Malan was a minister in the NG Kerk before entering politics and Jan Smuts started studying to become a minister of the NG Kerk before switching to Law. They both studied at Stellenbosch. The close relations between church and state are thus emphasised in this comparison.

In his comprehensive study on the influences that played a role in the development of J.D. Vorster, Louw (1994) considers not only the rock and vegetation types of the region his subject grew up in, but also genetic and inherited considerations,²⁰⁷ schooling, his student years and his prison term. J.D. Vorster is also considered in relation to his brother, the Prime Minister of South Africa, John Vorster. Louw (1994) indicates that they shared the same political views.

Rather pondering on the aloes of the Karoo, family trees and the personalities of forefathers, which are significant as formative influences, this study will consider the indicative activities of these two polarised contemporaries, Koot Vorster and Ben Marais, when they were students. By considering the activities of Koot Vorster, immediate parallels to the already discussed activities of Ben Marais, can be made. The broader content of Koot Vorster's activities can be mentioned, where he served: as a promoter of Afrikanerdom, and in the church as Actuary of the Synod of the Cape NG Kerk, later as moderator of the same synod; as minister of a congregation in Cape Town;²⁰⁸ as an activist in 1939 against military support for the Allies in the 2nd World War and subsequent imprisonment; as a religious consultant to his brother and other members of parliament; as a scholar in church law and capable administrator; and as political proponent for separate amenities and development – Apartheid.

Koot Vorster was the leader of the “Oupajane”,²⁰⁹ the conservative student group who opposed Prof. J. du Plessis in the Du Plessis Case. Ben Marais was one of Du Plessis' supporters. In the incomplete, unfinished and unpublished manuscript of his autobiography (1986), Koot Vorster discusses his involvement in the Du Plessis Case. The discussion on this also has bearing on his attitudes as a student, which, significantly were characteristic of his activities throughout his life. Most significant is his steadfast attitude of aggression towards the English people and their language, in which medium he was forced to receive instruction at school (Vorster 1986:3). In the following extract it is explicitly apparent how his refined wit, acuteness for detail and love for his

²⁰⁷ According to J.D. Vorster (1986): 47% Dutch, 27% German and 24 % French.

²⁰⁸ Nieuwe Kerk Gemeente – New Church Congregation.

²⁰⁹ The Old road users.

Afrikaner nation characterised his public picture (Vorster 1986:4):²¹⁰

“... Years later I was grateful that Milner ensured that I could talk a bit of English, when I was called to continue the same old battle²¹¹ in different countries against other enemies and in other terrains through other means. When I once achieved a victory because I could speak a little English, I almost forgave Milner, and years later, when I read the story of his end, I almost developed a movement against the tsetse fly that had executed Milner. Sometimes it also led to entertaining incidents that was most rewarding. On one occasion the B.B.C. phoned from London to ask whether I would be prepared to answer a few questions for a programme in England via the SABC. The two principle questions were venomous and accusing. ‘Do you and your brother regard the blacks as equals or inferior?’ Our man behind the glass was anxious. Since I learned and knew this story from youth, I answered without hesitance: ‘Equal but different.’ From behind the glass I could perceive a sigh of relief, not hear but see. The second question was worse: To what do you ascribe the fact that you and your brother are so national? It left a warm feeling in the heart to say, ‘Man, it has been a long time since one of you asked me that’, and then I answered: ‘For three reasons: i. My father taught us that we are Afrikaners and must be proud of that; ii. from war veterans I learned how our small nation fought to the death, sometimes martyrdom, against gold thieves, and that made us national’; and iii. in your Anglicising process I had to write out thousands of lines: I must speak English at school, and that made me a rebel.’ That answer evoked a startled comment, ‘Oh that is very interesting,’ and brought me £30 into the pocket!”

Like Ben Marais, Koot Vorster’s journey to Stellenbosch in 1928 was a new experience. He was overwhelmed by the number of students, their intelligence and their conversations (Vorster 1986:8). Koot Vorster (Ibid) mentions that fortunately he found residence in a boarding house where theological students, P. De Vos Grobbelaar and H.J. C. Snyders, helped him during the Du Plessis Case. They helped him “to hold on to the Word of God and to retain the faith in Jesus Christ and not like some of my class mates and contemporaries to throw everything overboard” (Vorster 1986:8). Ben Marais would have been one of these class-mates! He soon overcame his disorientation in the Du Plessis Case, and in his own version of the events – traced to the time before he was called as professor of Theology, and when the church was concerned about his radicalisation. According to Vorster’s version (1986:9-10), the church had no option but to act against Du Plessis, and was correct in doing so.

²¹⁰ My translation.

²¹¹ He was involved in a fist cuff with a English boy at school (Vorster 1986:3).

Koot Vorster attended the sessions of the open meetings (started on 11 September 1929) that was investigating the allegations against Du Plessis. He was shocked at the teachings of Du Plessis, and was more surprised when the Presbytery found him innocent. Vorster (1096:10) also relates how he became involved in a dispute with a minister about issues relating to the Case, and was asked by elders to take action, but how he declined due to the fact that he was a “small town boy”.

Significant in his involvement in the Du Plessis Case is that his future interest in Church Law would have been stimulated, also due to the fact that he placed particular emphasis on the procedures of the synod, the court sessions and the verdict (Vorster 1986), even though it is hopelessly one-sided and Du Plessis is deemed and accused as an heretic. Vorster and Marais would have debated against each other on the case, but considering the fact that both were freshmen, their arguments would not have been their own but those of their seniors, and with whom they found affinity, ever the conservative or the intellectually acute.

5. THEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Similar to Calvin only fully developing a doctrine of the Trinity in his *Institutes of the Christian Faith*, so Ben Marais only needed to fully develop his theological understanding on social issues, being political policies and scriptural justification thereof. However, the theological orientation to develop the theological thinking in the case of both Calvin and Ben Marais were present, as was the case also with St Augustine and his thinking on *The City of God*, Athanasius and his assertions of orthodoxy against Arius, and Martin Luther on the malpractices in the church. In no way is a comparison between Ben Marais and the theological champions intended, rather, it wishes to be pointed out that Ben Marais, as a Church Historian, followed a similar programme, and asked what the basic principles – tenets – were. Thus, as Calvin worked from the tenet of the 12 Articles, and Athanasius from the confession that God is One, and Martin Luther from the inability of man to contribute towards his own grace (Romans 1:17), and Augustine from the sovereignty of God, so Ben Marais orientated his theological reflection on his interpretation of Scripture. But so, too, did the

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proponents and advocates of Apartheid! Rather than develop a confessional Theology about race relations, Ben Marais applied particular theological principles that he derived from Scripture (Viljoen Interview 1986).

Ben Marais also distanced himself from certain theological schools and influences. On the question (Viljoen Interview 1986): What Theology made the development of Apartheid ideology possible? Ben Marais mentions five factors: Isolation; Race problems; interpretation of Kuypertian Theology (“In ons isolement lê ons kragt”²¹² – applied to church and national identity); the history; and fundamentalism. Ben Marais was hesitant to add Calvinism as a theological influence, because in his comparison to the Southern States of U.S.A. he identified similar tendencies on race relations, but that the churches there were not necessarily Calvinistic. Ben Marais was thus hesitant to pin point any factors on the label of Calvinism.

6. STUDIES

Ben Marais’ preparation did not begin when he went to Stellenbosch, according to C. Du Plessis (Interview 12 September 2002) he used to learn the church’s hymn’s in the house’s loft. Interestingly, Ben Marais was not known to be able to hold a tune (P.A. Marais Interview 17 December 2002), but that he often hummed and whistled hymns associated with the topics of the sermons he was preparing. He had a photographic memory (P.A. Marais 20 September 2002), which would have enabled him to recall facts and information with ease. Besides this, from his experiences and successes as a journalist at university, it is obvious that he was multi-talented, having the talent also to express his thoughts, and not needing to be taught to do so.

In this section, distinction is made between two types of literary study Ben Marais undertook. The first illustrates how a book, which he claimed to have influenced his thought, and the second illustrates how his formal studies contributed towards his forming as a Church Historian and his formidable pronouncements in the church.

²¹² “Our Strength rests in our isolation.”

a. Informal Studies

The book by B.B. Keet, *Whither South Africa?* appeared in January 1956. Ben Marais was able to identify with the book, and drew much encouragement from it. Some years earlier, when he was a student, he read E. Shillito's *Nationalism: Man's Other Religion*.

i. *Nationalism: Man's Other Religion* (1933): E. Shillito

In the front of his copy, which he first read in 1933, Ben Marais had written:

“Gaan my nasionalisme my godsdiens bepaal, of gaan my godsdiens my nasionalisme bepaal.”²¹³

Ben Marais was a student in the post “Great War” (1914-1918) era. Though South Africa was not as directly involved, as were the European sovereign states, South Africans were involved. The volunteers from the regions where Ben Marais grew up, found themselves fighting in German South West Africa, either for or against the Boer general, Manie Maritz. One of the questions being asked within the general state of nationalistic disillusionment, more abroad than in South Africa, was the question on the relation between nationalism and religion. Ben Marais read one such book – written by an American – that was determined to make sense out of the general state of disillusionment by trying to establish patterns in history, and tracing the build up to the catastrophic war in 1914. It claims to “provide a serious call to the reader to consider afresh this alternative way offered to the spirit of man along with the perils to which it leads” (Shillito 1933: Preface). This alternative way was to treat Nationalism as a Religion. Ben Marais was able to apply what he read to the South African situation, and thus the book profoundly influenced his thought, that he was able to distinguish between matters of religion and matters of nationalism and patriotism. The book also promoted his sense for ecumenism (Viljoen Interview, 1986).

Nationalism: Man's Other Religion (1933) consists of six chapters, each with accompanying illustrative sketches, of which it is suggested, “are meant to gather up the main themes of the book in a historic scene or myth”. The contents of the book reflect greatly on Ben Marais own forbearing on the state of affairs in South Africa on the

²¹³ “Will my nationalism determine my religion or will my religion determine my nationalism.”

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relations between church, state and culture, and on the relations between the various race groups.

The first chapter, “Man’s other religion” considers the essential theoretic framework for considering nationalism in the same light as religion. The author’s evangelical orientation is determined indirectly through the allusions made, the structure given to reality and the perceptions on history and relation to Scriptures. The accompanying sketch gives a brief, history of Karl Marx. The book rejects communism as a determined alternative to Christianity and Nationalism (1933:105).

The book claims that “the problems of communism and nationalism may be treated as political; but the strength of communism and nationalism does not lie in their political theories, but in their powers to fill the place of a religion” (1933:2). Communism is understood to be a “godless church, filled with a religious passion, possessed by a desire to banish the God, whom man had made out of his dreams” (1933:2). Nationalism is then discussed as an alternative to Christianity. This influence on Ben Marais is clearly visible where he considers the church as an alternative to nationalism (*The Two Faces of Africa*).

By religion the book means “the reference of all things human to one master –interest which has been found by most religious people in the mind and will of God; but there can be objects of worship and devotion other than a personal God” (1933:1). The book discusses how, in earlier times within the tribal system, there was a close relation between the tribe’s defence and its religion, and that as time went on, the religious aspects were eroded and the tribal – nationalistic – interests became revered, resulting in “many altars being dedicated to *Patria*, and among the worshipers are men of every creed. Thus, the commonality of nationalism across creeds, races, and across time is established. This would make it possible for Ben Marais to consider Race problems in The Americas, and to – draw parallels and differences with the situation in South Africa, because he first tried to establish communality and differences.

An important question is: How would Ben Marais have read the book, against his

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pietistic, evangelical Afrikaner background, on the one hand, and his schooling in Greek Philosophy on the other? It is my belief that he would have read it analytically, but not critically. The reason for this is the fact that the language would have been quite familiar to him. For example, the book's call to repent (1933:4), which I experience as manipulative, reasons:

“Nationalism is another religion which offers itself to the hungry soul of man. In face of it the church must repent. No serious call can ever be made which does not begin with the demand that men must everywhere and always adjust their minds to reality, and this is an essential part of what is meant by repentance.”

Reality is perceived from a 1930s middle class American point of view. As substantiation to his argument on “adjusting” in the face of changing reality, the book refers to Alaric (1933:5), when he attacked Rome in 410AD, and “when the men were blind” when he stood at the gates. The book claims that the Romans should have adapted to the new reality, then they would have been saved. Furthermore, the French nobles “living a life of wit and elegance till the eve of Revolution” (1933:5) are referred to along with the “Russian aristocracy [who] never dreamed of being driven out into exile” (1933:5). On the one hand, Ben Marais' noble French heritage²¹⁴ would have inspired him to associate with the reasoning, perceiving the patterns in history, along with the reference to the ill fate of the Russian aristocracy, at the hand of the feared communism. The book could be argued to be propagandistic.

Though, if read analytically, it is possible to perceive the dangers of nationalism in South African society. The moral drawn by the book, states clearly (1933:6), “The moral of history is plain, if others were blind to the signs of the times, we too may be blind.” In this assertion there may also be truth for the current reader, not only for Ben Marais. This relates to Ben Marais as a prophet, though, not self perceived, but made applicable to him (1933:6):

“Those who prophesy disaster, if something is not done, are called Cassandras or Jeremiahs. But Cassandra was right, Troy did fall. And Jeremiah was right, Jerusalem was captured....”

²¹⁴ His forefather, Charles Marais, a Huguenot, was a French nobleman.

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Within this realism, the “real world” according to the book (1933:6), there is an altar, and on the altar is an inscription: “To Fatherland”. Also, the church is silent (1933:7): it has either nothing to say, or it is afraid to speak. Ben Marais was one person who decided that he would not be afraid to speak. Also, he had much to say. He would have found the words, “The world is listening for any voice that can speak with authority” (1933:7) inspiring. Though, Hitler also spoke with authority, some years later, and was able to capture the psyche of a nation.

Simultaneously, and related, the book indicates a sensitivity to direct application of Scripture on 20th century society (1933:11). This hermeneutic principle would have made Ben Marais weary also of Scriptural justifications of societal practices and norms. Thus (1933:11):

“The church cannot give the precise witness which the faithful servants of God gave in Asia Minor in the days when the Apocalypse was written; it can but adjust its thought and action to the spiritual situation which it inherits in the 20th century.”

The realism for the church lies in the fact that “the Kingdom of God is at hand” (1933:8). Thus implicating that within biblical imagery, nationalism is imbedded, while also needing to be reinterpreted for the reality of the 20th century. The difference between nationalism and realism is considered by the book in very simplistic terms in the basic model (1933:9): “Nationalism has to do with the outward and temporal affairs; Religion is inward and spiritual.” The book then determines that the church has been at once a divine and a human society, that it fulfils an eternal purpose, but in time. This substantiates Ben Marais seeking the resolving of nationalistic differences within the structures of the church (*The Two Faces of Africa*).

While the book frequently refers to nationalism, it gives different senses to it. One of the more important references, places it in a historic context that being the disillusionment with nationalism experienced after the Great War (1933:13). The book refers to nationalism as “the mind and action of those who believe in a sovereign state above which there can be no higher power” (1933:13). The book draws the history of sovereign states in Europe over four centuries, though also being weary to indicate it as a human phenomenon affecting all of mankind. To this effect he quotes Gokhale, an

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Indian nationalist, who would have expressed the creed of nationalism: Love of country must so fill the heart that all else shall appear of little moment by its side.” This would have horrified Ben Marais, who insisted that he was a Christian before he was an Afrikaner (Viljoen Interview, 1986).

A look at nationalism from a different angle sees it being compared to patriotism (1933:16). In this comparison the book finds patriotism to be contrary to nationalism. The book reasons, “Not to condemn, but to save patriotism the church has come. Nationalism unchecked will make an end of the nation” (1933:17).

On a different point, but also akin to the times, the book discusses Islam, though it sees it not as a threat (1933:15). Ben Marais, who – as expressed in the correspondence with the World Council of Churches – was well aware of Islam, considered the religion a daunting threat over the church. The book is very naïve in calling Islam “a faith for the man in the desert” (1933:14), and negates it by considering it an “ancient protest against superstition” (1933:14). One could as easily classify Christianity as such. Much of the tension between Christianity and Islam can be detected in the book’s attitude towards Islam, where cultural bias most certainly plays a role, even as the book sweepingly claims that Islam, “in its positive teachings, it is out of touch with modern knowledge” (1933:14). This knowledge is culturally determined, and the modern is considered more affluent than the traditional, and the book appears to claim to have access to this knowledge. This comes across as quite arrogant. However, a person reading the book, and sympathising in a similar cause might not necessarily find alarming fault with such an attitude. The book thus emphasises internal threats far more than external.

At the end of Chapter 1 a short historic sketch is given on Karl Marx, emphasising strongly his work in the library. On the one hand, Karl Marx was confronting the reality of his day, the poverty, abuse and maltreatment experienced and the silence of the church. On the other, the book makes Carl Marx irrelevant through the one-sided treatment of his history, thus also neutralising effectively the threat that communism supposedly held. The book concludes on Karl Marx (1933:25):

“Still the same stream enters the British Museum. It is possible that among the living readers there is one whose studies will be among the forces which

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are for the rising and falling of the nations.”

Ben Marais would not have been so arrogant as to consider that his writings would determine the rise and fall of a nation. Rather, in retrospect, it must be claimed that his teachings and understanding of reality, as also influenced by this book, influenced later generations to effectively take steps to change negative policies within the church.

The second chapter, “Where the streams meet”, takes a closer look at the contemporary world in the context of the Great War. The two streams distinguished by the book are, firstly, nature, and secondly, man’s spirit (1933:27). This distinction is most certainly not as profound in the 21st century as it was during the 1930s. Drawing from the theory considered in Chapter 1, the book claims that man must adjust to the new reality as it has come to be known (1933:27). Thus, repentance is an adjustment to the new facts (1833:27).

The book considers the Great War to be an “explosion to which four centuries of nationalism in Europe led” (1933:28). Apart from establishing an European orientation to World War I and viewing the war as a conflict of established nationalisms, the book tries to understand the war within a broader historic context, as Ben Marais also tried to understand the race problems in South Africa against a broader historic framework.

It could be considered to be rather more idealistic than practical, and considered from a middle-class American perspective, but the book’s propagation for moving from nationalism to internationalism (1933:28-29) reiterates the move from a focus on individual nationalisms to the interaction between nations, which, interestingly, corresponds to the rising emphasis being placed on ecumenism. One post war movement, identified in the book, is akin to such a movement away from nationalism towards internationalism, as seen in the formation of the League of Nations, the Pact of Paris, and different meetings and conferences on science, medicine, commerce and finance. This movement implies a dogmatic denial of traditional groupings (1933:29-30). A second post war movement, identified in the book (1933:30), is reflected in the outbursts of nationalism and concerns “the revival of the idea of the sovereign state” (1933:30). The reason for this, according to the argument in the book, is that “in times

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of uncertainty man turns inwards and finds sanctuary in the narrower limits of the own country” (1933:30). This predicament could have been an encouragement for Ben Marais to seek dialogue and establish relations with others, and to consider the arguments of others (S Marais Interview 2000).

In the second chapter it is claimed that “a nation is a nation chiefly by virtue of its memories” (1933:31). The book distinguishes political and economic situations that need to be considered within this memory of a nation, apart from the dominant religion, which each nation has (1933:31). Also within the historic orientation to nationalism, the book considers various archetypes of nationalism (1933:32-42), which is brought strongly into the context of renaissance and the awakening spirit of new knowledge that replaces old religions and signifies the rise (dawn) of national consciousness (1933:43).

The short historic sketch at the end of Chapter 2 is devoted to Sun-Yet-Sen’s will (1933:44-50). The will is seen to be an important document for the Chinese nationalists, where it calls for the continuation of the work started by the political activist.

In Chapter 3 the theme of the altar is referred to once more, “The revival of an ancient altar”. The altar, which is dedicated to *Patra*, Fatherland, is an “altar that has been revived and rededicated, but it is the same altar before which man has bowed in many ages and in many lands” (1933:51). The book reasons that in early history the name of the god and the name of the tribe were linked. Devotion to *Patria* came to have a sacred value, and “when the gods vanish in the mists, the nation remains to take over the entire loyalty, and to fill the empty place in the heart of the people” (1933:51).

In the build up of the argument, the book first presents examples of nationalisms from Scripture and from the Highlands of Scotland (1933:52-69), colouring the history of Israel in nationalistic terms, then it suggests that the church is the new Israel in nationalistic terms. The church is seen as “a spiritual race, an elect people, its members went out to do what Israel, as a dedicated people, might have done” (1933:67). A critical question is asked in this regard, “Is the nation to live for itself or give itself to the Kingdom of God” (1933:68). This is then drawn to the book’s contention that *The*

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City of God of St Augustine is seen as the place in which all the nations bring their honours (1933:68). Thus, the book considers the future of nationalisms in an eschatological framework, where St Augustine's City of God is seen to be akin to a International meeting place of different nations. The book points out that Augustine developed the City of God to stand against the City of Earth (1933:69), which is at once temporal, decadent and on which one cannot trust. Thus, it appears that the book supports the idea that St Augustine wrote *The City of God* in his bereavement and while experiencing disillusionment at Alaric's invasion of Rome.

This then, is what the biographic sketch at the end of Chapter 3 covers, when St Augustine heard of the fall of Rome. As alternative to the temporal, earthly, refuge is sought in the spiritual: "Babylon would always fall. But the City of God could not perish. The king of that city is Truth, its laws Love, its direction is Eternity" (1933:76).

In Chapter 4 the book considers the development of the nationalistically orientated sovereign states of Europe. This is accomplished in "The Shadow of Machiavelli". Niccolo Machiavelli, a Florentine who wrote in Italy in the 16th century, is considered to have influenced European political thought. The book in question is *Concerning Principalities* (1532), also referred to as *The Prince*. The book, which was not intended for publication, interprets changes in the spirit of man which were to be operative for four centuries in Europe (1933:81). *The Prince*, intended to serve as a series of instructions to the "most magnificent Lorenzo de 'Medici" (1933:94), is important for its underlying theory of state. The ordering of the state is described with the assumption that this is the character with which practical men must deal. There is thus little room for the spiritual guidance of the church in public life. The book (1933) thus sees a general attitude towards the nation-state logically expressed in Machiavelli, and believes that this attitude has been the assumption of civilised communities for centuries (1933:81).

The book presents an interesting periodisation model (1933:80). In this model St Augustine is seen as an important moment in European political thought with his development of the eschatological City of God. The first period, then, leads up to the

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16th century, in which Martin Luther and Machiaveli respectively signify the Reformation and the Renaissance. These two events, the reformation and the renaissance are considered parallel by the book, and together form the onset of the second phase of the development of the sovereign states in Europe. The second phase lasted until after the Great War, from whence the 3rd phase proceeded. Thus, the relations between church and state are pertinent to the development of nationalism in Europe. The book offers several examples (1933:84-104), such as Hildebrand's sentence over Henry in 1076 (1933:84). The reformation is given an interesting political interpretation.

A further example presented by the book (1933:97) that has a parallel in South African history, and thus would have been interesting to Ben Marais, concerns Cardinal Richelieu. The Cardinal encouraged Protestant powers to fight against a Catholic State which posed a political danger to France. Nationalism thus prevailed over religion. In the annals of South African history, in the late 18th century, when the Cape was governed by the Dutch East Company, Roman Catholics were not allowed to celebrate Mass on land, and were generally not welcomed by the Protestants. Many of these sailors were French. Several years later, when the Cape settlers felt that the Protestant English posed a threat to their safety, the Catholic French sailors were welcome in the Cape (Hofmeyr & Pillay 1994:10) Thus, in times of distress nationalistic concerns over rode religious differences. As Cardinal Richelieu's attitude led to the development of the idea of sovereign states – in which no allegiance was owed to any higher power (1933:97), so, in contrast, the religious powers continued to be influential in South African society well into the 20th century. Within the parallel there is a difference, indicating how difficult it is to draw direct lines between European and South African societies. One reason for the disassociation was the influence of the Scottish evangelical orientated ministers who served in the Cape NG Kerk during the 19th century, and the interpretation of Scripture – Romans 13.

The third chapter concludes with the consideration of three main alternatives for the spirit of man. While being rather simplistic, regarding Communism as the worship of the proletariat and Nationalism as the worship of the Sovereign State, and Christianity

being the other alternative, the book's assertion that "man has always been a worshiper" is quite useful (1933:105). It would have promoted the idea of remaining within the church and challenging the status quo from within the church and refusing to become politically active in the thought and actions of Ben Marais.

The historic sketch at the end of Chapter 3, "Machiavelli writes *The Prince*", is very informative, apart from substantiating the book's premises on the relation between religion and nationalism. The book presents influential leaders that read the book (in the library – akin to Karl Marx) (1933:106). From *The Prince*, according to the book (1933:110), it is possible to discern how the lines of the renaissance, religion and nationalism interplayed. Leaders, such as Richelieu, Napoleon and Bismark would have read in *The Prince* (1933:110): "Clear intelligence backed by unsparing will, unflinched energy, remorseless vigour, the brain to plan and the hand to strive – here is the salvation of states." Religion is seen to be good – but should not be allowed to dominate, while political language is shrouded in religious terms. The sovereign states are seen to be each an end in itself – each the sole guide of its own life; "and in statesmanship everything would be justifiable which was needed to preserve or further the state" (1933:110).

The last two chapters, "Education for life in the nation", and "A large upper room furnished", appear to be more dogmatic, disclosing the author's unprecedented sentiments on the subject. The book, though, approaches the subject through a referral to the Chinese national Sun-Yat-Sen, thus Christianising global trends. The observations in these chapters would have had particular significance to Ben Marais' thoughts on ecumenism.

In Chapter 5, Sun-Yat-Sen is quoted, where it is claimed that a society must first be national before it can be a society internationally (1933:113). The state of being "international" can be achieved through two means: through the process of promoting international order, thus fellowship between existing nationalities; or through the process of ending all former groupings, the process of denationalisation (1933:114). Thus the two alternatives presented are anarchy and internationalism, where Education,

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through History (manipulated) is shown to work in the model of love and hate – hatred for the other and love for the own (1933:120). The book wishes to promote positive nationalism – patriotism (1933:21), and concludes the chapter on an inspired observation (1933:136): “The key to the future is in the satchel of the school boy.”

“The Sketch” at the end of Chapter 5 presents two aged Maratha Indians from the same village in discussion. The one was a Christian teacher and the other a politician, and they were comparing what each had done, and not done for India.

The final chapter, “A large upper room furnished”, reasons that the church faces a new task in each generation, where no exact parallel can be found in the past (1933:147). In the analysis of the post great war problem, the book tries to indicate the duty of the church. Counsel is offered to the church, which covers positive and negative assertions (1933:148).

The book presents three positive points of counsel, namely, 1. that the church must assert firmly its catholicity, in the sense of being international; 2. that a new emphasis needs to be placed on the application of Christian faith (the book mentions the meeting at Stockholm 1925 and the derived English orientated “Life and Work” and European orientated “Ecumenical Conferences”, as well as a renewed missionary enterprise); 3. that the church should be a living witness (related to the idea that man has more in common than what divides). The negative orientated counsel suggests that the church should refuse to be chaplain to the modern state (1933:148). The disillusionment following the 1st World War is very apparent. A mixed society, like The United States of America, of which the author is a member, would have experienced the relations between churches and states in a different light to their allies and opponents across the Atlantic.

The counsel is followed by several excursions on what the author perceives the church should and should not be, should and should not do (1933:151-166). The primary focus is to seek peace in the world and reunion of the church. This assertion is rather ironically expressed in a publication of the early 1930s, considering the build up of

national powers in Europe, which would lead to the 2nd World War.

The final excursion in the book, following Chapter 6, “The upper room”, contains a strong reference to where the Last Supper was eaten. The vision is explored where different people from different nations share a common meal.

This vision is contrary to the NG Kerk’s assertion and practice of separate Eucharist, church services and churches! It would have implored Ben Marais to consider carefully the church’s doctrines on unity and community and the justification of its controversial doctrines.

A discussion on his masters and doctoral studies indicates, firstly how his interests and thoughts developed, and secondly how his formal studies influenced his thoughts. It is also evident from an extended consideration of a book that he claimed (Viljoen Interview 1986) had greatly influenced him, how his informal studies also influenced his thoughts. Ben Marais was not only active in the church, though, he also had interests in sports bodies and in student affairs. The question is, to what extent his involvement in these activities influenced his thoughts and pronouncements?

b. Formal Studies

Ben Marais’ undergraduate studies are not discussed as a separate category. Rather, focus falls on his postgraduate studies, where influences on him, and the development of his thoughts are more clearly discernible.

i. M.A. in Afrikaans, Stellenbosch, 1932

Ben Marais’ MA dissertation in Afrikaans, completed in September 1932, is probably the most informative about the way he thought and about his academic and creative development. The dissertation reveals artistry with words and concepts and clarity of thought. The ability to convey difficult ideas in a simplified form, very evident in his latter writing, is very fresh and evident in this dissertation.

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The title²¹⁵ indicates that the study Ben Marais undertook was about the literary styles introduced by the Dutchman Arthur van Schendel who is identified with Romanticism of the 18th century. The argument is well presented and poetically articulated through descriptive language and images.

He begins his argument on renewal with a metaphor in which he compares the renewal in literature to the rejuvenation in the four seasons (1932:i).²¹⁶

“The spring comes forth from the winter and the autumn ... ‘It is a new spring!’ But it is only new because it is born from another season. If the winter also had spring buds, if the veld were also green and the aroma of flowers in the white moonlight dwindled through the valley, then spring would not have been new, because an own beauty and an own gleam it would not have had.”

In a further metaphor employed by Ben Marais (1932:iv) he describes his discussion on literary art – new style forms – against “the background and broad rivers from which this art stream flows clearly into sight.”²¹⁷ Ben Marais discussion of the renewal of a literary school and of style and art is compared to the flowing of a river, emphasising his orientation to literary history and to the relation between his argument and his subject on the one hand, and the relation between the different fashions in literary schools on the other. He then states (1932:iv) that he is to be writing about Romanticism in general and about style in more detail.

In the subsequent chapters of the dissertation, Ben Marais discusses Romanticism in literature, Dutch Romantics and its development, style in general, Arthur van Schendel’s contribution, his collections of stories, and travel stories. He concludes with a chapter on the new work of van Schendel.

Though the study is in Dutch and Afrikaans literature, Ben Marais methodology, arguments and conclusions reveals much about his own personality, style and academic

²¹⁵ *Die Romantikus Arthur van Schendel as Stylvernuwer.*

²¹⁶ “Die lente kom uit die winter en die herfs ... Dis ‘n nuwe lente! Maar nuut is dit alleen omdat dit uit ‘n ander jaargety gebore is. As die winter ook lentrebetsels gehad het, as die velde ook groen was en die geur van blomme in die wit maanskyn deur die vlakke gedwaal het, sou die lente nie nuut gewees het nie, want ‘n eie skoonheid en ‘n eie glans sou dit nie gehad het nie.”

²¹⁷ “... en breë riviere waaruit hierdie kunsstroom kom helder in die gesig te kry nie.”

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development and perception on reality. He distinguishes art into two categories (1932:1): Realism – those that are determined by the deed, reality and the present; and Romanticism – those that build on the dream. He elaborates on Romanticism, calling it the art that reaches in the distance, a flight to the world of dreams, of thought, a search for foreign things, for the supernatural, for the mysterious. All which is compared to the youth. Romanticism is thus defined as (1932:2):

“Die oneindigheidsgeroep wat die eindige van sy moeisame knelters losmaak.”²¹⁸

On reading the dissertation it becomes apparent that Ben Marais could be considered a Romanticist. This is especially true considering his remark that Romantics are often the great lonely people in life. His years of isolation and his intense experience of loneliness during this period comes to mind. It would thus appear that Ben Marais was prepared for such a life. It is not sure to what extent Ben Marais could have drawn on past experiences from his youth – these years are shrouded in mystery. As a Romanticist, though, Ben Marais would not have considered himself withdrawn, since he states (1932:4).²¹⁹

“The true Romanticist does not stand outside of reality and is not eager to avoid reality in his art, does not stand outside and lose from real life.”

A further surprising revelation in the dissertation is found in his commentary on Bosboom-Toussaint and Van Lennop concerning the relationship between author and work, an aspect for which Ben Marais is well known. In his commentary he accuses these historical novelists of (1932:8).²²⁰

“... little emotion and little warmth of the internal. Theirs were the general – though sometimes refined – but still almost colourless historical documents – deep personal accents were absent.”

The personal touch in especially Ben Marais’ devotional writing, and also evident in his two books *The Two Faces of Africa* and *Colour: Unsolved Problem of the West*, could be traced to his grooming as a student of Dutch Romanticism. Style, also, is evidently a

²¹⁸ “The eternal call that releases the boundry from its barriers.”

²¹⁹ Die ware Romantikus staan nie buite die realiteit en trag ook nie om in sy kuns die realiteit te ontwyk nie, staan nie buite en los van die reële lewe nie.

²²⁰ Min hartstogtelikheid en min warmte of innigheid. Dit was die breë – wel fyn soms – maar tog byna kleurlose historiese dokumente – diep persoonlike aksent was daar nie.

personal matter, as Ben Marais remarks (1932:25):²²¹

“The style thus of the times and school of thought plus the style determined by individual abilities and personality, thus form style in its broadest sense.”

The development of the personal style of Ben Marais – his involvement in the subject of his study and his characteristic first person reference reflects at once on his warm personality and on his aesthetic appreciation of the beautiful (1932:31).²²²

“I read my first sketch in the evening – when the aroma of his first dawn blossoms wakened my heart to new life.”

Ben Marais study in Dutch Romanticism certainly influences his writing style and approach to life in general. However, his M.A. dissertation in Philosophy appears foreign to his style, considering his dissertation on Arthur van Schendel and his later writings.

ii. M.A. in Philosophy, Stellenbosch, 1935

The dissertation, *Die Ontwikkeling van die Probleem van die Onsterflikheid in die Griekse Filosofie*,²²³ provides a framework within which Ben Marais’ philosophical approaches to questions and problems and his historical orientation is illustrated quite clearly. It is thus evident that his studies in philosophy clearly influenced his latter work.

The dissertation follows a historical argument, with a first chapter considering the problem of immortality. The next chapters consider, in order, the Homeric era, the early philosophers, the anthropological era of the Greek Philosophy, and the Hellenistic-Roman philosophers. He then draws a conclusion.

The dissertation closes with a reference to Plotinus on the death of philosophy – intuitive doctrine, which Ben Marais related to the springboard of Christianity (1935:103). It is thus possible to discern how Ben Marais was taught on the

²²¹ Die style dus van die tyd of rigting plus die styl wat op individuele aanleg en persoonlikheid berus, maak dus styl in sy wydste betekenis uit.

²²² Dit was in die aand dat ek my eerste skets geles het – dat die geur van sy eerste môrebloesem my hart tot nuwe lewe gewek het.

²²³ The development of the problem of immortality in Greek Philosophy.

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periodisation of schools of thought, of which the Christian thinkers formed an important part. It is interesting, though, that Christianity was already flourishing when Plotinus, a contemporary of Origen (3rd century AD) was active. Ben Marais argued (1935:103):

“Christianity was at the door – the nations were ready for it, with the mysticism of Plotinus Greek Philosophy which disappeared from the scene.”

Thus, from the historic periodisation of his material, and the positioning of the schools of thought, it is possible to see that Ben Marais’ orientation to Greek Philosophy was retrospective, from a Christian point of view. Christian doctrine was thus his hermeneutical key to understanding philosophic concepts.

The bibliography, at the front of the dissertation contains only 35 titles, but contains a balance between primary and secondary sources.

The text is error ridden, and the personal style, writing in first person is well developed. He thus says, “That is why we talk today...”²²⁴ (1935:9), using the royal plural in an argumentative mode. The frequent reference to and occurrence of “*volk*” is quite alarming for a study on immortality.

The argument of the dissertation commences with a quotation of Pascal, the source of which he does not indicate (it is definitely through a secondary reference). The quotation serves no other purpose than to elevate the status of the argument through a reference to a well known name. For that matter, it could have been Plato, Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas or Nietzsche. Ben Marais uses the words of Pascal to good effect (1935:1):

“The immortality of the soul is an issue that affects us intimately ... what our final purpose should be.”²²⁵

Ben Marais continues, in own pen, to provide an elaboration on this statement with an interesting reference to death. Personally as a child, he had to deal with death under very strenuous conditions, when first his mother, and then his eldest brother died. He

²²⁴ Daarom praat ons vandag.

²²⁵ Die onsterflikheid van die siel is ‘n saak wat ons so intiem raak ... wat ons finale doel moet wees.

writes in his thesis (1935:1):

“Death is a sombre reality. It comes to everyone. But whether there is a life after death, is the question that thinkers throughout the centuries of darkness have struggled with.”²²⁶

The pre-Christian era could be depicted as the dark era, and the era of Christianity as the era of light. Though, even then the problem would remain the restriction of perspective: the living can only learn about the conditions of the deceased through the veils of death – assuming that Scripture provides a divinely ordained account of what truly happens after death. The problem of immortality would then be resolved in Christianity – in the faith in life after death (1935:7).

The concept of immortality – depending on faith, Ben Marais argues (1935:2) is to be differentiated from nation to nation (volk) and from century to century – as well as amongst individuals within a nation or time frame. Also, that where there was faith in immortality, there was also denial and disbelief (1935:3). This is an important consideration, that Ben Marais had realised early in his academic development that an argument could be argued from the point of view of both the advocators and oppressors. Thus when a one sided argument was presented, he would invariably have asked for alternative points of view. This is quite evident in his opposition to scriptural justification of Apartheid.

Ben Marais’ power of discernment is formulated in his observation that ideas must be distinguished continuously (1935:4). This is especially important in his understanding and application of history – the concept of inter-relation – in which the old and the new are related and set apart from each other. He constantly differentiates between earlier concepts and the contemporaneous views (1935:9).

Before entering a detailed discussion on the different philosophers’ view points on immortality (1935:25-102), Ben Marais concludes his discussion on the role the mystery religions played in influencing Greek concepts of immortality in Greek thought (1935:24).

²²⁶ My translation.

Though it might well be possible to critically question Ben Marais' periodisation and prominence given to Christian doctrine, it is significant to see in this dissertation a historic awareness and frame of reference. At this point in his academic career, he did not see himself as a historian. He had first specialised in Afrikaans, where his historical awareness almost prevailed over his under-developed poetic abilities, and here, in his masters dissertation in philosophy, it is more evident, also his search for basic principles according to which he could organise his arguments.

iii. M.Th. in Theology, Princeton, 1936

His Masters degree in Theology at Princeton University was completed under the guidance of Samuel Zwemmer. He was highly commended as a student and was well respected by his fellow students.

Unfortunately a copy of the dissertation could not be traced, but it is known that it contains views that were groomed at Stellenbosch that he expanded upon (Viljoen Interview 1986). The fact that the title is very similar (*Die Godsidee by die Grieke: Probleme van die Ontwikkeling in die Onsterflikheid van die Griekse Filosofie*),²²⁷ and considering the limited time spent on it, are indicators that it would have contained much of the same material.

iv D.Phil. in Philosophy, Stellenbosch, 1946

Ben Marais completed his D.Phil with the title: *Die Christelike Broederskapsleer en sy Toepassing in die Kerk van die Eerste Drie Eeue*, in 1944 at the University of Stellenbosch, under Prof. B.B. Keet's guidance. Interestingly, J.D. Vorster completed his D.Th. in Church Law also under Professor B.B. Keet! Ben Marais thesis consists of two volumes. Volume One contains sections A and B while section two contains section C and the bibliography. The thesis is dedicated to his father, "in thankful

²²⁷ The exact English title is unknown, though a possible rendition could be: *The idea of God in Greek thought: problems in the development of immortality in Greek Philosophy* – the dissertation was most probably written in English.

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recognition”.²²⁸ He had first enrolled in 1944, with Brunner, professor of Philosophy, as his promoter.

The central question Ben Marais asks is: How did the Early Church approach the issues of race and nationalism?

The thesis is philosophical and considers the mystery religions, Judaism in the Diaspora, Stoic philosophy, and the background of Christianity. He is looking for insight into the Early Church as an ecumenical community. First he considers the spiritual and cultural milieu in which Christianity developed. He looks particularly at the general trends prevalent in the Mediterranean world in the centuries prior to the birth of Christ. In the second section he considers the principles of the doctrine of brotherhood and its social implications. In the third section he looks at how the doctrine of brotherhood was applied in the early church.

Ben Marais’ periodisation of the early church as covering only the first three centuries is significant. The problems experienced by the church when it became state church and further institutionalised were thus not covered in the thesis, problems which are central and comparative to the predicaments the church found itself in during the 20th century in South Africa. It appears that Ben Marais is doing this deliberately to work with the often idealised early church as reference for his argument.

Ben Marais (1946:iv) sub-divides the period into four sub-periods, which in turn reveals his orientation to conflict: (30-110BC) The apostolic era; (110-180BC) the era of the early apologists; (180-250BC) The era of the great thinkers; (250-313BC) The era of final battle.

Ben Marais wanted to make the doctrine of brotherhood, which underlies and is one of the basic principles in Ben Marais’ theology, and which is prevalent in the Early Church, applicable to the current situation in South Africa. The doctrine of brotherhood was determined by the nature of God and the value of humankind. Therefore, the church

²²⁸ Dankbare erkentlikheid.

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and Christians had a social responsibility that should be exercised in specific contexts and situations. He also determined that Christians were in a new relation, a brotherhood. Furthermore, Ben Marais applied the doctrine to race relations in the last chapter of the thesis. Here, he reasoned that because Christianity was universal in nature, and because Christian brotherhood transcends race differences, expression to these facts had to be made in church and society, which also, could not ignore the “concrete situation” nor the “real historical conditions”. The thesis was an aid to the question whether there were scriptural grounds for separate churches.

The influence of the doctorate and his reasoning in it is clearly discernible in *Two faces of Africa*, in which Ben Marais foresees national differences being nullified through the church. Ironically, the NG Kerk contributed towards accentuating nationalistic differences.

Ben Marais delivered a speech at the Faculty of Theology of the University of Stellenbosch on race justification and Scripture (*Op die Horizon* IX, 1947:66), which was a direct result of his thesis. On a closer reading of the thesis it is apparent that the contemporary situation in South Africa had a far greater influence on his reasoning and organisation of his thoughts than did his study of the Greek philosophers, Scripture and the Early Church.

Alternatively, his awareness of the greater world, of history and different schools of thought and ideologies, would have enabled him to place the narrow ideologically orientated situation in South Africa in perspective. This is apparent where he considers (Marais 1946:21) the variety and strength of the streams that flowed together, resulting in the state of humanity changing, as the organisation of the world changed the character of the nations changed also. In the old world of the Greek civilisation Ben Marais saw the development of the cosmopolitan society growing in accordance to the broadening of horizons, of prospects that improved, of the appreciation of virtues, while the restrictive militarism and patriotism fell into disfavour, interestingly, resulting in one empire, one predominate language and one civilisation. Though the old world was not as uniform as Ben Marais attempts to argue, the influence of Western philosophy on

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his thinking is quite apparent, where the continuation of civilisation, of the outflow of western civilisation from Greek origin through to Western European civilisation is both natural and uncomplicated.

Ben Marais was not exposed to other views, and therefore had to develop most of his thoughts in isolation.

7. PRINCIPLES

What were the principles that governed Ben Marais' thoughts and actions? These principles were ingrained into his person before he went to university, and each new experience he underwent, or alternative point of view he was confronted with, or action he had to take or was tempted to take were measured against these principles.

The most important factor in Ben Marais' life, his primary principle was faith in God. Other things were secondary.

Thus, to maintain that "Christianity Transcends Race" as a principle is secondary. This was used as a title of an article Ben Marais prepared for the World Council of Churches in which he maintains that one could make practical arrangements but could not exclude any one on any grounds. Though, it is derived from his primary principle.

It could be maintained that the doctrine of Christian brotherhood was a principle which governed Ben Marais' actions and thoughts on segregation and Apartheid. However, in his doctoral thesis (1946:90) he considers the principles of this doctrine, and uses the words of J.H. Oldham (1935:337) to formulate the principle governing his principle of the doctrine of Christian brotherhood:

"The ultimate question which determines the character of man or of a civilization is the kind of God that a man worships or that men collectively worship."

It is thus quite understandable why Ben Marais' thesis in Philosophy was orientated towards Christianity, and why he did not find it necessary to qualify himself. Ben Marais' principles rest in his 'concept of God' as in the Old and New Testament. Thus

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ethics were related to his concept of God (Marais 1946:83). He was an evangelical who was philosophically schooled.

Two further principles need to be mentioned here, since at once they indicate the influences on his thought, and how they determined his actions. The first concerns the unity of mankind and is a culmination of Acts 17:26, and Berkhoff's *Reformed Dogmatics* as read in Ben Marais doctoral thesis (1946:114):

“The human race is... a unity. Not only do we share the same human nature, but through Adam there is also a genetic and genealogical unity between all people.”

The second principle is an understanding of the unity of humanity in sin, and in the brotherhood of salvation (Marais 1946:119), and this principle is governed by God's relation to mankind. To formulate his ideas, Ben Marais uses the words of Emil Brunner (Marais 1946:120):

“Fellowship with God creates fellowship with man, and genuine human fellowship is only possible as it is based upon fellowship with God. Thus human fellowship rests upon the same foundation as fellowship between man and God.”

While Ben Marais could not accept statements he did not agree with, and therefore could never have become a political activist, it is apparent that he had a network of principles. The question is, what principles led him to write the letters to the General Secretaries of the World Council of Churches because they were supporting militarised opponents of Apartheid?

The answer is possibly to be found in the admixture of principles and personality.

8. THE WORLD AT WAR

Especially World War II and the students hoping Nazi Germany would win. Question: Was it more to do with anti English sentiment or with the National Social ideology of the Nazis?

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In Viljoen's interview with Ben Marais (1986), Ben Marais claims that the lesson of World War II was not learned, that it passed by. He makes an interesting point that South Africa was then busy establishing itself in world affairs. The attitudes to nationalism in South Africa were contrary to international sentiment after the war.

9. THE STUDENT ENVIRONMENT

Ben Marais spent most of his adult life in the company of students.

In Viljoen's interview with Ben Marais (1986), Ben Marais briefly mentioned the differences between the universities of Pretoria and South Africa. He appreciated the personal contact with students at Pretoria, and the intellectual contact at Unisa between the staff. He found the exchange of ideas from different traditions very enriching, contributing to his notion that Church History should be more ecumenical and not denominationally orientated.

10 CONCLUSION

This chapter has indicated that various impulses on Nationalism covering the two periods of transformation influenced the thinking of Ben Marais.

A closer look at the underlying principles and influential presence of Ben Marais has been made. Where Chapter 3 presented various climates, Chapter 5 considered more detailed perspectives on Ben Marais. This was accomplished through personal, political, church and academic considerations. It has been indicated that Ben Marais was able to distinguish himself from his peers through his persistent insistence on adhering to the principles that were established in his youth.

In the following chapter, Ben Marais will be considered a prophet, who used his influential presence to resolve the church's dilemma concerning race relations.

CHAPTER 6

A PROPHET FOR HIS TIMES, BUT FOR OTHERS TOO

1. INTRODUCTION

In an interview in *Kerkbode* (11 December 1992), Ben Marais was asked his reaction to the following statement:

“In various circles, today, you are seen as a prophet who posed points of view that were proven correct – and who lived to see it happen. Your reaction?”

Ben Marais answered:

“I experienced many years of loneliness and even rejection. But I thank the Lord that I could see and experience so much, which gives me much pleasure.”

This interview was conducted in 1992. The acknowledgement by the official popularised newspaper of the NG Kerk that Ben Marais is considered a prophet is significant. The newspaper is considered to be intentionally an instrument for the provision of information and a means to influence public opinion. The placement of such an interview indicates that the newspaper was conditioning its readership to the fact that errors of the past needed to be rectified, and that Ben Marais is one voice from the past (1940s-1970s) who could assist in the present and future healing in the church.

Thus, a few questions are raised: Who determines who are the saints and who are the sinners in the church? Who determines who is a prophet and who a heretic? Why was Ben Marais called a prophet when it was convenient and a liberal when his points of view were not? These questions will not be answered directly. Rather, this chapter will consider Ben Marais' pronouncements and formulations of his points of view – as expressly formulated also in his letter to Carson Blake (3 September 1970). It will be apparent that his points of view are rooted in his person, his background and his development as a church historian, a theologian and a thinker – and a romanticist.

In this chapter the legacy of Ben Marais is considered, a logical sequence in the line of thought argued in the previous chapters. In this chapter distinction is drawn between his various activities and the reactions he evoked through his person and pronouncements. Thus far it has been indicated that Ben Marais was a person of his times, but the principles he adhered to hold a strong message for others who find themselves in situations where politically and/or culturally manipulated sentiment abuses religion for alternative reasons.

2. THE LEGACY OF BEN MARAIS

In his consideration on the role of the Netherlands in the history of Apartheid, Van Butselaar (2001:155) reviews the sterner voices of criticism against Apartheid, as for example, J.C. Hoekendijk and J.J. Buskes. In 1955, under commission of the International Brotherhood of Reconciliation, Buskes made a three month tour through South Africa. Buskes returned home a convinced fighter against racism in South Africa. He wrote a book (1956), which contains a report of his tour and some important insights on Ben Marais.

Van Butselaar (2001:156) indicates that the book formulates few principled arguments against Apartheid. The report has two parts. The first part is a description of how Buskes experienced South Africa. The second part describes the (theological) criticism against Apartheid that he had heard in South Africa. Buskes allows the opinions of especially Ben Marais, B.B. Keet, T. Huddleston and Alan Paton to be heard. Buskes understands how Marais did not reject Apartheid outright, but effectively carved it out from the inside using theological criticism. Buskes (1955:200) concludes:

“Who ever reads the statements (of Marais) and considers them, would feel that Ben Marais is always debating ... Actually he does not believe in it (apartheid) ... In actuality apartheid is a horror for Marais.”

Buskes considered Marais to be “an expression of South Africa at its best, one humble man” (Buskes 1955:201).

On 13 October 1987, the principle of the University of Pretoria, Prof. D.M. Joubert, wrote to Ben Marais informing him that on the previous day, the Council of the University, had motioned to honour him with the degree D.D. (*honoris causa*), on recommendation of the university's senate. The degree was granted on 31 March 1988, during the autumn graduation ceremony. Joubert's letter mentioned the grounds for the honouring, which summarise the heritage of Ben Marais. The degree was to be granted for his significant influence and contribution as theologian, as minister and as a Christian, given as a result of his definite contemplation on the place and calling of the church in Southern Africa.²²⁹ Ben Marais was not a political activist, and most certainly not a party politician, though certain parties dearly wished he were.

a. Spoken Legacy

i. In the Classroom

“It is impossible to guarantee the creation of right and just minded people at our tertiary institutions. But it is imperative to appoint such people in training and development roles. Important aspects relate to academic suitability, affective and formative qualities, and of pleasant bearing. For how would it be that we nurture sour scholars because their mentors had no enthusiasm.” (Anon)

Ben Marais tried to make the subject Church History alive. He prepared his lessons in such a way that it would come across as a drama, firstly to evoke the students' interest, and secondly, to present Church History as the great drama of all of God's people on earth. In his inaugural lecture delivered during an evening session of the Transvaal Synod (1954b), Ben Marais shared his views on the study of Church History. In this lecture he brings the study and teaching of Church History to bear upon the calling of the church. In his introduction he states (1954b):²³⁰

“This year in which you called me to accept responsibility in the teaching of the history of Christianity stands in the sign of significant things.²³¹ In this time of times the Church of Christ is called on the world front to once more reflect upon its own history on which God has led it, and with this vision and the eye established upon Him who is and was and will be, to enter the

²²⁹ Vir sy “diepgaande invloed en bydrae as teoloog, as predikant, as Christen mens, gelewer van (sic) beslissende worsteling rondom die plek en roeping van die kerk in Suider Afrika” (Joubert 1987).

²³⁰ My translation.

²³¹ Beslissende dinge.

new storms that thunder darkly on all the horizons.²³² It is good that the Church knows its path in such an hour and reflects upon the routes on which God has led him.”

On periodisation, Ben Marais considers the contemporaneous church (1964b) to be in the 4th crisis hour, the onslaught of communism against the whole world. He places Church history writing in the context of history recording, placing particular emphasis on the early historians and on the Christian and biblical views on history. In his elaboration on the Christian view of history, Ben Marais emphasises the linear character of the Christian and biblical view compared to the cyclic view of eastern thought and religions. He continuously refers to Christianity as a western religion. He then moves chronologically through time, touching on particular views of history, such as Origen and Eusebius who wish to indicate that Christianity is not presenting anything new and St Augustine with *The City of God*, Irenaeus, and the development of the idea of progressive movement. He also highlights particular moments of history writing in the Enlightenment and the 19th century, the historical century. Ben Marais then places particular emphasis on the value and importance²³³ of Church History as a subject, which he summarises in five points.

Ben Marais taught his students (Marais 1962b:3):

“This is no time for church disputes, but for the description of the broad avenues of the life of the church of Christ as witness of eternal things in an always striving world.”

Interesting insight can be gained into Ben Marais’ teaching by looking at the examinations he set. For example, the examination set in November 1956 for BD I, II and III, as well as Dip. I, II and III, can be looked at as representative. The examination was on History of Doctrines,²³⁴ and while Ben Marais was internal examiner, the external examiners are indicated as the Professors of Theology, Section B.

²³² Wat donker op alle horisonne uitslaan.

²³³ Nood en noodsaaklikheid.

²³⁴ Dogmengeskiedenis.

Seven questions were set, of which five had to be done, and two, Questions 1 and 7, were compulsory. The compulsory questions each had two further options. The questions are formulated in broad terms, indicating the extent of course work covered. In Question 1, students had to choose between answering on either the teachings of Thomas Aquinas and his meaning for History of Doctrines, or scholasticism as a system and its main figures from Anselmus to Occam. In the second compulsory question, Question 7, students had to choose between providing a sketch of the origin and meaning of the *Formula Concordiae* also providing a summary of its main doctrines, and indicating the place Calvin's doctrines on the Eucharist and predestination took in Reformed Doctrine.

The remaining five optional questions, of which three had to be done, indicate that strong emphasis was placed on the Reformation, while Question 6 asked for the main figures and for more information (nature and meaning) of medieval mysticism. In Question 2 three separate questions were incorporated, firstly asking for the contributions of Petrus Abelardus to History of Doctrines, a comparison between the soteriologies of Petrus Abelardus and Anselmus, and the method Petrus Abelardus followed in his *Sic et Non*. Question 3 asks about the sacraments and how the church of the 13th and 14th century understood sacraments. While being very general in his reference to "church" in this question, Question 3, Ben Marais is very specific in requiring the students to describe three of the recognised sacraments referring to their *materia*, *forma*, and *intentio*. While Question 5 asks about the "forerunners of the Reformation" – a two page essay, Question 4 requests more information on Duns Scotus and William Occam.

It appears from the question papers (various – Archives Pretoria NG Kerk Synod) that Ben Marais reviewed and alternated the material he covered in his classes. It is also interesting to note how his students performed, in the above examination, without indicating the students names, there were no fails, and the allocated symbols ranging between A, A-, B+, B, and B-. The value of a "B" was 60% (Archive Pretoria NG Kerk Synod).

Other disciplines taught by Ben Marais included Church Law, History of Missions and General Church History, besides the Church History of the Fatherland, South African Church History.

Ben Marais provided his students with the minimal class notes (Viljoen Interview 1986). A few extant copies, though, are available for perusal. Of particular interest is his course work on Ecumenical Studies. The 5 page handout (Archive Pretoria NG Kerk Synod) provides a densely factual summary of the principle moments in the ecumenical movement, ranging from a reference to John 17:21, the early church, the time prior to, during and after the reformation, and more detail during the 20th century. The notes center strongly on what is meant under the term “ecumenism”, looking at its “conceptual necessity”, “linguistic justification” and the “history of the term”.

In the Conclusion 3 aspects of the meaning of the term “ecumenism” are distinguished. This is done in reference to the developments in the use of the term until the end of Vatican II. In the first aspect, Ben Marais considers it as a specific attitude or approach that contains in it a view to a new horizon and broader perspective, and in the second, it is indicated that the term is associated with institutions that help the churches in their strive for better understanding and promotes communal actions. The 3rd aspect Ben Marais considers is most interesting, since he emphasises that the word “ecumenical” indicates the relation of the church to the world, and then concerning its commission to proclaim the Gospel to all people. This last aspect emphasises the difference between Ben Marais and the general thinking in the World Council of Churches towards the end of the 1960s and early 1970 concerning the relation between church and world, as expressed in the Programme to Combat Racism.

ii. At the Synods

While the focus is frequently placed on Ben Marais’ protests against the scriptural justification of policies (Mission and Apartheid), even by this thesis, at the synods held during the 1940s (1940, 1944, 1948) his observations at synods during the 1970s and 1980s are equally as important. Botha (1979:15) considers the reasons for Ben Marais’ role in the various synods not being reflected in their respective Acts. Botha indicates

that it was “the policy of the Transvaal Synod” to notarise only the motions and proposals that were accepted. Botha then contends that Ben Marais did not state the popular points of view.

In a letter to the editor of the Afrikaans newspaper *Beeld* (23 January 1985), with the heading “Ope Kerke” (Open Churches), the contribution made by Ben Marais can be deduced. The letter reflects on the changes that had taken place over the previous decade. He writes (23 January 1985):²³⁵

“... In 1974 I suggested at the General Synod of the NG Kerk in Cape Town: ‘The NG Kerk declares that all its churches are open to all people for the purpose of worship’. Only 12 people had the conviction or courage in that meeting of hundreds of delegates to publicly raise their hands in support of the motion! I know more felt that way, but the pressure of the political and ecclesiastic opinion was still too strong. When a man from ‘Die Burger’ asked me afterwards: ‘Prof Marais, are you disappointed?’, I answered: ‘Naturally I am, but I forecast that the church will accept such a proposal within 10 years’. And then in 1984, exactly 10 years later in the same city and in the same hall, the Cape NG Kerk accepted a similar proposal! And this morning when I opened ‘Beeld’, the decision made yesterday by the Gereformeerde Kerke was on the front page: ‘Nobody may be excluded from a service or from the Lord’s supper based on race or colour’....”

This extract indicates the change in thought that came about in the NG Kerk on separate services and on Apartheid. Ben Marais was instrumental in influencing this change of thinking.

Ned. Herv. or Geref. Kerk of Transvaal

1940: Mission Policy

Ben Marais presented his report on the Tambaram conference, which was held the previous year, to the synod. He was not a delegated member of the synod because he was not associated with any one particular congregation. He was in service of the synod. He said that Apartheid was questioned at the conference and had to be thought about carefully (*Die Voorligter* 1 January 1976).

²³⁵ My translation.

1944: Issuing Weapons

This was the first synod Ben Marais attended as a delegate of a congregation: Pretoria East.

During the Second World War, the question was raised whether weapons should or should not be issued to black soldiers fighting in the war (it needs to be remembered that soldiers of colour – the Cape Corps – had helped to suppress the rebellion at Slagter’s Nek in 1810, and many black people had supported the English during the Anglo-Boer War). The formulation of the resolution was based on ideology, and not on either correct Scripture interpretation and hermeneutics or the practical situation. Ben Marais protested against the scriptural justification. The result was that they changed the wording, but not the sentiment (Handelinge 1944:57).

1948: Justification of Apartheid

Prior to the session of the 21st Synod of the Ned. Herv. or Geref. Kerk in which the justification of Apartheid from Scripture was to be tabled, Ben Marais consulted with Prof. Pellisier, who encouraged him to raise his objections (Meiring 1979:88). The report had been prepared by only one person, and he, Pellisier, had undersigned it – while not being in total agreement with all it contained. The study of the justification of Apartheid and guardianship was the responsibility of the Commission for Current Affairs. Other issues that were reported on by the Commission included: Chiliasm; the “Roomse Gevaar” (The Roman Catholic Church); the Catechism text book; the Noavitian Covenant;²³⁶ weddings of divorced persons; Sects; Cremation; and Spring day (Handelinge van die Sinode 1948:368-369).

The synod of 1948 will be known as the synod in which church leaders attempted to manipulate the reading of Scripture to serve an ideological and political purpose. Furthermore, as has been seen in the section on the relations between E.P. Groenewald, who was responsible for the preparation of the “Report on the Justification on Scripture”, the constitution of the synod was manipulated to ensure that the objections

²³⁶ Noagitiese Verbond.

raised by Ben Marais would not forfeit their political plans.

It is indicated in Appendix B (Report of Current Affairs) of the Acts of the Synod (*Handelinge van die Sinode 1948:279-284*) on the Scriptural grounds of the policy of race Apartheid and guardianship that the policy of the church is clearly formulated in the official “Mission Policy” of the church. The Scriptural grounds of the Mission Policy were previously questioned by Ben Marais. From Art. 5 of the Mission Policy the following justification is provided (*Handelinge 1948:279*):²³⁷

“The traditional fear of the Afrikaner for placing blacks and whites on the same level²³⁸ is born in his aversion of the idea of the mixing of races.”

And from Art. 6 of the Mission Policy (*Handelinge 1948:279*):²³⁹

“The indigenous²⁴⁰ and coloured people must be helped to develop to self respecting Christian nations, as far as possible separate from the whites.”

Reference is also made to the synod of 1944 (*Handelinge 1944:283*) in the report on the policy of the Church (*Handelinge 1948:279*):²⁴¹

“In the report of the Commission of the Synod on the issuing of weapons to the indigenous people the Synod modifies the formulation of the policy of apartheid to read as follows: ‘The Commission of the Synod wishes to indicate with earnest that the policy of the church is based on the principles of race-apartheid and guardianship as it is cemented²⁴² in the Word of God’.”

The report is careful to emphasise that principles of Scripture and not proofs from Scripture are central to the argument (*Handelinge 1948:280*). Further attention is then given to documents in which the principles of Scripture on race relations (*Handelinge 1948:281*), to racial and national Apartheid in Scripture (*Handelinge 1948:281-283*), and to guardianship in Scripture (*Handelinge 1948:283-284*).

Ben Marais was outspoken on the justification of Apartheid on Scripture.

²³⁷ My translation.

²³⁸ Gelykstelling tussen swart en wit.

²³⁹ My translation.

²⁴⁰ Naturel.

²⁴¹ My translation.

²⁴² Vasgelê.

The justification was based primarily on the Old Testament, and the prescription to Jews in order that their religion not be influenced negatively. Ben Marais maintained (Viljoen Interview 1986) that everyone was Semitic, and that it was therefore not a prescription for race differentiation. He asked about the how the texts were to be made applicable to the situation in Southern Africa, thus a hermeneutic question.

After talking for half an hour, Ben Marais says (Viljoen 1988) that one of the small miracles in his life happened. Ds P.J. Viljoen, minister of the Heidelberg congregation and assessor of the synod seconded his motion. The motion was thereafter accepted by the synod. Ben Marais had been successful in influencing the church's position on Apartheid! But only to avail for a short period. Certain ministers were furious, and they expressed it towards Ben Marais (Viljoen 1988), the rejected report on the Scriptural justification of Apartheid was to be used in the General Elections later that year (Swart Interview 20 January 2003). Two days later, on 13 April, in the evening, the issue was re-addressed in a special hearing of the synod. In the report (*Handelinge van die Sinode 1948*: 446) it is indicated that at this special hearing it was determined that the church's policy of Apartheid is not only born out of circumstances, but has its foundation in the Holy Scriptures. Reference is also made to Ben Marais' original motion and that he once more objected to justifying the policy of Apartheid in Scripture. The special session was attended by virtually all the delegates, but of these, only 10 had it noted that they were at this time not yet convinced to support the negation of the scriptural justification of race Apartheid.

Thus followed a regression of policy. The synod reversed to the 1944 formulation. In his argument, Ben Marais mentioned practical grounds as an alternative substantiation. In Viljoen's interview with him (1986), Ben Marais claims that he did so to keep the discussion open. However, I would rather determine that Ben Marais was of the opinion, in 1948, that Apartheid could be justified on practical grounds. He would later reject also this justification of Apartheid. Quite correctly Ben Marais distinguished (Viljoen 1986) between different services, ministries, for different language groups and separate churches for separate people. The first would be acceptable, the latter not.

A further seed was planted when 13 young ministers signed the document that they were not convinced that Apartheid could be based on Scripture. One of these signatures belonged to Beyers Naudé.

1951: Confirming Scripture's Stance on Apartheid

The arguments proposed during the 1948 synod were refined and expanded and reformulated (*Handelinge 1951:179-192*). The election was won and now the church was setting about substantiating its position as a national church. Thus, new headings appear: "The Word of God our Only Guide" (*Handelinge 1951:179*); "Holy Scripture and International Relations" (*Handelinge 1951:179*); "Scripture and the Unity of Humanity" (*Handelinge 1951:179*); and "Division of Humanity into Races, Nations and Languages a Determined²⁴³ deed of God" (*Handelinge 1951:180-188*). The Next Appendix (F), is a response to a general statement of the United Nations on Human Rights (*Handelinge 1951:189-192*).

1954: Disappointing Notice

In comparison to previous years, the debates on Scriptural Justification received less attention. In the report of the Commission of the Synod for Current Affairs the following notice appears, indicating that the church had received strong criticism from abroad (*Handelinge 1954:313*):²⁴⁴

"2. Scriptural Justification of Race-Apartheid: The commission is sorry that it has not been given an opportunity to comment on the preliminary report of dr Visser't Hooft, in as much as the criticism of last mentioned affects the report on race-apartheid, which was approved by the Synod of 1951."

This announcement is an indication of the response to international criticism on the church's policies, in which a challenging stance is taken, as well as a self-assured attitude. This attitude contributed towards the church's self imposed isolation due to its policies on race. As has been indicated, Visser't Hooft consulted Ben Marais on various issues. Ben Marais would have influenced the report by the General Secretary of the

²⁴³ Doelbewuste.

²⁴⁴ My translation.

World Council of Churches.

1957: Secret Societies

During the 24th Synod of the Ned Herv. or Geref. Kerk, held in 1957, it was recommended that the name of the church change from Ned. Herv. or Geref. Kerk van Suid-Afrika to Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk van Transvaal (NG Kerk of Transvaal), thus signifying an important step in the unification of the different member churches of the Federation of NG Kerke. The report on race relations is finally completed and approved, and the focus now shifts more to the laws of the country (*Handelinge 1957: 487-488*).

In May 1957 a recommendation was made at the Northern Transvaal Synod of the NG Kerk that a ban should be placed on the appointment of freemasons in church positions, because of the secrecy of the organisation. Ben Marais then suggested in a motion of principle that the Synod speak out against all secret societies, as for example also the Broederbond. Ben Marais' motion was not accepted. This synod was considered by him to be one of the lowest points in his life, because it initiated the years of his isolation (Meiring 1979:89).

NG Kerk: Southern Transvaal Synod

1963: Stemming the Critical Voice

Ben Marais reacted sharply in the press against the official decision that no member of the church was allowed to criticise any decisions of the synod, except through the official channels. He claimed the right to criticise because he fell outside the jurisdiction of the South Transvaal synod. This decision affected Beyers Naudé, who was then Moderator of the South Transvaal synod and editor of *Pro Veritate*.

NG Kerk: Northern Transvaal Synod

1970: Racial and Ecumenical Questions

Ben Marais' questions at the Transvaal synod of 1970 contributed towards the formation of the Landman Commission, which was to conduct a comprehensive and in-depth study of racial and ecumenical questions and especially how they affected South Africa and the NG Kerk. Ben Marais was not part of this commission.

iii. World Council of Churches

It can be determined from the correspondence between Ben Marais and the secretaries of the World Council of Churches and from his service on various commissions and study groups of the World Council, that he was well respected. Particular attention is drawn to his speech at the meeting of the World Council of Churches held in Evanston, 1954. This speech served as an introduction to the Report (Commission V) on "The Church and Race". In the speech, Ben Marais presents a survey on the issues that were discussed by the commission. It is presented as a "consensus of opinion of the Commission as a whole and naturally not as the individual opinion of every member of all points" (1954a). From the contents of the survey it is evident that Ben Marais had a remarkable influence on the opinions, and the personal references make the report more sincere. Thus, when stating that it is possible to take the status quo for granted, he qualifies it with a reference to his own experience, which underlies one of the questions this thesis asks about him, and how he came to his insights. He says (1954a):

"When I was a boy in the Great Karoo in South Africa nobody in my vicinity ever questioned social segregation or segregation within the church. It was just accepted as a normal human and Christian relationship. Only in later years when I tried to relate this social heritage to the totality of my Christian thinking, deep doubts and questioning were born in my mind. It was no longer adequate to be told: 'He must be separate because he is black'...."

This insight, indicating that Ben Marais started questioning the status quo of segregated groups in South Africa when he was exposed to greater human and Christian relations (especially Tambaran, 1939). Before elaborating on the arguments proposed by

supporters of segregation in society and church and how these supporters base their policies of segregation on Scripture, and emphasising that it is not exclusively a colour problem, but that “a myriad of ethnic tensions” are involved, and drawing on lessons from the history of the church (brotherhood of believers of many nations), Ben Marais makes a call for repentance, which he repeats in his conclusion. In his call he beseeches (1954a):

“Perhaps we must all come with repentance for an often unchristian and unbrotherly attitude towards fellow Christian groups of another background, colour or race, or a spirit of censure towards and a lack of understanding of the often extremely complicated problems of these groups or churches who follow a course very different from our own. It is just possible that they are not primarily motivated by fear, pride, prejudice and selfishness. There is also a deep need for repentance among churches which profess integration as the Christian ideal, but often fail dismally in making it a reality in their own life and the constitution of their congregations....”

The words of Ben Marais call across the expanse of time. Visser’t Hooft (1979:178-181) draws specific attention to the bridging role Ben Marais played in the relations between the Reformed Churches in South Africa and the World Council of Churches.

He says (Visser’t Hooft (1979:179):

“Ben Marais’ grote bijdrage is juist geweest, dat hij in een land, dat door ligging en historie ertoe geneigd is te weinig aandacht te schenken aan de dynamische stromingen in de wereld, zijn landgenoten opgeroepen heeft om de vensters to openen en te leren wat in de wijde wereld aan het bewegen is. Dat betekent natuurlijk niet een karakterloze aanpassing aan alle mogelijke modestromingen. Maar het betekent wel een leren van die lessen, die de Heer van de Kerk aan andere delen van zijn kerk in onze tijd te leren geeft.”²⁴⁵

Visser’t Hooft then elaborates on three specific lessons that were learnt – the ecumenical, the prophetic and the ethical lessons.

²⁴⁵ “Ben Marais’ greatest contribution was that he, in a country that through location and history and which has a tendency to ignore the dynamic tendencies in the world, called his fellow citizen’s to open the windows and learn what is happening in the greater world. That would not mean a characterless alignment with all possible fashions. But it does mean learning from the lessons of the church, that the Lord of of the Church taught to other parts of his church in our times.”

iv. Student Chaplaincy

In the Ned Herv. or Geref. Kerk Jubilee Commemoration (Keet 1942), Ben Marais made a contribution to the church's ministry under students in South Africa. Most interesting, concerning his style of writing and use of the 1st person singular and plural, is that he refers to himself in the 3rd person (Keet 1942 323). The Commemoration is significant for various reasons. Apart from containing the history of the ministry under students and the nature thereof, and apart from containing contributions by noteworthy churchmen,²⁴⁶ it reflects on a thematic approach to history as well as a chronological approach. The contents also reflect on what the principle concerns of the church were in the early 1940s. The commemoration – history of the church – is divided into 4 sections. The first three pertain to three distinguished periods in the history of the church,²⁴⁷ and the fourth considers various activities of the church. His ministry with the students is the final chapter, and is preceded by chapters on poverty, mission work, education and training, state relations. These chapters have a strong historical orientation.

Thus, the ministry of Ben Marais as chaplain to the students in Transvaal could be seen within the context of the history of the NG Kerk, written from the perspective of the Ned Herv or Geref Kerk. Ben Marais also contributed to the documentation of this history, thus, it also testifies to his written legacy.

In his description of the ministry with students, Ben Marais (Keet 1942:323) mentions the problems faced by students, considering their moral and intellectual life, the development and maturing of personalities, the determination of values, their countless questions on life and insecurities. He also elaborates on the demands of the ministry, determining that it is very different from normal church ministry. It needs to be

²⁴⁶ D.J. Keet preceded Ben Marais as professor of Church History. Further noteworthy names are: W.J. Badenhorst; G.D. Worst; W. Nicol; J.R. Albertyn; J. Reyneke; P.F.D. Weiss; J.H.M. Stofberg; and A.H. Lugtenburg.

²⁴⁷ First period 1842-1892: Wording en Worsteling; Second period 1892-1910: Reorganisasie en groei; Third period 1910-1942: Die kerk sedert die stigting van die Unie.

approached differently, where more time was required for personal contact and discussions groups.

The lack of time for personal contact, was identified by F.D. Moorrees, according to Ben Marais (Keet 1942:322), as a principle motivation for expanding the ministry with students to include more chaplains. F.D. Moorrees was responsible for students in Natal, the Free State and Transvaal. Moorrees thus experienced the same problem Ben Marais experienced when he travelled between Johannesburg, Heidelberg, Potchefstroom and Pretoria.

Ben Marais was also the first permanent chaplain of the church in Transvaal. He was called in September 1937 to replace Ds McDonald, who accepted a call to Cape Town – as Chaplain. Like Ds McDonald, Ben Marais was in service of the synod, and thus his status as minister was not clear. This changed during the Synod of 1940, when it was decided that the Chaplains would be called by congregations – thus giving them status of ministers. At the synod of 1940 it was decided to divide the chaplain responsibilities into two areas, the one being Pretoria and Potchefstroom, and the other Johannesburg and Heidelberg. Ben Marais received a calling to both, but accepted the calling to Pretoria, to Pretoria East congregation. This is interesting, because D.J. Keet was minister of the Pretoria East congregation before becoming professor of Theology, responsible for the history of Christianity, the same congregation W. Nicol, Moderator of the 1940 synod, was a minister, and the same congregation from which the ministry with students was organised.

b. Written Legacy

Ben Marais was a prolific writer, writing for the press, academia, general public, and specialised interest groups. He wrote on various topics. Hofmeyr (1985) asked him about Church History publications and articles, and how he categorised *Colour: Unsolved Problem of the West* – possibly the publication he will be known best for. Ben Marais replied that he did not write much on Church History specifically – possibly due to the late introduction to the subject. He wrote more on Ecumenical relations, apart from *Die Kerk deur die Eeue*, which was not intended to be a Church History. Over his

written legacy, Ben emphasised, on an answer to the same question, that he taught the whole of the Church's History – thus from Early Church through to South African – and Ecumenism.

In an undated (possibly early 1980s?) open letter to the NG Kerk, Ben Marais calls the church to unity and reconciliation, a prominent theme of the late 1990s and early 2000s in the NG Kerk. In his introduction he writes:²⁴⁸

“We, ministers and unordained ministers²⁴⁹ of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk, express it as our conviction that true reconciliation between people and groups is the greatest single need in our country's society. We believe that the Church of Christ in South Africa has a unique role to play in this regard and then (1) by giving clearer manifestation to reconciliation and the unity of the Church, and (2) to practice its prophetic calling regarding society.”

In the open letter, Ben Marais elaborates on the themes of reconciliation and unity and on the prophetic calling of the church. He concludes with several points on the solidarity within the church. On the prophetic calling, Ben Marais wishes to make the church aware that it has a responsibility towards greater society, and not only internally within itself. This awareness of a calling to greater society is characteristic of Ben Marais' own prophetic ministry, here in an open letter, but elsewhere in his monographs and other written work..

i. Monographs

Colour: Unsolved Problem of the West (1952a): the Bomb

The first words of the book are provocative (Marais 1952a:1):

“This book deals with dynamite, because today the colour problem is dynamite.”

“We are entering the storm.”

“Calm wisdom and a sense of reality constitute a *sine qua non* if the future is to bring hope.”

²⁴⁸ My translation.

²⁴⁹ Gelegitimeerdes.

The diverse reaction of the press to the book reflects the impact it had in the NG Kerk and broader community. Sandenbergh (1979:31-46) distinguishes between the reactions of the Afrikaans and English press.²⁵⁰ One English reaction reads (Sandenbergh 1979:32):

“The book ... is an exposure of the ‘myths of race and blood’ and a beacon light for the safeguarding of Christian principles in this time of crisis in multi-racial South Africa.”

In contrast, the reaction of the Afrikaans press was predominantly negative. Sandenbergh (1979:35) draws particular attention to the positive review of Willem van Heerden, which appeared in *Dagbreek en Sondagnuus* (9 November 1952), and the negative review of T. Hanekom (Sandenbergh 1979:36), which appeared in *Die Kerkbode* of 10 December 1952. The review of Hanekom commences with the remark that he does not actually hold an objection against Ben Marais’ point of view²⁵¹ and diverts the attention away from its application to the South African crisis by emphasising its contribution in highlighting the problems in other countries.²⁵² The review then attacks the book on scientific grounds, questioning the methodology used and style of writing. The value of the book is depreciated with the observation that it is not an objective scientific thesis but a personal observation, subjective – “a description of a journey with a theme and an inclination”.²⁵³ The first person narration, characteristic of Ben Marais, is criticised in the strongest terms.

A third review by A.B. du Preez that appeared in the Afrikaans press (*Die Kerkbode* 10 December 1952) is also treated by Sandenbergh (1979:45). This review claims that Ben Marais is unable to draw any feasible conclusions and is uncritical against international tendencies. What is most interesting, is Du Preez’s assertion (Sandenbergh 1979:46):

²⁵⁰ See *Die Transvaler* 18 November 1952; *Die Burger* 25 November 1952; and Bruwer (1953:28-36) for book reviews. See also *Die Voorligter* 16(1) 1953 for E.P. Groenewald’s criticism contrasted against a half page advertisement for the same book; and Coetzee (1953:145-149).

²⁵¹ “Ons wil dit voorop stel dat ons nie juis beswaar het teen dr Marais se standpunt en uiteindelijke slotsom nie.”

²⁵² “Daarin is die betekenis van hierdie boek ook geleë dat dit aan ons die geleentheid gee om te leer by die foute en suksesse van ander lande.”

²⁵³ “... ‘n reisbeskrywing met ‘n tema en ‘n tendens.”

“We would have expected from dr Marais, as a theologian, a principled theological approach of the topic that recognises God as the author of race differences, and therefore not called upon us to delete race differences and national sentiments as if they were evil, but instead he approaches the topic from a purely humanistic point of view based on the authoritarian pronouncements of the science, as if it possesses an absoluteness that the science never can maintain.”²⁵⁴

Sandenbergh (1979:34) reflects on the reasons for this negativity, and uses the narration of Ben Marais (*Beeld* Interview 20 November 1974) to describe the situation. It could be concluded that an asserted effort was made to discredit the book. It can also be asserted that the book was not received favourably by all people, especially since it contended the then popular policies of segregation.

In *Colour: Unsolved Problem of the West* Ben Marais is attempting to warn his readers, South African as well as American and European, against two dangers. The first danger is the attempt to transfer and apply solutions of other countries to the problems in South Africa. The concern here is that the situations between the countries differ. The second danger is that South Africans ignore, or take no notice of the reaction of other countries to the problems in South Africa. This would be done through South Africans adopting the attitude that they can learn nothing from other countries about colour and racial relations, because South Africa’s position differs from that of other countries. While not trying to formulate a standpoint on the issues, he is attempting to be descriptive, thus promoting an understanding of the problems and issues involved.

Colour: Unsolved Problem of the West is about the colour problem central to 20th century South Africa, and considers the colour problems in United States and South America as an orientation to the problems in South Africa. The book wishes to warn against exploitation and discrimination, and Ben Marais (1952a:2) hope with the book is that it:

²⁵⁴ “Ons sou van dr Marais as teoloog ‘n prinsipiële teologiese benadering van die onderwerp verwag het wat veral God as outeur van die rasseverskille erken het, en ons mense daarom nie geroepe sou wees om alle rasseverskille en nasionale gevoelens uit te wis asof dit uit die bouse is nie, maar in plaas daarvan benader hy die onderwerp suiwer humanisties uitgaande van die outoritatiwe uitsprake van die wetenskap, asof dit ‘n absoluutheid besit wat die wetenskap nooit kan hê nie.”

A PROPHET FOR HIS TIMES, BUT FOR OTHERS TOO

“... will play its part in encouraging that healthy, Christian and balanced approach whereby alone we will be enabled to avoid the worst dangers and chaos inherent in the colour problem, and to find a hopeful path for the future for the white as well as for the coloured groups of humanity.”

The book was not intended as a Church History. Certain parts are about the history of Afrikaans churches – especially about the synod of 1857. In Hofmeyr’s interview (1985) Ben Marais maintains that the book was written because he believed that they stood on the eve of a tremendous period of change and renewal. In Meiring’s interview (1979:83) he maintained that he wrote the book, not to provide solutions, but to question the traditional approaches and ease with which people accepted “the status quo in State and Church concerning race relations”. Many old colonial ideas for example on race relations were archaic, and he wished to prepare his reader to reconsider what the Christian message was on race and colour. He hoped that it could possibly make people think.

Dr W. Nicol recommended that Ben Marais should wait six months before publishing the book (see Meiring 1979:83). The book could have influenced his election to become professor. However, Ben Marais did not heed the advice, collecting his manuscript and approaching a publisher the very next day. He became a professor of Theology in spite of the publication of his book.

Ben Marais mentions in an interview (Viljoen 1986) that the book was a bomb that exploded in his face, ironic because of his reference to dynamite in the first few lines (1952a:1). He approached *Die Transvaler*, an Afrikaans daily, to enquire whether they would review it. He was asked: “Does it support Apartheid?” “No,” he replied. “Then we cannot touch it,” came the response (Viljoen 1986). Ben Marais had to have it translated into English to procure positive reaction.

It is interesting to note how Ben Marais integrated literary – library – and document research with interviews, empirical observations, perceptions and own point of view and impressions. He was open to change and influence during his study tour to the Americas, which preceded the publication of the book.

After drawing the historic lines from British colonialism (1952a:4-5) and the rise of nationalism in eastern countries after the second world war, Ben Marais indicates the shift of domination of one people over another. He considers the problem of race and colour a problem of human relations – formulated by him as “the problem of our century with regard to human relations is primarily the problem of race and colour” (1952a:14).

Chapter 2 of *Colour: Unsolved Problem of the West* wishes to end three myths. These myths are: the myth of blood; the myth of race; and the myth of harmful biological results of the crossing of races. Ben Marais openness and sincerity is quite visible where he asks the question (1952a:24): “Is Race a myth?” To which he answers: “There are those who think so”, and adds this footnote:

“I do not regard myself as being one of their number, although much that has been said and believed about ‘race’ rests purely on nonsense and myth.”

The above expressed openness and sincerity is coupled with very detailed historic research and a condensed style of argument in which he offers various voices the opportunity to express their point of view. He draws the lines of history of modern racial history in much the same fashion as he did in his two M.A. dissertations and Ph.D. in Philosophy. He considers (1952a:24) Arthur de Gobineàu as the first to develop a history of modern racial history. De Gobineàu was followed by H.S. Chamberlain in Germany and Madison Grant and Lothrop Stoddart in the United States of America. These people were significant in contributing to race orientated ideologies in their respective countries in the years preceding the Second World War.

In *Colour: Unsolved Problem of the West*, Ben Marais shows an artistic flair, where he makes use of a pun within a metaphor (1952a:32):

“History resembles a horse race. The present backwardness of a race gives no indication of its real powers. In the long race of history one race is leading at one stage, another at another. The race is far from ended, and the position of the different participants will change repeatedly ... And although leadership changed, there was nevertheless an unbroken continuity in our civilization.”

In the above metaphor he is comparing history to a horse race. As a horse race has different stages, so also history. The horses are metaphorical representations of different groups of people. As different horses have different strengths, so different groups of people have different strengths, and some may feature at different times of the race. The pun is on the word “race” – literally indicating the competition between the horses in the one instance and the different types of horses in another. A subservient commentary on the nature of humans is made, in which their behaviour is compared to that of horses. The horse play with words illustrates the futility of leadership trying to control history.

The reference to history indicates a linear orientation, and is thematically conditioned to the continuance of civilisation without categorising it in any models of rise and fall, or growth and development. Though, the metaphor employed was not utilised to this purpose. An indication is given into Ben Marais’ historiographical orientation, where he uses metaphorical language to communicate his ideas.

In *Colour: Unsolved Problem of the West*, Ben Marais does not withhold either his opinion or his sentiment, stating (1952a:41) his reserves on blood mixing and race mixing, mentioning his motives for such being divergence in colour, background, civilisation and culture.

The greater parts of the book deal with the United States of America and South America, especially Brazil. He considers (1952a:71) segregation in the USA, providing a historic background and indicating the broad patterns of segregation. He focuses on the development of the slaves where they developed into fellow citizens, considering differentiation in education and the justification of the system and of discrimination. He discusses (1952a:97) the three options, segregation, integration, and amalgamation, before considering the “American Negro and Church” in Chapter 4. He develops his argument further in Chapter 5 (1952a:146) in which he looks at the then present state of affairs concerning colour and the American churches. In Chapter 6 (1952a:227) he discusses the reaction and progress of black Americans up to 1951. He then changes the focus, concentrating on “the Negro in Brazil” (1952a:254) in Chapters 7 and 8.

The focus in Chapter 9 (1952a:285) falls on the issues more affecting the church and people in South Africa. The chapter deals with racial segregation in the Bible and in the history of the Christian church.

Following his approach to history, Ben Marais starts his analysis of the colour problem and the church in South Africa with the early church, thus the source from which flowed the NG Kerk. He combines a reading from Scripture with readings from the Church Historian, Eusebius of Caesarea (1952a:285) and contemporary historians – Lataurette (1952:285). Ben Marais (1952a:285) reasons that even though the Christian church had members from different nations, races and even colours since its institution, the general principles of brotherhood always transcended the differences in race. He compares the NG Kerk attitude to that of the early church. This is to illustrate how far removed the church was from its orientating principles when he states that distinction on the basis of race or country is not written in the Bible. Furthermore, segregation is not a scriptural demand, nor is it found in the early or later church, “in the sense in which we understand it today” (1952a:285). Thus the problem of interpretation, of hermeneutics, of Scripture is approached through careful historical differentiation by Ben Marais. On a consideration of what the rightful grounds for exclusion and inclusion of members in to the early and New testament church were, Ben Marais, under influence of Bainton (Marais 1952a:286) maintains that the only qualification for admission or refusal in the church was faith.

The idea of a race or colour orientated church was a eighteenth century phenomenon, and Ben Marais traces this history in detail, indicating its roots in American slavery, and comparing to the situation in South Africa, where the colour question only became prominent in the 19th century, due to different reasons.

At the time of writing, Ben Marais (1952a:292) maintained that it were possible to justify segregation in the church on practical grounds only, and not on Scripture. He emphasised (1952a:293) that it was not racial apartness that was emphasised in the Bible, but apartness of sin. Believers were not to mix with unbelievers. He considers the differentiation spoken about in the Bible in terms of religious differentiation, and argues

his point in detail.

In conclusion, before his two annexes, Ben Marais (1952a:298) brings the debate on Scripture, the history of the church and segregation to an end with a reference to the principle which governs his theological thinking, that of Christian brotherhood.

The two annexes (Chapter 10 & 11) are crucial to the compilation of the book, to his argument and also indicative of the influences on his thinking and the legacy of his thought.

Chapter 10 (1952a:30) contains the opinions of 13 well known church leaders from across the world. Ben Marais had posed 8 questions to 20 leaders and theologians from primarily the Calvinistic tradition. A few of the recipients were Lutherans. The respondents Ben named in the chapter are: G. Brillenburg Wurth (Kampen); J. Blouw (Dutch Missionary Board); K. Barth (Basle); E. Brunner (Zurich); F.J. Leenhardt (Geneve); J.H. Bavinck (Amsterdam); H. Berkhof (Driebergen); D. Bouma; W. Vischer (Montpellier); B. van der Sprenkel (Utrecht); N. Dahl (Oslo); S. Zwemer (Princeton); and K. Hartenstein (German mission leader).

The questions reveal Ben Marais thinking on the use and application of Scripture, the church and the colour problem. His main source for the formulation of the questions came from topical issues at synods and that which he had picked up in correspondence columns. Unfortunately Ben Marais did not comment on the responses, which he presented unaltered (1952a:300-319).

As a conclusion to the book, Ben Marais (1952a:300-325) formulated 44 theses which reveal a sensitivity to the colour problems and the parties involved, while also containing a strong prophetic voice.

The publication of the book influenced the election of the chair for the History of Christianity at the University of Pretoria. There were two strong candidates, Hanekom and Marais. The election was organised. There were 37 voters. Ben Marais won by one

vote, because an old classmate could not vote against him. Personal sentiment prevailed over ideological differences!

The Two Faces of Africa (1964b): The Reactor

The book consists out of four sections, their headings indicating clearly what the book is about: a prophetic orientation on problems and prospects – especially those of South Africa, concerning religion and ideology, as affecting the continent's past present and future. The four sections are: "Which road South Africa?"; "The Two faces of Africa"; "Africa: A cross road of religion and ideology"; and "The church in Africa: its history, problems and prospects".

The book expresses a specific orientation to history, where Ben Marais (1964b:3-4) states that it is "an age of universal history", indicating that he is considering the localised events and history in South Africa against a broader orientation, and he also mentions that it is a "chain of revolutions", thus indicating that he sees a common theme within his periodised 20th century. Ben Marais claimed (1964b:4) that the history of the world had become history, implying that no events could be considered in total isolation. Thus he was able to maintain (Marais 1964b:4):

"The representatives of East and West, of Asia, Africa, Europe and the Americas are irrevocably linked in combined planning. The great barriers of thousands of years have been breached; strong and weak nations, the rich and the poor, the historically dominating as well as the subordinate groups have all been thrown together. They have become part of one world and their histories have become part of a single history."

The history of the problems on ideology, nationalism and religion are related to his own experiences and the history of the regions he grew up in (Marais 1964b:7):

"When I was a child in the Great Karoo in the heyday of colonialism in Africa hardly any questions were ever asked about matters of race or subject races. The Good God had set the patterns and ordained the white man boss. Then slowly through two world wars there was the dawn of a new day. The problem of races, of subject peoples or minorities, suddenly moved to the centre of the world's interest. It is occupying the minds of Africans to such an extent today that what happens in connection with the solution of America's race problem is of far more consequence to the African mind than all the untold millions America pours into Africa."

The race problem in South Africa is considered against the broader history of South Africa (Marais 1963:10), in which the land issues, legal issues and the problems of different peoples having to share the same geographic areas are touched upon. This serves as background to the question of what is understood under Apartheid (Marais 1964b:11) and consideration of the alternative models (Marais 1964b:12-15). In the comparison between Africa and United States, Ben Marais is particular in emphasising the differences between the two countries and the race problems of each (1964b:16). It is also inevitable that he would not have something to say about the threat of communism, interestingly, placing it in the context of Apartheid not fitting into predominantly accepted political thought of the twentieth century (1964b:17):

“Apartheid may not fit into twentieth century patterns; it may in an indirect way play into the hands of the Communists by antagonising all the coloured races of Africa and Asia; it may ultimately not succeed in giving real justice to the majority of Africans; it may within a decade break down completely under the pressures of a new day....”

Ben Marais presents a visionary view on the prospects of the political system, mentioning an actual concern – justice, as well as fears – the antagonised people, and also a fear current to the 1960s – Communism. He also refers to laws and important documents, thus offering credibility to his argument. Thus, the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 serves as orientation to the position of the hereditary tribal chiefs that benefited under the Apartheid regime (1964b:21). Further, he indicates his knowledge of the documents, their implications and how they were treated. For example, the Tomlinson Report of 1954, “the work of a strong and able commission appointed by the government for advice in the field of black-white relations in the socio-economic field” (1964b:22). Ben Marais indicates that even though the recommendations of this document were not accepted during the 1950s, it became the cornerstone of the implementation of separate development during the 1960s (1964b:22). Other important laws referred to are the Bantu Education Act of 1954; the Group Areas Act (1950) – which was considered to be “fully in accord with the strengthening of rural and tribal ties” (1964b:26); the Suppression of Communism Act of 1950; and the General Law Amendment Bill of 1963 – which allowed for a 90 day detention without trial (1964b:27).

The problem with Apartheid, it would appear from Ben Marais analysis, which is fully substantiated with statistical support, is in the urbanisation of people and the controlling thereof (1964b:26): “Of course the urban African is the real problem in terms of Apartheid or separate development.” Therefore, the pass books were required, and the strict access and residential controls. Ben Marais thus indicates that he has command of his subject and is in a position to make pronouncements, draw comparisons, and determine influences, the current state and make predictions on possible future scenarios.

It is also evident in the argument that Ben Marais had, at the time of writing (1963) not rejected the policy of Apartheid. In answer to the acceptability of the policy on Separate Development, he writes (1964b:31) that he “cannot raise moral or religious objection to separate development on the basis of territorial separation as such.” He substantiates his point of view by referring to Palestine, Ireland, India and Pakistan. He discusses the acceptability of the policy of Apartheid, asking, “How do Africans feel about it?” Thus indicating that his sensitivity towards reasoning without ideological bias. The factors favouring Apartheid (1964b:34) and the factors against Apartheid (1964b:42) are presented in factual fashion without any preferences being indicated. So also the treatment of alternatives to Separate Development (1964b:51) and alternative policies of the different political parties (1964b:57-66).

Ben Marais asks (1964b:62) whether the white electorate could consider any of these alternatives, and stresses “to what degree the possibility of making separate development a workable hypothesis poses a very real moral problem” (1964b:66). He argues emphatically (1964b:66):

“... if we are convinced that millions of Africans, for instance, are among us to stay, and many were born here, the question arises; may we still condone blatant discriminatory measures like job reservation on the strength of a political philosophy that, in terms of actual trends shows no possibility of being realised?”

To this question, in argument, he provides a prophetic answer, which – interestingly –

emphasises a topical issue of 2002: the question of land redistribution.²⁵⁵ While indicating his understanding of topical issues of the post 1948 era, in which positions were reserved for particular people who exhibited the correct hereditary, political and cultural traits, he reasons (1964b:66):

“According to all present indications the non-whites will form a permanent majority in our midst, if there is not to be a radical redistribution of land – which the government categorically rejects. May we, in the light of these facts continue to condone discriminatory legislation like job reservation? If we are at once convinced on the strength of actual facts and trends that the non-whites will form a permanent majority of the population of so-called ‘white South Africa’ does it not become immoral to continue supporting certain steps or legislation based on a philosophy which clearly promises more than it can deliver?”

Ben Marais did not consider himself a prophet, rather his words are considered retrospectively, and his clear understanding of the situation, his analysis of the various aspects and his holistic – historic – grasp and foresight are seen to be those of a prophet.

He concludes his first part, “Which road South Africa”, with a general orientation so that the reader can know how the book’s argument is developing (1964b:68), showing that he is in control of his content and aware of the reader. He has a particular audience. This is done in the midst of prophetic words (1964b:68):

“I have touched on some aspects of the most complicated racial situation on earth. I have discussed some of the basic problems, trends and prospects of present-day South Africa. I am convinced that if and when South Africa finds a key to the solution of its problems that key will be transformed into a beacon of light for all of Southern Africa and for many other difficult human situations as well. Though I see vast storms gathering against our fair republic and I am deeply aware that fundamental adjustments will have to be made, I have solid faith in the future of South Africa and in that bitter day that is in store for all its peoples.”

Part 2 of *The Two Faces of Africa*, under the same heading as the title of the book, builds on the critical and statistically argued analysis of the political situation principally in South Africa in the early 1960s. In this sense, though he does regard other countries in Africa, the predominant focus on South Africa, disqualifies the book as a

²⁵⁵ See also Marais (1964b:72) on nationalism, land exploitation, expropriation of property in various African States.

reasonable account for the continent Africa as such. The considerations, though, and trends Ben Marais presents in Part 2, as a result of his study tour through Africa and his discussions with heads of state and government officials in the African countries he visited, contribute to his encasement of the South African social situation.

Ben Marais introduces and concludes Part 2 with a historiographical considerations. He commences: “One cannot be too dogmatic about the future of Africa. One must always reckon with the imponderables of history” (1964b:71). Apart from relating past and future, it can be seen that Ben Marais is hesitant, in his approach, to draw ideologically loaded conclusions. Rather, he wishes to present perspectives, as can be seen in the title of the book. He explains the title, considering the one face, the one perspective on Africa, as idealised – the bright side; the other perspective, the other face of Africa, as disillusioned – the dark side. Scepticism and optimism are both contained within the same reasoning (1964b:74).

In the conclusion of Part 2, Ben Marais regards the patterns of history where he wishes to compare also the situations in India (1940s) and South Africa (1960s), and personifies history as an observer – judge – of events and also as a role player (1964b:101):

“Now history is the judge and its verdict on India is, on the whole rather favourable in spite of the almost insoluble problems inherited by that country. The next five years in Africa may be very unsettled and even dangerous until new patterns take solid shape. After that may history once again confound the pessimists.”

In the build up to this optimistic conclusion, Ben Marais gives an empirically orientated treatment of selected features which constitute the two sides of the African picture (1964b:81-88). Consideration is given to: Living standards (1964b:85); Foreign Aid (1964b:88-91); African Socialism (1964b:91-93); Employment (1964b:93-94); Africanisation (1964b:94-97); Education (1964b:97-98); the danger of self aggrandisement and the new upper class (1964b:98-99); and, Pan Africanism versus Tribalism (1964b:99-100).

Most interesting is Ben Marais treatment of nationalism, where he considers

Africanisation as part of African Nationalism, on the one hand (1964b:94), and Pan Africanism as contrasting to tribalism on the other (1964b:99). The relations between tribalism and nationalism are explored more fully in Part 3 (1964b:110). A contributing factor to the tensions in Africa is that colonial borders cut across tribal groupings, and thus Ben Marais perceived anti-colonialism to identify strongly with the promotion of the unity of Africans.

While Part 2 draws far more on his travels through the African continent, it is very evident in his formulations that he maintains an affinity towards “Western” civilisation – equated to that which opposes communism (1964b:100). Africa is seen to be a buffer in the war between East and West (1964b:100):

“It seems to me that to us Westerners there is only one possible approach: We must accept African nationalism. We may try to guide it in different ways, but we should not refuse to recognise it or co-operate with it. To take a hostile or unfriendly attitude towards African nationalism could lead to only one result – the total alienation of Africa from the West and the handing over of this continent to the Communists.

If Africa goes communist, the world goes communist. It is the Great Power line-up between East and West.”

The concern for communism is predominant throughout the book.²⁵⁶ The introduction to Part 3 is no exception (1964b:103), in which Islam joins Communism, Tribalism and other ideological “threats” to Africa. Part 3 is aptly titled “Africa: a crossroad of religion and ideology”.

The influences of Shillito’s *Nationalism: Man’s Other Religion*, while being evident throughout *The Two Faces of Africa*, is particularly transparent in the Part 3 of *The Two Faces of Africa*.²⁵⁷ This pertains particularly to the consideration of Christianity’s “competition”, Islam and Communism (1964b:104 & 107). An aspect that Ben Marais adds though, indicating that he gave much consideration to the subject, is the addition of African religions and paganism (1964b:105 & 107) to the threats to Christianity in Africa. Paganism is related to tribalism, which is not to be confused with nationalism (1964b:110). Ben Marais draws particular attention to the prevailing confusions

²⁵⁶ See especially Marais (1964) 117-134.

²⁵⁷ See Shillito (1933).

between nationalism and tribalism and the tensions between them (1964b:111):

“In every country in Africa some sort of tension is working up between tribalism and nationalism. Nationalism is the modern trend. Where the tribal loyalties become loose or obsolete, nationalism flourishes. Nationalism epitomises the new African’s desire to rediscover his dignity by projecting himself into the modern world. And in this process he must shed his rustic traditions and seize the alien instruments of Western culture ... Nation or race becomes a substitute for the tribe and the security he was assured as a member of his tribe, and which he loses in the process of individualisation which is taking place all over Africa. Into this vacuum, caused by the falling away of the collective security he experienced as member of the tribe, the race or nation moves in.”

Ben Marais understands the development of nationalism in Africa in sociological terms. Though, he is also apt at indicating the role Christianity played in developing African Nationalism: “Its stress on the inestimable value of every human soul and the brotherhood of all believers stimulated the African’s dream of equality” (1964b:112).

The discussion on tribalism Pan-Africanism (1964b: 112-117) leads on to a detailed excursion on the impact of communism on Africa (1964b:117-134). While Communism is seen as a movement that wishes to control the continent, the reasons for its successes and failures are explored, and the reason it poses such a threat to Christianity and the continent are elaborated upon.

Part 4, “The church in Africa: its history, problems and prospects”, at first glance could appear to be an addendum to a contemporaneous sociology book, but in matter of fact, the first three chapters are background to, and preparation for the fourth part. Where Ben Marais was in command of the subject and information conveyed in his arguments in the first three parts, he is most at home in part 4. His referencing becomes more precise, as does his formulations.

Ben Marais’ historical orientation, evident in his dissertations and thesis, is the first indication that the fourth part is to be distinguished from the foregoing. He commences (1964b:135):

“In spite of vital setbacks the church in Africa has a history of almost unequalled fascination, though tragedy has consistently dodged its steps”

Ben Marais traces the history of the church in Africa, mentioning also Christ's visit to Egypt, thus incorporating the New Testament also in his church history framework. He then relates the origin of separate nations to the early church. He considers the arguments of different church fathers, for example, those of Justine (1964b:138).

Justine is regarded where he considers the relations between nations, where the belief existed that God had fixed the boundaries of the separate nations according to the numbers of his angels. Ben Marais indicates how religion, Christian doctrine, was adapted to explain the phenomena of different nations in the *Apology* of Justine (1964b:138). In this illustration it is told how God made heaven and earth and assigned the things of earth to man, and appointed the angels to rule over man, emphasising the faithless angels who through their acts brought about confusion and sin, which led to different nations. Most important though, besides the different theories Ben Marais treats (1964b:139), is his assertion that the Christians described themselves as people who had forsaken the ancestral customs. Especially Origen is referred to, and his Africanhood is emphasised (1964b:139-141). Ben Marais continues to present a general history of the church of Africa (1964b:138-181), which expounds in his treatment of what he considers to be the most pressing problems of the church in Africa, which were discernible at the "All Africa Church Conference" that met in Kampala in 1963 (1964b:181). These are (1964b:181): the need for unity; the need for a better trained African ministry; African nationalism; the growing power of Islam; and, the threat of communism. The remainder of the book is devoted to a short treatment of these problems (1964b:181-205).

It is evident from the book that it is intended for an intellectually orientated church readership, principally international. The fact that it was published only in English should not deter from the fact that the book was written also to invoke reaction from his fellow NG Kerk theologians. In this sense, his statistical references and elaborate sociological treatment would emphasise his considering his colleagues to be narrow and self minded. It was thus that when Ds J.S. Gericke represented the NG Kerk at the international court in Den Haag (September 1965), and the books and other writings of Ben Marais and B.B. Keet were referred to during his questioning, he answered that the

NG Kerk did not share their points of view.

The book reviews of *The Two Faces of Africa* were predominantly English, and are considerably favourable, in contrast to the mixed reception *Colour: Unsolved Problem of the West* received a decade earlier. The review by Anthony Delius in his column in *The Cape Times* (15 June 1964) is interesting for the integration of his own criticism against the government's policies into his appraisal of Ben Marais:

“Public speakers in South Africa, whether on the platform, in Parliament, or over the air, hardly ever mention the word Africa without immediately associating it with ‘chaos’.

In this way we are doing to Africa, and its three dozen newly independent states, what both Government and Opposition claim the rest of the world is doing to South Africa – showing only its worst and gloomily sensational side.

It is difficult for the average citizen, who hasn't the time to read the voluminous reports on both sides of the question, to make his way through this welter of confusion and counter-confusion to something nearer reality. But now a short-cut to sanity in this subject is offered by the restless and farsighted Dr Ben Marais, who holds the chair of History of Christianity at Pretoria University.”

Due to his balanced approach, Ben Marais did not make himself available as a spokes person for either political parties or interest groups.²⁵⁸

***Die Kerk deur die Eeue:*²⁵⁹ Battles of the Ages**

In the foreword, Ben Marais (1959a) states:

“What follows is *not* a Church History, but merely a few basic discussions on the great hours of the church, in its life and especially in its battles through the centuries. It wishes to do no more than to open a few windows, through which readers would be able to see something of the clouds and darkness, which the Christian church experienced on its long road, and of the changing nature of its battles. It is intentionally not chronological.”

²⁵⁸ See also, *Sunday Chronicle*, 21 June 1964; *The Cape Argus* 11 June 1964; *The Star*, 10 June 1964; *The Southern Cross*, 17 June 1964; *The Sunday Tribune*, 18 June 1964; *The Natal Mercury*, 25 June 1964; *Zionist Record and S.A. Jewish Chronicle*, 10 July 1964; *Jewish Affairs*, October 1964; and *Pretoria News*, 13 August 1964. Compare to his contribution in Hanekom (1952:304-341), titled “Die Kruis Onder die Suiderkruis: Die Sendingaksie van Ons Kerk” (The Cross under the Southern Cross: The Mission Movement of Our Church), which concludes with a call (Hanekom 1952:341; my translation): “Let us do more than yesterday and the day before, and in the midst of upcoming storms approach our duties and calling more purposefully than in the past. There will be many battles on the road, also disappointments....”

²⁵⁹ The church through the ages.

The book is divided into four parts, the first three considering various battles, and the fourth considering “New Routes”, mission movements and the church’s pursuit for unity (ecumenism). The first set of battles, part 1, considers the exterior battles (Die stryd na buite), while the 2nd part looks at the internal battles (Die stryd na binne). The 3rd part concentrates on the reformation, on “key moments in the battle”, then considering Martin Luther, Calvin and the execution of Michael Servetus, and the tragedy of Bernardino Ochino. This study is particularly interested in Ben Marais writing on Bernardino Ochino (1959a:116-124), because it appears that Ben Marais found a persona in whom he saw a reflection of his own turmoil.

In the 1st part, various threats against the church are considered: the Graeco-Roman heathendom; the Eastern mystery religions Islam (and the crusades against Islam); the ancient – established – religions of the East; Communism; and Secularism of the 21st century.

The 2nd part considers: the Arian controversy; monasticism; the Spanish Inquisition; Modernism; and the danger of religious freedom.²⁶⁰ The book shows how Ben Marais is orientated towards threats. In the letters to the secretaries of the World Council of Churches these threats are formulated in observably passionate terms. It is therefore possible to determine that Ben Marais was most sincere in his concerns on Islam and Communism in his letters to Blake (1970) and Potter (1978?).

The Inspirational

There is little semblance between his letters to the secretaries of the World Council of Churches and his devotional inspirational, collections of prayers and short messages, and recollections from his past, prepared for the general public. *’n Groet op die Pad* (1952a), and *Wit Huise van Herinnering* (1964c), like the numerous inspirational contributions in the newspapers and magazines (see Appendix), appear to be written by a different person. There is a similarity in style, the writing in the 1st person, but because the material is different and the intention with the writing is different, it is difficult to

²⁶⁰ Die Hedendaagse Gevaar van Godsdienstige Gelykskaking.

draw direct comparisons. It could be argued that Ben Marais could have used the Inspirational medium to promote his views on the justification of the Mission Policy and Apartheid on Scripture and his concerns over the World Council of Churches supporting the banned political organizations. Due to his not using this medium to pursue these topics it needs to be asked why he did not. In similar fashion to his not discussing political issues as part of his lesson programmes, and as he did not use the pulpit to discredit alternative points of view (e.g. J.D. Vorster), nor did he use devotional literature to promote his views. Through the inspirational literature, however, a picture of a very devout person can be drawn. His sincerity is greatly in evidence. The difference between his polemic writing and objections raised at official church meetings and communications with the World Council of Churches and his inspirational works, reflects upon the difference between his objections against the misappropriated justification of Apartheid on Scripture and his objections against the, in his view, inconceivable support for organizations against Apartheid, on the one hand, and his call for church unity and reconciliation and the resolvment, through dialogue, of the racial tensions in church and society.

3. DURING THE FIRST PERIOD OF TRANSFORMATION

In his extensive treatment on the NG Kerk and Apartheid, Kinghorn (1986:115) mentions two means in which the criticism of Ben Marais influenced the church. He was firstly successful in revealing the unacceptability of the use of Scripture by church exegetes to justify Apartheid. Though, the exponents of Apartheid turned around and superseded his protests by turning to more doctrinal issues. Secondly, his criticism contributed towards attention being focused on the church and on church structures.

4. IN THE SHADOW OF THE SECOND PERIOD OF TRANSFORMATION

The inherent flaws within the periodisation model used for this study, Rise and Fall, is quite apparent. The transformation process is not a closed circuit. Furthermore, within the history of South Africa it is not yet complete. The transformation process thus has a futuristic dimension, which will be reperiodised in future. The roots of this transformation process rests in the middle of the 20th century, which in turn rests on events in the 19th century.

According to Ben Marais, expressed in 1986 (Viljoen Interview 1986) the important questions that would need to be answered in future are:

1. The question of forgiveness. The problem he identifies is that people will have difficulty in acknowledging that they had made a mistake.
2. The question of principles. Ben Marais, living in the world of the church, considers the church as the people of God. This consideration predominates his thoughts on the subject.
3. Thus, on considering social issues, and on the relation between principles and reality, he argues from Scripture. The example he uses (Viljoen 1986) is the relation between the slave and free person in St Paul's writings. He mentions that St Paul had a sensitivity for the reality when he writes that the slave owner should accept the slave as his brother, while the ideal would be that there be no distinction between the free and the slave. Ben Marais encourages that the dynamic history of a people be kept in mind, and that there is often a tension between the practical and theoretical.
4. The fourth question is on the place and influence of Scripture in Society. This is a most important factor to Ben Marais, which, it appears, he makes applicable to people of all confessions and religious affiliations. Ben Marais maintains that it is necessary to argue from Scripture in order to effect a shift in people.

5. APPRECIATION FOR BEN MARAIS

The appreciation expressed towards Ben Marais by his peers for his various contributions are well illustrated in the honorary doctorates he received, and in the letters of condolence received by his widow.

a. The Honorary Doctorates

Ben Marais received several honorary doctorates, D.Th. (University of South Africa) 1978, LL.D (Witwatersrand) 1983, D.Phil (Stellenbosch), and D.D. (University of Pretoria) 1988.

The University of South Africa, 1979

On 16 May 1979 Ben Marais received a honorary doctorate in Theology at Unisa. In the *Commendatio Unisa* (1979), the following motivation was given, which exemplifies his role as teacher, ecumenical theologian and prophet:

“More than any other theologian in this country, he endeavoured to make the church and his students aware of their Africa context, but also that the Body of Christ is not restricted to the Republic, to Africa, Europe or whatever country or continent. He is a creative theologian who aimed high and made his students conscious of the times in which they live, the need for the church in the world and their task as theologians across all borders. As an ecumenical theologian he has no comparison at home. There is no other professor of theology who endeavoured with so much courage during his academic career to allow the Word of God to follow its course in a time when politics and ideology threatened to impair thoughts. In many respects, like the caller in the desert, he was in front of his time, but this he was in conviction, and it was his privilege to see the desert flower.”

b. The funeral letters

The funeral letters, addressed to Mrs Sibs Marais are comparable (contrasting) to the hate letters and phone calls which they had received during the 1960s.

The funeral was held on Monday, 1 February 1999 in the Pretoria East Congregation of the NG Kerk. The church was filled to capacity and extra chairs had to be carried in: old students, friends, old colleagues, family, and some curious.

There were no condolences offered from the World Council of Churches. Neither were there any words of comfort from the president's office. However, there were numerous personal letters, and a few significant messages from synods and student groups. It would appear that students appreciated Ben Marais far more than either the international or national academia or race-relations politicians. The following letter and attachment were received from Sonop Residence (My translation):

Sonop Council, University of Pretoria, 26 February 1999

26 February

“Dear Tannie Sibis

The following motion of grief was unanimously accepted by the members of the Sonop Council on a meeting of the Sonop Council, held on 18 February 1999.

Kind regards
(signed)
Avrille Prinsloo
(Secretary)

Motion of grief

Prof. B.J. Marais 26 April 1909 – 27 January 1999

It is with great sorrow that the Sonop Council takes note of the death of Prof. Ben Marais, in life a former chairman of the Sonop Council. With right, Prof Ben is considered the father of Sonop. We thank the Lord for the life of Prof. Ben who positively affected the development of so many Sonopians with goal-orientated leadership and compassionate service.

Prof J.J. de Beer
Chairperson: Sonop Council
18/02/1999”

A letter along a far more formal and removed vein, also in Afrikaans, was received from the House Committee of Wilgenhof House, University of Stellenbosch. Most interesting, is the fact that Ben Marais had kept contact with his old residence in Stellenbosch (My translation):

From Wilgenhof House Committee, University of Stellenbosch, 11 February 1999

“11 February 1999
Dear Mrs S. Marais

On behalf of Wilgenhof I wish to convey our innermost sympathy on the passing away of your husband, Prof. Ben Marais.

Prof. Ben Marais will not only be remembered as a former Student Council chairperson, but also as someone who showed his devoted loyalty by being involved in the fund collection for the rebuilding of Wilgenhof in 1963. This project, which was considered impossible by outsiders, was the determining

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factor of Wilgenhof considering an amount of £15 000 had to be collected. Due to this special effort, Wilgenhof could commemorate its 95 years of existence. We plan to dedicate a special spot to Prof. Ben Marais in the archives, and would appreciate any memorabilia that would contribute towards this project.

Prof. Marais will always live in our memories. May the Lord be with you in these days.

Greetings

(signed)
J.M. Erasmus
Secretary”

From The Club of Old Student Council Chairmen, 28 January 1999

A third letter need not be quoted in full, but mention must be made that it emphasises the fact that Ben Marais’ world was orientated towards the world of students. The letter from the Club of Old Student Council Chairmen, in Afrikaans, places particular emphasis on how highly esteemed the person Ben Marais was, being the honorary president of the club – a remarkable achievement.

From the Office of the General Synod, NG Kerk, 29 January 1999

A letter of condolence was received from the Office of the General Synod of the NG Kerk. Ben Marais is described in the letter as one of the “Great men”²⁶¹ of the NG Kerk. Mention is made of his love for church history, the fact that he was a fearless and unmoveable fighter and a pioneer with vision, that he was a loyal churchman, further that he had a childlike faith in God and that he followed an exemplary Christian lifestyle.

Many more letters were received, all emphasising different aspects about Ben Marais. No hate mail was received, nor messages of ill-wishes.

²⁶¹ Groot manne.

6. HERALDING THE RAINBOW AFTER THE STORMS: DESMOND TUTU

There were far more than three prophets in South Africa in the twentieth century. Mention could be made of Albert Luthuli, Trevor Hudleston, Beyers Naudé and Desmond Tutu. Where Beyers Naudé could be considered because of his close affinity, yet distant sentiment to Ben Marais, Desmond Tutu is considered because he comes from a different time frame, and also quite a different socio-political environment.

Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Mpilo Tutu was honoured in 2002 at the University of Pretoria with a honorary doctorate in Divinity. In the argument he is remembered gratefully for his vast contribution to the church, academia, civil society and international politics.²⁶²

“Desmond Tutu was born in Klerksdorp in 1931, the son of a school teacher and a domestic worker. After matriculating from the Johannesburg Bantu High School, he enrolled for a teacher’s diploma at the Pretoria Bantu Normal College. He studied for his Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of South Africa. Thereafter, he taught at the Johannesburg Bantu High School as well as at the Munsieville High School, Krugersdorp.

In 1958, following the introduction of Bantu education, Desmond Tutu decided to enter the ministry in the Church of the Province of Southern Africa and became an ordinance at St Peter’s Theological College, Rosettenville. He received his Licence in Theology in 1960 and was ordained in 1961. Shortly afterwards, he went to study at the University of London where he obtained the Bachelor of Divinity Honours and Master of Theology degrees. In 1967 he returned to South Africa to join the staff of the Federal Theological Seminary at Fort Hare. In 1970 he was appointed lecturer in the Department of Theology at the University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. After a further spell in England as associate director of the Theological Education Fund of the World Council of Churches, and as Dean of St Mary’s Cathedral, Johannesburg, Desmond Tutu was elected Bishop of Lesotho (1975). By this time South Africa was in turmoil, finding itself in the wake of the Soweto uprising of 1976. Bishop Tutu was persuaded to leave the Diocese of Lesotho to become the General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches (SACC). Desmond Tutu became a national and international figure while holding this position (1978-1985).

Under the leadership of Desmond Tutu, the SACC developed into an important institution in the nation’s spiritual and political life, voicing the ideals and aspirations of millions of South African Christians, and effectively providing help to victims of Apartheid. Desmond Tutu was often embroiled in controversy as he spoke out against the injustices of the

²⁶² For more detail on Desmond Tutu see Allen’s *The Essential Desmond Tutu* (1997) and Tutu’s *The Rainbow People of God* (1995).

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Apartheid system -- inevitably so, because by this time his voice had become synonymous with the crusade for justice and racial conciliation in South Africa. In 1984 his contribution to the cause of justice and reconciliation in South Africa was recognised when he received the Nobel Peace Prize. In 1985 Desmond Tutu was elected Bishop of Johannesburg, and in 1986 Archbishop of Cape Town. In 1987 he became President of the All Africa Conference of Churches, the same year he was also elected Fellow of Kings College, London, as well as Chancellor of the University of the Western Cape.

In 1995 President Nelson Mandela appointed Archbishop Tutu to chair South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, arguably his greatest challenge, recognising his moral leadership, his advocacy of social justice as well the role he played in terms of peace and reconciliation.

Archbishop Tutu is recipient of no less than 98 honorary degrees, holding fifty *honoris causa* doctorates, inter alia from the universities of Harvard, Oxford, Cambridge, Columbia, Emory, Aberdeen, Sydney, Fribourg, Cape Town, Witwatersrand and the University of South Africa. Over the years Desmond Tutu has written a number of books, chapters in books, and scholarly articles in many local and international magazines. The Association of Theological booksellers of the U.S.A. honoured his latest book, *No Future without Forgiveness* (1999), with the Book of the Year Award. Conversely, Tutu himself – regarding his person, his contribution to the ecumenical community as well as to society, his theology and especially his sermons – has been the object of numerous books and scholarly studies.”

It is particularly difficult to draw comparisons between Ben Marais and Desmond Tutu. It is important to mention though, that Ben Marais was critical of him for his support for the Programme against Apartheid, promoted by the World Council of Churches. Ben Marais, himself, acknowledges that he did not know him well and was critical towards Beyers Naudé for associating with him (Ope brief aan Beyers Naudé 1985b). This criticism must be seen in similar light to Ben Marais' forbearance about the World Council of Churches' Programme to Combat Racism (see correspondence with secretaries of World Council of Churches). Ben Marais was willing, though, to express in a postscript of the manuscript of his open letter to Beyers Naudé his gratitude on hearing that Desmond Tutu renounced violence as a means to bring about change.

7. CONCLUSION: BEN MARAIS THE PROPHET

Possibly the most conclusive testimony to Ben Marais was given by the Press, *Beeld*, on Thursday, 28 January 1999, prior to his funeral on Monday 1 February 1999. The obituary was written by Neels Jackson and was titled; “Ben Marais was an academically brilliant prophet with vision.”²⁶³ He is described as one of the great figures of the NG Kerk who would be remembered as one of the earliest critics against Apartheid, as a well liked person, a prominent theologian, a formidable student chaplain, a significant ecumenical spirit and a loyal member of the church. The article touches upon some of the highlights of his life, mentioning his being chairman of the council of the men’s residence of the University of Pretoria, Sonop, for 26 years, and his involvement in sport, as well as when he first started questioning the church’s policy on race relations in 1934 while he was still a student at Stellenbosch, his public statements against Scriptural justification of Apartheid at the synods of 1940, 1944 and 1948, and his various publications. His years of isolation within the church is also mentioned as also ds Freek Swanepoel’s praise of him at the 1994 General Synod of the NG Kerk, as a “prophet within the walls of the city”.

On the road forward: Ben Marais expressed the wish that everybody in South Africa would be able to say, “This is my land” (Viljoen 1986).

To obtain this dream, the only route, expressed in 1986, was through negotiation. These negotiations were entered, and a relatively peaceful revolution took place in which it was made possible for all people, regardless of race, colour or class to participate in the affairs of the country, and to participate in the Lord’s Supper.

²⁶³ Ben Marais was ‘n akademies briljante profeet met visie.

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Like Bernardino Ochino (Marais 1959a), who was not a “central” figure in the Reformation in Italy, Barend Marais will not be remembered as a “central” figure in the history of South Africa in the 20th century in the struggle against Apartheid. Though, in Afrikaner circles and in the history of the NG Kerk in especially the 1940s to 1980s, Ben Marais played an influential role. The consequences of his influences in drawing attention to the principles of Christianity, faith in God and brotherly love, warning against the abuse of Scripture to justify political ideologies, remaining loyal to the church, and his tolerance of onslaughts against his person, will only be realised in a few generations time.

Where he is overshadowed in early 21st century international reflection on South Africa by such figures as Beyers Naudé and Desmond Tutu, both his juniors, Ben Marais played a significant, though not as flamboyant role in drawing the world’s attention to the imbalances in the country. Rather, he attempted to engage, consistently and continuously in dialogue to resolve the racial tensions. He had many strong qualities, many developed during his formative years.

It has been attempted, throughout this thesis, to present an integrated argument in Church History. Apart from considering a Church Historian, Ben Marais, and how he was influenced and influenced the course of the NG Kerk’s history through his person, faith, scrutiny, criticism hardships and loyalty, the study has paid particular attention to issues raised in the introduction. Reflection on the subject has not been comprehensive, but main themes have been alluded to throughout the study.

A balance has been maintained between chronological portrayals in history – of biography and organisational orientation – and thematic exposition. Concerning the chronological portrayals, it has been indicated that the particular advantages and

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shortcomings of periodisation are grasped and can be used to good effect. Furthermore, through the consideration of Ben Marais' life through his correspondence with the World Council of Churches, while being immediately restrictive, has made it possible to relate, direct and structure a biographic study, and at once to place the life of Ben Marais in the immediate context of international ecumenical relations and mission and in the local South African church, political and social context.

This study has shown that Ben Marais was a prophet of the church. Neither intentionally nor in self acclaim. In the conclusion to this study, the particular questions posed in the introduction will be considered, having been explored from various angles throughout the extent of the foregoing chapters. The hypothesis that helped formulate the line of thought is also tested. Furthermore the approach to the study, the methodological questions and research process has been accounted for, and without being too self critical, particular lessons that were learned were expounded.

Ben Marais made several contributions to Theology in South Africa. He placed a focus on the abuse of Scripture in the substantiation of ideology and political policies. Furthermore, he emphasised the unity of church, the brotherhood of all Christians, and the role of reconciliation, in a time when these characteristics were neglected. The most significant aspect of his contribution to Theology, Church and Society, is his understanding of the prophetic role, individual and broader, towards the church and society, in which he combined vision and insight with situation analysis and study and these with his convictions, his principles, which have been seen to be his deep rooted faith in God and in the power of the Gospel.

1. ANSWERING THE POSED PROBLEM

It has been found that the formulation of a problem and hypothesis has assisted in the structuring of an argument. It has helped in the formulation of a central theme which helped the research to remain focused.

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The following answers can be given to the general questions posed in the Introduction:

- *Why base a study on the life of Ben Marais?*

It has been indicated that a study on the life of Ben Marais and his contributions to the debates on Apartheid is an excellent access to many of the intricate relations between church, political parties, ideologies and faith systems, between localised and international pressure groups and opinion.

- *What happened during the 1930s to 1970s in South African politics and the NG Kerk? How was Ben Marais involved in these events? How did what happened affect him?*

The leadership of the NG Kerk started to play an increasingly significant role in South African politics, directly and indirectly. Ben Marais was a leader in the NG Kerk and objected against the church's sanctioning of ideologically biased policies. Simultaneously, Ben Marais was not an opponent of the supporters of the policies, rather insisting on peaceful negotiations, calling for unity and reconciliation between the various national and race groups. Ben Marais was isolated, but this did not deter him in his insistence on serving truth.

- *Who was Ben Marais? Would it be best to approach a study on his life, by considering him in the categories: churchman; church critic; family man; lecturer; author; radio personality; or ecumenical figure?*

Ben Marais was an Afrikaner, a Church Historian in the NG Kerk, and an ecumenical figure. He played a prominent role in the early debates of the World Council of Churches on Race Relations and played a significant role against the NG Kerk's formulation of a policy supporting racial segregation. It would be possible to approach a study on his life through various channels. There is sufficient primary and secondary source material to make any approach interesting and insightful.

- *There is hardly any documentation on Ben Marais' childhood. What were the circumstances he grew up in? What early influences helped govern his later perspectives?*

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This study has indicated that Ben Marais had a religiously conservative and politically open minded background. There were various early influences on his life that played a direct and indirect role on the choices he made in later life and on his approach to resolving conflict. The most important influence, groomed in childhood and as set out in this thesis, was his faith in God and love for the church.

- *Are the decisions made in youth, in terms of thought processes and execution thereof not a blue print to later decisions that are made in life? How can a reflection be made on Ben Marais' youth from decisions and attitudes later in life?*

This perspective has not been explored in full due to the incomplete picture of Ben Marais' youth. However, it can be ascertained that Ben Marais approached problems rationally and with great contemplation.

- *Ben Marais made calculated study, academic and ministerial decisions. What was the essence of these decisions?*

It has been assessed that the essence of the decisions Ben Marais made was not financial, neither political nor fame. Rather, it was how best to serve the church.

The thesis has given an elaborate answer to the central question that was posed in the introduction:

What led an ordinary man, of humble background, to the insights he reflected, and guided him through times of transparent opposition to maintain his belief in what was right and just? What was the essence of his theology and understanding of the South African Problem? To what extent could the church leaders of the present, and the future learn from his example and life, in terms of the tribulations faced, different schools of thought, and sentiments, both nationalistic and spiritual?

It has been indicated how Ben Marais was a prophet of the NG Kerk who held on to his core principles while listening to perspectives from various sources. He studied with fervour and made these applicable to his situation and drew applicable insights from them. He had a strong character and was greatly respected. Various lessons can be learned from Ben Marais, it is not possible to isolate one. In the perspective of this study, which was built up around his correspondence with the secretaries of the World Council of Churches, it can be emphasised that Ben Marais had a questioning spirit that

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measured all insights and decisions against his confessions.

2. PROVING THE HYPOTHESIS

This thesis thus upholds its hypothesis:

Ben Marais can be considered as one of the steadfast and humble prophets of the church in Southern Africa during the 20th century, who serves as an example of Christian Brotherhood, regardless of the perplexities, to present and future generations on relations between the affairs of faith, state and society.

The formulation of the title, *Ben Marais (1909-1999): The Influences on and Heritage of a South African Prophet During Two Periods of Transformation*, has been found suitable for this study, though the focus in the thesis on predominantly the NG Kerk could draw justifiable criticism.

3. METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE

Hermeneutic keys were used to direct and structure this study. The research focused predominantly on literary sources. Interviews provided vital information and insight. It has been attempted to work in constant dialogue with the available secondary sources and primary sources, moving between an understanding of the times and the issues and a knowledge of Ben Marais.

It could be determined that the scope of the study was too broad, and could, for example, have focused on an aspect of his work such as his travels or publications, rather than the general scope proposed. The general scope in this thesis, however, will make it possible to conduct more intensive study in various directions pertaining to Ben Marais life.

The thesis was developed from a central kernel, the biography of Ben Marais, outwards to the history of South Africa. A thematic orientation to Ben Marais was identified as to retain the scope of the study. Ben Marais' correspondence with the General Secretaries of the World Council of Churches has served well as an orientation to his life. Ben Marais is presented as a key or window through which the history of the twentieth century in South Africa can be approached.

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The chapters have both a chronological and thematic organization, thus, incorporating different writing styles, narrative, description, analysis and commentary.

4. CHAPTER OVERVIEW

The following chapter overview indicates how the argument has been developed.

- **Chapter 1: Introduction**

A short orientating synopsis of Ben Marais' life preceded a consideration on the nature of this study. The theological and scientific orientation to biographies and church histories was related within the scope of church and general historiography. The study's premises concluded the philosophical considerations in historiography and introduced the posing of the problem and hypothesis formulation. The formulation of the title was then discussed, along with the methodology and procedure followed in the study.

- **Chapter 2: The Life of Ben Marais**

A biographic relation on the life of Ben Marais was presented. Special emphasis was placed on his childhood. The orientation to his life was taken from the point of his singular communications with the General Secretaries of the World Council of Churches during the 1960s and 1970s. It was then suggested that Ben Marais could serve as key to the history of South Africa.

- **Chapter 3: The Times of Ben Marais**

The biographic relation of Chapter 2 was set within particular climates experienced during the 20th century in South Africa. Thus, where Chapter 2 was more biographic, Chapter 3 was more contextual in nature. The context of the twentieth century Ben Marais knew was approached thematically, being designated under politics, culture, religion, academia, Theology and nationalism. The study placed particular focus on nationalism and in Ben Marais' understanding of its intricacies.

- **Chapter 4: Nationalism: The Two Periods of Transformation**

The considerations on nationalism were approached from a model of rise and fall, or

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growth and maturity. Thus, it is considered using the model of two periods of transformation. The various forms of nationalism prevalent in South Africa was discussed, and it was indicated how they are invariably related.

▪ **Chapter 5: Underlying Principles and Influential Presence**

A closer look at the underlying principles and influential presence of Ben Marais was made. Where Chapter 3 presented various climates, Chapter 5 considered the different perspectives on Ben Marais. This was accomplished taking personal, political, ecclesiastic and academic considerations into account.

▪ **Chapter 6: A prophet for His Times, But For Others Too**

Chapter 6 dealt predominantly with the legacy of Ben Marais. The incomplete pattern in the transformation and rise and fall of a nationalism served as background to his prophetic voice, which was based as much on Ben Marais' underlying principles as it did on his analysis of the situation.

▪ **Chapter 7: Conclusion**

The Conclusion to the thesis intends to present a contemplative church historical consideration on the role and significance of Ben Marais.

5. REFLECTION

Greater emphasis could have been placed on the two periods of transformation, and on the view that Ben Marais was disjoined from time, speaking a language and communicating a message that was relevant but not understood. In the first period he was well known and active, but his contributions were against the contemporaneous trends. He was not too well acquainted with the plight of the black people, and was arguing almost purely from a theoretical point of view. His visits and exposures substantiated this view internationally. Interestingly, he gained insight on the situation in South Africa through international eyes. During the second period he isolated himself by remaining in the church and moving over to politics or becoming politically active, rather finding solitude in the security of the student communities. His contemporaries isolated him through various means, and thus he experienced years of loneliness, in

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contrast to his years of being outspoken at the synods. This isolation was made more tormenting by the intimidating and life threatening hate mail and telephone calls he received. Furthermore, the church went into isolation mode, as did the country (media coverage etc), as it was also isolated by international pressure groups. Sports, religion, politics and trade. Ben Marais was thus cut off from a part of his world. In contrast, African nationalism broke the barriers of suppression, ANC and PAC being banned, its leaders being imprisoned, and grew in strength. Ben was effective in making a contribution more through his students, than he did personally in bringing his African nationalists –Afrikaans on the one hand and African on the other to the same table, to share and eat together (Codesa – Eucharist) and negotiate a resolution.

On the greater trends within South African history, it could be argued that during the 19th century the region was governed predominantly by regulation through policies, a sentiment that carried through to the 20th century. There would then be no definite break between the 19th and 20th century. It is of particular interest to follow how the church and the leaders of the church relate to these policies, whether progressive and reactionary, conservative and supportive, prescriptive, positive or negative.

6. WHAT DID WE DO WITH OUR TROAS?

Ben Marais travelled to Stellenbosch to become a minister of a church. He ended up as a minister to a country. He remained true to his calling, where the Spirit led, he followed. Not only considered geographically, but also regarding the contents of his message.

In reaction to the implied question by Meiring (1979:86) on his calling to be minister, and the possibility that he had considered entering politics, he answered that he had never felt a calling to enter politics, and maintained that what a minister of the church could not achieve in and through the church for the Kingdom of God, could probably not be achieved if that person were outside the church. Furthermore, Ben Marais maintained that he thought that this was the lesson history taught us. This lesson had few exceptions, and he concluded with a reference to possible alternative roads (Meiring 1979:86):

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“I clearly felt the calling with which the Lord called me uniquely to stand in the service of His church. For me that was determinant.”

7. FINAL REMARK

The argument argued, perspectives explored, the thesis concluded, were I to be granted an interview with Ben Marais, with tea and biscuits, assurance could not be given that I know everything about his life, work, what influenced him and how he thought. I would surely need to ask him many more questions on various subjects. Most probably, though, future studies will be conducted that will bring more light into the life of Ben Marais. How well we might believe ourselves to know, we can only grasp in parts. It remains though, to mention, in the slightly adapted words he used in his letter to Dr Potter (1978):

“In conclusion: I hear someone out of your corner say: This is a typical reaction of a white South African. No! You are wrong. [He had] consistently – all [his] life, been a critic of much of what [was] happening in Southern Africa, and of our systems. [He had], as a result, often been treated as the filth of the earth and experienced extreme forms of ostracism, organised boycott and loneliness. [He] could not wish that to happen to [his] greatest enemy ... [He had] no regrets. A man can only stand up for what he believes. Faced by the same issues [He would] make the same decisions once again. Freedom for human groups [meant] much to [him]. But that does not mean that [he] supported or condoned any sort of action in the name of freedom....”

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NG Kerk Synod of the Western Cape, Cape Town.

Public Museum Middelburg.

Public Museum Steynsburg.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN SOUTH AFRICAN HISTORY²⁶⁴

1652	Dutch East India company establishes supply station at Cape Town
1806	Britain assumes political control of the Cape
1835-1879	The Frontier wars
1838	Battle of Blood River
1854	Britain grants independence to Orange Free State
1856	Natal becomes a British colony
1857	Establishment of South African Republic (later to become the Transvaal); Synod of NG Kerk decides that separate services (Eucharist) are permissible on grounds of “weaker brother”
1867	Discovery of diamonds at Kimberley
1870	Transvaal enacts one shilling pass law to leave Transvaal
1886	Discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand
1887	Formation of chamber of mines
1894	Glen Grey Act
1895	Transvaal Squatters Law
1896	Transvaal Pass Laws (badges) to discourage desertion from the mines
1899-1902	Anglo-Boer war (terminated by treaty of Vereeniging)
1901	Witwatersrand Native Labour Association (WNLA) to recruit outside South Africa
1904	Transvaal Labour Importation Ordinance
1904-1908	Recruitment of 100,000 Chinese for the gold mines
1909	Ben Marais born
1910	Act of Union: Union of South Africa
1910-1924	South Africa Party (SAP) government
1911	NG Kerk Act excludes Africans from NG Kerk in Orange Free State and Transvaal ; Mines and Works Act
1912	Native Recruiting Corporation (NRC) to operate inside Union of South Africa ; Formation of South African Native National Congress (SANNC)
1913	Natives Land Act
1918	Status quo agreement between chamber of mines and South African Mineworkers Union;

²⁶⁴ See Hofmeyr et al (2001).

APPENDIX A: SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

	Formation of Afrikaaner Broederbond
1922	Witwatersrand strikes
1923	Natives (Urban Areas) Act
1924	Formation of the pact government (Labour Party and Hertzog's Afrikaner nationalist party [NAT]); Industrial conciliation act
1925	SANNC becomes ANC
1926	Mines and Works Act
1932	Fusion government to confront depression
1934-1948	United Party government (fusion of NAT and S.A.P.)
1934	Breakaway of purified NATS under D. Malan
1936	Natives Trust and Land Act
1939	Reunited National Party (Hertzog leaves fusion government in disagreement over entry into World War I I)
1945	Natives (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act ("Section 10")
1946	Miners' strike
1948	National party wins elections; D.F. Malan becomes Prime Minister; Establishment of World Council of Churches
1949	Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act
1950	Population Registration Act; Group Areas Act
1951	Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act
1952	Native Laws Amendment Act; Natives (Abolition of Passes and co-ordination of Documents) Act
1953	Bantu Education Act; Reservation of Separate Amenities Act
1954	J.G. Strijdom becomes Prime Minister
1955	Tomlinson Commission; Eiselen line introduced; ANC Freedom Charter adopted at Kliptown South African Catholic Bishops Conference rejects Apartheid on theological grounds
1959	H.F. Verwoerd becomes Prime Minister Establishment of Bantu Investment Corporation; Promotion of Bantu Self Government Act PAC breaks with ANC
1960	Langa and Sharpeville shooting; Borderlands Industrialisation Policy begins; Banning of ANC and PAC; Partial state of emergency (5 months); The Cottesloe Consultation
1960-1961	Pondoland revolt
1961	South Africa becomes a Republic; Formation of Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation)
1962	Nelson Mandela imprisoned
1963	General Law Amendment Act (detention without trial); Formation of the Christian Institute

APPENDIX A: SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- 1966 H.F. Verwoerd assassinated;
B.J. Vorster becomes Prime Minister
- 1967 Environment Planning Act
- 1968 Promotion of the economic development of the Homelands Act
- 1969 Formation of Herstigte Nasionale Party;
World Council of Churches Programme to combat racism formed
- 1971 Administration Boards established
- 1973 Durban labour disturbances
- 1974 Repeal of Masters and Servants Act
- 1975 Mozambique independence;
Angola independence
- 1976 Soweto uprisings;
Transkei "independence"
- 1977 Community Councils Act
Boputhatswana "independence";
Formation of Urban Foundation;
Death of Steve Biko;
United Nations declares Apartheid a crime against humanity
- 1978 99-year leasehold rights for blacks in urban areas;
Foundation of Azanian peoples' organization (AZAPO);
Desmond Tutu becomes General Secretary of South African Council of Churches
- 1979 P.W. Botha becomes Prime Minister
Reports of the Wiehahn and Riekert Commissions;
Industrial Conciliation Amendment Act
- 1980 Zimbabwe gains independence
- 1982 Formation of the Conservative Party;
Black Local Authorities Act;
Apartheid is declared a heresy (Ottawa)
- 1983 Constitution Act;
Foundation of United Democratic Front (UDF);
Foundation of National Forum
- 1984 Nkomati accords with Mozambique
- 1984-1986 Township insurgency;
State of Emergency introduced
- 1985 State of emergency for selected areas (July);
Abolition of Mixed Marriages Act; interracial sex legalised;
- 1986 National state of emergency (June);
Abolition of Influx Control Act;
South African Citizenship Act
- 1988 UDF and COSATU political activities banned
- 1989 F.W. De Klerk becomes State President
- 1990 Legalisation of ANC, PAC and SACP ;
Nelson Mandela released;
Namibia becomes independent;
Repeal of Reservation of Separate Amenities Act;
Inkatha-ANC violence spreads to the Rand;
Apartheid is recognised as a sin at the Rustenburg meeting

APPENDIX A: SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

1991	National Peace Accord
1993	Transitional government in South Africa
1994	Multiracial elections held in South Africa; Nelson Mandela becomes State President; Restitution of Land Rights Act; Provision of Land and Assistance Act; Truth and Reconciliation Commission established
1996	Land Reform (Labour Tenants) Act
1997	Extension of Security of Tenure Act
1998	The NG Kerk declares Apartheid a sin; The NG Kerk is readmitted to the World Council of Churches.
1999	Ben Marais died; Second democratic elections; Thabo Mbeki becomes State President
2001	The NG Kerk declares the year 2001 a year of Hope: attention to reconciliation, poverty, and moral values

APPENDIX B

OVERVIEW OF THE WRITTEN WORK BY BEN MARAIS²⁶⁵**Monographs**

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²⁶⁵ Ds Oekie Olivier and Mrs Petro Braetler need to be acknowledged for collecting and initial organization of the information contained in Appendix B and Appendix C. The information contained in the appendices has been rearranged.

Contributions in Ecclesiastic Magazines and Newspapers***Die Kerkbode***

- 05/08/1936 Sektes en buitekerklike strominge. Hoe kan ons hulle bestry I
 12/08/1936 Sektes en buitekerklike strominge. Hoe kan ons hulle bestry II
 20/09/1939 Opdraande stryd van Protestantse Christendom: 'n kritieke wêreldtoes-
 tand
 08/05/1940 Die Transvaalse Sinode. Enige indrukke
 05/06/1940 Die waardes wat bly
 31/07/1940 Die evangelisasieveldtog op die Witwatersrandse universiteit
 18/12/1940 Stedelike armesorg: 'n baanbrekerskonferensie
 25/08/1948 Die nood van ons kinders
 16/08/1950 Wêreldraad van Kerke
 07/02/1951 Hugenate-spore in die nuwe wêreld
 28/01/1953 Die kleurkrisis en die Weste (korres)
 25/06/1958 Uit die donkerste ure van godsdiensvryheid I: Die Spaanse Inkwisisie
 02/07/1958 Uit die donkerste ure van godsdiensvryheid II: Christene en Jode die
 prooi van die Inkwisie
 09/07/1958 Uit die donkerste ure van godsdiensvryheid III: Die Inkwisisie en die
 More
 13/04/1960 Die Here het waarlik opgestaan!
 25/05/1960 By die heengaan van Kagawa
 12/07/1961 Die stem van die Evangelie oor die radio uit Addis Abeba
 18/10/1961 Dit is ons Afrika I
 25/10/1961 Dit is ons Afrika II
 01/11/1961 Dit is ons Afrika III
 30/05/1962 Pan-Afrikaanse kerklike konferensie
 03/07/1968 Die Christelike gesin
 15/10/1969 Op soek na 'n naam vir die 20ste eeu I
 22/10/1969 Op soek na 'n naam vir die 20ste eeu II

Die Voorligter

- 01/03/1947 10(4) En nou....Universiteit toe
 01/02/1958 21(3) Die gevaar van godsdienstige gelykskaking
 01/08/1958 21(9) Die kerk as brandwag oor die politiek
 01/12/1958 22(1) Die Christendom in Afrika
 01/07/1959 22(8) Wat stap oor Afrika?
 01/01/1960 23(2) Was Thomas in Indië?
 01/12/1960 24(1) Die kerk en die wêreld
 01/04/1961 24(5) 'n Nuwe dag in die sending
 01/01/1962 25(2) Ethiopië - land van die leeu van Juda
 01/02/1962 25(3) Kom die koningin van Skeba uit Ethiopië?
 01/08/1963 26(9) Waarom die ou kerk van Afrika gesterf het...
 01/09/1963 26(10) Christene in Noord-Afrika
 01/09/1963 26(10) Teologiese Fakulteit van Pretoria bloei

APPENDIX B: THE WRITTEN WORK OF BEN MARAIS

01/12/1964	28(1)	Islam en die nuwe Afrika
01/03/1965	28(4)	Die kerk groei in Afrika
01/04/1965	28(5)	Stand van die Christelike sending vandag
01/10/1965	28(11)	Uit die ou land van Kus – oor Christelike erfenisse onder Nylwater bedek
01/06/1966	29(67)	Gegewens oor Jesus buite Nuwe Testament
01/03/1970	33(4)	Die kerk in die groot maalstroom
01/09/1974	37(10)	Die Christendom en die nuwe tendense in Afrika
01/11/1974	37(12)	Die predikant se bediening in hierdie tyd
01/01/1976	39(2)	My eerste sinode
01/08/1976	39(9)	Ver...lê die begin
01/06/1977	40(7)	Die Afrika waarin ons leef
01/07/1983	46(8)	Die oes van die jare
01/11/1987	50(12)	Ons kerk van toe en nou

Op die Horison

01/06/1947	9(2),65-80	‘n Kritiese beoordeling van die standpunt van ons kerk i.s. rasseverhoudings met die oog op die gebeure oorsee
01/06/1952	14(2),53-6	Die buiteland en ons kleurbeleid
01/12/1961	23(4),26-32	Wat groei daar uit Afrika?

Die Sendingblad

01/07/1976	Die Kerk in Afrika: Huidige stand I
01/08/1976	Die Kerk in Afrika vandag: Grootste teenstanders II

Articles in Theological Periodicals***Theologia Evangelica***

01/09/1976	9(2 & 3)	Enkele stromings in die Grieks-Romeinse wêreld rondom die koms van Christus
01/09/1977	10(3),60-72	A historical flashback: The Christian church and race (colour)
01/09/1983	16(3),45-50	Die NG Kerk se vereensamingspad

Pro Veritate

15/08/1962	1(4),1	Die eksklusiewe rassekerk - ‘teologie’ in die lig van die Skrif en die kerkgeskiedenis
15/09/1962	1(5),5	Prof Ben Marais antwoord op vrae van ds Loggerenberg
15/01/1963	11(9),1,3	Die Christen se houding teenoor verandering
01/10/1970	9(6),12	Letter to WCC to dr Carson Blake
01/10/1972	11(6),3-4	Real brotherhood in South Africa (Report of SPROCAS: the church and apartheid)

APPENDIX B: THE WRITTEN WORK OF BEN MARAIS

Die Gereformeerde Vaandel

- 01/02/1950 18(2),14-25 Die Skrif en rasse-apartheid
 01/12/1957 25(12),21-9 Die sin van die geskiedenis

Nederduits Gereformeerde Teologiese Tydskrif

- 01/12/1959 1(1),30-9 Die herlewing van die heidendom
 01/12/1962 4(1),54-65 Die Mariologie in die Rooms Katolieke kerk
 01/09/1967 8 (4),194-202 Was die kerkhervorming noodsaaklik?

Contributions in Daily Newspapers***The Star***

- 24/03/1959 Challenge of Africa I. Force no answer to a mass movement
 25/03/1959 Challenge of Africa II. Mass immigration and the fears it creates. The rapidly changing pattern of our continent
 13/06/1960 Christianity in the 'new' Africa: I. Church's western label is now its liability
 14/06/1960 Christianity in the 'new' Africa: II. The challenge is to all churches
 24/02/1961 Many believe Congo will break into several states. Leopoldville is a city of splendour and fear
 03/03/1961 Congolese do not dislike Europeans. Against domination, not colour
 10/03/1961 Nigeria – most populous independent African state. The great new country
 17/03/1961 French have left a heritage of goodwill in these countries
 29/03/1961 Nigeria 's trouble spot. Visit to the Tiv-belt
 05/06/1961 The Negro in America I. Deep South has lost much ground
 06/06/1961 The Negro in America II. Optimism leads to disillusionment
 07/06/1961 The Negro in America III. The role of the president and the Federal Administration
 08/06/1961 The Negro in America IV'. Four basic differences with South Africa
 21/06/1961 Why we missed the bus in Africa
 22/06/1961 Ethiopia: land of history and legend
 23/06/1961 History forms the basis of the Ethiopian dynasty
 06/07/1961 'Uhuru' on every doorstep – and fear stalks in Kenya
 21/07/1961 Man of destiny in Africa. Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda
 16/08/1961 Four men of destiny hold the future of Africa
 1961 Colour patterns in the Americas I. In Brazil class, not colour, is decisive. Where people of all races mix freely
 1961 Colour patterns in the Americas II. The United States is going all out to give the Negro his full rights as a citizen.
 1961 The price of backing Tshombe
 16/03/1962 Church and state: a live issue everywhere
 27/06/1962 Loyalty to country and honesty need not clash
 11/10/1962 Apartheid in NG Kerk was never meant to last
 06/11/1962 Islam is both ally and rival. Christian churches in Africa have great

APPENDIX B: THE WRITTEN WORK OF BEN MARAIS

- opportunities and face great challenges
- 027/12/1962 Christians must encourage change
- 13/02/1963 Christians, the church and the state. The power of the state, according to the gospel, can never be absolute
- 27/06/1963 Arabs in Africa I. Early conquest of Northern seaboard
- 28/06/1963 Arabs in Africa II. Led campaign to free Africa from imperialism
- 05/08/1963 Communism in Africa I. African leaders have disappointed Moscow
- 06/08/1963 Communism in Africa II. Why Moscow's impact has not been greater
- 14/02/1967 The law and the prophets I. Church must get into politics
- 15/02/1967 The law and the prophets II. Church has a precise duty
- 01/11/1967 Division of Christian church
- 15/10/1968 The fanatic fringe is widening
- 25/01/1969 Will breakthrough to a shared society in South Africa not become inevitable?
- 10/04/1969 Formulas solve so little – I
- 11/04/1969 Backlash of race gratitude – II
- 21/08/1969 World churches – and the problem of violence
- 12/02/1971 Boundaries of church and state
- 19/05/1971 Africa: as much to gain as to give
- 9/09/1971 Africa's education grows faster at the top
- 5/03/1973 Crescent, sickle and cross in Africa

Natal Daily News

- 28/12/1961 The future of South Africa I. Outline reactions to Republic's policies
- 29/12/1961 The future of South Africa II. Only a few years left in which to prove apartheid

Sunday Chronicle

- 02/08/1964 South Africans uneasy on their continent. Contrasting attitudes to new Africa
- 09/08/1964 The only way to sell apartheid
- 16/08/1964 Then the red way of life might win
- 23/08/1964 American attitudes to Africa as a whole and SA in particular

Sunday Times

- 12/11/1961 Dr Ben Marais looks at: Drastic changes in present way of life are necessary
- ?/11/1961 South Africa's future. There is no side-stepping the basic issue of colour

Cape Times

- 14/11/1961 Drastic changes in way of life necessary for S Africa's survival

Cape Argus

- 27/12/1961 Problem critic of South Africa: India

Other Magazines, Periodicals and Newspapers***Oudstudent***

01/04/1935 Boekbeskouing: Gedigte – AE Schlengemann

Die Soeklig

15/10/1936 14(-),295 Godsdienstige lewe in Noord-Amerika

Die Naweek

25/02/1943 Agra, die stad van Akbar

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01/05/1948 7(-),8-11 Die Transvaalse Sinode – ‘n belangrike mylpaal in die lewe van die kerk

NG Jaarboek

01/01/1949 465-71 Verslag: Die Jeugwerk van die Transvaalse kerk

Die Koningsbode

01/01/1952 32-4 Uit die lande van Columbus

Die Brandwag

15/04/1955 4,6 Die kerk se houding teenoor: drank en tabak
 28/10/1955 24-5 Is ewolusie tog met die Bybel versoenbaar?
 20/07/1956 25-6,29 Onweer uit die Ooste
 20/12/1957 - Dag van vreugde
 26/12/1958 - Word ons Kersfees 'n bespotting?
 29/10/1976 86-7 Toe lag hulle in die kerk! ‘Nee, de donder dreigt me!’
 12/11/1976 88-9 En toe lag hulle in die kerk! ‘Bid asseblief, ek gee jou ‘n os’

Naweekpos

1/12/1955 - Ons roeping waardig
 01/03/1960 6(71),30-31,35 Die toepaslikheid van die Bybel vandag I
 01/04/1960 6(72),38-9,55 Die toepaslikheid van die Bybel vandag II: In die eeu van maatskaplike vraagstukke
 01/05/1960 6(73),46-7 Die toepaslikheid van die Bybel vandag III: Wie, vanwaar, waarheen
 01/06/1960 6(74),40-1,55 Die toepaslikheid van die Bybel vandag IV: Die leer van Christus – is dit prakties?

APPENDIX B: THE WRITTEN WORK OF BEN MARAIS

Eternity

- 01/06/1956 - The church and racial tension in South Africa
 30/06/1958 - A million danger signals ahead
 01/03/1962 26-7 How important is race?

Dagbreek

- 11/08/1957 20-1,25 Die vuurdood van Servet. Wat was die aandeel van Calvin?
 08/02/1969 Amerika na vyf jaar

Christianity today

- 26/05/1958 2(5) 8-9 Cross or crescent in Africa
 22/12/1958 8-10 Missions in South Africa
 23/05/1960 4(5),6-8 Church's role in Africa
 06/06/1960 4(6),11-3 The storm over South Africa II
 18/01/1963 8(1),37 Anchoring the eternal gospel in the local scene

Suid-Afrikaanse Stem

- 05/10/1958 Die vyf skouspelagtigste watervalle van die wêreld
 22/07/1962 Die stad en rivier kan nie geskei word nie
 12/08/1962 Nie laaste woord oor die saak nie
 23/12/1962 Die ryke herkoms van ons Kersfees

The Compass

- 01/08/1959 30(8) 120-3 The Christian attitude in a multi-racial society

Optima

- 01/09/1959 9(-),149-58 Is there a practical alternative to apartheid in religion?

Dagbreek en Landstem

- 08/05/1960 Wat het ons met ons geleenthede gedoen?
 16/03/1969 Moeilike jare wag op VSA
 23/03/1969 Swart opstand en Black Power
 08/05/1969 Wat het ons met ons geleenthede gedoen?
 - Nigerië, die slapende reus van Afrika

Church of England Newspaper

- 20/05/1960 The reasonableness of separatism

Werda

- 01/02/1961 3 Dr Ben Marais antwoord alle kerk-kritici
 01/04/1961 - Prof Marais waarsku teen gebrek aan realisme

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- 01/05/1961 - Op my wagpos: Amerika het blanke nog nie afgeskryf
 01/06/1961 5 Op my wagpos: Feite oor die nuwe Afrika
 01/08/1961 5 Op my wagpos: Vurige nasionalisme by alle Afrika-state

Horison

- 01/07/1961 Ethiopië arm maar belangrik

Sondagblad se tydskrif

- 22/10/1961 Leerhoof se voorgevoel het komplot verongeluk

Christianity and crisis

- 29/10/1962 22(18) The race question: The US and South Africa

Matieland

- 01/12/1962 29-30 Studentejare
 01/08/1979 Prof Ben onthou
 - 12-3 Dit was ander dae daardie

The Livingstonian

- 01/01/1963 1(3) Africa: a new day or turmoil?

Tydskrif v Geesteswetenskap

- 01/03/1963 3(1) Die kerk in Afrika

The Christian Century

- 01/05/1963 ,580-1 The white South Africa 's dilemma

Christian Minister

- 01/10/1964 1(1) Will history repeat itself in Africa?

News Check

- 09/10/1964 3(-),26-30 The Afrikaans churches. Conscience or existence?

Dagbreek en Sondagnuus

- 28/11/1965 Meeste Kersfees-gebruike het 'n heidense oorsprong

Deo Gloria

- 01/12/1965 15-16 Is dit die moeite werd – die evangelie aan die swart man?
 01/12/1973 34 (33) Vernuwning en dogma: interpretasie of herformulering
 01/12/1974 35(34) Die kerk op weg met sy verlede

Koers

01/12/1965 33(3),173-85 Die kerk en die Islam in Afrika

Koinonia – Jaarblad

01/12/1966 ,25-9 Die kerk en sy ekumeniese strewes (Teologiese skool Belville, NG Sending)

Beacon

01/03/1967 Colour

Lantern

01/06/1967 54-62 Ligbakens in Afrika I: Morgenster en die NG Sendingwerk in Masjonaal

01/09/1967 62-7 Ligbakens in Afrika II: Die NG Sending in die Soedan

01/12/1969 52-5 Desiderius Erasmus van Rotterdam

01/06/1970 60-64 Biblia 70

Reformed & Presb World

01/12/1969 30(8) The role of the churches in South Africa

Bul African Inst

01/12/1971 11(11),51-65 Islam: politieke faktor in Afrika

01/05/1973 13(5) NG Kerk sendingaksie in Afrika

Mankind

01/04/1972 3(6),10-8,64 Islam is a political factor in North Africa

Taalgenoot

01/12/1972 15 Die St Bartholomeusnag

Die Volk

23/12/1972 Die ster van Bethlehem. Engele, wyse manne en die kind

Hoofstad

02/08/1973 Voeg sendingkerke saam in belang van Christendom

Gedenkblad

01/07/1975 21-2 Ons Kollegehuis

Hoofstad

27/10/1975 Kolonialisme in Afrika verdwyn soos mis voor die môreson

Rapport

24/12/1978 Rondon Kersfees
10/06/1990 'n Nuwe dag begin breek

Theologia Viatorum

1/11/1979 7(2),12-9 The Christian church in Africa

Korrels

28/03/1980 5(3),1 Zimbabwe en ons

Beeld

10/08/1982 Die spanninge van 'n nuwe wêreld
20/07/1983 So het SA se kerkbeeld verdof I
21/07/1983 So het SA se kerkbeeld verdof II
29/10/1985 'Ongelukkige vertaling', uittreksel uit 'Window on origins/Oorspronge in oënskou'
29/07/1987 Drama van kerke in Afrika. Boekresensie: Afrika, die hamer, die kruis en die sekel

Insig

01/09/1990 Ope brief: Geloof versus die ideologie
01/05/1992 Volkstaat: sonder die hoe en die waar is debat futiel

Correspondence in the Press***Die Kerkbode***

10/04/1940 645-6 Brief: 'n Oproep
05/06/1940 1007-8 Brief: Ons sendingbeleid
31/07/1940 217-8 Brief: aan die redaksie: Ons sendingbeleid
14/07/1948 1596-7 Brief: Die Skrif en rasse-apartheid
15/09/1948 632-3 Brief: Die Skrif en rasse-apartheid
28/01/1953 9-10,31 Brief: Die kleurkrisis en die Weste
26/09/1956 607,609 Brief: Ons klag bly staan
28/01/1959 159-61 Brief: Groepsgebiede-wet en die Indiërs
20/04/1960 - Brief: In die krisistyd
22/02/1961 263 Brief: Ons moet eerlik soek
10/10/1962 506-8 Brief: Ons kerklike dislojaliteit
13/10/1965 1300 Brief: Mag dit langer geduld word?
20/10/1965 1330 Brief: Prof. Marais oor ons kerk se beleid
24/11/1965 1489-90 Brief: Verdagmakery

APPENDIX B: THE WRITTEN WORK OF BEN MARAIS

- 25/08/1982 - Brief: Versekering deur prof Hanekom 'n verligting
 29/05/1985 - Brief: i.v.m. skeuring
 29/05/1985 - Brief: Dreigemente en die NG Kerk
 31/03/1989 - Brief: Goddank vir die besluit
 05/10/1990 - Brief: Dankie Johan Heyns

Die Transvaler

- 10/09/1954 Brief: Wêreldraad van Kerke: Prof Marais vertel
 07/08/1956 Brief: Prof Marais se standpunt
 04/09/1956 Brief: Prof. Marais se standpunt
 28/09/1956 Brief: Die standpunt van prof Marais

Dagbreek en Sondagnuus

- 08/12/1963 Brief: Laat dit nie ons vennoot word nie
 05/01/1964 Brief: Prof Ben Marais waarsku weer
 19/01/1964 Brief: Prof Ben Marais antwoord mnr Jaap Marais

Die Vaderland

- 28/08/1964 Brief: Prof Ben Marais antwoord op 'n uitdaging

Beeld

- 13/04/1978 Brief: Winterwind se klank vir kerke
 16/08/1979 Brief: Kerkgeld: Ons het nie geweet nie
 21/08/1979 Brief: Skulderkenning kan lug suiwer
 13/09/1979 Brief: Sinode in duister gehou – waarom?
 30/01/1985 Brief: Niemand durf sê niks het verander nie
 28/07/1985 Ope brief aan Beyers Naude

Hoofstad

- 06/02/1979 Brief: Kerkraad en AB nie vergelykbaar

Die Burger

- 13/09/1979 Brief: Eerste geld-vrae nie beantwoord
 29/01/1985 Brief: Kerke se besluit laat 'n mens se hart gloei

Rapport

- 10/06/1990 Brief: 'n Nuwe dag begin breek

Insig

- 01/09/1990 Brief: Geloof versus die ideologie
 01/05/1992 Brief: Volkstaat: sonder die hoe en die waar is debat futiel

Regulars*Die Verre Horison*

05/09/1975	Die ou kremetartboom
19/09/1975	Pasop vir die rooigesig bobbejaan
12/09/1975	Hoe praat jy met jouself?
26/09/1975	Die Rio Neger
03/10/1975	'n Prentjie van die hemel
24/10/1975	Die wilde gans
07/11/1975	Vlerke soos 'n duif
21/11/1975	Op die Corcovado
05/12/1975	Die lig van een enkele kers
19/12/1975	Die verre horison (oor Kersfees)
02/01/1976	So kort die tyd
23/01/1976	Daar is maar een Boek
06/02/1976	“Die wêreld het net begin....”
20/02/1976	Lewe uit die dood
05/03/1976	Die lamppitte van Alwaye (In S.W.Indië)
19/03/1976	Die lamp van jou gewete
16/04/1976	'n Getuie vir Christus
30/04/1976	Die bome van die Boland
14/05/1976	Sing vir ons 'n Sionslied
28/05/1976	Sing vir ons 'n Sionslied (verv.)
25/06/1976	Die oue en die nuwe
09/07/1976	Die Grootrivier
23/07/1976	Ons as verteenwoordigers van God
09/08/1976	Alles is julle s'n
23/08/1976	Ambrosius van Milaan
03/09/1976	Jy is betrokke
17/09/1976	Die 'Onse Vader'
01/10/1976	Die wit keursteen
29/10/1976	Die lewe se tweede bestes
12/11/1976	Die lewe verander so vinnig....
26/11/1976	'n Ou donkie moet jy ver van die huis af verkoop
10/12/1976	Hoe vergewe 'n mens?
07/01/1977	Die Here regeer
21/01/1977	Moenie vrees nie
04/02/1977	Die Sewester en Orion
18/02/1977	Waar God ons ontmoet
04/03/1977	Die lampe op ons pad
18/03/1977	Die lig wat nie verdof nie
01/04/1977	Die God en ons gode
15/04/1977	God, ek en my naaste
29/04/1977	Wat is die mens?
-	Die Here is my Herder
-	Hoe bereik ek my ideale?
-	Die meeu en die condor
-	Die stem van die geloof

APPENDIX B: THE WRITTEN WORK OF BEN MARAIS

- Waarheen lei hierdie pad?
- Wat maak ons met ons vrees?
- Die verre horison (Moes ek nie iets anders as lewenswerk gekies het nie?)
- Die verre horison (ons godsdiens is dikwels vaag en nie duidelik omlyn nie)
- Die verre horison (verskil tussen pelgrim en swerwer)

Dagbreek en Sondagnuus:**Die Prediker**

- 18/07/1948 Die kerk en Bybel is nie genoeg nie
- 26/07/1959 Is die Kommunisme vyand van die kerk?
- 24/04/1960 Nee, Dr. de Blank
- 01/05/1960 Ons skinder so gou van ander
- 04/08/1960 Afrika se stormdag
- 30/04/1961 Deur die prediker: Die oes van baie jare
- 25/06/1961 Sektariese venyn
- 02/07/1961 Anti-Kommunisme as slagkreet
- 27/08/1961 In so 'n wêreld leef ons nou
- 29/12/1963 Oomblikkie van stilte: So kom 'n nuwe jaar
- 05/05/1966 'n Vleiende beskuldiging
- 06/04/1969 Opstanding en van Riebeeckdag
- Christus nog die antwoord
- Deur die prediker: Draers van die kruisevangelie

Die Huisgenoot

- 02/02/1951 Kersfees in Amerika
- 1/06/1951 Die Christus en die Corcovado
- 04/04/1952 Die abc van die lewe
- 27/06/1952 So is die lewe
- 21/11/1952 In die land van die alledaagse dinge...
- 19/12/1952 So bou ons altare...
- 05/02/1954 Is alle selfmoordenaars verlore?
- Kerklike feesdae
- En wie is my naaste?

Die Perdeby**Om oor na te dink**

- 19/09/1947 Bewaar jou pand. (Timotheus)
- 12/03/1948 Oorwin die kwaad deur die goeie (Rom. 12:21)

Ons Wapenrusting

- Die verre horison (lewenswaardes)
- Die verre horison (vryheid wat die beperking van lojaliteit meebring - teenoor Christus)

APPENDIX B: THE WRITTEN WORK OF BEN MARAIS

- Swerwer of pelgrim
- Verganklikheid.....
- Die verre horison (onbestendigheid van aardse mag en heerskappy)

Other

01/12/1948	<i>Die Herder</i>	Deel u Kersvreugde met u naaste
01/01/1953	<i>Die Jeugbonder</i>	Laat die eeue oordeel en nie die ure nie
22/03/1959	<i>SA Stem</i>	Uit die woord: Dit was die held Simson se val
01/12/1980	<i>Die Koord.</i> 240	So kort die tyd
01/11/1985	<i>Vroueaksie</i>	Die blyste dag

Miscellaneous Contributions

30/12/1949	23,49,61	Nuwe weë vir 'n nuwe geslag
-/09/1950	-	'Twee sulke manne binne een geslag' (Nuusberig geskryf deur BJM vanuit Amerika met dood van JC Smuts)
26/01/1951	31,21	Die perde byt mekaar. Nie die rykes nie, maar die armes van Amerika vrees die Negers
02/02/1951	33,35	Amerika het ook sy apartheid
09/02/1951	26-27,52	Vry! Maar waarvoor? Negers het ondervind dat slawe nie in een dag burgers word nie
06/04/1951	33-5,49	Universiteite van die wêreld (slot) Universiteit van Kalifornië
28/01/1957		Hierdie Laeveld
01/11/1957	17-18	Vergesigte uit ou Griekeland
25/08/1961	7	Die hart van die 'Diep Suide'
01/12/1961	7	Die Christen se plek in die Nuwe Afrika
11/05/1962	14-5	Die stormsentrums van Afrika
18/05/1962	22-23	Afrika het ook sy ligpunte
24/08/1962	38-9,51	Indië – land van mensewemeling en skrilte kontraste
31/08/1962	30-1,46	Die Taj Mahal. Pêrel uit die skoonheidskat van Indië
25/09/1964	58-60	Indië se miljoene skree al hoe luider: 'Ons is honger'
13/03/1966	9-12	Die mooiste plek op aarde
13/01/1967	69-72	Baalbek – puinhoop van wonder
16/05/1969	20-1	Hoop en wanhoop in Afrika. Ek besoek 'Uhuru' na sewe jaar
16/01/1970	18-20	'n Orkaan bars los oor die kerk
19/03/1971	46-7	Die wild het teruggekeer
19/09/1975	30-5	Matie onder die Tukkies

Miscellaneous Texts: Articles, Lectures, Speeches

(Some typed, others hand-written)

*Afrikaans Texts***General**

02/12/1962	Article/Lecture/Talk	Die Godsdiens as die moeder van die kuns
+/-1998	Article/Talk	Die lewe het my geleer
-	Lecture/Paper	Die ekumeniese betrekkinge van die Suid-Afrikaanse kerke
-	Outline	Gesamentlike aanbidding
-	Article/Lecture/Talk	Die Grand Canyon en die Yosemite-vallei
-	Article	Grondbesit en politieke regte (BJM se siening na die Kerkeberaad by Cottesloe)
-	Lecture	Is daar ligpunte in Afrika?
-	Speech	Die Islamherlewing
-	Article/Lecture/Speech	Die kerk en die kontemporêre geskiedenis (veral t.o.v. die Kerk en maatskaplike veranderings)
-	Lecture	Die kerk in die kontemporêre wêreld
-	Article/Lecture/Speech	'n Kort oorsig van teologiese opleiding in die Protestantse kerke tot die totstandkoming van die Teologiese Seminarium van Stellenbosch in 1859
-	Lecture	Krisis in die interpretasie van die Skrif
-	Article/Lecture/Speech	Die kruis oor die nuwe wêreld
-	Article/Speech	'n Lewe sonder wolke
-	Lecture I	Ons betree die eeu van die universele geskiedenis
-	Article/Speech	Ons lewens afgemeet
-	Lecture/Speech	Ons moet die weg wys - na wie?
-	Article/Lecture/Speech	'n Pêrel uit die skoonheidskat van Indië
-	Article/Lecture/Speech	Rondom Athene 11
-	Article/Lecture/Speech	Rondom die blou Karibiese see. 11 Puerto Rico
-	Toespraak	Rondom Geloftedag - Toe en Nou
--	Article/Lecture/Speech	Die Taj Mahal - die skoonste gebou op aarde
-	Article/Lecture/Speech	Die teenswoordige wêreldgebeure vanuit Christelike gesigspunt
-	Article/Lecture/Speech	Uit hierdie Afrika
-	Article/Speech	Vanwaar en waarnatoe?
-	Speech	Wanneer die onmoontlike moontlik word
-	Article/Lecture/Speech	Die wonder van ou Griekeland

APPENDIX B: THE WRITTEN WORK OF BEN MARAIS

Afrikaans Texts Indicating Names of Newspapers

- 1957 Letter to the Editor of *Dagbreek*: Broederbond en Ruitersweg (possibly returned unpublished)
- 19/08/1964 Letter to the Editor of *Die Transvaler* (possibly returned unpublished)
- Article Die groot wit moskee (typed article possibly prepared for *Die Huisgenoot*)
- Article ‘n Lewe sonder opoffering is onmoontlik (handwritten article possibly prepared for *Die Volk*)
- 05/10/1971 Article Ons Kersfees kom van ver (typed article possibly prepared for Rapport)
- Letter to the Press: Ope brief aan die NG Kerk i.v.m. eenheid van die kerk (possibly prepared for *Die Kerkbode*)
- Article Die rol van die Bybel in die kerk van die eeue (typed article possibly prepared for *Deo Gloria*)

English Texts**General**

- 14/8/1969 Article/Lecture/Speech The World Council of Churches and violence in American Colleges and Universities
- 22/10/1969 Paper (WARC) The role of the churches in South Africa
- 09/02/1971 Article/Lecture/Speech The church and the state
- Article/Lecture/Speech Africa 's yesterday. Spotlight on the ancient land of Cush
- Lecture - VSA The Christian attitude in a multi-racial society
- Speech The Christian's attitude towards his body
- Lecture - possibly for USA The church and racial tension in South Africa
- Lecture - USA The churches of South Africa
- Article/Lecture/Speech Communism and the churches - a lesson from the USA
- "Response" Conversion
- Lecture - VSA Current racial attitudes of the DRC Churches
- Article/Lecture/Speech Ethiopia 's Axum – ancient city of history and legend
- Article/Lecture/Speech Giving the eternal gospel local rootage
- Lecture Heroes of lost causes in the early church I
- Article/Speech The meaning of Christmas
- Lecture - VSA On the fringe of the African cauldron
- Lecture Pelagius. IV
- Lecture - VSA South Africa in the African continent
- Article/Lecture/Speech South African Missionary Societies
- Article/Lecture/Speech The theology underlying the DR attitude to racial questions
- Article/Lecture/Speech A time for decision (incomplete)
- Article/Lecture/Speech Union of South Africa (historical review of missionary work in SA)
- Article/Lecture/Speech What future? The Christian church in Africa

APPENDIX B: THE WRITTEN WORK OF BEN MARAIS

- Article/Lecture/Speech What the World Council is not
- Article/Lecture/Speech Zimbabwe - the mysterious
- ?/10/73 Article A few reflections on government action against churchmen

English Texts Indicating Names of Newspapers***Eternity***

- 1/12/58 Article A challenge to all Christians. The Bible and race

The Star

- Article The American Negroes change of attitude towards Africa
- Article Black power and black revolt III
- Article The character of the black revolt – persuasion, threat or violence IV
- Article Christian crusaders
- Article Historical flashback on the DRC - its missionary record and policies
- Article In these United States – glimpses on the present day America I
- Article Islam and African politics
- Article Tension on the youth and race fronts II
- Article What can we learn from the United States? I
- Article What can we learn from the United States? II

British Weekly

- Correspondence Letter to the Editor

The Sunday Chronicle

- Article Out of this Africa

Christianity and Crisis

- Article A South African's interpretation of the United States' racial problem

Radio Texts***Afrikaans radio***

- Wat het die wêreld aan die Christendom te danke? VI
- 18/07/1948 Wat het die wêreld aan die Christendom te danke? VIII
- Die geskiedenis van die kerk en ons
- Groot figure uit ons kerkgeskiedenis. Dr Andrew Murray
- 27/01/1952 Groot figure uit ons kerkgeskiedenis III. Dr Abraham Faure
- Groot figure uit ons kerkgeskiedenis VI. John Daniel Kestell
- Die Christelike sending het misluk
- Die stand van die Christelike sending vandag

APPENDIX B: THE WRITTEN WORK OF BEN MARAIS

- Oor ou Christengroep
- 14/01/1953 Die posisie van Wes-Europa in die moderne wêreld I. Die redelik-godsdienstige grondslae van die Wes-Europese beskawing.
- Lesse van die geskiedenis I. God betaal nie op Saterdag
- Lesse van die geskiedenis II. Die meule van God maal langzaam
- Lesse van die geskiedenis III. Jy kan die dagbreek nie terughou nie
- Lesse van die geskiedenis IV. Die kerk en die gelowige moet in die wêreld wees maar nie van die wêreld nie
- Lesse van die geskiedenis V. Die waarheid oorwin eendelik
- Ons moet die weg wys - na wie?
- Kom ons praat oor geld I
- Wat geld kan en nie kan doen nie II
- Agter verre horisonne I
- Agter verre horisonne V. Op die rand van die groot Prêrie
- Agter verre horisonne. Die VSA 1954
- Agter verre horisonne. Die Taj Mahal
- Dialoog met Rome?
- Die geheimnisvolle Zimbabwe
- Ceylon, die traan op die wang van Indië
- Ligdraers van Afrika: David Livingstone
- So ryk die kleed van ons Kersfees
- Augustinus en die Noord-Afrika van sy jeug
- Die bekering van Augustinus
- Augustinus en die Donatiste
- Kerk en staat
- Wêreldmening (druk)
- Het die kerk 'n roeping ten opsigte van die politieke 'lewe'?
- Op die horison van die feesjaar - seëninge en verantwoordelikhede
- Die Yosemite-vallei
- Die betowerde wêreld
- Herfs in Amerika
- Die toepaslikheid van die Bybel
- New Orleans: op die laaste draai van die "Ol' man river..."
- Radiodiens Ontwaak my siel

English radio

- Humour (handwritten text possibly prepared for Radio Nairobi)
- The American Southwest: an enchanted world
- Islam as political factor in Africa. Nasser's Egypt and Gaddafi's Libya

Sermon Texts***Specific Occasions***

1953	Lusaka	The just shall live by faith
?/02/1960	Pretoria	Akademiediens, University of Pretoria
25/11/64	Pretoria East	Closing Service, Faculty of Theology

APPENDIX B: THE WRITTEN WORK OF BEN MARAIS

Unspecified

10/02/40		Wie sal my water gee om te drink uit die put van Bethlehem?
30/4/1950	Pretoria East	Handelinge 11: 17: Wie was ek dan dat ek God kon verhinder
28/2/1960	Waterval-Boven	Handelinge 11: 17;
-		Romeine 1: 17 (Reform Sunday).
-		Psalm 22: 1-9; Romeine 1: 8-17: Die regverdige sal uit die geloof lewe

APPENDIX C

BACKGROUND MATERIAL

Background Material and Biographic Information

Organised chronologically

- 25/08/1910 *De Kerkbode*,115-6, Het Naturellen vraagstuk I
- 01/09/1910 *De Kerkbode*,130-1, Het Naturelle vraagstuk II: De inboorling in zijn maatskapijlike toestand
- 08/09/1910 *De Kerkbode*,146-7, Het Naturellen vraagstuk III: Welk rechten mogen wij de naturel toekennen
- 15/09/1910 *De Kerkbode*,163-4, Het Naturellen Vraagstuk IV: Rechten waarop de naturel aanspraak heeft - Opvoeding
- 22/09/1910 *De Kerkbode*,179-80, Het Naturellen Vraagstuk V: Rechten waarop de Naturel aanspraak heeft - Stemrecht
- 26/09/1923 *De Kerkbode*,1310-1, De Johannesburgse Konferentie
- 01/02/1933 *The SA Outlook* 63 (741), 26-8, The poor white problem - JW Macquarrie
- 01/02/1934 *Die Geref. Vaandel* 2(2),57-8, Die vloek van Cham - PJ Retief
- 01/02/1935 *Koers* 2(4),11-8, Christianisering van die Bantoelewe met behoud van sy Bantoïteit - H du Plessis
- 01/08/1935 *Koers* 3(1),5-12, Enkele essensiële vereistes i.v.m. die oplossing van ons volks-vraagstukke - JC van Rooy
- 01/08/1935 *The SA Outlook* 65(773),172-3, Race relations and religion - RFA Hoernle
- 01/10/1935 *The SA Outlook* 65(773),216-7, Race equality and religion
- 01/11/1935 *The SA Outlook* 65(773),240-2, Race relations and religion
- 01/01/1936 *The Calvin Forum*, Calvinism and Islam - SM Zwemer
- 01/10/1938 *Die Geref. Vaandel* 6(10),306-8, Segregasie of gelykstelling
- 01/04/1939 *Op die Horison* 1(2),50-1, Selfstandigwording van Bantoekekerke in SA
- 01/04/1939 *Die Geref Vaandel* 7(4),106-9, Die krisis in die sendingkerk - D Lategan
- 03/05/1939 *Die Kerkbode*,787-8, Ons sendingbeleid van apartheid - JG Strydom
- 01/07/1939 *Op die Horison* 1(3),97-9, Nogeens segregasie (red)
- 01/07/1939 *Op die Horison* 1(3),111-4, Blank en gekleurde - BB Keet
- 01/08/1939 *Die Basuin* 10(4), Ons sendingbeleid van apartheid
- 24/01/1940 *Die Kerkbode*, 'n Boodskap aan al die Gereformeerde kerke
- 01/02/1940 *Die Basuin* 10(6), Die rassevraagstuk in SA
- 01/03/1940 *Op die Horison* 2(1),7-11, Voorwaardes vir voogdyskap - AH Murray
- 15/05/1940 *Die Kerkbode*,872-3, Ons sendingbeleid
- 01/06/1940 *Op die Horison* 2(2),63-70, Seperatisme en die sending - B Sundkler
- 05/06/1940 *Die Kerkbode* 45(23),997,Nogeens Madras - GJR
- 05/06/1940 *Die Kerkbode* 45(23),989-90, Ons standpunt teenoor ons volksvraagstukke - G Cronje
- 05/06/1940 *Die Kerkbode* 45(23),1007-8, Ons sendingbeleid - BJ Marais
- 19/06/1940 *Die Kerkbode* 45(25),1076, Ons sendingbeleid

APPENDIX C: BACKGROUND MATERIAL

- 01/07/1940 *Die Kerkbode* 46(1),38-9, Ons sendingbeleid nogeens
- 31/07/1940 *Die Kerkbode* 46(5),217-8, Ons sendingbeleid BJ Marais
- 18/09/1940 *Die Kerkbode* 46(12),506-8, Die Christenraad
- 02/10/1940 *Die Kerkbode* 46(14),600-1, Die oekumeniese beweging I - BB Keet
- 01/12/1940 *Die Basuin* 12(5),1-2, Die natuurlike-beleid van die Christen Afrikaner
- 01/12/1940 *Op die Horison* 2(4),171-4, Afrikaanse liberalisme en die naturel - AH Murray
- 01/09/1940 - Kerklike samekomste van blank en gekleurd
- 01/03/1941 *Die Geref Vaandel* 9(2),89-94, Die ideologie van die Afrikaner - PW Botha
- 01/03/1942 *Op die Horison* 4(1),15-22, Segregasie en aparte woongebiede - WJ v d Merwe
- 01/06/1942 *Op die Horison* 4(2),56-62, Die verhoudingsvraagstuk tussen blank en gekleurd soos ons dit vandag aantref
- 01/03/1943 *Op die Horison* 5(1),1-5, Rasseverhoudings in SA (red)
- 01/03/1943 *Op die Horison* 5(1),20-7, Oplossing van die Naturelle-vraagstuk - PJ Coertze e.a.
- 01/03/1943 *Op die Horison* 5(1),33-6, Die Naturelle-verteenwoordigende Raad - J Reyneke
- 01/04/1943 *Die Geref Vaandel* 11(4),85-6, Interessante besonderhede oor sending-aangeleenthede en Naturelle-beleid - EE v Rooyen
- 01/06/1943 *Op die Horison* 5(2),90-3, Oplossing van die Naturellevraagstuk - PJ Coertze e.a.
- 01/12/1943 *Op die Horison* 5(4),157-60, Ons sendingbeleid van apartheid - JG Strydom
- 01/06/1944 *Op die Horison* 6(2) 50-8, Die Christelike voorgedyskap - CB Brink
- 01/09/1944 *Op die Horison* 6(3),83-9, Die historiese agtergrond van meer as een van ons sendingvraagstukke - DJ Keet
- 01/09/1944 *Op die Horison* 6(3),95-106, 'n Veranderde sendingterrein in ons land - N Diedericks
- 1/12/1944 *Op die Horison* 6(4),140-52, Konstruktiewe staatsbeleid vir die Kleurling-gemeenskap – AH Murray
- 01/12/1944 *Inspan* 4(3),7-16, Godsdienstige grondslag van ons rassebeleid - JD du Toit (Totius)
- 15/08/1945 *Die Kerkbode*,136-7, 'n Samespreking oor rasseverhoudings
- 01/09/1945 *Op die Horison* 7(3),105-6, Apartheid: 1829 en 1857 - EA Venter
- 16/01/1946 *Die Kerkbode*,54-55, Is segregasie Bybels? - TC de Villiers
- 01/03/1946 *Op die Horison* 8(1),22-32, Die probleem van die nie-blanke gemeenskap in die lig van Christelike geregtigheid - AM Filmer
- 01/06/1946 *Op die Horison* 8(2),41-45, Van die redaksie - Herrenvolk-mentaliteit
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- 01/12/1946 *Die Basuin* 18(4),1-2, Die godsdienstige grondslag van ons rassebeleid - JD du Toit (Totius)
- 18/12/1946 *Die Kerkbode*,1204-5, Ekumeniese Sinode van Gereformeerde kerke I - BB Keet
- 01/01/1947 *Die Kerkbode*,16-7, Dr John R Mott: Nobel-Pryswenner - GBA Gerdener
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- 22/01/1947 *Die Kerkbode*,146-7, Huislike opvoeding en rasseverhouding - HFM Louw
- 01/02/1947 *Die Geref Vaandel* 15(2),11-13, Aktuele kerklike vraagstukke - D Lategan
- 01/03/1947 *Die Geref Vaandel* 15(3),13-14, Calvinisme en die sosiale vraagstuk - EA Venter
- 01/03/1947 *Op die Horison* 9(1),1-2, Nogeens verhoudingsvraagstuk (red)
- 01/03/1947 *Op die Horison* 9(1),12-8, Ons rassevraagstuk gesien in die lig van gebeurtenisse oorsee (red)
- 01/03/1947 *Op die Horison* 9(1),22-37, Rasse-apartheid in die lig van die Skrif - JH Kritzinger
- 01/04/1947 *Die Geref Vaandel* 15(4),14-5, Die Rassevraagstuk - LAD Roux
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- 01/07/1947 *Die Geref Vaandel* 15(7),4-5, Volkskongres, 1-4/7/47, Johannesburg - JD Vorster
- 01/08/1947 *Die Geref Vaandel* 15(8),4-6, Die rassevraagstuk volgens die Skrifte - JD Vorster
- 01/12/1947 *Op die Horison* 9(4),30-6, Wat is segregasie? - AH Murray
- 01/12/1947 *Die Basuin* 19(4),1-3, Die enigste praktiese apartheidsbeleid vir SA
- 14/01/1948 *Die Kerkbode*,68,79, Ons rassevraagstuk - GBA Gerdener
- 16/01/1948 *Die Kerkbode*,1368-, Kerk en parlement
- 01/03/1948 *Die Geref Vaandel* 16(3),13-4, Die natuurlike-probleem gesien by die lig van die Wysbegeerte van die Wetsidee - DD Rosslee
- 01/04/1948 *Die Geref Vaandel* 16(4),6-7, Die apartheid van die nasies en hul roeping teenoor mekaar – EE van Rooyen
- 14/07/1948 *Die Kerkbode*,1596-7, Die Skrif en rasse-apartheid - BJ Marais
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- 06/10/1948 *Die Kerkbode*,807-8, Die Skrif en rasse-apartheid - EA Venter
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- 30/10/1948 *Die Kerkbode*,937-9, Die kerk en rasse-apartheid (- PV Pistorius)
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- 01/02/1950 *Die Geref Vaandel* 18(2),2-4, Die apartheidsvraagstuk (red.)
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- 15/02/1950 *Die Kerkbode*,294-7, Ons kerk en die rasseprobleem - GBA Gerdener
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- 15/03/1950 *Die Kerkbode*,502-4, Die Skrif en rasseverhoudinge I - AB du Preez
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- 16/08/1950 *Die Kerkbode*,317,320, Wêreldraad van Kerke
- 01/06/1952 *Op die Horison* 14(2),53-6, Die buiteland en ons kleurbeleid - B Marais
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- 31/08/1955 *Die Kerkbode*,270, Die Christen en die Nie-blanke (red)
- 23/11/1955 *Die Kerkbode*,771-2, Die kerk van Christus - en die volkskerk I - AC Barnard
- 30/11/1955 *Die Kerkbode*,820-1, Die kerk van Christus - en die volkskerk II - AC Barnard
- 30/11/1955 *Die Kerkbode*,814, Het ons 'n volkskerk? (red)
- 18/01/1956 *Die Kerkbode* 77(3),111-3, Oor die Volkskerk
- 01/02/1956 *Die Kerkbode* 77(6),180, Dit is net die Swartes
- 15/2/1956 *Die Kerkbode*,278-81, 'n Veelbesproke boek van BB Keet - GBA Gerdener
- 01/03/1956 *Die Geref Vaandel* 24(5),5-10, 'Suid-Afrika waarheen?'
- 18/04/1956 *Die Kerkbode*; Ons rasseverhoudinge
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- 01/10/1957 *Tydskr v Rasse-aangel.* 9(1),12-29, Die beleid van apartheid - MC de Wet Nel
- 06/11/1957 *Die Kerkbode*,831,829, Gesamentlike aanbidding
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- 3/09/1958 *Die Kerkbode* 82(10)410-2, Die Gereformeerde Ekumeniese Sinode II - AJ v Wijk
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- 01/03/1959 *Die Geref Vaandel* 28(1),16-20, Die verskeidenheid van ons Bantoebevolking - BA Pauw
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- 03/04/1960 *Dagbreek en Sondagnuus*, Die Bruinman was altyd daar (Uniefees Bylaag) (SV Peterson)
- 24/04/1960 *Dagbreek en Sondagnuus*, NG Kerk en Apartheid (FE O'B Geldenhuys)
- 01/06/1960 *Op die Horison* 22(2),39-41, Eiesoortige ontwikkeling tot volksdiens deur AB du Preez - Uit die boekrak, MWR
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- 03/06/1960 *Die Burger*, 'Christelike realisme' in ons rassesituasie (FJM Potgieter)
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- 01/03/1961 *Op die Horison* 23(1),7-22, Die Cottesloe Kerke-beraad (red)
- 01/06/1961 *NGTT* 11(3), Matrimonium Mixtum - PA Verhoef
- 20/07/1961 *Rand Daily Mail*, Race discrimination 1. Violates the basis of Christianity
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- 13/09/1961 *Die Kerkbode*,348-9, Gelykheid - die nuwe kultus (red)
- 01/04/1962 *Die Kerkbode*,456-7, Die redes is aanvegbaar (red)
- 24/04/1962 *Rand Daily Mail*, Africa 's fateful clash of nationalisms (PV Pistorius)
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- 15/08/1962 *Pro Veritate*, Conflict of loyalties (red)
- 15/08/1962 *Pro Veritate*, Kritiek van kerkblaaië - ons antwoord
- 15/08/1962 *Pro Veritate*, Belangrike brosjure - WD Jonker
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- 19/09/1962 *Die Kerkbode* 114(12),390-2, Lojaliteit - 'n verdwynende deug II. Verskillende faktore dra by tot gebrek aan... - AB du Preez

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- 12/06/1963 *Die Kerkbode*,800-1, Kritiek op Sinodale besluite (red)
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- 08/11/1990 *Die Kerkbode*, Versoening uit die NGK. (oorgeneem uit Die Burger
- 16/11/1990 *Die Kerkbode* 146(20), Die lang reis van Cottesloe na Rustenburg
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- 16/11/1990 *Die Kerkbode* 146(20), Skuldbelydenis (red)
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- 25/10/1991 *Die Kerkbode* 148(17), Kerk moet ligbaken wees - D Hattingh
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