

**LAND FOR MISSION AND MISSION FOR LAND: A MISSIOLOGICAL REFLECTION
OF THE KRANSPOORT MISSION STATION IN SOUTPANSBERG WITHIN THE
VHEMBE DISTRICT OF THE LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

BY

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DECLARATION

I declare that *Land for mission and mission for land: A missiological reflection of the Kranspoort Mission Station in Soutpansberg within the Vhembe district of the Limpopo Province* is my own work. All of the sources used and quoted have been indicated and acknowledged.

Mashonelo Anderson Magwira

April 2016

DEDICATION

It is by the grace of God that I dedicate this dissertation to my late father Rev. Eyeson (Eveson) Thomas Magwira who worked very hard under difficult circumstances in and among the then Messina farming and copper mining community and among Nancefield township residents. He served this community as the leader of the then Messina Dutch Reformed Church in Africa which has been called the Musina Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa since 1972. I also dedicate this dissertation to Gressier Magwira, my mother, whose unwavering support remained constant throughout. She was very inspirational in many instances throughout this process.

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SUMMARY

The relationship between the Messina Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) in Africa and the group that left Kranspoort Mission Station, who settled in Nancefield in Musina, had an effect on the researcher. The despondent feelings, sentiments of bitterness and grief of the group were felt during church services, Holy Communion services and even during choir practices. The attitude of the Kranspoort arrivals affected many leaders including the researcher's father who was one of the leaders in the congregation in Musina. The continued resistance and ill feelings of the Kranspoort forced removals were always echoed in their conversations.

Events were repeatedly told, which demonstrated the deepest dissatisfaction of how the land was lost unexpectedly. The myth of how the land was rightfully acquired by the missionaries and how it was bought remained unanswered.

The big question that was always asked was how the aim of mission work related to the occupation and sudden takeover of the land. The land for Africans was never for sale, but for sharing, for the sense of belonging and even for building good relations.

The approach of the whites was to obtain land first and do mission work second. This approach was a recipe for conflict. The researcher's deep question then is this: why did these conflicts arise if the core reason for the mission station was the Gospel? Why was there so much pain if the aim of the mission station was the Gospel?

Chapter One of this dissertation is an introduction to the study. Chapter Two of the study starts with the events in the Cape that led to the DRC getting involved in mission work outside of the Cape. Influences from other churches that made the DRC get involved in missionary work are also mentioned. This is followed by a discussion of the arrival of DRC and Lutheran missionaries in the north. The role of black evangelists and their coincidental convergence with missionaries around the area of Soutpansberg is also mentioned. Although black missionaries played a vital role in pioneering mission work among their people, they are missing from the records of missionaries despite the fact that white missionaries would not do anything without them.

These black evangelists served as preachers in the remote areas where missionaries could not go and served white missionaries' personal needs such as getting wood and maintaining their gardens and surroundings. The black evangelists were also bodyguards and served as advisers to the white missionaries in cases where these missionaries were ignorant. These unsung heroes knew the language of their people, they knew the cultural impediments that held people back from accepting Christian teaching and they were also more mature and human to interact with their people.

Chapter Three traces the factors that were responsible for the development of mission policy. Land issues, the plight of the poor white and the emergence of the black elite that fought against inequalities made the white government introduce stringent rules that would ensure forced compliance. The 1935 DRC Mission Policy was a direct product of the forces of the 1913 and 1936 Land Tenure Acts that pushed black people into barren land, rendering them 'hewers of wood and drawers of water' (Malala 2015:23).

Chapters four, five and six analyse the actual events that took place at the Kranspoort Mission Station. The roles played by resident missionary Rev. Lukas Van der Merwe and mission secretary B.F. Stofberg are discussed. Moreover, individual black leaders such as Walther Segooa, Ramphele and others are scrutinised. Conflicts between Stephanus Hofmeyr's descendants and the DRC about the ownership of the land are also assessed. In addition, ensuing court cases including the Land Claim Court of 1998 with former Kranspoort residents who were forcefully removed in 1957 receive attention. The last chapter contains a summary and conclusions.

Lastly, the question posed for the researchers who will explore the question further is: How can the former and the present community that originated from Kranspoort benefit from this history and avoid making the same mistakes? Does the aim to do mission in South Africa still exist? How does one read the signs of time?

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CHAPTER ONE: DECK-SETTING

1.1 Introduction

The Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) of South Africa established its first mission station outside the Cape Colony in the northern part of the country in 1863 at a farm called Kranspoort. The developments at this mission station took many turns, especially after Stephanus Hofmeyr, the first Afrikaner pioneer missionary, came to the area. The mission policy which was influenced by the events of the 1800s, which guarded the church over the years, was shrouded with Afrikaner politics of disdain for black culture and political aspiration. A plethora of Acts that suppressed and discriminated against black people were promulgated to safeguard white Afrikaner economic, social and religious interests.

The policy of segregation and dominance over black people, which was met with black resistance, led to the demise of the Kranspoort Mission Station in 1957 when a group of black Christians consisting of 157 families was declared undesirable and forcefully banished from the station. The forced removal was done under the disguise of the Group Areas Act of 1950 which declared that any black people who were living on white farms who did not have a permit were unemployed squatters and liable for forced removals.

The group that left Kranspoort and settled in Nancefield in Musina, next to the Beitbridge border with Zimbabwe, and other parts of the country were 'wounded' and they did not tell a good story about the Kranspoort Mission Station wherever they went. The Kranspoort Mission Station that happened to be the first DRC mission station outside of the Cape colony eventually became the source of anger and frustration (Saayman 2007:42). The feelings and attitudes of the Kranspoort arrivals affected the researcher's father, who was one of the leaders of the congregation in Musina. The continued resistance and ill feelings about the Kranspoort forced removals destabilised the community at Musina. These people repeatedly told stories of how they were treated at the mission station and brutally lost the land of their birth to the hands of those who brought the Gospel to them. The myth of how the land was rightfully acquired by the missionaries and how the land was bought did not convince them that they were not rightful owners of the land.

At the time, the researcher could not understand why people were forcefully removed from what was regarded as a Christian mission station and dumped in a squalor place where they were neglected.

The big questions that occupied the researcher's mind were the following:

- What was the aim of mission work?
- What were the motives of mission in the first place?
- Why were harsh methods enforced when the disagreement ensued?

For Africans the land was never for sale but for sharing and building good relations. According to the researcher, church mission was about love and the promotion of an ethos of coexistence and not about creating animosity and rivalry.

1.2 Problem Statement

According to the researcher's parents (informants) there were problems of governance at Kranspoort for a long time which simmered with a low intensity of disunity until these problems intensified in 1953. The arrival of Thibego Leshiba in 1953, who was perceived as a heathen in the mission station, worsened the underlying tensions until they became open conflict. According to Malunga, Leshiba came to the Kranspoort Mission Station after receiving an invitation from her children because she could no longer stay alone on the neighbouring farms as she was old and sick (1986:120). She died after only a short stay with her children. According to the rules of the mission station, she could not be buried there as she was considered a heathen (Malunga 1986:120). The conflict came to a boiling point when one group buried her there against the word of the missionary and his council. The burial caused conflict because the practice of the mission station could not permit her to be buried in the consecrated cemetery. However, Joseph Matsiba who was the son-in-law to the deceased and a citizen of Kranspoort insisted that Leshiba be buried at Kranspoort, disregarding missionary orders (Segooa in Malan 1973). Matsiba and his supporters used the burial to stage a confrontation with the missionary Lukas Van der Merwe and the church council by violating one of the most important regulations at the mission station at that time (Malunga

1986:121).

This study proposes to investigate the problems that led to the confrontation at Kranspoort and the mission policies that were followed. The study will attempt to come up with some suggestions as to how mission work ought to have been done at that time. The study will compare the DRC's approach to mission with those of other churches that worked in the neighbourhood. The study will further investigate the role of the Group Areas Act of 1950 and how it promoted the conflict at the time.

Mission work came to a halt following the implementation of the Group Areas Act of 1950. The researcher's concern is whether the mission intention of the DRC was incongruent with the ethos and ideals of the policy of separateness and whether the scaling down of mission activities at Kranspoort was in line with the envisaged purpose of mission. Answers to these questions are imperatively important to guide any future missionary work in the area.

Having been a member of the DRC in Africa in Nancefield Musina and a son to a lay preacher in the church at the time, the researcher had direct experience with the Kranspoort forced removals. After interacting with members from the Kranspoort mission station, the researcher and many children of the church workers had the impression that mission work was sometimes used to further the political agendas of the ruling party. Tactics of divide-and-rule that were common in the apartheid system were noticeable in the church. The existence of two rival groups at the Kranspoort Mission Station epitomises the divide-and-rule tactics of the church. This study attempts to answer these questions.

1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions are pursued in the study:

- What guided the DRC in its early mission policy to the black people within the boundaries of South Africa?
- Did the whites' economic interest as perpetrated by the legacy of the colonial right of conquest and acquisition of land play a significant role in the DRC Mission Policy?

- Why were the black Christians residing at the Kranspoort Mission Station forcefully removed?
- Why were the black people residing outside the mission station invited to replace them?

1.4 Epistemology

The events at Kranspoort made the researcher an outsider and insider at the same time. The researcher did not personally experience the forced removals but did experience the effects of forced removals. The scars of forced removals are still present as people are still fighting for land at Kranspoort although the Land Claims Court has restored the land to the owners (Land Court decision of 1998). The beneficiaries of the land cannot go back to Kranspoort and settle there or use it in a profitable way because of backlogs created by the apartheid system. As an outsider and a person on the margins, the researcher strives to know what happened during the forced removals and as an insider still living on the margins, the researcher wants to come to terms with how the mission of the church could have been understood. The researcher is an insider because the pain affecting people then still lives on in the generation of this time. The conflict's painful results still lives because it impairs the continuation of mission work at the Kranspoort Mission Station and the surrounding areas.

As an insider, the researcher has the knowledge based on his Christian upbringing in the evangelist house which had to deal with all of the hardship the black evangelists had to bear in serving people who were wounded by the forced removals.

The extent of the pain caused by the forced removals and the loss suffered remained a question in the researcher's life. The researcher's personal contact with one of the missionaries involved in the mission station caused a long standing quest to find out exactly what had happened. This would be an insider's approach. An apology has never been issued from the white DRC about what happened in the past, not even at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Dutch Reformed Church 1999).

1.5 A Missiological Study

The study is missiological. John Roxborough (2008) says the following about missiology:

‘Missiology acts as a gadfly in the house of theology, creating unrest and resisting complacency, opposing every ecclesiastical impulse to self-preservation, every desire to stay where we are, every inclination toward provincialism and parochialism, every fragmentation of humanity into regional or sectional blocs’

Furthermore, missiology’s task is to critically accompany the missionary enterprise, to scrutinise its foundations, aims, attitudes, message and methods—not from the safe distance of an onlooker, but in a spirit of co-responsibility and service to the Church of Christ (Bosch 1991:496). This study attempts to take the path of critical missiological enquiry that would bring about an authentic theological reflection on what God’s mission is to the world (Wright 2010:2-20). This study is missiological in that it investigates the role missionaries played at the Kranspoort Mission Station and what missiology as a ‘second activity’ of reflection can pronounce for the edification of mission in future. Bosch (1991:496) further states that one effect of the success of the theological project is to place mission at the centre of the church’s self-understanding.

In discussing the history of missiology in the theology curriculum, David Bosch notes that ‘The basic problem...was not with what missiology was but with what mission was’ (1991:492). Mission is the first activity and missiology is the second activity (Bosch 1991:7-8). This study reflects on missionaries’ motives and the aim of mission at Kranspoort as a second reflective activity. Verkuyl (1978:168-175) and Otto, Strausse and Tennent (2010:165) identify impure motives (unquestionable motives), which include a) imperialist motives (turning natives into docile subjects to be exploited by colonial authorities, b) cultural motives (mission as transfer of missionary ‘superior’ culture), c) romantic motives (the missionaries desire to go far away to exotic countries and people), and d) ecclesiastical colonisation motives (religious domination of other faiths and condescending pity). Among appropriate or pure motives they cite a) compassion and human needs, b) the love of Christ, c) divine calling, d) obedience to Christ’s call, and e) doxology. This study aims to use this to expose impure motives from pure motives at the Kranspoort Mission Station.

1.6 Literature Review

Maria Atilano (University of North Florida) cites four benefits of conducting a literature review in qualitative research. These include 1) an identification of the experts on a particular topic, 2) an assessment of the current state of research on the topic, 3) an identification of key questions about the topic that need further research, and 4) the determination of methodologies used in past studies on similar subjects. Therefore, this method reveals the authors who have already written on the topic. There are, however, some pitfalls in the literature review. Some topics are localised within the country and specific church. Furthermore, the language used in the research on some topics possibly limit global investigation. The case of the DRC mission within the borders of South Africa received attention from local scholars, including Afrikaans scholars. The literature from such local scholars and from specific ethnic groups may suffer from subjectivity and provincialism. Such reports may lack critical thinking and rigorous assessment.

For these reasons, the literature review in this study is limited to South African scholars who wrote their work in English and are critical about the mission policy of the DRC. As background material to support the enquiry, some foreign scholars who wrote generally about mission work will be included in the literature review. The following works are considered in this review: D.J. Bosch (1991): *Transforming mission*; W.A. Saayman (2007;1984): *Being Missionary and Being Human: An overview of Dutch Reformed Mission*; J.J. Kritzinger (1988): *The South African Context for Mission*; T.R.H. Davenport (1989): *South Africa: A Modern History*; Z. Mbali (1987): *The Churches and Racism: A Black South African Perspective*; C. Otto, S.J. Strauss & T.C. Tennent (2010): *Encountering Theology of Mission, Biblical Foundations, Historical Developments, and Contemporary Issues*; P.U. Maynard-Reid (1997): *Complete Evangelism: The Luke-Acts Model*; J.W. de Gruchy (2004): *The Church Struggle in South Africa*; D. Horner (2011): *When Missions Shape the Mission: You and Your Church Can Reach the World*; and J. Verkuyl (1978): *Contemporary Missiology: An Introduction*.

1.6.1 D.J. Bosch (1991): Transforming mission

In his magisterial book on mission, Bosch starts by highlighting the contemporary crisis mission is in. Since 1950, mission has gone through a paradigm shift in its relevance and meaning in the

world. The context in which mission is done has changed and so the methods as well as the goal of mission has been affected. The advancement of science and technology, the challenges from the so-called third world to the dominant western culture and the blurring of the two worldviews of Christian and non-Christian have also complicated the meaning of mission (Bosch 1991:1-4). Moreover, economic disparity in the world and the rapid changes Western Theology has gone through because of the developments in the world have, according to Bosch, also contributed to the crisis in which mission is defined and understood.

Bosch, however, tries to explain that everything that has to do with mission is not lost as mission is firmly founded in the plan of God as revealed in scripture. He does this by arguing for the foundation, aim and nature of mission from the Old Testament and New Testament. He goes further by identifying six epochs in the history of the Christian mission in order to explicate the developments that had been there in order to show the shift in the understanding of mission (Bosch 1991:181). After explaining the contexts in which mission took place at length and how its understanding was influenced by those circumstances he comes up with new elements that should provide a new lens for understanding what mission should and could be. He comes up with 13 elements of emerging missionary paradigms that should aid the church in its mission to the world. He coins the new phrase of 'mission as', meaning mission as the church with others, mission as *Missio Dei*, mission as a quest for justice, mission as liberation and so on. This new interpretation of what mission may mean given a particular context is a helpful step that moves away from the narrow traditional way of confining mission to a particular worldview. In order to evaluate the missionary activities and what went wrong at the DRC Kranspoort Mission Station and to prevent reoccurrences of the unnecessary conflicts, one needs a broader view of what mission may mean in a particular context. Mission at Kranspoort should have been 'mission as mediating salvation' and at the same time should have focused on a quest for justice. Moreover, mission at Kranspoort should have been mission as liberation, mission as common witness and mission as contextualisation (Bosch 1991:368-507).

An important gap that needs to be elucidated, which Bosch does not articulate, is transformation and empowerment. Although the title of his book is the 'transforming mission', Bosch does not

discuss mission as transformation and mission as empowerment. It is the researcher's conviction that unless mission is seen as transforming societal oppressive structures and empowering the downtrodden and levelling the playing field in terms of power relations, mission will not be comprehensive enough to be heralded as a liberating praxis.

The researcher will thus argue in Chapter Five that mission must include the paradigm of authentic transformation and empowerment. Transformation in a South African context has a political and social context. It requires an intentional agenda of de-racialising and reconstructing 'damaged' self-esteems that have deteriorated into black self-hate and self-destruction and empowering the poor and the people on the margins (Williams 2000:169). Transformation has to do with relationships that, when improved, can strengthen the bonds of spirituality and togetherness (Kgatla 2013:6).

1.6.2 W.A. Saayman (2007 and 1984): Being missionary and being human: An overview of Dutch Reformed mission and unity

Saayman (2007) provides a useful overview of how the DRC mission was started in the Cape Colony, the factors that led to its acceleration and the influence other missionary societies had on the DRC missionaries. This overview explains the fact that the DRC was a 'wounded' church as far as equal treatment of blacks as that of whites was concerned and this 'frozen' attitude had a bearing on their mission involvement (Saayman 2007: 24-28). Although some missionaries tried to fight for slave emancipation, advocated for better working conditions for farm workers and even arranged evening prayers for their workers, there was always ambivalence surrounding their missionary work for as much as they would try to protect black workers against brutalities from white people they still believed that blacks were inferior to them. One may say that they 'hunted with hounds and ran with the hares'.

1.6.3 J.J. Kritzinger (1988): The South African context for mission

The work of J.J. Kritzinger is useful for this study because of the statistics he has presented in the book about the demography of Christian churches in South Africa. The introductory chapter is a

short history of mission in South Africa that starts with the DRC and then moves to other churches. After presenting a pictorial map of religious affiliation in South Africa he moves on to define what mission is. The weakness of the book lies in the author's approach. Although he is a professor of Missiology at the University of Pretoria, he has not transcended the typical Western protectionist approach of defining mission. Although he admits that there are dimensions of mission, he does not go as far as Bosch who defines mission as something else in each context. Moreover, racial overtures such as blaming black Christians for hate, violence and prejudices are still audible in the background of his analysis (Kritzinger 1988:35-37).

That black people had to fight to overthrow the yoke of oppression is not very clear in his theology. There is, for example, no appreciation for 'mission as liberation and quest for justice'. Theological definitions of mission such as 'the sharing in the renewal of the church; the sharing in the spreading of the Gospel; and the sharing in creating a society based on Gospel principles' are but empty statements because there is no context to them. What the Gospel means to one person may mean something different to another. Even the statements such as 'mission is the total task to which God sent the church for the sake of the salvation of the world means nothing if the concept like "salvation" does not have [an] empowering transformational dimension'. If power relations between the poor and the rich do not change and the rich are still in control, the word mission has no context. The book contains trivialities that betray the true meaning of the mission of God to the world.

1.6.4 T.R.H. Davenport (1987): South Africa: A modern history

The book by Davenport remains a useful resource on the whole range of South African history from the earliest times. Section 11 of the book deals with the struggle for land possession between blacks and whites in the Cape Colony. The relics of this history are very crucial for the interpretative framework for the conflicts at the Kranspoort Mission Station. Similar prejudices and quests to acquire and defend the land were a formative part of the struggle at Kranspoort. Rural resistance to white dominance and apartheid rule had a contributing effect on the conflicts at the Kranspoort Mission Station. Chapter 2 of the book gives an account of the policy of 'separate

development' which brought about the plethora of black dispossession laws emanating from the Land Act of 1913, Group Areas Act of 1950, Native Services Levy Act of 1952, Bantu Education Act of 1953 and many others which were tailored and promulgated to curtail and control black advancements in any form. The effects of these Acts played their share in the developments of conflicts in the DRC mission stations such as Bethesda and Kranspoort. The book is reviewed to enable the researcher to argue that the church's struggle in the DRC mission station was orchestrated by politics and religion. As Lamin Sanneh argues (2008:218), Christianity became a world religion only because Europe was a world power. Similarly, Kranspoort Mission Station became what it was and did what it did because the DRC closely collaborated with the white apartheid regime.

1.6.5 J.W. de Gruchy (2004): The church struggle in South Africa

The *Church Struggle in South Africa* gives accounts of many events that occurred over a long period stretching from colonial times to 1994 when the new political dispensation was ushered into South Africa. It is also a resource book which details the lives of pioneers in the struggle against apartheid such as Dr Beyers Naude, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and many others who held the torch of hope high during the dark times of apartheid. It portrays the black renaissance, protest, resistance, repression and transition to democracy. Any work on South African church history and mission which does not take the contents of this book into its discussion will not be authentic. Black Consciousness and Black Theology are discussed to elucidate black quests for freedom despite brutal state repressions. The book also gives background information about and reasons behind the 'forced removals' of the mid 1950s and early 1960s.

1.6.6 Otto, Strausse and Tennent (2010): Encountering theology of mission, biblical foundations, historical developments, and contemporary issues

The book follows Bosch's style in his book *Transforming Mission*. First, it elaborates on the biblical foundations of mission followed by motives and means for mission. Since this research focuses on the missionary motives and methods of the DRC, the theoretical information provided in this book is crucial to evaluating the DRC Mission Policy and motives. In part one of the book,

the authors, after having clarified the biblical foundation of mission in the Old and New Testaments, elucidate *Missio Dei*, the nature of mission and the task of mission. The discussion under the above headings brings a new perspective through which the assessment of the DRC mission at Kranspoort can be analysed.

Under the chapter dealing with the motivation for mission, the authors clarify the spirit and commitment with which missionary work should be conducted. Motives for why mission is done are classified into two categories: ‘questionable motivations for missions’ and ‘appropriate motivations for mission’. The authors warn that ‘throughout the history of the Christian mission pure and impure motives have been as mixed through each other as the clean and unclean animals of Noah’s ark’ (Otto, Strausse & Tennent 2010:166). They also warn that people should not be quick to condemn the missionaries who gave their lives for mission and unwittingly committed mistakes as they are human and not divine. The pure and impure motives discussed in this book provide a useful lens through which the DRC policy and motives for mission can be analysed, especially under the scramble of colonialism and quest to conquer the soul of Africans (Kirkaldy 2005:15).

1.6.7 D. Horner (2011): When missions shape the mission

Horner is alarmed by the worldwide dissolution of the Christian church when it comes to God’s given mandate to do mission in the world. He tries to trace some of the root causes of the problem. The author also makes some controversial statements about mission. He defines mission as ‘God’s plan for reaching all nations with the good news of Jesus Christ by sending His people to tell them about and show them the gracious, redeeming love of a glorious God’ (Horner 2011:170). Despite this definition he does not help the church to understand what mission means. As discussed in the previous book by Otto, Strausse and Tennent (2010), such a loose definition lends itself to questionable motivation for mission because it carries elements of condescending pity and ecclesial power.

However, the author provides five ‘roadblocks’ which serve as major obstacles to a kingdom-focused mission: a) inward-focused church (self-interest); b) trend toward isolationism among

nations (drawing boundaries around itself); c) overwhelmed by magnitude of the task (feeling incapable to do the task); d) compromise of conviction about the message; and e) general spirit of apathy (lack of commitment). These five elements are critical during an assessment and evaluation of the Kranspoort Mission Station in Chapter Six.

1.6.8. D.L. Guder (2000): The continuing conversion of the church

The book is about the mission of the church and how the words ‘mission’ and ‘witness’ should be understood. The author warns against the optimism of Western societies where they assume that they have reached the highest level of social, cultural, technical, and political achievement which would guide them in exporting civilisation throughout the world (Guder 2000:30). Unwittingly, their Christian understanding is wrapped within this assumption.

The author introduces the new concept of ‘disestablishment’ whereby the church lost its legal privileges within society and its power to define and control public morality. In time, the church began to rely on the state for its protection in mission fields (Guder 2000:7). Within this context of close collaboration between the church and state, ‘mission’ had basically meant the Western expansion of its culturally conformed Christianity, carried out in a complex relationship with colonialism (Ibid:19). In this context, mission and evangelism were used interchangeably and they both meant ‘the salvation of the individual souls’, liberation from fear of judgement, and the promise of heaven (Ibid:19).

Over the years these presumptions were challenged as new paradigms of mission emerged as can be seen from Bosch’s book (1991). Among other understandings of mission, mission started to be understood as *Missio Dei*. God could not be restricted anymore to what was happening in the West cultural Christianity (Guder 2000:20). God’s work was understood to be universal and made other nations of the world ‘carriers of His revelation’. It is against this background that Guder argues for a more comprehensive nature of God’s mission.

Under the section ‘*Missio Dei* and Its Witness’, Guder argues for the dynamic understanding of scripture as ‘the written witness to God’s self-disclosure’ (2000:59). In God’s self-disclosure, God

is actively involved in human history using any means He decides to use. His Word is the first of all God's self-disclosure as event and message (Ibid:59).

Under the fifth chapter, the risk of translatability is explored. Guder (2000:97) discusses how human beings may be obstacles to mission. He calls this human impediment to the translation of the Gospel 'human sinfulness'. This 'sinfulness' expresses itself in a constant, and often subtle, process which results in humans' attempts to bring the Gospel under control and to make it manageable (Ibid:97). Guder calls for a radical conversion of the church to undo this 'human sinfulness' of limiting the Gospel. He argues that reduction (reducing the Gospel to earthly vessels) plus control (wanting to manage the Gospel) produces reductionism. This results in one arguing that one's way of understanding the Christian faith is a final version of Christian truth. This happens when one tends to enshrine one cultural articulation of the Gospel as the normative statement for all cultures (Guder 2000:101).

Under the sixth chapter, Guder discusses the dichotomy in the theology of mission. In some Christian quarters the Gospel has been reduced to a message focused on the individual's salvation. The fundamental question asked is: 'Are you saved?' In that case everything done in evangelisation and mission is directed to that understanding of salvation. Guder calls for a confrontation with this kind of understanding of evangelism and mission and wants people to develop 'an understanding that is rooted in the *missio Dei*, shaped by God's actions in history' (2000:120). The church ought to transcend this dichotomy and rejoin the benefits of salvation with responsibilities and 'call[s] to the church to enter into God's mission in the world'. Guder (2000:131) further maintains that 'the reduction of the Gospel to individual salvation and with all its resulting implications, is the gravest and most influential expression of human drive for control'. According to Guder, a reduced Gospel trivialises God as it makes God into a manageable deity. It violates the biblical confession of the holiness of God (2000:131). Reductionism means that the 'breath and length and height and depth of the love of Christ' are deprived of their radical and transforming power, the 'inbreaking of God's kingdom is hindered or diluted' (Guder 2000:133).

The discussions in this book are vital for the researcher's evaluation of the DRC Mission Policy and the understanding of underlying problems at its mission station in Kranspoort. One needs the critical insights and comments as elucidated in this book to find the causes of the 'failure of mission' in Kranspoort.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is based on criminologist William Chambliss's theory of conflict. William Chambliss was a professor of Sociology at George Washington University and he died on 22 February 2014 (William J. Chambliss nd). He is the author and editor of several books in the field of sociology of law, criminology and sociological theory including, *Law, Order, and Power* (with Seidman), *Making Law* (with Zatz) and *On the Take: From Petty Thieves to Presidents* (ibid). Some of his current work includes *Criminological Theory and Social Structure* and also *Octopus Inc: Crimes of the State* (William J. Chambliss nd).

William Chambliss began his work during the 1960s, the time of the Civil Rights Movement, war protest, and riots. People living during this time wanted a perspective to better understand the circumstances of the world. He believed that sociology was best equipped to explain the perplexing and complex problems that occurred during this time. The theoretical framework he uses to study and analyse the world is called the conflict perspective (Sage publishing nd).

Here are a few of the basic assumptions of the conflict theory as espoused by Chambliss:

- 1) Every society is subjected at every moment to changes. Social change is ubiquitous.
- 2) Every society experiences at every moment social conflicts. Social conflict is ubiquitous.
- 3) Every element in a society contributes to its change.
- 4) Every society rests on constraints of some of its member by others.

In other words, the conflict perspective argues that:

- 1) Society is a place where various struggles take place.
- 2) The state is the most important factor in the struggle and is certainly on one side against the other. Coercion (usually in the form of law) is the chief factor that helps maintain social institutions such as private property, slavery, and other institutions that create unequal rights and privileges. Social inequality arises out of these coercive techniques (Chambliss 1971:4).
- 3) Social inequality is the major source of social conflict.
- 4) The state and the law are instruments of oppression employed by the ruling class for their own benefit.
- 5) Classes are social groups with distinctive interests that bring them into conflict with other social groups with opposite interests.

So the key factor in the conflict perspective is to understand and study the relationship between social classes and social inequality.

Chambliss believed that the conflict perspective was the best suited framework for understanding social circumstances because it was interdisciplinary. According to Chambliss, it uses the works of historians, economists, philosophers, geographers, and sociologists. In the researcher's opinion, it is impossible to understand society and human behaviour by studying through the eyes of one discipline. As Max Muller says 'one who knows one knows none' (Encyclopedia of Britannica nd). These perspectives from other social disciplines are also appropriate to missiology.

In one of his books, he gives other reasons why he used a functionalist perspective. According to him, this perspective focuses on what produces stability and continuity in society. It is more focused on why things change. It looks at what the disruptive aspects of society are, especially in industrialised society, and how society is divided by power, wealth, prestige, and perceptions of the world. Chambliss argues that, 'The shape and character of the legal system in complex societies can be understood as deriving from the conflicts inherent in the structure of these societies which are stratified economically and politically' (1971:3).

Moreover, Chambliss felt that empirical data suggested that the poor do not receive the same treatment from law enforcement agencies as the middle class or the well-to-do (1971:4). In other words, the differential treatment is systematic. It involves practices by the police and prosecuting attorneys of choosing to look for and impose punishments for offenses that are characteristically committed by the poor and ignoring those committed by the more affluent members of the community. Offenses that are equally likely to be committed by different social classes (gambling for example), are enforced more readily by the police in lower-class neighbourhoods while ignoring them in upper-class neighbourhoods (Chambliss 1971:190).

Chambliss then goes on to say how selective enforcement by policing agencies focuses less on what society needs and more on what is less important in society. He gives the example that, even though there was also discontent in urban areas, the laws which prohibit discrimination in employment, unions, and housing, consumer fraud, housing violations, and other protections for the poor are ignored at every level of government. However, despite the lack of evidence purporting that marijuana is a harmful drug, laws prohibiting marijuana smoking are enforced vigorously (Chambliss 1973:191).

Following these perspectives of Chambliss, the researcher wants to argue that some of the causes of conflicts at Kranspoort can be explained using this model of analysis.

1.8 Methodology

In this study, the researcher employs qualitative research methods involving a case study, snowball sampling, and archival qualitative research with the administration of a questionnaire to collect data. The Kranspoort community, which consists of the descendants of people who were banished from Kranspoort farm in 1957 and have recently successfully claimed their ancestors land back, forms the case study. The researcher employs some theories to form propositions that would guide the research questions to get to the bottom of the investigation.

Theory is understood as the relationship between cause and effect through the study of observable phenomenon and in this case theory is related to truth with statements giving true knowledge

regarding the conflict at Kranspoort. According to Howel, ‘Truthful statements theory reflects and explains reality and provides knowledge of phenomena under analysis’ (2013:23). Howel (2013:23) also explains the following theories.

1.8.1 Interpretive theory

According to Howel. ‘Critical, constructive and participatory paradigms involve interpretive perspectives of theory which emphasise understanding and relationship between interpretation and the phenomenon under investigation’ (2013:25). In this theory, emphasis is placed on the interconnection between patterns rather than the identification of cause and effect. These understandings make it possible to look at the situation at Kranspoort Mission Station within the political climate of the time in South Africa. The missionary assumptions of the time about black people and underlying African resistance against apartheid are at play and the authorities, operating from religious and ‘superior culture’, miss the point and plunge the mission enterprise in jeopardy. The primary benefit from employing the interpretive perspectives theory is to benefit missiological reflections on mission conflicts in South Africa.

1.8.2 Case study method

The research methodology employed by the researcher requires gathering relevant data from people who lived at Kranspoort and the specified documents and compiling databases in order to analyse the material and arrive at a more complete understanding and historical reconstruction of survivors of Kranspoort Mission Station. The case study method benefits the study in that it is a content analysis and ‘brackets out’ irrelevant material that can detract the attention of the researcher. The researcher hopes to shed some light on the following questions:

1. What were the motives for DRC mission in Kranspoort?
2. How did black people receive and understand the message?
3. Why was there conflict between the indigenous people in the mission station?
4. Why could the missionaries not foresee the danger and avoid it?

5. How did the black people expect the missionaries to treat them?

1.8.3 Snowball sampling

Rowland Atkinson and John Flint (2004:1) describe snowball sampling as a technique for gathering research subjects through the identification of an initial subject who is used to provide the names of other actors. These actors may themselves open possibilities for an expanding web of contact and inquiry. This strategy has been used primarily as a response to overcome the problems associated with inadequate numbers of respondents that could provide vital information and are not known to the researcher (Faugier & Sargeant 1997). It is easy for the researcher if the identified unit of analysis can identify similar candidates in the community. This also saves the researcher a lot of time, energy and resources. Snowball sampling can thus be placed within a wider set of methodologies that takes advantage of the social networks of identified respondents, which can be used to provide a researcher with an escalating set of potential contacts.

1.8.4 Archival qualitative method

Louise Corti (2004) says that archival research can be defined ‘as the locating, evaluating, and systematic interpretation and analysis of sources found in archives’. Original source materials are consulted and analysed for purposes other than those for which they were originally collected—to ‘ask new questions of old data, provide a comparison over time or between geographic areas, verify or challenge existing findings, or draw together evidence from disparate sources to provide a bigger picture’. Corti (2004) further argues that for the social scientist, using archives may seem relatively unexciting compared to undertaking fieldwork, which is seen as fresh, vibrant, and essential for many researchers, but it remains one of the useful methods of accessing original data that cannot be otherwise accessed.

1.8.5 Qualitative evaluation

A qualitative evaluation will be used for this research project leveraging subjective methods such as interviews and observations to collect substantive and relevant data. These interviews will be conducted with people with firsthand experience of the events at Kranspoort. Such a qualitative

approach is valuable here due to the varying experiences of the participants. After collecting the qualitative data derived from these interviews, careful analysis will be done manually using assessment and evaluation methods.

1.8.6 Data collection

Data collection will consist of surveys, observations and interviews with former residents of Kranspoort (teachers as well as ordinary people). Initially, a survey instrument to measure participants' attitudes and beliefs regarding their experiences at Kranspoort will be administered. A structured observation protocol will be developed to aid in field notes collected and an interview protocol rooted in the literature will be developed to act as a guide for the semi-structured interviews. The goal is to interview approximately 20 participants who embody a range of identity positions and stakeholdings.

1.9 Study outline

The study comprises seven chapters that are organised around the following thematic divisions:

Chapter One is called Deck-setting and provides an introduction to the study. It discusses background, the problem statement, literature review, relevance of the study and methodology of the dissertation.

Chapter Two is called Missionaries arrive in the then Northern Transvaal and provides dates of arrivals and discusses the acquisition of land for mission. It compares missionary approaches to the indigenous people and explores the role of black pioneers in the area. Lastly, it investigates missionaries and colonial authorities in the areas.

Chapter Three discusses the DRC's motivation for mission and the DRC Mission Policy and how it was born out of a political context. It also explores the circumstantial influences on the DRC's Mission Policy. The policy of indirect rule at Kranspoort is also discussed in this chapter and some critical observations are made.

In Chapter Four, problems at Kranspoort Mission Station are discussed and the political climate in

South Africa at the time is analysed. Moreover, the black struggle for independence and white government's repression of dissidents is explored. Then the chapter addresses the full conflict that erupted at Kranspoort and Rev. Lukas van der Merwe's part in this conflict is discussed. Then Bosofasonke and BaPharao are discussed before the state and church's convergence to crush the resistance is explored. Then the chapter looks at how the policy of forced removals was implemented and it addresses how there was no place for the people who were forcefully removed to go. The researcher looks at how remnants are eventually removed and the DRC mission was reduced to a primary school. In addition, Chapter Five discusses the apartheid laws that were used to oppress the residents at Kranspoort.

Chapter Six addresses the aftermath of forced removals and focuses on how the DRC's legitimacy for mission was contested. The discussion specifically looks at how Hofmeyr's descendants attempted to claim back the land and how the DRC tried to justify its mission on the farm. The role played by white local congregations is discussed and grounds for opposing the land claim of the DRC are explored. Finally, the chapter discusses how the Kranspoort residents claimed back the land.

Finally, in Chapter Seven, the researcher discusses the findings of the study. This chapter provides an evaluation and assessment of the research and then gives recommendations for further studies.

CHAPTER TWO: MISSIONARIES ARRIVE IN THE THEN NORTHERN TRANSVAAL

2.1 Introduction

From their arrival in the Cape Colony in the middle of the 1600s to the late 1700s, the DRC was not interested in mission work among indigenous people until it was stimulated by foreign missionary societies from Germany, Scotland, England, America, France, and the Roman Catholic Church (Cronje 1982:14-17; Saayman 2007:1-10). Reasons for this inability to engage in mission can be attributed to the lack of trained ministers at that stage (Cronje 1982:15) and intense race relations of the time. The synod of 1857 held at Stellenbosch also led to some eagerness to perform missionary work outside of the Cape Colony. Individuals such as Andrew Murray, P.K. Albertyn, N.J. Hofmeyr and J.E. Neethling played a leading role in implementing the decisions of the synod to do mission (DIV 39).

The DRC was the last of all the missionary societies that came to the Cape Colony and started mission work among the indigenous people. However, there were reasons for that. First, at that time the DRC did not have theologically trained ministers and it had to rely on foreign countries such as Scotland, Holland, Switzerland and other European countries for a supply of trained ministers. Second, the DRC was not keen to do mission work among indigenous people because of racial prejudices. It was only in 1737 when Georg Schmidt from the Moravian Church came to Cape Town to work among the Khoikhoi of the Overberg that the DRC was pressurised to consider mission work among black people. In the course of time, various mission organisations from overseas started working in South Africa which led to the formation of a number of denominations among those people who would have been excluded from the church.

This process motivated the DRC to start its own independent mission work. This new development started at the church's first synod of 1824 when it decided to allow missionaries within its own ranks. This was clearly a move to get control over the way in which mission work would be done in the years to follow. As Elphick argues, 'The Afrikaner abhorred the liberal views of equality, freedom and the social integration of many missionaries' (2012:103).

It was only after 1824 that the DRC started considering sending missionaries to black people and into the interior of the country. Van Donk (1994:27) sheds some light on why the DRC started missionary work later than other European churches who came to settle in the Cape Colony. Van Donk (1994:27) contests that one of the reasons why the DRC started missionary work late was as a result of the control executed by the authorities in the Cape and Holland. The Cape Church could not satisfy the needs of the Dutch colonists and, therefore, it could not think of doing spiritual work outside its ranks (Ibid). Another reason, Van Donk (1994) argues, was the colonial understanding of the teachings of Dort that declared that the offspring of the heathen should not be baptised. But eventually the DRC was stimulated to do mission work even by the proliferation of European Churches who came to South Africa and started with missionary work (Van Donk 1994:27).

A revival conference held at Worcester in 1860 led Dr William Robertson to go to Europe in search for trained ministers who could help the DRC to engage with mission work (Ibid). The visit by Dr Robertson yielded some fruit in that eleven ministers were recruited and two of them, Alexander McKidd and Henry Gonin, became pioneer missionaries to the North in the early 1860s (Crafford 1982:62-64). Among the first DRC missionaries to cross the Vaal River were Alexander McKidd (Scottish) and Henri Gonin (Swiss). At first McKidd and Gonin were delayed because they had to wait for a call from local chiefs to come to their places for mission work as required by the Boere Republic laws (DIV 39). However, in time Alexander McKidd received an invitation to Soutpansberg to work among chief Buys in the present Limpopo while Henry Gonin received an invitation to come to this part of the world (to the Rustenburg area) to work among the Bakgatla (the Tswana people).

However, even those DRC missionaries who were sent into the interior of the country were not 'Afrikaners' until 1862 when an Afrikaner pioneering missionary, Eerw Stephen Hofmeyr, was sent to Soutpansberg.

In its attempt to do mission work for the indigenous people of the country, the DRC was influenced and shaped by its disposition towards certain biblical texts and the socio-political context of the 'Afrikaner volk' which led to the polarisation of European culture from the indigenous people's

culture. These racial connotations profoundly influenced its mission policy to the extent that its objectives could not be differentiated from that of the secular apartheid regime.

2.2. Missionaries Acquire Land for Mission Stations

Earlier on the Voortrekkers had established themselves at the foot of the Soutpansberg between 1836 and 1837 before the arrival of missionaries. The other missionaries who came to the north were from the Berlin Missionary Society. They had established their mission stations at Sekhuneland, south-east of the Transvaal and Blaauwberg Mountain, west of Polokwane. They arrived in Venda in the early 1870s. The missionaries from the DRC were the first to arrive in 1863, under the leadership of Alexander McKidd, who spent only two years in the area before he died of malaria in 1865. He acquired two farms, Goedgedacht and Kranspoort, in the area. He received one farm from a farmer by the name of Cornelius Lottering and he bought another with his money (DIV 39). He was succeeded by Stephanus Hofmeyr who settled mainly among the Sotho-speaking people and served there for 40 years. After a short stay at Goedgedacht, Hofmeyr had to leave the farm because of rumours of war between settlers and the indigenous people (Ibid). He settled in the farm Noem-Noem near Polokwane where he established many mission stations among the Sotho-speaking people.

In contrast, the Lutheran missionaries came to Venda and located themselves east of the Soutpansberg. According to custom, the Lutheran missionaries also visited Tshivhase, the Vhavenda paramount chief, to request his permission to start mission work in his territory (Grutzner, Beyers, Beuster, & Stech).¹⁸ The mission station in the territory of Chief Tshivhase was followed by two other mission stations: the station at Tshakhuma in the territory of Chief Madzivhandila in 1874 and the station in the territory of Chief Makwarela Mphaphuli in 1877. The Reformed Church was the third church to gain a foothold in Venda, in 1928, in the territory of Chief Nzhelele (Crafford 1982:27).

The success of missionaries in Vendaland was largely due to a number of previously converted local Christians whose presence in the area was of great help to the missionaries (Kirkaldy 2005:53; Crafford 1991:72). These 'already Christians' continued to play a crucial role in the

spreading of the Gospel among their own people. Since the missionaries lacked the necessary linguistic, political and social skills to engage with the chiefs and their followers on all levels, these ‘already Christians’ and ‘unsung heroes’ did almost everything for the missionaries. The ‘already Christians’ had received the Gospel as migrant workers in the Cape, at Port Elizabeth and in Kimberley (Crafford 1991:72). Now they became evangelists and took care of the mission stations and remote outposts. Some had come into contact with missionaries from the Parys Missionary Society and, subsequently, taken training as evangelists in Lesotho. They were readily available for missionary work in Venda, serving as guides and interpreters for missionaries, not to mention as advisers on African cultural protocol. Kirkaldy mentions eight such ‘previously converted Christians’ in Venda at the time of the arrival of the Berlin missionaries. Furthermore, Crafford (1991:75-86) claims that there were 21 of them in the DRC in 1887, mainly among the Sotho people in the south of Soutpansberg. When the DRC missionary A.A. Louw volunteered to cross the Limpopo River to start mission work in Mashonaland, he took seven of these ‘pioneers’ with him and deployed them at various mission stations from the Bubi River in the south to as far north as Morgenster in the middle of what is now Zimbabwe (Crafford 1991:86).

According to statistics gathered by Kritzinger in Crafford (1982:342), the three churches had about twenty-five thousand members in Venda in 1981. Of the three, the Lutheran Church was the largest, at 15 000 members, followed by the DRC with about 5 770 and the Reformed Church with about 4 830 members (Crafford 1982:342). The fact that the Lutheran Church had three times as many members as the DRC may be ascribed to two factors. First, the Lutheran missionaries had approached the major Venda chiefs for permission to start missionary work among their people and had worked closely with the chiefs. By contrast, the DRC missionaries had approached settlers, such as Lottering at Kranspoort and the leaders of the Afrikaner Republics, for land to start mission work. This fact made them more reliant on the Voortrekkers’ assistance than the local chiefs. Second, the relationships between the Lutheran missionaries and the local people were more open and trusting than those of the DRC. Because the allegiance of the DRC missionaries lay with their counterparts in the white government(s), they were sympathetic to white people’s interests rather than those of their black converts. This point is argued fully in Chapter Four.

2.2.1 Black unsung heroes

Throughout the history of the DRC mission, missionary work was always carried out to the indigenous people by black evangelists as indicated earlier. A missionary was more of a mission organiser who surrounded himself with a group of evangelists trained elsewhere for their mission work. These missionaries served as a link between the sending Mission Commission in the Cape and the local churches fully depending on the evangelists. Missionaries like Stephanus Hofmeyr remained at the mission station when the black evangelists traversed vast areas, preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The success of their labour was always accredited to the white missionaries (Kgatla 1988:30).

Prominent evangelists who were deployed by Stephanus Hofmeyr during this period included Moses Ramushu, Paulus Ramushu, Sagaria Ramushu, Lukas Mokoele, Micha Makgato, Cornel Mamathula, Sagaria Malope, Salomon Motsoeri, Filemon Mokgoebo, Josef Masoga, Timotheus Molea, Melgisedek Moloto, Moseto Masekela, Fredrick Molepo, Izak Khumalo, Andries Buys, Michael Buys, Simon Buys, Jefta Buys, Josua Masoha, Mikia Chuene and Simon Nijt (Crafford 1991:80-90).

Using the mission station of Bethesda, Stephanus Hofmeyr, after relinquishing the Kranspoort Mission Station in the 1870s (DIV 39), established the following outposts around Polokwane: Marabastad, Nkhuna, Berea, Ga-Chuene, Bethel, Ga-Maja, Ga-Mashashane, Ga-Matha, Makapansgat, Waterberg, Ga-Mphahlele, Bethesda, Moletji, Goede Hoop and many others. Moses Ramushu was stationed at Marabastad as the first black pioneer. He was appointed as the evangelist at Marabastad in 1879 and died of tuberculosis in 1881 (Crafford 1991:80). During his active ministry, Moses Ramushu, for example, accompanied Stephanus Hofmeyr to Waterberg and later went alone to Paramount Chief Mphahlele to start mission work there. In 1883, the mission station Goede Hoop was established and Sagaria Malope was stationed there from 1881 (Crafford 1991:80). Paulus Ramushu, a nephew of Moses Ramushu, was stationed at Eland and Ga-Matha to the south of Marabastad. He did not stay there long as he was regarded as a travelling itinerant missionary. He was succeeded by Timotheus Molea who was a convert from Vaalperse village.

Molea had also worked at Makapansgat near Mokopane where he worked among the Shangaan people (Maree 1962:81).

Paulus Ramushu was succeeded by Cornel Mamathula at Chief Matha. He had attended the school of the Paris Mission Society at Morija in Lesotho. He started working at the village of Chief Matha in 1887. As the work at Ga-Matha was discontinued in 1888, Cornel Mamathula was transferred to Mashashane where he achieved more success. In April 1894, he reported that he had preached the Gospel at 58 locations and that 2 068 people had listened to him (Maree 1962:81).

2.2.2 Frederick Molepo: An example of an unsung hero

Initially, Stephanus Hofmeyr agreed with the Swiss Mission to work at the Berea station and under Chief Molepo while he was concentrating on the area north and north-west of the present Polokwane (Crafford 1991:84). But when the Swiss Mission moved to the Spelonk area in the eastern part of Polokwane, he took over the area and assigned it to an evangelist known as Josias. Josias was replaced by Moseto Masekela (Kgatla 1988:60). In 1885, outpost Nkuna was established and Moseto Masekela was sent there (Crafford 1991:84). He was succeeded by Izak Kumalo, a grandson of Moselekatse, who later played a crucial role among the Va-Shona people of Zimbabwe. From 1883, Fredrick Molepo worked in the Molepo area and his influence led paramount chief Molepo to open his area for missionary work. By 1914, the Molepo congregation had 9 outposts, 11 evangelists and 670 professing members (Crafford 1991:84). In 1908, Rev. Hofmeyr, with the consent of Chief Chuene, decided to extend the missionary work to Chuniespoort. Evangelist Frederick Molepo was stationed there to proclaim the Gospel. In 1957, a small church (which is still there) was consecrated (Crafford 1991:84).

Therefore, Frederick Molepo can rightfully be called a herald and apostle of the Gospel among the people of Molepo (Crafford 1991:81). He planted the church and led it to grow in the midst of opposition. Towards the end of his life he had a congregation of about 1 000 people. As a trailblazer, church-planter and faithful evangelist he deserves to be remembered for what he did.

2.2.3 Sagaria Ramushu: The pioneer of Waterberg

The first mention that can be found of Sagaria Ramushu is when he was one of the five evangelists (made up of Micha Makgato, Josua Masoha, Mikia Chuene, Sagaria Ramushu and Simon Nijte) who risked their lives to do missionary work in Zimbabwe among the Shona people (Crafford 1991:84). The five evangelists travelled on foot for a month in order to reach their destination and returned after four months with a favourable report from Zimbabwe. On 30 September 1887, three evangelists (Sagaria Ramushu, Micha Makgato and Josua Masoha) departed for Zimbabwe to negotiate with Chief Lobengula of Matebele to allow missionaries to enter Mashonaland with the Gospel. However, Chief Lobengula refused the request (Crafford 1991:83).

2.3 The Gospel Crosses the Limpopo River

From Gabriel Buys (who took many hunting trips across the Limpopo River) Rev. Hofmeyr heard of the Vakaranga people in Mashonaland who were regarded as slaves and dogs by the Matebele and who had, therefore, acquired the derogatory name Banjai, meaning dogs (Crafford 1991:83). Hofmeyr immediately felt sympathy for them and wanted to take the Gospel to them, but he could not implement his plan immediately as Chief Lobengula of Matebeleland would not allow evangelists to go there. In 1870, Gabriel Buys returned to Soutpansberg with Mutsikwa Madivire who was baptised afterwards and named Johannes. From 1872 to 1876, Gabriel Buys continued his hunting expeditions to Zimbabwe and wherever he went he proclaimed the Gospel (Van der Merwe 1981:38).

Several attempts were made to go to Mashonaland but Hofmeyr did not succeed until 1887 when five black evangelists (Micha Makgato, Josua Masoha, Mikia Chuene, Sagaria Ramushu and Simon Nijte) visited the area (Crafford 1991:84). On September 1887, Micha Makgato, Josua Masoha and Sagaria Ramushu (who knew Ndebele and could act as an interpreter) departed to Chief Lobengula for permission to take the Gospel to Mashonaland. However, Lobengula still refused (Ibid). In 1889, Micha Makgato, Josua Masoha and Lukas Mokoete attempted for the third time to take the Gospel to Mashonaland. However, they did not succeed with their mission because Matebele's impis disrupted their work as they were moving around and killed the VaShona. In 1890, the second minister of Polokwane, Rev. S.P. Helm accompanied the three evangelists to

Zimbabwe after Cecil John Rhodes' Pioneer Column of the British South Africa Company had gained control over the region. Within 37 days they had travelled 800 km on foot and re-established contact with a few Shona chiefs (Crafford 1991:84).

In 1901, the second mission station was established about 80 km from Morgenster and was called Pamushana (Sunnyside). In 1909, another mission station was started in the area of Nyajena 32 km from Morgenster. Nyajena was the same area where Micha Makgato was posted in 1891 and the station was called Jena (Van der Merwe 1981:76).

The researcher is purposefully giving the reader all of the details of the white missionaries, who they were and what they did. Much has been written about them, but this study aims to focus more on the black unsung heroes. In fact, the DRC mission, as is the case with other churches like the Methodist, Anglican, London Missionary Society, Berlin Missionary Society, Presbyterian Church and many others, would not have succeeded without the people who laid the foundation for the work. These people were black trailblazers of the Gospel whose achievements were not penned by historians.

One may say without any fear of contradiction that throughout the history the Western churches' mission, including the DRC, initiative was always carried out to the indigenous people by black evangelists. Missionaries like Stephanus Hofmeyr remained at the mission station while the black evangelists traversed vast areas preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The success of their labour was always accredited to the white missionaries (Kgatla 1988:30).

In the Limpopo Province, prominent evangelists who were trained and deployed by Stephanus Hofmeyr during this period included Moses Ramushu, Paulus Ramushu, Sagaria Ramushu, Lukas Mokoete, Micha Makgato, Cornel Mamathula, Sagaria Malope, Salomon Motsoeri, Filemon Mokgoebo, Josef Masoga, Timotheus Molea, Melgisedek Moloto, Moseto Masekela, Fredrick Molepo, Izak Khumalo, Andries Buys, Michael Buys, Simon Buys, Jefta Buys, Josua Masoha, Mikia Chuene and Simon Nijt (Crafford 1991:80-90).

2.4 The Case of Bakgatla ba Kgafela (North West Province)

In the North West Province, the pioneering black evangelists included David Mogatle Modibane, Leoke Mariri, Stefanus Moloto, Karel Thabola, Kefas Makgala, Abraham Phiri, Petrus Phiri, Thomas Phiri and many others whose names escaped mention in history records. A few remarks about some of these pioneering evangelists is necessary in order to do justice to history.

2.4.1 David Mogatle Madibane

David Madibane was born in the Rustenburg district, north of the Crocodile River in or about 1814. He belonged to one of the Ba Tswana tribes. He lived during the time of encroachment of Afrikaner settlers in the area and he spent some of his time as a farm labourer. During his visit to Thaba’Nchu in the Free State, he got converted and thereafter he became a very powerful preacher. When he was in Thaba’Nchu, he met one of the pioneering Methodist missionaries who arrived in the Cape with British settlers in 1820. William Shaw appointed David as one of the workers in his mission field. After a few years in the Free State, David Madibane travelled to the north through Sekhukhuneland to Soutpansberg where he also did good work of evangelising black people.

Before the arrival of Henri Gonin in Rustenburg in May 1862, Madibane was back in his home. In 1860, Madibane started building a permanent ministry in Mandabole at the homestead of Chief Mmamogale of the Bakwena ba Mogopa. He founded a small school where he taught Ba Tswana people how to read and write. When Rev. Henri and his wife arrived in Rustenburg they were welcomed by Madibane and he helped them to settle there. On New day in 1864, Madibane introduced them to his followers who were a congregation in Rustenburg of about 30 members. Later in around 1866, Madibane left Rustenburg for Potchefstroom where he helped the Methodists start their work there. Madibane, as he regarded himself as an itinerant evangelist, left for Natal with the same mission. In 1874, Madibane was back in Rustenburg collecting money to erect his small church near Bethanie, the Hermannsburg German mission station. He died on 24 December 1874 from pneumonia.

2.4.2 Leoke Mariri

Leoke Mariri was one of the pioneering evangelists who did a lot of work for the DRC mission.

Together with Josef Modisa, Mariri was sent to the French Missionary Society at Morija Lesotho for training to become a minister. Although they were never ordained as black ministers because the time was not yet ripe for them, they continued doing excellent work. At Mochudi in Botswana Mariri was instrumental in gathering a church of 230 confessing members and 240 baptised members.

2.4.3 Stefanus Moloto

Stefanus Moloto, like his predecessors, grew up under very trying circumstances. He was a farm labourer and he had to work for someone who called himself a Christian and yet was oppressive. Moloto died at the age of 110 years after serving the missionary church for 47 years.

Other evangelists that assisted Rev. Gonin were Josef Phomane Madisa, Josefa Moitse, John Minfred Letanke, Abel Madisa and Thomas Phiri (Crafford 1991:108).

2.5 The Work of Black Evangelists

The work of black evangelists was specialised, complex and even dangerous. They were the real pillars of the church and they provided crucial direction for the church although the majority of them did not receive any stipend for the work they were doing. They were pioneers who brought the Gospel to the people, paved the way for the missionaries to access the traditional chiefs by providing diplomatic intelligence, convinced the chiefs to accept them and gave feedback and advice to missionaries about protocol issues. They were interpreters for both the chiefs and missionaries and they provided necessary services like teaching and evangelising to the indigenous people while serving as farm labourers to both farmers and missionaries. These evangelists served as messengers between various denominations and provided an ecumenical link needed between the denominations. They looked after the outposts and prepared the ground work of evangelisation, gathered people for church service, followed up on the new converts by taking them through catechism classes, including holding the bowl for the missionaries, and baptised the converts they had brought to the saving knowledge of God. Finally, they took the Gospel to the places where missionaries would never reach by crossing borders to other countries.

Similar developments occurred in the region around Rustenburg in the west. In July 1864, Rev. Gonin started missionary work on the farm Welgeval and in 1866 he received an invitation from BaKgatla Chief Kgamanyane to start mission work among his people. Like his fellow missionary in Kranspoort, he went to settle on the farm Saulspoort which belonged to Boere leader Paul Kruger (Crafford 1991:107). Among the African pioneers that helped him to evangelise the BaKgatla people are Leoki Mariri, Mogatle Modibane, Stefanus Moloto, Karel Thabola, Kefas Makgala and Thomas Phiri (Crafford 1991:108-112). Moreover, the list of Gospel pioneers among the Methodist and Lutheran Churches is long. It includes Israel Molema, Klaas Olifant, Hans Apie, Johannes Mphahlele and May Loti (Crafford 1991:124-130).

2.6 Conclusion

These unsung heroes who carried the message of the Bible to their people in their language are obscured in mission writings of the time. Furthermore, many white scholars' accounts of what happened fail to address political overtures and the black pioneers' resistance against the missionary dominant culture. The simmering resistance that eventually erupted in the end of the 19th century and gave rise to many African initiated churches had not really affected the DRC. In the case of the DRC Kranspoort and Bethesda mission stations, the outcome of resistance to missionary dominance was not the formation of African independent churches but a silent resistance that led to the forced removals of 1956 and 1964. Some of the descendants of the Kranspoort people who left the station during the mass removals while in their teens are still alive and their stories are told in the fourth chapter of this study. In the next chapter, the researcher reviews the DRC Mission Policy of 1935 and 1947 and the political developments of the time in order to locate the DRC's motivation for mission among black people. White settlers' political and racial prejudices against black people which started after the arrival of colonial powers and intensified and culminated into the late 1920s and 1930s native policies are the defining moments of the DRC Mission Policy. This point is elucidated further in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE: THE DEFINING MOMENTS OF THE DRC MISSION POLICY

3.1 Introduction: Racial Segregation is Introduced

In an article published in the *Missionalia Journal*, M.A. Magwira and S.T. Kgatla deal with the issues that gave rise to the DRC Mission Policy of 1935 and 1947 (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383). The authors indicate that South Africa became a union after the Treaty of Vereeniging in 1902. This treaty came after a truce was reached between the Afrikaners and the English (Davenport 1989:22). After that truce, General Louis Botha became the first Prime Minister of the union and he introduced the policy of formal racial segregation which led to the effective exclusion of the black majority (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365).

The policy of racial segregation was influenced, in part, by the question of the poor white and white perceived superiority over black people (Worden 2012:74; Elphick 2012:296) and the clashes between the black people and white people in the 1880s in the Cape Colony, Natal and Transvaal (Kgatla 1988:98). The white Afrikaner had to be cared for separately from the blacks and resources were indeed channelled to their benefit (Bottomley 2012:107). Government after government systematically advocated the racial policies that eroded the rights of black people and confined them to barren reserves, often referred to as Bantustans, which effectively squeezed and crowded them into an area consisting of 13% of the total country's space (The Natives Land Act No. 27 of 1913). From the beginning, the white government of the Union of South Africa implemented a policy of apartheid which curtailed the rights of the black majority (Ibid). White self-interest was maintained at the expense of the black majority at all costs (Elphick 2012:297).

It is the view of the researcher that the factors that gave rise to the struggles and conflicts at the DRC Mission Station cannot be fully explained without looking at a wider picture of the country at that stage. The DRC policy was a religious document profoundly influenced and shaped by the political climate of the country. It should become clear to what extent the political circumstances of South Africa influenced the DRC's motivation for mission as the mission policy is analysed.

3.1.1 The Impact of the Natives Land Act (No. 27) of 1913

The policy of segregation had far-reaching consequences for black people and their acquisition of land was largely tailored along the Natives Land Act of 1913 (Elphick 2012:298). As part of ordering a new society based on racial segregation, a series of legislations were enacted. An example of this legislation is the Natives Land Act (No. 27 of 1913) which laid the foundation for other legislation that entrenched the ‘dispossession of black people of their land’ (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365). The impact of the Natives Land Act was that Africans were denied access to their ancestral land, including land they previously owned (List of Laws on Land Dispossession and Segregation and Reinstitution nd). The Act had far-reaching consequences for black people including denying black people the right and the opportunity to purchase land (Ibid). Another effect that was brought about by the Act was that blacks could easily be removed from what was called ‘white farms’ if they were no longer wanted there or regarded as surpluses (Ibid).

The Act laid a firm foundation for the policy of separate development which was later introduced when black homelands were designed. Similar Acts that followed and reinforced the dispossession of land from Africans were the Urban Areas Act (1923), the Natives and Land Trust Act (1936), the Black Administration Act (1927) and the Group Areas Act (1950) (Ibid). The Black Administration Act (No. 38 of 1927) was one of the plethora of Acts that gave rise to other enabling legislations dealing with the regulation of land tenure for black people. The Natives Administration Act (No. 38 of 1927) was premised on the assumption that ‘Europeans’ had a civilising call to influence a ‘primitive’ and ‘native’ population and thus ‘Europeans’ were seen as guardians over ‘minor’ blacks who were supposed to be gradually led to maturity (Worden 2012 75; Murray & O’Regan 1986:14). In section 5(1)(b) of the Act, it states that: ‘The Governor-General may, whenever he deems it expedient in the general public interest, order the removal of any tribe or portion thereof ... from any place to any other place within the Union upon such conditions as he may determine’ (Murray & O’ Regan 1986:18 in Magwira and Kgatla 2015a:366). It was within this context of brutal laws designed to curtail black aspiration and interest that liberal Afrikaner missionaries who supported the DRC Mission Policy were sent into the interior of the country with the task of persuading the government segregation policy to implement ‘constructive’ apartheid in the midst of hostility (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:366). With the government’s takeover of missionary schools in the early 1950s, and with more conservative leadership occupying the

central stage within the DRC, the liberal missionaries were effectively sidelined and silenced. Sadly, in the end, it was the DRC leadership that advised the government on how to implement apartheid (Kgatla 1988:98; Elphick 2012:300).

3.1.2 Instrument of land tenure for blacks: Permission To Occupy (PTO)

One of the instruments used to implement the provisions of the Natives Land Acts (Act No. 27 of 1913) was the Permission to Occupy (PTO) which was used to deny black people the full right to own land. This inferior and insecure land tenure right allowed the user occupation rights over a certain rural piece of unsurveyed land with no protection against a third party. The effects of this inferior right are still felt to this day. Even today black people have to go through the Land Claim Commission to get back the land they were dispossessed of (www.justice.gov.za). The PTO measure enabled the state to evict many black communities when and if it wanted to by forcefully removing them from a certain piece of land (Executive Summary in the Land Claim Court of South Africa 1998 Case No. 26/98) without compensation (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:367). Despite the fact that PTO could not be registered in a Deed Registry as it did not contain real rights, it was effectively used to propagate this unfair inferior land right tenure. The restriction of black migrant movement and black's right to own property can be traced back to the Squatter Law Act (No. 2 of 1895) which was first passed in the Free State in 1895 (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:366) and prohibited farmers from employing more than five blacks on one farm without government permission; the law also prohibited blacks from living outside of the reserves (South African History Online in Magwira and Kgatla 2015a:365). Native Reserves were established as early as 1848 in Natal and became a feature of systematic control and the dispossession of land from African people and were later adapted in all Afrikaner Republics (Ibid).

The instrument PTO was used even more effectively with the introduction of the Group Areas Act of 1950. In fact, the policy of PTO was the foundation of the Group Areas Act whereby black people were not allowed to own any land—not even in reserves where they lived. White people too were not allowed to own land in reserves and they had to use the PTO to occupy land there. This clause was clearly used to prevent white liberals whom might have bought the land for their

black friends. The PTO was as cruel as any piece of legislation that curtailed blacks from owning land. Blacks had to occupy land under very strict rules which would allow white people to take it back without any effort if they so wished. However, the land could only be used for the purpose it was acquired for and for a stipulated period (usually two years on white farms) (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:367). In cases where the rules for the allocation of land were uncertain, the government chief commissioner appointed for the purpose had to be approached for directives.

Therefore, the PTO was less formal and there were lapses when the holder died or when the original activities for which permission were granted changed (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:366). These arrangements, however, were not economically viable as they did not offer real security. These became useful arrangements which were applied to substitute blacks' rights to own land in South Africa (Ibid). The PTO remained an effective way of controlling the land occupied by blacks and the restrictions that went with it. Through these measures such as the PTO, Africans were made accessible as labourers for whites who needed them. However, the whites who acquired them were also subjected to strict rules and were not allowed to offer them permanent residence on their farms. Africans were effectively dispossessed and segregated as well as forbidden from emigrating from one place to another in the country (South African History Online in Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:366).

What is more significant in this chapter, is that the new Union of South Africa gained international respect with the approval of British government, despite all of the black deputations who went to England to block the recognition (The Afrikaner Rebellion nd). For example, the Milner regime rejected political equality for blacks and whites (Elphick 2012:103) and introduced the measures through which blacks were represented in parliament. Through the South African Natives Affairs Commission (SANAC), Milner tried to find ways and means of attending to the native question. These initiatives later gave emergence to the mission policy of the DRC (Elphick 2012:103). This meant that the British government was in cahoots with Afrikaner governments as far as the treatment of black people was concerned. In this respect, the new government continued relentlessly to introduce segregation between black and coloured people on the one hand and black and white people on the other hand without any condemnation from England. Black leaders of the

time such as John Dube, President of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC), and Sol Plaatjies, the first secretary of SANNC, wrote an article entitled ‘Wrong Policy’ in the newspaper criticising the new land and condemning the policy, but their comments fell on deaf ears (Cousins & Walker 2015:27). Many protests were organised by SANNC to stop the systemic erosion of their rights, but both the Afrikaners and the English would not listen (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:368).

The black struggle against unjust policies was not limited to political activism led by the leaders of SANNC and others (Ibid). Many African independent churches were founded around this period, epitomising the widespread agony the African people had with the ‘apartheid’ policies of their time. Leaders like Mangena Mokone, Nehemiah Tile and James Dwane moved out of the white churches to form their own separate churches. There were, however, many reasons which gave rise to the schism from the white churches, but political reasons were some of the major causes for the split (Ibid).

3.1.3 DRC Mission Policy of 1935 and 1947

As already indicated, the DRC Mission Policy was crafted during the turbulent period when South African native laws were being resisted by the black majority and the white dominion in South Africa was being promoted and protected at all costs (Worden 2012:76). It was during the era when Africans and coloured people experienced a series of attacks on their integrity in society which effectively cut them off from having access to full citizenship (Davenport 1989:228 in Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:370). Equally, the Milner regime rejected political equality for blacks and whites (Elphick 2012:103) and introduced the measures through which blacks were represented in parliament (Elphick 2012:103 in Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383).

These measures ensured that blacks had to be represented by whites who were nominated for them—a situation which white people would not have liked to have reversed (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:368). This exclusion of black people invited open violence between blacks and whites, but the violence was crushed by the group who had the guns and means (the white regime) (Ibid). Davenport (1989:230) lists some of those open confrontations between whites and blacks. His list

includes the Zulu Rebellion of 1906, the Herero and the Maji-Maji in Namibia (south-west Africa) and many others in the north such as Chief Malebocho in 1894, Makhado of the Vendas, and Makgoba and Mokopane in the current Limpopo (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383).

It is also important to note that the politics of resistance, though peaceful, were condemned by the white churches (Farisani 1987:28–29). The black people had no alternative but to resort to a method which would advance their liberation. Even though the method of non-violent resistance against racial oppression was preferred through defiance campaigns, peaceful protests and demonstrations, the authorities would not listen to the logic of equal opportunity and citizenship (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383). As already indicated, the plethora of African initiated churches started to fight white supremacy alongside their political counterparts. It is against this backdrop that the DRC Mission Policy should be analysed and understood. It is also important to remember that the resistance to the policy of apartheid was wide and comprehensive.

3.1.4 The mission policy is formulated in 1935

The events leading to the formal drafting of the DRC Mission Policy were soaked in the racial prejudices of the 1930s. The DRC took advantage of the racially saturated environment to draft a mission policy. The mission policy was drafted at a conference held in 1931 in Kroonstad, Free State, (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383) and was officially promulgated in 1935. It was at this conference that the DRC expressed itself unequivocally against any form of equality (*gelykstelling*) between blacks and whites (Ibid). But the church affirmed that the natives have souls as white people have and that they possess a soul of equal value in the eyes of God. However, in order to stick to this fundamental belief and at the same time to stick to their ‘treasured policy of inequality and separateness’, the DRC came up with a twist that proposed that blacks should develop ‘on their own terrain and apart’ from whites (Ibid:369). Language, customs, culture and colour became determinants and the policy was securely aligned with that of the government of the day (Ibid:369). The DRC Mission Policy was built on the pillars of the General Mission Committee of the Cape synod of 1921 where delegates from the then Transvaal and Orange Free State were invited. According to Magwira and Kgatla (2015a:365-383), at that meeting it was

concluded that:

The practice of the church follows the doctrine of the State on the relation of the white and the black races to each other. That doctrine is that the white race is and must remain the ruling race. The coloured and the black sections of the population occupy a strictly subordinate position. This is not due to, as is very generally supposed, to the accident of their colour: it is due to their lower stage of cultural development. (Van Donk 1994:32)

It was at this Federal Council of Churches (where all DRC synods from various regions gathered) where a uniform policy was adopted and realigned with the government ideology of segregation (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383). According to this policy, evangelisation should not assume the ‘denationalisation’ of the black people but the primary aim of ‘Christianity’ should be to refine black nationalism for what was termed self-determination (Van Donk 1994:32). The mission policy formulated and adopted at the meeting of the Federal Council of the DRC played a crucial role in guiding both the church and government during the heyday of apartheid (Giliomee 2003:459). According to Van Donk (1994:33), it was the DRC that submitted its mission policy to the government and it was this policy that influenced and guided the government in developing apartheid—an influence the church was proud of (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383). This policy document determined its missionary activities for decades to come (Ibid).

Despite its racially motivated mission policy, the DRC continued its work among black people, both inside and outside the country. This is a phenomenal achievement unparalleled in other denominations within South Africa. The DRC also poured a lot of money into its mission work and has done more than many other churches in South Africa (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383). The DRC had also received financial support from the government to set up social institutions such as hospitals, old-age homes and special schools for disabled children. According to the policy document called ‘Church and society’ drafted in 1986 and adopted in the same year, the DRC’s synod mission work was still a matter of church calling regardless of all the mistakes of the past (Ibid). The 1986 DRC synod could declare that ‘in all circumstances, even in a situation of strained relationships, mission work must claim the highest priority in the programme of the church’ (Van

Donk 1994:34).

3.1.5 The church and society in the DRC

After 50 years of the adoption of the DRC Mission Policy of 1935 and 40 years after its revised mission policy of 1947, the DRC had not changed fundamentally in terms of its ideological vision (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383). In October 1986, the DRC met to consider what could be named the revised mission policy document of the *DRC Kerk en Samelewing* (church and society). The document had three pillars: 1) the basis of many years of intensive study concerning the task of the church in the South African society; 2) the church's programme for its activities for the future and against which it could be judged; and 3) the document served as its stance and testimony (Ibid).

The new document on the DRC's understanding of its role within South African society had not changed from that of 1930 when the first mission policy was formulated. The question of black majority and equality between blacks and whites was embedded in the document (Ibid:365-383). Issues such as the composition of racial groupings in South Africa, urbanisation, language and literacy, economy, socio-political and cultural issues, and religion as challenges facing the church were raised (Kerk en Samelewing 1986:1-5). The second part of the document concerned the Bible. The DRC took on itself that its pious interpretation and use of the Bible was authentic and normative (Ibid:5-12). Contextual theologies that used praxis as the starting point and were critical about inequality and exploitation of the poor by the rich were ruled out as unscriptural (Ibid:9). The document revealed some inconsistencies and unfounded pious misrepresentations of the concrete facts:

Concealed inconvenient truths from oneself and others are revealed. The South African race relations needed condemnation and radical conversion by both the state and the church. Cross equalities between black and white, and the brutality of the state at the time could no longer be ignored. Brushing these atrocities aside would disqualify the church as missional as the document tried to say (Kerk en Samelewing 1986:11). Love and diaconate services that are believed to be profound by repentance and apology within the South African racial situation

for the future of the authentic mission of God to the neighbour in South Africa (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383).

The Bible underlies the common origin and destiny of humankind and it does not have room for social injustice (Ogbonnaya 1994:3). Behind the central message of the Bible is God's call to social justice as humans have a common origin and God's purpose is to fulfil their lives. He has likewise ordained that certain responsibilities belong to humans. It was God's original intention that humans should live in harmony with the laws of God and His purposes (Kane 1978:97). Any church mission policy that ignores these principles is not part of God's mission policy (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383).

At the same meeting in 1986, the DRC synod redefined the objectives of mission (Van Donk 1994:34) and the demeaning phraseology of a 'mother church' and 'daughter churches' was changed to 'sister churches' (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383). But these changes did not mean anything more fundamental. The fundamental questions of property rights, equality and restorative justice of the imbalances of the past were not addressed. It was more of a change of language than reality (Ibid). The DRC benefitted from the apartheid laws and, in some cases, it was the DRC that brought harsh laws to the government to consider; these include obstacles that were created with regards to black ownership of property (Ibid). Even though the church later claimed innocence, it was due more to expedience than a real change of heart. Some scholars such as Van Donk argue that the change of heart shown by the DRC in the church society in 1990 was due more to the isolation imposed on it by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches than due to an actual change of principle and belief (Van Donk 1994:33-35).

3.1.6 Interesting sections of the 1935 DRC Mission Policy

According to Magwira and Kgatla (2015a), the following sections of the DRC Mission Policy need to be analysed:

a) The preamble. Here the church expresses its deep conviction of the fact that it was God who ordained that the first European inhabitants should be the bearers of the light of the Gospel to the

‘heathens’ of the continent (DRC Mission Policy 1935). The DRC thus considered itself to be privileged to proclaim the Gospel to the ‘heathens’ of the country. This mission would be done in terms of DRC considered methods which were based on educating the natives and not ‘denationalising’ them (Giliomee 2003:459).

b) Evangelisation. The church considered its evangelisation as ‘the ingathering of souls for the Kingdom of God’. The ingathering is the first step followed by the founding of a congregation which must be guided to become an independent church along the lines of ‘self-support, self-government and self-expansion’ (DRC Mission Policy 1935). Agencies for mission included education and instruction as well as medical, agricultural, industrial and literary activities. The mission policy makes assumptions that as the church does mission to the blacks there would be a desire among the blacks to develop and the desire that the church should guide them to their logical fruition. Black racial customs that do not militate against the Christian principles should not be negated. But those practices are not tabulated which means the DRC would have chosen and picked as it pleased.

c) Fields of Labour. The ‘fields of labour’ start in the neighbourhood (vicinity) and extend to other parts of the country and into the rest of the continent.

d) Relations to other churches and government. The mission policy acknowledged that there were similarities and dissimilarities between the DRC and other churches. Where there were differences, the church did not indicate how that would be resolved. However, where there were similarities it was said that bonds should be promoted. When it came to the government, the church expressed delight in the fact that governments of Africa had fixed policies for the upliftment of natives under their control. These policies corresponded very well with that of the DRC. In such a case, the missionaries should work well together (DRC Mission Policy 1935). Church and state cooperation would be more visible in education where the state was putting in more resources.

e) Education. Under the discussion of education, the mission policy painted a picture of a black ‘mind’ under their control to be moulded according to the predetermined wishes and expectations of white desires. Education should be aligned with black racial cultures and customs. Such

education should not be ‘denationalised’, but should be linked up with the past in order to shape the future.

f) Social. Here the reasons for developing the mission policy as a means of control and channelling become clearer. The policy is based on the traditional fear of the Afrikaner of equal treatment between blacks and whites. The idea of racial fusion in South Africa is fundamental to the mission policy. The church declared itself unequivocally opposed to the idea of racial equality and fusion. As the Afrikaners wanted to be a nation on their own with all privileges that state could accord them, blacks were to have Afrikaners decide what was best for them and if the blacks resisted the imposed treatment, the idea should not be abandoned as there were no alternative developments for them in South Africa. The logic for the imposition of a white agenda for black separate development was informed by the logic of the policy of trusteeship which would eventually lead to the complete policy of independence and self-determination. The church supported the policies because it believed that whites were the fruits of Christian civilisation and, at the same time, the blessings of the Gospel (DRC Mission Policy 1935).

g) Economy. The most bizarre section of the DRC Mission Policy is the economic section. The church should have realised that something was seriously wrong after they had taken 87% of the land and appropriated it for the white minority and gave only 13% to the black majority. The church declares itself as accepting all the implications of the process of evangelisation, although it did not spell out what that meant. It stated that ‘it restricts its contributions to the ministry of the Gospel in building the daughter churches while cooperating with the state and the people in respect of economic justice’ (Ibid). Implicit in the DRC Mission Policy was the view that identification with one’s own ethnic group was not only authentic but universal (Ibid). Although there were sensitivities on both sides (from the government and the church) not to offend each other, compromises were made to have the policy implemented and maintained. On the economic issues, the DRC accepted the implication of the evangelisation of the blacks but it maintained that the process would involve close cooperation with the state to promote ‘own nationhood’ on economic grounds, better housing, health and general social upliftment.

h) The 1947 Mission Policy was slightly different from the 1935 one. In the 1947 mission policy, the paragraphs on social matters and economic issues are expounded a bit. The addition included the idea of the trusteeship of black people which would gradually lead to a full self-standing and self-determination for the coloured and native churches. There was also a clause on Christian civilisation which could be exercised to benefit black people.

i) The *Kerk en Samelewing* did not change the fundamental fears and concerns of the DRC but concealed them in a pious and 'brave' language that did not show any remorse for what the church did to black people in the name of mission. There was also no indication that the church would put right its errors of the past through methods such as restorative justice, metanoia, forgiveness or a new approach.

3.1.7 Observations: Isolationism

From the discussion thus far one can conclude that the DRC Mission Policy was an extension of the government policy of separate development with the exclusive passion to protect white interest against black people who constituted the majority in the country. This is evident in the national boundaries defined and drawn by the ruling white politicians' cultural, ethnic, and tribal distinctiveness of people which became pillars of the mission policy for the country (Horner 2011:77). More attention was focused on protecting and preserving Afrikanerdom with tendencies of closing ranks against instead of opening up towards the other (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383).

As Worsnip (1991:39) states, the policy of apartheid did not envisage any equality, racial mixing or integration or extension of rights to the natives. It stood for Afrikaans baaskap (bossism). The safety of the white race and 'Christian civilisation' meant a guardianship of the natives by white people without natives having a say in that process. For these reasons, the mission policy and apartheid policy were two sides of the same coin (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383).

The policy was more focused on isolationism and parochialism (Ibid) and sought converts that would be 'created' in the image of an ideology of separateness. Instead of the DRC becoming the

‘salt of the earth and the light of the world’ where its life is lived for the sake of others, the church built ‘walls’ that separated it from the other and yet claimed to be working in the interest of the other (Adonis 1982:1). Isolating themselves from ‘others’ meant cutting themselves off from the other in such a way that their witnesses were never credible. The ‘ingathering [of] souls into [an] independent self-supporting, self-governing and self-expanding [church]’ produced religious communities which could never break away from dependency on the master and could never be self-sustaining churches (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383; Modise 2013: NGTT Part 54, No. 3&4 Sep & Dec 2013). White Afrikanerdom was equated with Christianity (Giliomee 2012:224) and negatively affected it in the eyes of the black South Africans (Kgatla 2006:4).

According to the executive Mission Board of the DRC held in 1947, the church was called to keep its own identity so that it could fulfil the calling of God (SIN 220 1939-1973). The DRC was seen as a faith community such as Israel that had the responsibility of not mixing with ‘heathen nations’. If racial fusion could be allowed in South Africa, the Christendom would come to an end according to the Mission Board (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383).

3.1.8 DRC Mission Policy and the government agenda for apartheid

The DRC Mission Policy was as ambiguous and ambivalent as it could be (Ibid). Although many young white missionaries lay aside their lives as they sought to serve God under this questionable mission policy, the policy was not biblically founded (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383). The opposition voices of black leaders were increasingly heard as they denounced the whole system of the church and state policies for the blacks (Holland 1989:73). These young DRC missionaries were aware of the death facing them in black areas, but they kept going to the areas in large numbers. Although one should temper one’s judgement of their motives, one should, for the sake of the credibility of the Gospel and *Missio Dei*, scrutinise them for the benefit of the analysis of the events that took place at the DRC Mission Station at Kranspoort and the future of constructive reflection on church mission today (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383).

The least one could say about the abhorrent human failures is that God in His sovereign way uses feeble human efforts in spite of questionable motives. It should also be said that in the eyes of the

DRC, this questionable mission policy was not misguided and inconsistent with biblical understandings of mission, but the mixture of ‘religious and political milieu’ of the time severely blurred the vision of the church (Ibid). Motives and cultural superiority prevailed because of the ‘self-preservation’, the ‘self-identity’ as well as the ‘self-interest’ that superseded the ‘love for the neighbour’. According to Dr Verwoed, throwing together different communities into one common society in a multiracial state would mean racial suicide for white South Africans (Ibid). The solution to the problem, according to him, was separate states for the blacks and a form of separate self-government for the coloureds and Indians (Race Relations Survey 1962:1977). In line with this policy, Dr D.F. Malan was telling apartheid patriots at the Voortrekker Monument in December 1949 that it was the duty of white people to sustain ‘white Christian civilisation’ by acting as ‘guardians over the non-whites’ (Morris 1977:35). This ideal would be maintained through ‘paramountcy’ and ‘race purity’. These statements were followed by the 1950 Group Areas Act and many others (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383).

The DRC Mission Policy culminated in helping the Nationalist Government to ascend to power in 1948. In 1948, DRC mission theorist and think-tank Gerdener helped in drafting the Nationalist apartheid manifesto that led to the Nationalist Party victory (Morris 1977:35-36). In 1949, Eiselen (the son of a missionary who later played a pivotal role in shaping and directing the policy) was appointed to head a commission to come up with strategies to introduce Bantu Education (Saayman 2007:72). His commission report of 1951 and the Bantu Education Act of 1953 formed a solid basis of education both in South Africa and Namibia (Namibian Educational System nd). As H.F. Verwoed, the minister of Bantu Education at the time, declared, ‘education would always be separate, unequal, and designed to let Africans develop exclusively within their own communities’ (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383). The philosophy of apartheid was imposed on the black majority without their consent to ensure that all nations in South Africa and Namibia would be forced into a ‘white designed form of development’. Education was effectively taken out of the hands of missionaries who could not be trusted to transmit the apartheid ideology correctly (Namibian Educational System nd).

As the Bantu Education Act brought all black schools under the direct control of the government

and a single department, resistance against it among black people grew (Ibid). Because it was determined to keep the black people in a position of perpetual inferiority, black organisations such as The African Education Movement (AEM) openly opposed the arrogant Verwoerdian statement that ‘by blindly producing pupils trained on a European model, the vain hope was created that they could occupy posts within the European community’ (Federation of South Africa 2013). The AEM was formed to coordinate the work of all blacks that were opposed to Bantu Education. Its first chairperson was Father Trevor Huddleston (Federation of South Africa 2013). The AEM aimed to help maintain private schools that were completely independent of the government and provide ‘self-education material’ to club members. However, financial constraints and government opposition to private schools, including churches, outlawed anyone from teaching children outside of the government system (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383).

The new policy of Bantu Education left many black parents with an agonising dilemma. Some were determined not to allow their children to be subjected to an education system that would make them ashamed of their own nation (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383). Other parents decided not to allow their children to attend schools that would enslave them forever (Ibid). The AEM provided a third alternative which would assist the African National Congress (ANC) in introducing bodies which would run a ‘cultural club’. The clubs were aimed at providing ‘organised and healthy’ activities to the children whose parents were objecting to Bantu Education. The system of apartheid in the area of black education, social terrain, labour and economy remained very oppressive and disregarded African aspiration. Private schools were denied permission to function on their own and teachers who did not comply with the system were removed (Ibid).

As stated earlier, whites perceived themselves to be superior to blacks and thus considered themselves the trustees of blacks in all spheres of their lives (Ibid). In May 1963, at the 100th anniversary of the Kranspoort Mission Station, Dr Eiselen, who was serving as the Bantu Affairs Commissioner for the Northern Sothos at the time, had the following to say: ‘It is appropriate for the State to express its gratitude not only towards God, but also towards the church who worked so hard in the interest of Bantu people of South Africa’ (my own translation). Dr Eiselen further

said: ‘One cannot state it fully that each action that was undertaken to promote the interest of Bantu people was also done in the interest of the white community’ (my translation). It is clear that the DRC Mission Policy was drafted to promote Afrikaner interest as well. Both the state and the DRC had a common agenda: the church had to give birth to ‘daughter churches’ that would become ‘national churches’ within their own territories, while the state was creating ‘independent national states’ within their own Bantustans (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383).

3.1.9 At the conscious level of the DRC

The introduction and implementation of the ideology of apartheid did not leave the church with a clear conscience. Some DRC regional synods (there were a total of ten regional synods) did not feel completely comfortable with the philosophy. Although some, like the 1948 synod of the Transvaal, accepted a report that was based on the DRC Mission Policy of 1935 and used the Tower of Babel as justification of the report, not all were convinced of the policy (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383). Even H.F. Verwoed, who was an editor of the secular newspaper *Die Transvaler* at the time and later became the prime minister, wrote that the ‘survival struggle against millions of non-whites would become more difficult’ (Giliomee 2003:463). The Cape DRC synod that sat in 1949 gave a more circumspect endorsement of apartheid. The call from those who pursued apartheid’s solution to the South African native question was that ‘Afrikaners would prevail if they clung to a single idea and believed that it was in accordance with God’s will that different races exist separately’ (Giliomee 2003:463).

Moreover, some academics within the DRC cautioned the DRC against apartheid. These academics were Ben Marais and Bennie Keet who protested against the arbitrary use of biblical texts taken out of context to justify apartheid (Giliomee 2003:463). Despite all debates for and against apartheid, the church was faced with the question: ‘How can the church maintain its identity without doing damage to the cause of spreading the Gospel among the non-whites?’ But the answer came from the mission policy, shallow as it was. In 1947, James Oglethorpe, who was studying theology at Stellenbosch, wrote that ‘even if apartheid was the last weapon in Afrikaner hands to ensure its survival, the DRC had no right to sacrifice its most precious possession, its

faith' (Giliomee 2003:464 in Magwira & Kgatla 2015a). But survival fears forced the DRC to ignore logic as articulated by academics such as Marais, Keet and Oglethorpe and to rather embrace the policy that was labelled a crime against humanity in the United Nations resolution 2202 A (XXI) of 16 December 1966 (Dugard nd). Despite all of the euphemisms the politicians and DRC missionaries tried to use to describe the ideology of apartheid, the system remained the most brutal and vicious tool in the hands of an oppressor obsessed with greed and fear (Terblanche 2012:20).

The DRC Mission Policy was premised in a cultural ideology of apartheid. This policy made assumptions and points of departure which were given but not debated or questioned (Johnson 1994:1560). The ideology of apartheid, which undergirded the DRC Mission Policy, was based on three tenets according to Thompson (1985:69). The first was that European people were inherently superior, the second was that the 'vacant land' theory justifies white dominance over the rest of South Africa, and the third was the idea of a covenant that interprets white victory over blacks as God's endorsement of white rule in South Africa (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383).

Leatt, Kneifel and Nurnberger (1986:273-302) outline three contexts within which the term 'ideology' can be used. There is the critical context in which the term is used to convey the possibility and desirability of a 'value-free' science. According to this view, all people are involved in one form of ideology as determined by their assumptions, thoughts and specific norms (Leatt, Kneifel & Nurnberger 1986:271).

The second context in which ideology operates is the Marxist and neo-Marxist contexts. In this context the notion of ideology refers to the conditioning of ideas through material economic base (Leatt, Kneifel & Nurnberger 1986:274). The ideas of the ruling class are dominant and determine material relationships. In this respect, 'ideology is a false consciousness of social and economic realities and it is a collective illusion shared by the members of a given social class' (Leatt, Kneifel & Nurnberger 1986). This type of ideology serves a persuasive device to justify the interest of the ruling class who should accept false reality uncritically as truth, as right and just for the benefit of the dominant class (Leatt, Kneifel & Nurnberger 1986:275). The ideology includes a language of

legitimation which is internalised into the experience of and subjectivity of ideology (Cousins & Walker 2015:41; Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383).

The third level of ideology within which apartheid in South Africa operated is epistemological in nature and interprets reality from one specific perspective and gives no possibilities of alternative solutions (Leatt, Kneifel & Nurnberger 1986:281). This perspective was largely informed and shaped by Afrikaner nationalism. According to Giliomee (2012:223), Afrikaner nationalism was developed from 1875 when Afrikaner nationalists persuaded their fellow Afrikaner to unite in a party to control and promote the Dutch and later the Afrikaner language and culture and to work for the economic well-being of Afrikaners in South Africa. Afrikaner nationalism developed largely as a reaction against British authority and a disdain for black culture and religion (Ibid). Afrikaner nationalism was largely shaped and directed by the underground movement called the Broederbond (Serfontein 1970:231). Established in 1919, the Broederbond played a crucial role in the protection of Afrikaner interest and unity. The Broederbond was a think-tank on the implementation of the apartheid policy (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383).

Nationalism is a form of ideology that interprets reality from the point of the group (Serfontein 1970:231). Here ideology 'presents a specific analysis of present order, relates it to a future ideal, and provides a strategy to achieve the desired state' (Leatt, Kneifel & Nurnberger 1986:282). The ideology of apartheid in South Africa appeared, on the surface, to separate people in a horizontal fashion and yet it had a vertical dimension in which whites were above and blacks were at the bottom (Ibid). Reality was interpreted in such a way that it appeared logical while hiding a cruel and subversive agenda. Leatt, Kneifel and Nurnberger (1986:302) label apartheid ideology a 'false God' which used the Christian Gospel as a façade to cover the brutal system of disempowering and subjugating black people while promoting white interest.

The Afrikaners desire for land and labour, the need for security, and an impulse to conquer and rule over blacks partly explains the attitudes that permeated the policies that went into all the native laws which were promulgated wherever they had space to have their independent republic (The Afrikaner Response and the 1914 Rebellion nd). Afrikaners who migrated into the interior had the

view, which was conditioned by their experience in the Cape, that blacks were savage and heathen. They were hardened by the African resistance and would do anything in their power to subdue them. All these hardened stereotypes went into their mission policies and practices.

3.1.10 Black voices were ignored and silenced

From the beginning of the introduction of segregation laws and the systematic application of inhuman humiliation of black people, prominent black leaders made their voices heard but were ignored. Among those leaders were Dr A.B. Xuma who later became the president of the ANC (Land act, dispossession and segregation and reinstatement nd). He was himself a son of a priest of the Methodist Church. In his address at a conference of ‘European and Bantu’ Christian Association held at Fort Hare, Dr Xuma challenged the government to abandon its policies of segregation. He argued that black and white students were capable of studying together and achieving the same outcomes. He cited examples of Rev. Tiyo Soga who was regarded as a pioneer missionary (a graduate of Lovedale Mission), Mr John Jabavu (an editor), Rev. Walter Rubusana and Rev. J. Bokwe as examples of African academics who have proven themselves as capable and equal to their white counterparts (Land act, dispossession and segregation and reinstatement nd).

Moreover, black leaders like Chief Albert Luthuli labelled apartheid a ‘deceit concept’ and he noted that, ‘There is really no possibility of anyone developing “along his own lines” as is suggested (Mbali 1987:7)’. To Chief Luthuli ‘developing along one own lines’ as suggested did not allow one to develop along one’s own lines at all, but made one develop along the lines as designed by the government through its structures (in Mbali 1987:8). He pointed out the irony of determining the laws that govern black people in their development without any attempt to consult with those governed. Developing along black lines meant developing according to their own desires (Ibid). These black leaders saw themselves as South Africans, entitled to South African citizenship.

In addition, James ‘Sofasonke’ Mpanza was one of the leaders whose influence stretched from urban to rural areas of the country (Land act, dispossession and segregation and reinstatement nd). He was charismatic and attracted a large following against unjust laws of the country. Migrant

labourers from Kranspoort took his philosophy of resistance to their home. Around 1944 to 1945, James Mpanza exerted much pressure on the city of Johannesburg to provide houses to African people (Ibid). Together with leaders of the ANC Youth League, such as Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela and Anton Lembede, he forced the city of Johannesburg to provide housing for black people (Ibid). Mpanza inspired many black people and his influence was carried over to Kranspoort through the protest of the ANC migrant workers (Ramphela 2013:46). The Defiance Campaign of the 1950s, the Kliptown Congress of the People of 1955, the anti-pass campaign, in fact, the whole black resistance campaign and resultant police brutality kindled a rebellious spirit that swelled to the remote areas of the country. Moreover, the ‘Sofasonke’ spirit of fearless commitment was spread to the Kranspoort Mission Station. Mpanza inspired many people—especially those who were living in squalor conditions (Land act, dispossession and segregation and reinstitution nd).

In 2004, James Mpanza was honoured by the mayor of the City of Johannesburg for his role in the black liberation struggle together with Richard Maponya and Dr Nthato Motlana (Ibid). In 2009, President Zuma bestowed on him the country’s highest honour of the Order of Luthuli in Gold at the Union Buildings. The past recipients of the Order in Gold are Anton Lembede, John Dube, and Sol Plaatjie (Ibid). The researcher will come back to this point in Chapter Four when he discusses the conflicts at Kranspoort (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a:365-383).

3.2 Conclusion

The DRC mission work was always political and self-seeking. They allowed themselves to be dictated to by what was happening in their camp of government and embraced their ideologies. Saayman explains the involvement of the DRC in mission through four waves. The first wave (1779-1834) was triggered by the involvement of other missionary societies in mission in the country; the second wave (1867-1939) was triggered when the DRC started to focus on the areas outside of the Cape; the third wave (1954-1976) was triggered by the Tomlinson Report on the situation of missionary work in the country; and the fourth wave (1990 onwards) was triggered when the DRC started focusing its mission on foreign countries (Saayman 2007:57-62).

In all the instances mentioned by Saayman, there was political motive behind it. The first instance was the involvement of other missionary societies doing missionary work at its doorsteps. The second was the influence of the Great Trek where large numbers of Afrikaners went to settle in the interior of the country opening the way for the missionaries to follow on their heels and the experiences of the aftermath of the defeat in the Anglo-Boer War, a defeat that led to a spiritual awakening in the church that found its expression in dedicated mission work (Magwira & Kgatla 2015a: 365-383). Many Afrikaners made some introspection during this time and were led to repentance in the commandos in concentration camps where they were held as prisoners of war and interpreted this as the punishment of God (Kgatla 1988).

In all its experiences, the Afrikaners remained opposed to the idea of equality between themselves and blacks. The fact that that black people were protected by the English people in the Cape against the Afrikaners, that blacks fought on the side of the English in all the wars between the Afrikaners and the British, and that blacks favoured the British over the Afrikaners pushed the conflict between the two to unprecedented levels (Crafford 1982:144-50). Blacks regarded Afrikaners as inferior to the British and Afrikaners viewed blacks as 'heathen' and inferior.

In conclusion, the desire for land and labour, the need for security, and an impulse to conquer and rule over blacks partly explains the attitudes that permeated the policies that went into all of the promulgated Natives laws wherever the Afrikaners had the space to have their independent republic (List of Laws on Land Dispossession, Segregation and Reinstitution nd). The Afrikaners who migrated into the interior believed that blacks were savage and heathen. These views were conditioned by their experiences in the Cape. Moreover, they were hardened by the African resistance and would do anything in their power to subdue them. All these hardened stereotypes went into their mission policies and practices.

CHAPTER FOUR: KRANSPOORT MISSION STATION

4.1 Introduction: Farm Setting and Its Residents

The Kranspoort farm is at the foot of the Soutpansberg range bordered by Bergplaas in the north-west, Koedoesvlei farm in the north, Goedgedacht farm in the south-east (where the first mission station was situated) and Du Preezrand farm in the south. Before the arrival of the Voortrekkers in the area, three black ethnic groups occupied the land. These, according to W.L. Maree (1962:38), were Ba-Vhenda, Ba-Tsonga and Ba-Sotho. The Ba-Sotho people were well represented in the area of Soutpansberg and they occupied the whole area south and west of Kranspoort (Ibid:38).

Around 1950, there were about 800 people living on the station (Malan 1973:6). There were three residential areas which were called 'Stasie' (Mission Station), 'Oorkant' (That Side), and 'Patmos' (Malan 1977:76). The 'Stasie' was the area around the church and the school. This area had streets named after the previous missionaries such as McKidd, Church, Helm and Daneel streets (Malan 1977:76). There was also a school named after Stefanus Hofmeyr, the first Afrikaner pioneering missionary to Kranspoort after McKidd. It was in this area where most of the church members lived. Everyone had a garden in their yard and they got water for their garden from Khudeta River. On the eastern side of the Khudeta River there was the residential area called 'Oorkant' and on the western side of the 'Stasie' there was the residential area called 'Patmos'. The residents of 'Oorkant' and 'Patmos' were regarded as heathens while the residents of 'Stasie' were regarded as Christians (Ibid:76). The house of the white missionary was at 'Stasie' where the church building was.

According to the report by Mission Secretary Theron (1990), the following missionaries served at Kranspoort: Alexander McKidd (1863-1865), Stephanus Hofmeyr (1865-1905), Johannes Daneel (1898-1935), W.M.A. Van Coller (1937-1945), Lukas van der Merwe (1946-1969), Franscio Malan (1970-1972), E.C. Esterhuys (1977-1985) and G.L. Schnetler (1985-2015). According to Serumula (7 July 2015) his grandfather Eliakim Serumula worked with Daneel, Van Coller and Van der Merwe and could give a good comparison of the personalities of the three missionaries. Of the three, Daneel, who retired in 1935, was most loved by the residents because of his

consultative skills and warm personality. Van Coller succeeded Daneel in 1937 and Van Coller had tendencies of behaving like a soldier when dealing with black people. He would, however, tolerate some black traditional practices and ‘socialise’ with people (Serumula date). After his retirement, Van Coller started farming in the vicinity and he could occasionally come onto the mission station for mission work. Van Coller was succeeded by Van der Merwe who was disliked by the people because of his repugnant attitude towards the black people and his eccentricity and violent temper. Van der Merwe was not an easy-going person and was the most hated because of his heavy-handedness (Ramphela 2013:49; Smith 1994).

Van der Merwe was born and bred in the former Boere Republiek of Transvaal in 1902 and was ordained in the place of his birth, Belfast. According to Serumula (date), he was brought up and socialised in the ultra-conservative environment of the Voortrekkers. At Barberton in the Eastern Transvaal he had problems with black people and he had to move to Belfast (Maree 1962:209). After working around the area as a missionary he eventually went to the Kranspoort Mission Station in 1946.

4.2 Problems at Kranspoort

The conflicts at Kranspoort were accelerated when Van der Merwe came to the farm in 1946. The conflict had to do with his poor management style, resentment of African traditional practices and ‘baasskap’ (bossism) according to Serumula and Littie Mabuella (date). The problems that were experienced after the arrival of Van der Merwe will be discussed next.

4.2.1 Traditional dance

Before the arrival of Lukas van der Merwe at Kranspoort, people had entertainment between Christmas Day and New Year’s Day where they would arrange competitions and beat drums. Rev. Van der Merwe and his two ‘associates’, evangelists Segooa and chairperson of the ‘Stasie’ governing body Nathaniel Sebati, were not in favour of the event because they regarded it as a heathen practice. But many residents liked it and participated in it (Malan 1977:76). Evangelist Segooa started preaching against it in his sermons on Sundays as he believed that the groups that

were participating in the competition were using traditional ‘muti’ to win their game. The previous missionary, Van Coller, had come to terms with the practice and he did not forbid it but Van der Merwe, on the instigation of his two associates, opposed and wanted to abolish it without consulting with the people on the basis of scripture and showing them what was wrong with the practice (Serumula date).

The church elder who was in the ward where the practice was held warned Van der Merwe against abolishing the practice because it was an old custom and the abolishment would lead to the ‘breaking’ of the ‘Stasie’ (Malan 1977:76). The following December the practice was eliminated and forbidden without any form of negotiation. The practice was also forbidden in other outposts at Kranspoort. This unilateral decision hurt people deeply and drove them into a hostile attitude toward the missionary. The argument, according to Serumula (date), is that nothing should be forced on people because other people regard it as heathen practice and yet they could not prove it on theological grounds.

4.2.2 Appointment of village council and church council

In order to keep law and order at the ‘Stasie’, a village council was appointed which was headed by headman and his assistants. At this particular year, the village council consisted of three people: Isak Ramphela, Jakob Moemi and Nathiel Sebati. The three became Van Der Merwe’s ‘henchmen’ and nothing would happen at the ‘Stasie’ without them reporting it to the missionary. Even gossip stories were reported to the missionary (Serumula date). The chairperson of the village council was Nathaniel Sebati. Van der Merwe, Segooa and village chairperson Nathaniel Sebati became the most powerful men at the ‘Stasie’. The trio ruled Kranspoort with an iron fist. Van der Merwe, Seooa and Sebati were also members of the church council (Malan 1976:81). The three men were hated by the residents and in 1955 a petition was signed by 167 residents of Kranspoort, singling out the three as undesirable members at Kranspoort (Malan 1976:81).

4.2.3 Indirect rule

The pattern of Van der Merwe’s governance resembled that of indirect rule practised by the

missionaries elsewhere. Khapoya (2012:117) portrays 'indirect rule as the approach involving identifying the local power structure: kings, chiefs or headmen so then identified would then be invited, coerced, or bribed to become part of the colonial administrative structure while retaining power over the people'. The Kgoro (Village council) resembled a similar arrangement at Kranspoort. The rationale for keeping this style of rule, according to the missionary, was that Van der Merwe was preserving the African political system at the station while extending apartheid rule. Interactions between residents to meet and design their own strategies to fight missionary rule were severely restricted and discouraged (Khapoya 2012:118). However, 'direct rule' would be imposed on the subjects regardless of existing arrangements that allowed for the 'village council' to be in charge if the missionary order was challenged (Khapoya 2012:119).

4.2.4 Witchcraft beliefs and suspicions

The existence of a missionary-style village council, the appointment of the church council by the missionary, dissatisfaction over the forbidden traditional annual competition and many other factors intensified the suspicions of people over each other. The trust between the kin was eroded. This led to the formation of the two main camps called Ba-Sofasonke and Ba-Pharao or Ba-Daza (Ramphela 2013:50). Ba-Sofasonke were opposed to the missionary rule while Ba-Daza were on the side of the missionary. Both groups were renamed by one group: Ba-Sofasonke. They called the missionary group Ba-Daza after a traditional leader in the community who was renowned for strong muti. They believed that Ba-Sofasonke were not conquering Ba-Daza because of strong witchcraft medicine Ba-Daza were using (Ramphela 2013:50-51).

The beliefs and suspicions of witchcraft were extremely entrenched at Kranspoort and served to widen the distance between the two groups. The missionary group members, like evangelist Segooa, believed in it. Segooa shared his convictions about the witchcraft with Van der Merwe (Malan 1973:78). Instead of nipping the beliefs in the bud, Van der Merwe demonstrated a lack of awareness that witchcraft is a form of scapegoating and projection of one's failure on the enemy (Kgatla 2003:23). There is no such thing that human beings can manipulate natural powers to their advantage in order to harm others (Kgatla 2003:12).

4.2.5 Van der Merwe's disdainful management style

Van der Merwe went to a non-consultative school of thought and he had no tolerance for black people opposing his ideas. When he was inducted on Kranspoort on 27 October 1946 (Malunga 1986:41) he found about 800 black Christians at the mission station but in less than 20 years (by 1964) more than 600 of them were forcefully removed (DIV 2408). As a result of his style of mission, by 1953 he had triggered serious problems at Kranspoort. He introduced notorious burial regulations that would separate people according to his judgement of beliefs. Those who were regarded as unbelievers were buried in one place and those who were regarded as Christians were buried in another place. Moreover, those who did not belong to the Kranspoort Mission Station were not allowed to be buried there (Malunga 1986:44).

In addition, when Van der Merwe arrived at Kranspoort he introduced a system to inspect the residents' yard, houses and surroundings for cleanliness (Malunga 1986:41). Although the system might have been desirable, he unilaterally imposed it on the residents and it attracted resentment and opposition. His wife was given the responsibility of carrying out the campaign.

Moreover, Van der Merwe wanted to renovate the old manse and some outpost locations but again he did not consult with the people. He wanted to use proceeds from the old orchard in order to finance some of the projects (Malunga 1986:42) for which he requested permission from the Synodical Mission Committee but failed to inform the local black people. According to Serumula (7/7/20150), the way the missionary sold the orange orchard was blatant theft which could not be tolerated.

The introduction of a fund-raising system that discriminated against those who were said to be non-Christians exacerbated the problems. Christians were levied R 2.00 per year while people from Patmos and Oorkant were charged R4.00. The reason for the difference in levies was that Christians had paid their other half in the 'love-offerings' (Malunga 1986:44). As a result of this, more and more people felt compelled to challenge these new regulations introduced by Van der Merwe.

Attempts by Van der Merwe to unilaterally obtain permission from the Minister of Native Affairs, D.F. Verwoerd, without first informing the Synodical Commission Committee (Malunga 1986:48), to expel undesirable people from Kranspoort, his introduction of the clean-up campaign, his forced financial contribution towards improvements at the mission station, his unilateral style of management of the missionary, allowing for rumours of witchcraft and its resultant suspicion, his indirect rule through the village council and hand-picked church council, his autocratic rule and disdain towards the black people resulted in a major confrontation at Kranspoort.

4.2.6 Arrival of evangelist Walther Segooa

The appointment of evangelist Walther Segooa, who proved to be a henchman of Van der Merwe, even in his unlawful deeds attracted more criticism. Segooa was hand-picked by the missionary because, according to his words, the missionary said ‘Ek soek imand soos jy’ (I need a person like you; my translation) (Malan 1977:76) and Segooa had said this about Van der Merwe ‘Ek sien jy is kwaai en ek soek kwaai’ (I see you are strict and I too need someone strict, my translation) (Malan 1977:75). Van der Merwe ran the mission station with the mission committee of the DRC and yet he had the village council and church council.

Mission bylaws such as the one which barred non-confessing members of the church from burying their dead in the consecrated cemetery and annual rental payments which had to be up to date before any service could be rendered to the affected person angered many residents because it pronounced judgement on their family members before *parousia*.

Furthermore, Van der Merwe introduced another controversial regulation that demanded any visitors to the mission station to be introduced to the church council if they intended to stay for more than a day (Malunga 1986:45). This was done as a way of monitoring and frustrating movements of people from the neighbouring white farms to the ‘Stasie’. Such visitors who had reported their presence to the church council had to attend all religious services held on the Kranspoort Mission Station irrespective of their denominational affiliation (Malunga 1986:45). The reason for this measure was to discourage Christians and non-Christians from settling on the mission station permanently. The majority of the Kranspoort Mission Station refused to obey these

rules which resulted in serious confrontation.

4.2.7 The confrontation of 1953-1957

The swelling anger that led to the real confrontation between the residents of Kranspoort and Van der Merwe came forth in 1953. Ramphele (2013:49) puts it as follows: ‘The high-handedness of this man eventually led to a mass expulsion of two-thirds of the mission villagers between 1955 and 1956’. The episode was the product of local and national grievances of mass resistance movements in the 1950s. Although these events should have made the DRC realise that its mission policy was not palatable with political developments in the country, the church stood side by side with the government to implement apartheid. The mission policy eventually led to an open rebellion at Kranspoort. The Defiance Campaign of the 1950s, the Kliptown Congress of the People in 1955, the anti-pass campaign of the 1950s, the ANC Women’s March of 1956 to the Union Buildings, and James ‘Sofasonke’ Mpanza and many other’s protests in the country that were ‘mushrooming’ everywhere helped to ignite the open confrontation at the DRC Mission Station (Ramphele 2013:49).

The grievances about the allocation of pieces of land, irrigation water, burial rights within the mission station and suppression of African traditional practices were some of the causes of the conflict. According to Malunga (1986:50), Ramphele (2013:49), Malan (1973:79-81) and Serumula (7/7/2015), the open confrontation started with the death of a woman called Thibego Leshiba. The woman was the mother-in-law of Joseph Matseba who was residing at Kranspoort and working at Messina. When Joseph Matseba invited his mother-in-law, Leshiba, to come and stay with his family at Kranspoort, he did not comply with the regulation that all strangers coming to the mission station should be reported to the church council (Malunga 1986:50). During her visit, Leshiba passed away because she was old and ill. However, Leshiba came from a neighbouring farm and her body could not be returned to the farm of her origin because the road was impassable, steep and rocky (Segooa in Malan 1973:79).

After convincing the missionary that the deceased woman should be buried at Kranspoort because of the difficulties of taking her body to her farm of origin, an argument started with the church

council that Matseba was in arrears with his church contributions (Segooa in Malan 1973:79). Because Matseba was not in good standing with the church, Leshiba could not be buried at the station. Open confrontation ensued where the residents of Kranspoort defied the bylaws of the station and buried Leshiba in the designated area for Christians and missionaries (Segooa in Malan 1973:81). The mob issued a warning that the village council chairperson Nathaniel Sebat, evangelist Walther Segooa and missionary Van der Merwe should not come to the grave as they would be killed. Van der Merwe felt humiliated by the defiance and called the police (Serumula 7/7/2015). The police came, but they could not arrest anybody as there was no incident of crime. The crowd shouted ‘take Van der Merwe, Segooa and Sebati away [and] peace would be restored’ (Segooa in Malan 1973:83).

Shortly after the burial of Leshiba, there was another death that caused conflict (Segooa in Malan 1973:80). When the church council heard about the death of another lady in the village they went to the family to comfort them, but the people who were in the house refused their prayers. The relations were so poor that the residents called Van der Merwe ‘Satan’ and they said that they did not want to be prayed for by ‘Satan’ (DIV 2406:102-110). Eventually, the whole group started shouting, repeating the earlier demands made at Leshiba’s burial: ‘Away with Van der Merwe, Segooa and Sebati’ (Segooa in Malan 1973:81).

After the two deaths, the residents of Kranspoort issued a petition to the DRC Mission Secretary Rev. J.B.C. Stofberg complaining about Van der Merwe, Segooa and Sebati. Two commissions of enquiry were appointed and the church council was suspended and reinstated after the enquiry. The commission tried to bring reconciliation but the residents would not accept Van der Merwe, Segooa and Sebati back. Court cases ensued where Van der Merwe and Segooa were summoned by the court (Serumula 7/7/2015). The complaints of the Kranspoort residents were handled in court but the white magistrate who was handling the case was biased towards Van der Merwe and his camp. At the third sitting, the magistrate ordered that the complainants (aggrieved party) should leave the mission station as they were ‘no longer Christians’ (Segooa in Malan 1973:87). According to the magistrate, the mission station was meant for Christians. These were early warnings of the Group’s Areas Act of 1950 which would declare the area a white area and remove

the black residents from it. Such moves also revealed what the DRC Mission Policy stood for. Those who resisted the policy because of its evil agenda were branded as non-Christians and they were not tolerated on the 'Stasie'. Subsequently, the Ba-Sofasonke group was forcefully removed from the mission station because they were 'no longer Christians'.

According to asylum seekers theory, the following three points apply to the situation: 1) people came to Kranspoort because they were fleeing from neighbouring farms, 2) on the farms they were subjected to work for months without pay, and 3) when they got employment in Gauteng where they could receive better pay they decided to seek accommodation at Kranspoort and later took their families from the farms to Kranspoort. According to Malan (1973) the people above had no claim to Kranspoort because they were fugitives.

There were also groups of people who were afraid of witchcraft and came to Kranspoort for refuge under the wings of the church. Similarly, some women fled their homesteads in the villages to Kranspoort for the safety of their 'maseka'. 'Maseka' were babies who experience teething first with their lower jaw. Such babies were killed in their traditional communities and their mothers sought refuge at Kranspoort. It is alleged that such babies were killed because people believed that if a Maseka bites someone they will never heal.

All of these explanations are farfetched for the missionaries found people residing on Kranspoort when they arrived there in 1863, according to court evidence led by Tau and Serumula (DIV 2406). There could have been people who fled from white farms to settle on Kranspoort but this was not a matter of cause. People who might have fled from witchcraft killings in their community cannot be an explanation of why people were on the farm because the DRC went to the Northern Transvaal for missionary work. They needed people to evangelise. The unfortunate situation arose when the DRC Mission Policy was founded on secular interest and draconian laws. The DRC Mission Policy had failed and scapegoats were sought to justify the failure of the policy. The Maseka theory is unfounded myth. Such beliefs might exist but it is rare that one could find so many children with that disorder to the extent that they form a large crowd settling at Kranspoort. In the next chapter, the researcher focuses on the actual reasons for the removal of the 'no longer Christians' of

Kranspoort who were subsequently forcefully removed as well as banished as ‘undesirable’ people in South Africa.

4.3 The Police Intervene—The Actual Forced Removals

As the confrontation between Van der Merwe, Segooa and Sebati and the majority of residents came to a climax, the only option the mission station leaders saw as a solution for the conflict was to give the dissatisfied people ‘trekpassie’ (Afrikaans word for exit permit). A retired policeman of the South African police was called in to issue the residents with ‘trekpassie’ at the local primary school (Malan 1973:88). The people who were issued with the permit to leave the area refused to leave. After three months none of them had complied with the order to leave the place. The police of a nearby station were called in to arrest these residents and took them to Mara station. The residents were charged with contempt of court. They all paid their fines but then returned to the Kranspoort Mission Station.

After a while the police came in bigger numbers to arrest them and at court they were given higher fines that they could not pay and had to stay for some months in prison. Those who managed to pay their fines went to the Messina location, while others went to their relatives within the area and some went to Johannesburg (Malan 1973:90). After the forceful removal of the residents, permits were given to 75 families to stay on Kranspoort. These were people who obeyed the laws of the mission station and were submissive to the rule of Van der Merwe (Serumula date). As there were some vacant houses on the ‘Stasie’, people from ‘Oorkant’ and ‘Parmos’ who were regarded as heathens were invited to come and stay in the ‘Stasie’ (Malan 1973:91). The people who stayed behind were subjected to the PTO for two years renewable when and if the ‘landlord’ (missionary) so desired (Serumula date). Those residents who had a good relationship with the missionary were finally removed in 1964 and were given compensation for their demolished houses. They went to settle in Maepa township and Mara location under chief Khutama’s area (Serumula date).

4.4 Conclusion: The Other Side of the Same Coin

The problem of the Kranspoort residents became a serious nightmare to the DRC mission

strategists. They never expected that there would be black people who would resist their mission policy of denial of black rights, oppression and that which perpetuated white dominance over black people. By definition, black people who resisted the policy of apartheid could not be said to be Christian. Christianity was defined in terms of the total surrender of black people to white rule and direction. This is evident from the correspondence the mission authorities had with their counterparts in government. Correspondence between the mission secretary of the time, Rev. J.H.M. Stofberg and Van der Merwe and the regional liaison commissioner and secretary of native affairs shows the collusion and convergence of the policies of the DRC and the government (this will be discussed more fully in the next chapter). The forced compliance with the apartheid policy on the side of the black people was not negotiable.

CHAPTER FIVE: CHICKEN COME HOME TO ROOST

5.1 Introduction: Fear Drives the White Nation Crazy

This chapter surveys the DRC Mission Policy and the close collaboration of mission and politics¹. The 1948 Nationalist Party election victory brought about a host of laws designed to bring total control and dominance over black people's lives and their destiny. The DRC was drawn into the government agenda to the extent that they lost their prophetic voice. The use of government instruments such as the forced removal of 'excess' and unwanted people from white farms was employed by the church. Black Christians that held a different political view were declared 'no longer Christians' and forcefully removed from the mission stations. The pious outlook of mission did not help the church to realise that its social and political interests were against the love of Christ and thus the love of the neighbour.

In 1948, the politics in South Africa changed fundamentally. The Nationalist Party came to power and in 1950 it started introducing a litany of laws to reinforce and consolidate their policy of separate development and racial dominance (Magwira & Kgatla 2015b:471-490). The fear of what influence the Communist Party could have on the natives and fear of racial mixing and the native majority's increasing protests resulted in the white government promulgating laws that would ensure their dominance and total control of native affairs (Afrikaner Fears and Politics of Despair nd). Examples of some of the Acts that were enacted for the purpose of promoting white exclusive interests are (Magwira & Kgatla 2015b:471-490):

- The Group Areas Act (No. 41 of 1950) with the primary objective of curbing the movements and influx of blacks into the cities and keeping them away from all the land

¹ This chapter benefits from my research article with S.T. Kgatla in the Stellenbosch Journal of Theology published in January 2015.

reserved for the whites;

- The Population Registration Act (No. 30 of 1950) with the purpose of classifying people into three categories: white, black or coloured based on their appearance, social standing and descent (Afrikaner Fear and Politics of Despair nd);
- The Bantu Authorities Act (No. 68 of 1951) with the aim of keeping the South African citizens apart along racial lines and pushing blacks out of the areas where they were not wanted;
- The Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act (No. 52 of 1951) with the aim of forcefully removing 'surplus' people from their landowners, local authorities and government places through evictions and demolishing their houses without compensation;
- The Natives Act (No. 67 of 1952) with the aim of introducing reference books, employment records, and tax payments. Black people had to carry their reference books with them day and night otherwise they would be charged criminally;
- The Natives Labour Act of 1953 with the aim of prohibiting Africans from striking and denying Africans with any right of a trade union;
- The Public Safety Act of 1953 with the aim of prohibiting the ANC from staging civil disobedience campaigns;
- The Criminal Amendment Act (No. 8 of 1953) with the aim of presuming any person associated with a guilty person as also guilty;
- The Bantu Education Act (No. 47 of 1953) with the aim of providing separate and inferior education;
- The Reservation of Separate Amenities Act (No. 49 of 1953) with the aim of providing separate recreational facilities for different races;
- The Natives Resettlement Act (No. 19 of 1954) with the aim of removing black people from any designated area for the convenience of white people;
- The Natives Act (No. 64 of 1956) with the aim of depriving Africans of the right to court protection against apartheid laws; and
- The Riotous Assemblies Act (No. 17 of 1956) with the aim of prohibiting all gatherings if the Minister of Justice has not given expressed permission (The Riotous Assemblies Act

Commences nd).

Included in this arsenal of regimes was The Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act (No. 52 of 1951) which prevented illegal squatting and cleaned up the existing squatting (Changuion & Steenkamp 2012:194). This is the act which was used extensively to control the movements of black people. The only thing the Chief Commissioner in charge of native affairs had to do was give advice to local chief magistrates on how to interpret and implement the legislation. This was also the case with the Kranspoort Mission Station in the then Northern Transvaal (Magwira & Kgatla 2015b:471-490).

These excessive laws would not have come at a better time for the Kranspoort Mission Station because the black people living there were uncontrollably resisting the system between 1955 and 1964. As the DRC Mission Policy and apartheid policy shared the same objectives and destination, these laws were intensively used in promoting the mission agenda of the church (Ibid). Morris (1977:36) correctly argues that, 'If Christian righteousness was ever the inspiration of national piety, it was surely suspended in 1950'. Indeed, the 1950s were a 'roaring epoch' in which the apartheid laws were made and implemented. Both the Nationalist Government and the DRC went all out to create and enforce the laws that would effectively consolidate white dominance and rule over black people (Worden 2012:108).

The 1950s are also known for their vibrant black resistance and protests against the apartheid government. It is also known for the most brutal retaliation from the government (Black Resistance of 1990 nd in Magwira & Kgatla 2015b). The direct victims of these Acts included Albert Luthuli, Moses Kotane, Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, Walter Sisulu and Joe Slovo as some of them were leaders within the ANC (Ibid). In this decade, a number of ANC defiance and protest campaigns were held including the Defiance Campaign of 1952, the 1956 ANC Women's March to the Union Buildings, and the 1955 Kliptown Congress of the People. These defiance and protest campaigns possibly provoked the amount of brutality the apartheid regime had. The regime was poised to ensure the uncompromised implementation of the policy of separate development (Magwira & Kgatla 2015b:471-490). Bodily pain was used to induce forced compliance on the

part of black people. Moreover, massive forced removals of Africans were undertaken at a large scale during this period (Badat 2012; The SPP Reports Series Vol. 1-4).

5.2 Colonial Conquest and Capture of Land Under African Occupation for Mission and Private Use

The colonial conquest and the right of banishment of black people from their land was concluded in South Africa towards the first half of the 19th century and the patches of land occupied by black people had to be appropriated in terms of the policy of separate development (The SPP Reports in Magwira & Kgatla 2015b:471-490). 'Native reserves' also known as Bantustans had become convenient dumping grounds for 'supplies [of] people' in order to facilitate domination, both economic and political, over the 'conquered' black people (Ibid). Changuion and Steenkamp (2012:101) estimate that by 1900 there were 45 reserves in the Transvaal to which blacks were relegated to. The policies for both the DRC and the white government were shaped by these different histories of resistance and conquest, the different needs of white people, the size of the African population and the degree of resistance against white rule (Ibid). For the policy to be implemented, an amount of force had to be used including forced removals and banishments of those who proved more influential in leading the resistance. Sometimes the settlers did not necessarily need the land occupied by blacks, but they wanted to exert their authority over those areas (Changuion & Steenkamp 2012:108).

After the historic Afrikaner election in 1948, a host of laws systematically introduced demographic control over which various races could settle in the country. These included the ones that led to the creation of black homelands (Bantustans) between 1948 and 1959 (The SPP Reports Vol.2). According to The SPP Reports (Vol.2), the demographic distribution of the African population was divided into three types: white urban areas, white rural areas, and Bantustan areas (Ibid). The table below gives some idea of the plan in percentages (The SPP Reports Vol. 2 in Magwira & Kgatla 2015b:471-490).

Year	White urban areas	White rural areas	Bantustans areas
1960	29.1	31.4	39.5
1970	28.2	24.5	47.3
1980	25.4	20.6	54.0

(The table above is taken from The SPP Report Vol. 2.)

Demographic control was the result of political control that was designed to crush any black resistance violently or passively but with unwavering determination (Van Aswegen 1990:283). A plethora of legislations was introduced to enable the state to use any means necessary to restrict the activities of individuals or groups. According to The SPP Reports (Vol. 4:9), the policy of the forced removal and banishment of people was backed by the policy of the Bantustans where some chiefs were lured into accepting a ‘false’ dream of independence within a state (Magwira & Kgatla 2015b:471-490).

According to Magwira and Kgatla (2015b:471-490), by the second half of 1970 the communities that suffered banishment and forced removals were found all over South Africa. According to Badat (2012), these communities were found in the Eastern Cape (Ciskei, Transkei, Mpodoland, and Thembuland), the Free State (Witzieshoek), the Northern Province (Sekhukhuneland, Matlala, and Malebogo), the North West Province and many other parts of the country. As Dumisa Ntsebeza and Terry Bell (in Badat 2012:vii) argue, South Africans will never know how many people were banished and what happened to them. People who were forcefully removed or banished had no trial in court; they were provided no opportunity to defend themselves and yet they were denied their liberty (Ibid:vii). The only crime of those who were banished was that they either resisted apartheid policies or they were staying on land that the state wanted to take without compensation.

Kgatla (2013:9) has listed some of the reasons for the forced removal and banishment of black people. These include the following:

- **Ethnic purity:** The removal of people of colour from white designated areas was a purposeful policy designed by the government to remove, by violent and terror-inspiring means, black people from certain geographic areas for white exclusive use. The policy was a planned deliberate removal of black people from a specific territory by force or intimidation, in order to render that area homogenous and ethnically white.
- **Military bases:** Some black land would make very good military bases, especially those on open plains and on mountain ranges along the Spelonken. Black people living in those areas had to be removed peacefully, sometimes without compensation, or forcibly if they resisted.
- **Exclusive self-interest:** Although the 1913 and 1936 segregation laws were in operation, there were still fertile patches of land occupied by black people. The government had to find a way to acquire such prime land for white agricultural farmers and government projects, including military bases.
- **Homeland policy:** Homelands were established to achieve the grand policy of apartheid and some of them were situated in small areas. Ways had to be found to remove people from one area to another to make room for the homelands. Further forced removals were an essential tool of the government to strip all black people of any political rights as well as their citizenship.
- **Implementation of the Group Areas Act:** The Group Areas Act mandated residential segregation and black people were forcibly removed to make room for the new dispensation. Many 'surplus' black people were removed from towns and dumped in reserves where they would provide cheap labour (Kgatla 2013:9).

Once the government had decided that people should move from a particular spot to another, nothing would stop them from realising that goal (Magwira & Kgatla 2015b:471-490). Methods used by the government to remove 'unwanted people' included persuasion through incentives, intimidation and the appointment of collaborators (Mohlamme nd:1). Should incentives fail to persuade people to move voluntarily, then coercive methods such as threatening people, denying people grazing rights or detaining leaders were used to instil fear in people (Mohlamme nd:15).

On the one hand, a special branch of police (known for their secretive methods and torture) may be employed to do this, on the other hand, chiefs or collaborators are appointed to exert pressure on people to leave. If all of the above fails, brutal force may be applied to compel forced compliance (Ibid).

5.3 The Flip Side of the Same Coin

As stated in Magwira & Kgatla (2015b:471-490), lethal apartheid laws would not have come at a better time for a missionary solution for the black resistance at the Kranspoort Mission Station. A similar situation which required the same laws such as the Group Areas Act was brewing in Bethesda Mission Station², some 56 km west of Kranspoort (Moeng 2015). The black Christians who constituted the Christian community at ‘Stasie’ had become ‘no longer Christians’ and warranted forced removals.

The Group Areas Act was forcefully and mercilessly applied in 1955 after black Christians who lived on the farm for their entire lives were denied permits in terms of section 14(1) of the Act to stay on the farm in Kranspoort. The families who were vocal and resisted the white rule were declared excess families and were ordered to leave the farm with immediate effect (Land Claim Commission Report No 201/1997:3 in Magwira & Kgatla 2015b:471-490). Families who were compliant with the missionary rules were issued with permits that would expire after two years after which they had to leave the mission farm (Ibid). It was during this time that the provisions of the Native Trust and Land Act (No. 18 of 1936) were evoked to declare people who lived on the Kranspoort Mission Station as squatters (Ibid).

Squatters were black people who lived on white farms without permits and were unemployed. A farmer would conveniently dismiss black workers from work and deny them permits in order to

² Bethesda was the second mission station some 56 kilometres south west of Kranspoort. It was established in 1856 by Stephanus Hofmeyr (Kgatla 1988:78).

render them squatters and effectively make them liable for arrest in terms of the Squatter Act of 1952 (No. 52 of 1952). Moreover, it was a criminal offence for a black male to roamer in the street even if he was looking for employment. ‘Surplus people’ were a nuisance to get rid of from the land. In terms of Section 32 of the same Act, all squatters who continuously lived on the land since 31 August 1936 should have been registered and a licence fee for each squatter should have been paid by the white owner (Magwira & Kgatla 2015b:471-490). If the farm owner stopped paying the required licence fee, the squatters were declared illegal and they had to leave the farm. The same procedure was followed with regards to the church members who did labour work at the DRC missionary at Kranspoort in 1955 (Ibid).

However, there were other circumstances where squatters were not effectively dealt with and fell through the cracks. Consequently, Proclamation No. 244 of 1957 was promulgated whereby the payment of licence fees was suspended in respect of any black person residing on any land held by a missionary society (Ibid). This concession would only be considered for trustworthy missionaries who supported the government policy of the time (Ibid). It was finally decided in 1960, as a general policy, that people on the mission stations in ‘white areas’ were no longer allowed to remain on farms in the so-called white areas but would be resettled in black reserves (Ibid). This decision revealed serious ambiguities within the motives for mission within the DRC. One would ask whether land for mission was only for the use of white people or whether the land was a commodity to enable mission work in black areas.

There is abounding evidence in the form of documents to substantiate this assertion. Correspondence between the DRC mission authorities and government officials on the matter of forced removals during the period 1954–1960 at Kranspoort reveals unprecedented church and state collusion (DIV 2407). Letters from missionaries and responses from the state officials reveal a common purpose and agenda between the two groups (Magwira & Kgatla 2015b:471-490). The DRC missionaries needed the state to help them to remove excess people who were initially recruited to join the Christian faith and had then become ‘no longer Christians’ because of their political hostility. As the black resistance against separate development intensified in the country, it spilled onto the mission stations (Ibid). The letter written by Rev. J.H.M Stofberg on 8 March

1954 to the Secretary of Natives Affairs and the response of the Secretary of the Natives Affairs sheds more light on the collusion the church and state had on the question of squatters. Squatters received no sympathy either from the church or the state (Ibid). In the letter, Rev. Stofberg raised four questions concerning the forced removals of squatters from the Kranspoort farm (Ibid). These questions are discussed in the article by Magwira & Kgatla (2015b:471-490) as follows:

a) In the first question, Rev. Stofberg expressed doubts as to whether the church had the right to evict squatters because, according to him, the Squatters Act No. 21 of 1895 (first passed in the Free State Republic) (DIV 2408) stated that no person other than the state could do so. The Secretary of Natives Affairs responded by reassuring the church that the 1895 Act specifies that the farm owner was entitled to give only five families PTO and such squatters should be in his employment (Letter dated 8/3/1954 in DIV 2408). Natives could only live at places approved by the government, such as reserves, and an application to the Volksraad (Parliament) should be made if natives wanted to live in another area. Since Kranspoort wanted to get rid of excess people, they could do so without hesitation, according to the Secretary of Natives Affairs (Ibid).

b) The second question concerned the legality of action against black people who had stayed on the two farms of Kranspoort and Bethesda for a very long period without permits. According to the church, it would not be reasonable to remove them after staying there for so long a time. The answer from the Secretary of Natives Affairs was that legislations that came after 1950 had overriding effect over the practices which occurred there before (DIV 2407).

c) The third question was whether the missionary society had the right to hire natives who lived on the mission farm. This question had far-reaching implications for the church, hence it had an elaborate answer. Article one of the Land Act No. 27 of 1913 was quoted by the Secretary of Natives Affairs as prohibiting the appointment of natives by a white person on white land without expressed permission from the Governor-General. But this condition did not include missionary societies who occupied land for the purposes of education and missionary work (Letter dated 8/3/1954 in DIV 2407). The Governor-General had given exemption to missionary societies on 8 April 1915. But according to the Secretary of Natives Affairs, the people living on mission ground

had rental contracts that expired in 1924. For Kranspoort and Bethesda, the natives who were living there for the period 1924-1955 (a period of 31 years), even if the provision of the Land Act of 1936 was not observed, were there without the permission of the Governor-General and thus lived there illegally. The situation was further drastically changed with the introduction of the Group Areas Act (No. 41 of 1950) which became effective from 30 March 1951 (DIV 2407). From 30 March 1951, the permit system was introduced and it affected all natives who were on white ground, including mission stations. The status of the inhabitants of Kranspoort had changed and they could be treated as squatters living on other white farmers' land.

d) The fourth question was whether the church (mission station) had the right to remove the natives from the farm who disobeyed the bylaws drawn by the church. The answer to this question was that the church had the right to cancel the contract which was subject to obedience to the bylaws after the expiry date. But in the case of Bethesda and Kranspoort, the natives that refused to vacate the land after the expiry of their contract could be removed through court order. It was also possible that the Governor-General might make proclamation in terms of article (2) of the Act of 1951 (Act No. 52 of 1951) to remove them. The church had the same rights as ordinary white farmers to remove excess people by obtaining a court order from the civil court. Furthermore, the natives that refused to vacate the land after the expiry of their permission might be prosecuted in terms of the provisions of the Group Areas Act (No. 41 of 1950). This advice from the government was accepted by the DRC and implemented ruthlessly.

Moreover, on 22 September 1955, the local missionary Rev. Lukas van der Merwe at Kranspoort wrote a letter to the Chief Natives Affairs Commissioner reporting that inhabitants of 157 families had taken up a serious riotous attitude and that they should be ordered to make their own arrangements for resettlement outside the mission area to black areas (Letter dated 22/9/1954 in DIV 2407). This was taking place although the Mission Secretary Rev. J.H.M Stofberg had earlier written a letter to the Secretary of Natives Affairs expressing doubt as to whether they, as a church, could take steps to remove about 200 squatters (157 families) from the Kranspoort farm (Ibid). Rev. Van der Merwe, the local missionary, wrote another letter to the Chief Natives Affairs Commissioner dated 9 September 1955, in which he complained about the 'natives' on the farm

of Kranspoort who refused to leave the area even though their 'trekpas' was expiring on 13 September 1955 (Letter dated 9/9/1955 in DIV 2407). He further warned the government that if drastic steps were not taken against the 'squatters' in terms of the Squatter Act of 1952 (Act No. 52 of 1951), then a wrong precedent would not only be created for Kranspoort but also for other mission stations elsewhere (Ibid).

Of the two, the Mission Secretary Rev. Stofberg and local missionary Rev. Van der Merwe, Rev. Van der Merwe seemed more forceful in his actions. He wrote straight to the government officials, ignoring his mission secretary (Magwira & Kgatla 2015b:471-490). On 9 September 1954, the Secretary of Natives Affairs wrote to the Natives Affairs Commissioner of the Northern Transvaal informing him about the letter received from the local missionary Rev. Van der Merwe as well as a telephonic conversation he had had with Van der Merwe. In the letter, the Secretary of Natives Affairs further informs the Natives Affairs Commissioner that legal steps were instituted against the squatters who were refusing to leave the Kranspoort Mission Station (Magwira & Kgatla 2015b:471-490).

Later, Rev. Stofberg wrote to both the Natives Affairs Commissioner and the Secretary for Natives Affairs enquiring about the legality of the contemplated action, as was the case in his letters of 8 March 1954 and 25 April 1955 (DIV 2408), as he was the last line of communication between himself and the church. In his letter of 25 April 1955, Rev. Stofberg enquired (on behalf of the Mission Commission) from the Secretary of Natives Affairs whether 200 squatters who were not issued with permits should be given notices to leave the area. He further requested the Department of Natives Affairs to act urgently. He also suggested that it was only the Department of Natives Affairs, through the Chief Natives Commissioner, that could remove squatters to trust grounds, reserves or native townships. Rev. Stofberg further indicated that the situation at Kranspoort was intolerable and earnestly requested the department to remove the excess people immediately (Ibid).

The affected residents of Kranspoort tried to take the matter to court through their attorneys (Letter from Bernard Melman & Co in DIV 2408), but because of the Natives Act (No. 64 of 1956), which deprived Africans of the right to court protection against apartheid laws, they could not. As they

could not approach civil courts for protection, their lawyers pleaded with the Natives Affairs Commissioner that they be settled in native reserves at Mara, Senthumule or Molebo (DIV 2407) as they refused to be settled on white farms as labourers. To be stationed on white farms as labourers was a worse denigration than many black people could imagine. According to the Chief Natives Commissioner (Letter to the Secretary of Natives Affairs dated 3 June 1955 in DIV 2407), the excess people from Kranspoort could be sent to Senthumule and Khotama Townships, although the farmers in the Levubu area were prepared to take them all as squatters. The residents were not prepared to go to white farmers as squatters because that would mean further humiliation. Finally, they were chased from Kranspoort by the police. Some fled to their relatives in Gauteng while others went to the neighbouring township in the current Limpopo Province.

After the dispersion of the black Christians who were regarded as ‘no longer Christians’ because of their political convictions from the ‘Stasie’, the black people who were regarded as ‘heathens’ and were residing on the sections of Kranspoort called ‘Oorkant’ and ‘Patmos’ were invited to come and settle in the ‘Stasie’ because they were politically ‘correct’ according to Serumula (7/7/2015). In 1964, the rest of the people who came to settle at the ‘Stasie’ were removed in terms of the Group Areas Act of 1950. Unlike their predecessors, their houses were evaluated and compensated for by the government.

5.4 Summary and Observation

The activities around the removal of black Christians from Kranspoort in 1955 dealt a severe blow to the credibility of the mission policy of the DRC in the Northern Transvaal of that time. There was no basis for the 157 families to be declared squatters after staying on the farm as ‘converts of the DRC’ for more than 100 years unless the mission policy was highly diabolical. Dr J.P. Theron made an overview history of missionary work at Kranspoort in February 1990 in which he indicated that from January to April 1877 about 90 black people came to repentance in the area. In the following year, 1878, 62 adults and 52 children were baptised adding up to 244 adults and 195 children being baptised (Theron 1990:73-104 in DIV 2408 in Magwira & Kgatla 2015b:471-490).

A conclusion one can arrive at is that the mission policy served two purposes for the DRC and the

Afrikaner government. For the DRC, the troublemakers were removed from the 'Stasie' and replaced with law-abiding 'squatters' and for the government the ideal of the Group Areas Act of 1950 was implemented when those 'black spots' within the white areas were removed (Ibid). The ambivalence arises from the fact that the DRC had abandoned the original purpose for which the land was acquired—for exclusive missionary work for political expediency. On 27 April 1955, the mission secretary of the Northern Transvaal wrote to the Secretary of Natives Affairs about 157 families on the mission farm in Kranspoort who did not have permits (Magwira & Kgatla 2015b:471-490). The mission secretary wanted the families to be removed even though they had stayed on the farm since 1863 as Christians when the mission station was started. The government was in agreement with the DRC that blacks living on mission stations within the white areas had to be removed to the black reserves. The greatest problem they faced was removing the squatters, placing them and supporting them in their new localities (DIV 2407). Where there was resistance on the part of black people to comply with the desired white decision, force had to be used.

5.5 Confrontation of 1953–1957 at Kranspoort Mission Station: A Case Study

The increasing anger that led to the real confrontation between the residents of Kranspoort and the missionary station came forth in 1953. Ramphele (2013:49) puts it as follows: 'The high-handedness of this man van der Merwe] eventually led to a mass expulsion of two-thirds of the mission villagers between 1955 and 1956'. The episode was the product of local and national grievances of mass resistance movements in the 1950s. Although these events should have made the DRC realise that its mission policy was not palatable with political developments in the country, the church stood side by side with the government to implement apartheid (Magwira & Kgatla 2015b:471-490). The mission policy eventually led to an open rebellion at Kranspoort. The Defiance Campaign of the 1950s, the Kliptown Congress of the People in 1955, the anti-pass campaign of the 1950s, the ANC Women's March of 1956 to the Union Buildings, and James 'Sofasonke' Mpanza and many other's protests in the country were 'mushrooming' everywhere and helped to ignite the open confrontation at the DRC Mission Station (Ramphele 2013:49).

The grievances about the allocation of pieces of land, irrigation water, burial rights within the

mission station and the suppression of African traditional practices were some of the causes of the conflict. According to Malunga (1986:50), Ramphele (2013:49), Malan (1973:79-81) and Serumula (7/7/2015), the open confrontation started with the death of a woman called Thibego Leshiba. The woman was the mother-in-law of Joseph Matseba who was residing at Kranspoort and working at Messina. When Matseba let his mother-in-law, Leshiba, come and stay with his family at Kranspoort, he did not comply with the regulation that all strangers coming to the mission station should be reported to the church council (Malunga 1986:50). Leshiba was very ill and she passed away while she was staying at the farm. Leshiba had come from a neighbouring farm and her body could not be returned to the farm of her origin because the road was impassable, steep and rocky (Segooa in Malan 1973:79).

According to Malunga (1986:45), after convincing the missionary that the deceased woman should be buried at Kranspoort because of the difficulties of taking her body to her farm of origin, the argument started with the church council that her host, Matseba, was in arrears with his church contributions (Malan 1973:79). Because Matseba was not in good standing with the church, Leshiba could not be buried at the station. Open confrontation ensued where the residents of Kranspoort defied the by-laws of the station and buried the deceased in the designated area for Christians and missionaries (Segooa in Malan 1973:81). The mob issued a warning that the village council chairperson Nathaniel Sebat, Evangelist Walther Segooa and the missionary Lukas van der Merwe should not come to the graveside as they would be killed. The missionaries felt humiliated by the defiance and called the police (Serumula 7/7/2015). The police came but they could not arrest anybody as there was no incident of crime. The crowd shouted 'take van der Merwe, Segooa and Sebati away [and] peace would be restored' (Segooa in Malan 1973:83).

Immediately after the burial of Leshiba there was another death at the station (Segooa in Malan 1973:80 in Magwira & Kgatla 2015b:471-490). When the church council heard about the death they went to the family to comfort them, but the people in the house refused their prayers. The relations were so poor that the residents called Lukas van der Merwe 'Satan' and said that they did not want to be prayed for by 'Satan' (DIV 2406:102-110). Eventually, the whole group started shouting the earlier demands made at the previous burial: 'Away with van der Merwe, Segooa and

Sebati' (Segooa in Malan 1973:81).

After the two death cases, the residents of Kranspoort issued a petition to the DRC Mission Secretary, Rev. J.B.C. Stofberg, in which they complained about Van der Merwe, Segooa and Sebati (Magwira & Kgatla 2015b:471-490). Two commissions of enquiry were appointed and the church council was suspended and reinstated after the enquiry. The commission tried to bring reconciliation but the residents would not accept Van der Merwe, Segooa and Sebati back. Court cases ensued where Van der Merwe and Segooa were summoned by the court (Serumula 7/7/2015). The complaints of Kranspoort were handled in court but the white magistrate who was handling the case was biased towards Rev. Van der Merwe and his camp. At the third sitting, the magistrate ordered that the complainants (aggrieved party) should leave the mission station as they were 'no longer Christians' (Segooa in Malan 1973:87) and, according to the magistrate, the mission station was meant for Christians. These were early warnings that the Group Areas Act of 1950 would be evoked and would declare the area a white area and remove the blacks from it. Such moves also revealed what the DRC Mission Policy stood for. Those who resisted the policy because of its evil agenda were labelled 'no longer Christians' and they would not be tolerated on the 'Stasie'. Subsequently, the Ba-Sofasonke group was forcefully removed from the mission station because they were 'no longer Christians' (Magwira & Kgatla 2015b:471-490).

The 75 families who were not removed from the Kranspoort mission station in 1957 were said to be loyal to the authorities and did not take part in the riots of 1955–1957. According to memorandum 4/447(2) submitted to the Department of the Natives Affairs by the squatters controlling officer at Kranspoort, they had built a new church building at the Khutama location outside Louis Trichardt (DIV 2407) for excess people on Kranspoort.

5.6 Mission at a Different Level

After the closure of the Kranspoort 'Stasie' and relocation of the last group which remained after the forced removals of 1957, new 'mission stations' were established in black areas. According to the report submitted to the mission secretary on 22 March 1965 (DIV 83), the following congregations that formed the Presbytery of Kranspoort were established: Tshilidzini, the next

white area in Levubu; Nthume near the current town of Sibase; Messina, in the black township of Nancefield; Bethesda; Soekmekaar; Turfloop; Letaba; Nkhensani; Lebone; Meetse-a-bophelo; Pietersburg and Kranspoort (Ibid). The Nationalist Government and the DRC dovetailed closely to develop and support a mission policy that would completely restructure South Africa to be totally under the tutelage of 'grand' apartheid where various ethnic groups would have their own homelands. The same policy of separateness heavily influenced the Mission Board in 1963 when the Mission Church (black) had to get a new name. The meeting decided to divide it into ethnic groups and name them Xhosa, Zulu or Sotho Dutch Reformed Churches to mirror the principles of the grand apartheid (Minutes of Mission Board in SIN 2503 & SIN 733 in Magwira & Kgatla 2015b:471-490). The name 'Dutch Reformed Church in Africa' was eventually adopted by black delegates when they became an autonomous church in 1963 (Ibid). The white DRC had so much power over the black autonomous church that when the 'mother church' made decisions, these decisions were forced on the 'daughter church' (SIN 2503).

The DRC mission work in the current Limpopo was not always coordinated and controlled from one central office. As the government was also a party to missionary work among black people for the purposes of introducing black homelands and separate development, it had a separate agenda from that of the official church (Smith 1994:np). The forced removals of 157 families from Kranspoort in 1957 did not have direct bearing on the developments of the late 1950s when other mission stations were established in Vendale and the Lowveld of the Transvaal of the time.

In his monograph first written in 1963 and revised in 1994, Nico Smith illustrates another path the DRC mission took in Venda that was ideologically related to the events at Kranspoort, even though the role players were not often aware of each other's intentions and presence in the area. Smith, who became a pioneering missionary to Venda in 1956, states in his monograph that although he was sent to Venda under the direct assistance by Verwoerd, Rev. Lukas van der Merwe of Kranspoort (some 60 km west of where Smith was stationed) did not welcome Smith in the area (Smith 1994:np). Van der Merwe was very angry with Smith's coming into the area and regarded it as transgression onto his terrain without previous consultation. The two worked for the same ideology but the right hand did not know what the left hand was doing.

Driven by the ideology of separateness and directly inspired by the Tomlinson Commission Report of 1956, many white missionaries gave their lives for mission work by going to remote areas of the country (Saayman 2007:47). The Tomlinson Commission was appointed by the National Party government to investigate all aspects of Bantu homelands with a view of developing them to form their own homelands for the various ethnic groups (Smith 1994:np). The commission came up with startling statistics, especially on the status of Christianity in South Africa. According to the commission's report, only 10% of homeland inhabitants were Christianised (Smith 1994:np). The report further indicated skewed mission statistics of the DRC, Roman Catholic Church and other Protestant churches. The DRC was not doing well when compared with other churches (Saayman 2007:23 in Magwira & Kgatla 2015b). At a meeting in June 1956 in Bloemfontein to discuss the Tomlinson Report, the DRC decided to accept the challenges posed by the commission to send as many missionaries as possible to homelands to go and evangelise black people, the results of which held favour for the white Afrikaners on the questions of having favour with God to fulfil their calling as the 'chosen' nation of Africa (Minutes of Mission Board 1939-1973 in SIN 220).

By 1960, the DRC had established the following mission stations in Venda and the Lowveld: Tshilidzini (Nico Smith 1956), Nthume (Willem Louw 1958), and Sibasa (Mauritz van den Heever 1959 in Smith 1963). These mission stations were led by white missionaries who were fundamentally influenced by the Tomlinson Report of 1956. New mission stations were accompanied by hospitals (Kgatla 1988:106).

Further south-east of Sibasa (Venda), in the area of the Shangaans, the DRC sent missionaries to fulfil the demands raised by the Tomlinson Report and the church to establish homelands among various ethnic groups in South Africa (Smith 1994:np; Kgatla 1988:46). In 1956, Rev. D.C.S. van der Merwe was inducted in Giyani as the first missionary in the area (Crafford 1982:349). In May 1959, E. Bruwer was inducted in the vicinity of Giyani called Nkhensani. Other outposts which were looked after by black evangelists included Makhuva and Shingwedzi. Further down south, C.W.H. Boshoff, the son-in-law of Dr. H.F. Verwoerd, established himself in Bushbuckridge in August 1956. In this period, the mission work of the DRC spread to the west in the area of Polokwane (Pietersburg), Mokopane (Potgietersrus) and south to Sekhukhuneland (Lydenburg).

The DRC mission strategy included building hospitals. From 1939 to 1960 ten hospitals were built in the area (Kgatla 1988:51).

5.7 Conclusion

The situation of the Kranspoort residents became a serious nightmare for the DRC mission strategists. They never expected that there would be black people who would resist their mission policy of denial of black rights, oppression and that which perpetuated white dominance over black people (Magwira & Kgatla 2015b:471-490). By definition, black people who resisted the policy of apartheid could not be said to be Christian. Christianity was defined in terms of total surrender of black people to white rule and direction. This is evident from the correspondence the mission authorities had with their counterparts in government (Ibid). Correspondence between the Mission Secretary of the time, Rev. J.H.M. Stofberg and Rev. Lukas van der Merwe, and the Regional Liaison Commissioner and Secretary of Native Affairs shows the collusion and convergence of the policies of the DRC and the government. The forced compliance with the apartheid policy on the side of the black people was not negotiable.

Apartheid as an ideology of self-interest and white protection was entrenched in the DRC to the extent that the DRC could not separate what was purely evil from Christian love. The church could not read the signs of time and remove brutal elements from its mission policy. Smith (1994) alludes that the pious outlook to mission within the DRC leadership at the time was a dose that blinded the Afrikaner missionaries. The zeal to convert the ‘heathens’ undergirded by a condescending attitude shaped the DRC Mission Policy. They did not realise that the ideology of apartheid had a firm grip on their minds. Part of the missionary outreach was to convince black people that the policy of separate development was designed to serve their interest whereas the main objective was to safeguard exclusive white interest. When ANC Leaders such as Dr Xuma ‘warned that there was no way that one nation could work in the best interest of another without involving it’ (Dr Alfred Xuma in SAHO), they were simply ignored.

The challenges posed by the Kranspoort black Christians revealed the weakness of the DRC Mission Policy and their motives for mission. One could hardly differentiate between church

mission policy and government agenda. The apartheid policy, with its strong religious underpinnings, succeeded in motivating its people to interpret it as God's calling (Smith 1994:np). Missionary programmes such as health, religious education and economic development were invariably subsidised by the government, an indication that they were part of the government agenda for the development of homeland policies (Ibid).

CHAPTER SIX: BEE IN THE BONNET

6.1 Introduction: The Dutch Reformed Church's Legitimacy for Mission is Contested

The removal of the 'no longer Christians' from Kranspoort, as discussed in the previous chapter, did not bring peace to the Dutch Reformed Church Mission Board. Three tidal waves of challenge descended on the farm at Kranspoort. The challenge came from three different levels: heirs to the Kranspoort farm challenged the continuous occupancy of the farm by the DRC after the removal of black people, the court challenged the DRC when the DRC closed the Hofmeyr Primary School in 1997, and the Land Claim instituted by the descendants of people forcefully removed from the farm in 1957 and 1964 also challenged the DRC Mission Board. These challenges exposed the DRC Mission Policy further as the church found itself increasingly in difficulties to defend its decision to close the mission station. The church could also not distance itself from the political agenda of the white government. Therefore, the authentic mission of the church was highly compromised.

6.2 Hofmeyr Descendants Claim Back the Land

Before his death on 22 April 1902, the pioneer missionary (DIV 84) of the DRC, Stephanus Hofmeyr, wrote a will about the future of the Kranspoort farm. As indicated earlier in the study, he purchased the farm from farmer Cornelius Lottering for the sole purpose of missionary work (DIV 39). In his will, Hofmeyr granted the ground to the DRC Mission Society on strict conditions as can be seen from the following clauses:

- 'That the said ground should be continuously used specifically for the object of mission work';
- 'That the rights hereby granted to the Mission Society of the Dutch Reformed Church aforementioned shall not be transferable and may not or cannot be made over to any other person'; and
- 'That by a breach of the conditions imposed in section 1, 2, 3 and 4 hereof on the proper execution thereof the rights hereunder granted shall lapse ipso facto and cease to exist'.

After the removal of the last group of black people from Kranspoort in 1964 and the retirement of

Rev. Van der Merwe, who was instrumental in the forced removals at the mission station, the grandchildren of the late Stephanus Hofmeyr started questioning whether the Kranspoort farm was still being used as their grandfather had directed in his will. Therefore, an exchange of letters between Hofmeyr's grandchildren, the DRC mission secretary and their lawyers started taking place.

The initial problems and challenge to the DRC arose in the 1970s. Van der Merwe was succeeded by Prof. F.S. Malan in 1970. In 1972, Prof. Malan was appointed as a lecturer at Stofberg Seminary and it took some time before a successor for the Kranspoort Mission Station could be found. This break between missionary appointments led to a lapse in the missionary work of the farm. During this time, the heirs to the Hofmeyr estate, under the leadership of Prof. J.D.J Hofmeyer, lodged a claim that the Kranspoort farm be returned to them as no mission activities were taking place there.

Prof. F.S. Malan realised that the claim was very serious and so he wrote a letter to the Master of Deeds on 19 October 1972 enquiring how clauses 1-3 of Hofmeyr's will could be nullified or declared invalid. The three clauses said:

- 'That the said ground should be continuously used specifically for the object of mission work';
- 'That the rights hereby granted to the Mission Society of the Dutch Reformed Church aforementioned shall not be transferable and may not or cannot be made over to any other person' and
- 'That by a breach of the conditions imposed in section 1, 2, 3 and 4 hereof on the not proper execution thereof the rights hereunder granted shall lapse ipso facto and cease to exist'.

Church lawyers advised that the case should first be discussed with Prof. Hofmeyr, the leader of the claimants (10 in number) and that they should ask him to gather the opinions of the other heirs. The church office advised that a written proposal should be compiled to be presented to the claimants (Letter to the mission secretary dated 14/02/1973 in DIV 84). The proposal stated that the rest of the farm (about 1 000 morgens) should be given back to the claimants while the church should retain the 70 morgens where the missionary house, the church building and the school were situated (Letter dated 23/11/1972 in DIV 84).

The Hofmeyr claimants responded to the proposal as follows (Letter to the mission secretary dated 26/05/1973 in DIV 84):

- That the DRC removed black people from Kranspoort through the use of government for its own interest;
- That the descendants would approach the government to prevent the church from having its own way;
- That the portion of 70 morgens of land the church had requested was too big for the purpose the church was requesting;
- That the claimants would approach their lawyers to have the farm restored to their owners as the church had breached the original agreement; and
- That the claimants refused to demarcate the Kranspoort farm to accommodate the DRC.

The allegations that the DRC was no longer doing mission work on Kranspoort and that it had breached the original agreement caused much uneasiness and uncertainties within the circle of leadership. On 19 February 1975, Prof. F.S. Malan wrote a letter to four of the claimants requesting them to come to a meeting in the office of the Regional Area Demarcation Commissioner of the Northern Region in Polokwane to discuss the situation. The points on the agenda of the meeting stated that:

- The DRC of the Transvaal, the legal owner of portion A of the Kranspoort farm, would give 1 000 morgens of the farm to the Hofmeyr heirs;
- The conditions for the grant is that the heirs state in writing that they relinquish all rights and conditions of their grandfather's will to allow the church to have exclusive rights over the farm; and
- The heirs give written permission to amend the clauses of the will with regard to the portion of land the church wants to occupy.

However, in a letter dated 26 August 1975, the leader of the Hofmeyr heirs Prof. J.D.J. Hofmeyr responded as follows: 'My grandfather's will reads "That the said ground shall be continuously

and beneficially used for the object of mission work”’. He further elaborated that the mission work as his grandfather envisaged was no longer in existence because the inhabitants of the farm had been removed and sent to neighbouring black areas in 1957. As a result, the number of churchgoers had been reduced to a minimum. The situation did not change despite the repeated call by the church in the last three years that no missionary could come to the farm (Letter from Prof. J.D.J. Hofmeyr dated 26/08/1976 in DIV 84). During this situation, the church, according to Prof. Hofmeyr, had to seriously assess and decide whether it was no longer possible to do bona fide mission work as Hofmeyr’s grandfather had intended in his will (Ibid). As his grandfather’s intentions in his will could not be fulfilled, the church had to give the land back to its heirs (Ibid). The heirs also promised to make a donation of R10 000 to the church if it vacated the place.

The DRC leadership failed to respond adequately to Prof. Hofmeyr and could not relate the circumstances in which they found themselves to their traditional understanding of what they understood as mission. In his reply to Prof. Hofmeyr, the Mission Secretary Dr J.P. Theron had the following to say as a defence:

- The methodology of mission had changed over time; however, the church still stuck to its original missionary objectives;
- The church’s inability to call a missionary to Kranspoort should not be brought under dispute as the church was in the process of going over to a time of black ministers;
- A failure to reach an agreement with the Hofmeyr heirs about the demarcation of land should not hinder the mission work at Kranspoort; and
- The suggestion that the church should give the land back would not be considered by the DRC (Letter of 18/09/1975 in DIV 84).

The reply from Prof. Hofmeyr to Dr Theron’s argument exposed the DRC’s failure in its mission policy. For the DRC to declare black people he held a different political view and to declare them ‘no longer Christians’ haunted them for a long time. In his letter of 23 September 1975, Prof. Hofmeyr reminded the DRC that his grandfather was opposed to the idea that the mission station should be placed in a black area. He was upset by the suggestion from President Kruger to erect a

mission station in a black area (Letter dated 23/10/1975 in DIV 84). For that reason, Kruger agreed with Stephanus Hofmeyr and obtained a special occupation right in terms of the then Occupation Laws to have Kranspoort used for mission work. According to Prof. Hofmeyr, there were no restrictions on the number of black people who were allowed to stay at the farm and many black people were allowed to stay there. It was the conviction of the claimants (heirs) that the conditions of their grandfather must be met or the church must give the land back.

Moreover, in another letter dated 29 December 1975, Prof. Hofmeyr wrote to Dr. Theron, the mission secretary, complaining about how the property had been neglected. According to Hofmeyr, during his visit to the property at Christmas time there was no sign of life on the farm. The grass and cuff had grown all over the place and there was no bell calling people for Christmas service—an indication that mission work was no longer being done on the farm (DIV 84). In addition to this, a big tree had grown on his grandfather's grave. Prof. Hofmeyr accused the church of making empty promises about continuing mission on the farm. The conditions contained in his grandfather's will for mission work to be done on the farm were no longer being adhered to. Grass had grown over the grave of his grandfather and the situation had been like that for the past ten years (Ibid).

Furthermore, Hofmeyr mentioned rumours that he had heard that the DRC was turning the Kranspoort Mission Station into a camping place for white children, something that did not fit the definition of the DRC mission work (DIV 84). All of these facts, according Prof. Hofmeyr, were mitigating factors against the claims of the DRC that there was still mission work being done on the farm. Unless the clauses of the will were implemented, there was a breach of the contract.

The demands of the heirs of the Kranspoort farm continued unabated but the church continued to argue that the heirs should accept the offer of taking 1 000 morgens of land for themselves and leave the church with 70 morgens of land for mission purposes. The church could not own up to the fact that their decision of 1957 to remove the black people from the farm was wrong and this seriously affected their missionary prospects in the area. The church continued misrepresenting the factors that led to the closure of the mission station. According to a letter dated 8 July 1977

written to the circuit inspector of the Department of Bantu Education, the removal of the black Christians in 1957 was beyond their control (DIV 84). But their removal did not prevent the church from continuing its mission on a small scale according to the mission secretary. The DRC argued that the demands of the Hofmeyr heirs were attempts to hinder the church in its mission work (DIV 84). The church viewed the keeping of a farm school with about 57 children as part of the continuation of its mission.

The heirs to the Hofmeyr estate disputed the church's claim, arguing that the continuation of mission work could not be justified by the existence of a single black spot on the farm. Mission work could not be done on an empty farm (Letter of July 1977 in DIV 84). The church's offer that the heirs of the estate take 1 000 morgens of land and the church keep 70 morgens of land was viewed as a bribe on the side of the church and the Hofmeyr's were not prepared to demarcate the farm (Letter dated 22/10/1977 in DIV 84). Moreover, the idea that the church would erect a camping site and mission centre on the farm from where planning for future mission work would be done was also out of question, according to Prof. Hofmeyr. A letter dated 10 November 1977 written by the Hofmeyrs to the church demanded the immediate handover of the Kranspoort farm as the mission work on the farm had ceased to function.

The church in turn approached its lawyers who, in turn, wrote to Hofmeyr's lawyers declaring their intention to defend their ownership of the farm (Letter of 13/12/1977 in DIV 84). On 1 June 1978, Mission Secretary Theron wrote and submitted a memorandum to the Transvaal Synod in which he clarified the church's position on three questions: 1) Who is the rightful owner of the Kranspoort farm; 2) Under whose jurisdiction does Kranspoort fall; and 3) Who controls the income from mission properties. In answer to these questions, Theron stated that the mission board of the Northern Transvaal was the rightful owner of the Kranspoort farm. On the second question, Theron declared that Kranspoort fell under the jurisdiction of the mission board of the Northern Transvaal and a motion was submitted that the jurisdiction of Kranspoort be transferred to the white local congregation of Louis Trichardt. Moreover, all money from mission properties was said to belong to the mission board of the Northern Transvaal (DIV 84). These decisions were a clear indication that the church would fight the Hofmeyr heirs to the bitter end. The synod further

decided that the white youth should be allowed to camp on the farm.

The church further sought legal opinion on the matter of the claim of Kranspoort by the Hofmeyr descendants. The church wanted the clauses of Stephanus Hofmeyr's will (that stated that the land should be used exclusively for mission, that the land was not transferable, and that any breach of the conditions would end the rights granted in the agreement) to be scraped by the high court. For this reason, Advocate Kamers was approached in 1983 to advise the DRC (DIV 552). Advocate Kamers's legal advice was about clause 7 of Hofmeyr's will that said 'That in the event of a breach of any of the aforesaid conditions as set out in 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 the rights granted hereunder shall ipso facto lapse and cease to exist' (DIV 552). According to Kamers, the clause was vague because it did not specify unto whom the land should be given in case of a breach of the contract. He also argued that the conditions of the contract were not forcible because no one's interests were affected. Moreover, Kamers stated that the Hofmeyr descendants were not mentioned in the clause as rightful heirs and, therefore, they did not have any right to the inheritance. The advocate advised the church to approach the high court for a declaratory order to end the dispute with the Hofmeyr descendants (DIV 552). Subsequently, the church approached the high court for the declaratory order and it was granted in the DRC's favour on 17 April 1985. The declaratory order stated that the conditions on the Hofmeyr will that were the basis of the Hofmeyr descendants' arguments to claim back their land could be deleted.

Immediately after the court order was issued in the favour of the church, the DRC registered and subdivided the property of Kranspoort in terms of the registration certificate of Registered Title T19023/1988 and T19024 (DIV 552). On 14 March 1997 an agreement was reached between the DRC and Mr L.W. Goosen to sell part of the Kranspoort farm (Ibid). The other portion was rented out to Mr Johan Venter.

6.3 Closure of the Stephanus Hofmeyr Farm School

In Section 6.2, the researcher showed how the DRC defended the farm from Hofmeyr's descendants by citing the Stephanus Hofmeyr Farm School as proof that its missionary work was still being carried out on the property. However, after the decision of the high court on 17 April

1985 to delete the conditions of Stephanus Hofmeyr's will that his descendants were using to claim the land back, the DRC confirmed the argument used against it that it was no longer using the farm for mission work. Apart from selling one portion of the farm to Mr Goosen and renting another part of it to Mr Venter, the church also closed the Stephanus Hofmeyr Farm School permanently.

The portion of land sold to Mr Goosen had conditions that stipulated that the property rights may be transferred free of any obligation and specifically stated that there were no undertakings to provide school facilities on that land (Letter from Soutpansberg Area Manager in DIV 552). The letter from the Soutpansberg Area Manager (Education) was a sequel to the letter of 29 March 1997 from Dr J.W.J. Viljoen, General Manager of the DRC. Consequently, the new owner allowed the school three months to wind up its affairs before closing it (Ibid). Goosen intended to use the property for natural tourism. Therefore, the Department of Education, who had jurisdiction over education in the area, could not compel the church or its successor at Kranspoort to keep the school open because the school was on a private farm. The school was eventually closed mid-year and could not open for the second term (DIV 552).

On 21 August 1997, the principal of the school, Mr Joseph Rivombo (acting on behalf of the school governing body), applied to the High Court of South Africa to restore the school. At the same time of the application, the Kranspoort community (descendants of people who were forcefully removed from the property in 1957) made a land claim application at the high court. Moreover, the Department of Education supported the community's application to have the school re-opened.

The matter between the DRC and the Stephanus Hofmeyr School was heard on 16 January 1998. The court decided in favour of the DRC on the following grounds that 1) the department, who had education jurisdiction in the area, was informed by the DRC of the time that the school was going to be closed; 2) the DRC had the right to stop the property from being used for the school; and 3) the principal and children were not in possession of property at the time of closure or had the intention to possess the property prior to the time of action.

6.4 The Land Claim

In 1998, the South African High Court (Johannesburg section) heard a land claim case (Case 26/98) by former Kranspoort residents who were forcefully evicted and removed in 1955/57 and 1964 in terms of Section 14(1)(b) of the Restitution of Land Rights Act (No. 22 of 1994) (DIV 2406). The community submitted an application to the court that they held beneficial occupation rights prior to their dispossession. There were warning signs before the claim case of the Kranspoort farm that should have helped the church to protect its credibility in the new democratic order. These include the following.

First, before the hearing of the claim case, the DRC was advised by the Regional Land Claims Commissioner of the Northern Province and Mpumalanga on 2 December 1997 that the community had a prima facie valid claim for their rights on the Kranspoort farm (DIV 2405). This should have warned the church that there was something wrong with their mission policy that led to the forced removals of the black people who were their converts through their missionary activities.

Second, the daily Afrikaans Newspaper *Beeld* issued an article on 4 August 1999 in which it warned the church that the forced removals of the black people in 1955 from Kranspoort was an unfortunate event that should be regretted. The newspaper went further to indicate that the church responded to the differences it had with the black residents of Kranspoort with the full power of apartheid laws and the police to remove black people from the farm (Beeld 1999). The editor of the newspaper expressed the hope that the church would then use the new situation for reconciliation and support the application of the Kranspoort claimants. 'Restitution in the case of Kranspoort spoke louder than the judgement on apartheid', the editor concluded in his article (Ibid).

Third, the two land claim cases of the Hofmeyr descendants against the DRC and the Stephanus Hofmeyr Farm School discussed in Sections 6.2 and 6.3 were also clear indicators that the DRC's occupation of the Kranspoort farm would come to an end in a manner that would expose its supportive role of brutal racial policies. Moreover, it would show that its mission work in South Africa after 1994 would be severely compromised and curtailed. Reconciliation and reinstatement

would go a long way in giving the church the necessary ‘saltiness’ (Matthew 5:16) and prophetic voice as a church of God in South Africa.

The DRC contested the Kranspoort community’s application on the grounds that the rights held by the members of the Kranspoort community were unregistered rights of use and occupation on Kranspoort in terms of oral agreements and were granted as an act of compassion. It further argued that though claimants had a right to reinstatement, they had no right to be restored to the Kranspoort farm with rights of ownership since the DRC, prior to the dispossession, held personal rights of occupation to the said property (DIV 552) and, therefore, the community was not entitled to be restored to the Kranspoort farm. Both Mr J. Venter (who hired the second portion of the farm) and Mr W.J. Goosen who bought the first portion of Kranspoort supported the DRC’s argument. At this late stage the developments of the South African political landscape prevented the DRC from acknowledging that its creation of its mission policy was soaked entirely in apartheid ideology.

The Kranspoort community application was supported by the regional land claims commissioner of Mpumalanga and Northern Province and the Department of Land Affairs (DIV 552; DIV 2405; DIV 2406). The evidence before the court was conclusive that the Kranspoort community was disadvantaged by past unfair and unjust discrimination laws that prevented a black person from owning the land. Despite the fact that the black people resisted the dispossession of their land and eventually succumbed to white people’s superior weapons, who in turn produced a litany of laws that were mercilessly applied to deprive them of all basic rights, it did not occur to the church that this was not part of ‘the Law of Love’ as revealed in the Bible (Berg 1977).

The judge ruled the case in favour of the Kranspoort community and he based his decision on the several points discussed below.

The Group Areas Act of 1950, the Land Act of 1936, and the statutes which were enacted with the sole purpose of furthering the ‘government policy of separate development and ethnic consolidation along racial lines in a manner which amounted to unfair discrimination’ was followed in the forced removals of the Kranspoort community in 1955 and 1964 (DIV 552). The Kranspoort community were denied freehold titles to the Kranspoort farm purely on grounds that

they were black and, therefore, were prevented from purchasing the land (Ibid). Equality and justice before the law were not accorded to black people during apartheid rule and they were unfairly discriminated against. The practice of black discrimination emanated from the 1936 Land Act together with the Natives Land Act (No. 27 of 1913) both of which prohibited black people from holding any rights in land situated in the so-called white areas (Ibid). In land set aside for black occupation, they were at best granted ‘defective titles’ because the rights to the land were in terms of the PTO certificate. Such rights could only be exercised through a relationship of trusteeship held in the name of the native affairs minister or through a chief (Ibid). Such insecure land tenure with little or no protection for the blacks was used by the DRC in Kranspoort to evict black Christians who were in disagreement with the missionary (DIV 552).

6.5 Conclusion

Apartheid as an ideology of self-interest and white protection was entrenched in the DRC to the extent that the DRC could not separate what was purely evil from Christian love. The church could not read the signs of the time and remove brutal elements from its mission policy. Smith (1994) alludes to the fact that the pious outlook to mission within the DRC leadership at the time was a dose that blinded the Afrikaner missionaries. The zeal to converting the ‘heathens’ undergirded by condescending attitude shaped the DRC Mission Policy without realising that the ideology of apartheid had a firm grip on their minds. Part of the missionary outreach was to convince black people that the policy of separate development was designed to serve their interest whereas the main objective was to safeguard exclusive white interest. When African National Congress Leaders such as Dr. Xuma ‘warned that there was no way that one nation could work in the best interest of another without involving it’ (Dr. Alfred Xuma in SAHO).

The challenges posed by the heirs of Stephanus Hofmeyr, the Hofmeyr farm school and eventually the Kranspoort community revealed the weakness of the DRC Mission Policy and motives for mission. One could hardly differentiate between church mission policy and government agenda. The apartheid policy, with its strong religious underpinnings, succeeded in motivating its people to interpret it as God’s calling (Smith 1994:np). Missionary programmes such as health, religious

education and economic development were invariably subsidised by the government, an indication that they were part of the government agenda for the development of homeland policies.

In the next chapter the researcher makes a general concluding summary that tries to explain the influence of the ‘right of conquest and acquisition of land’ from black people that effectively rendered them not only as foreigners in their place of death but systematically outlawed them. The DRC rationale for doing missionary work among the black people of South Africa will be examined. Moreover, the right of conquest and seizure of territories occupied by the Pedi, the Tswana, the Ndebele and the Venda people will be interrogated in order to explain the reasons why this outlook ‘blinded’ the DRC to embrace an ideology that contradicted and betrayed their mission policy. The conclusion arrived at here will also attempt to explain the dilemma the white churches in South Africa are facing to embark on mission in the new dispensation. Stripped of all political power it is difficult for these churches to get involved in the inland mission because its missionary agenda was always done from a dominant position and followed a particular economic, social and cultural ideology of separateness.

The analysis will be followed by recommendations for future mission objectives in a democratic South Africa. Warnings such as a church’s close proximity with the state that may lead it to a path where legitimacy of its prophetic voice is compromised is discussed. Several questions are analysed such as ‘how does the church interact with democratic systems?’; ‘how does the church function in a secular state?’; and ‘what is the role of the church in society?’ Finally a transformative agenda for the church in a democratic society is suggested where the church is truly the ‘salt of the earth and the light of the world’.

CHAPTER SEVEN: FINDINGS AND LESSONS LEARNT

7.1 Introduction: Colonial Mentality Informs the DRC Missionary Agenda

Having gone through various literatures on the subject and after studying the motives for mission by the DRC, one comes to a conclusion that missionaries were sons and daughters of their time. They had a definite ideology that shaped their interests and blurred their vision. Recently, Pope John Paul II noted, during his visit to Latin America, that Latin American church leaders in the past had acknowledged that ‘grave sins were committed against the native peoples of America in the name of God’. Moreover, St. John Paul II apologised to the continent’s indigenous people for the ‘pain and suffering’ caused during the 500 years of the church’s presence in the Americas (Associated Press 2015). As Christian religion is premised on forgiveness, justice, restoration and reconciliation, it should never be a difficult thing to say ‘I am sorry’ to a wronged brother or sister. Christ taught his followers to confess their sins and ask for pardon.

In South Africa, given the opportunity to apologise for what was done and was allowed to be done to black people during the apartheid rule, the DRC instead decided not to address itself to the issue of confessing its sin (www.gov.za). It was only the Regional Synod of the Western Cape that confessed its entanglement in the policy of apartheid (www.gov.za). Missionaries were, however, not all the same. Some missionaries did a lot of work to fight the injustices meted out at indigenous people by colonial authorities.

The findings and recommendations from the study burden the researcher to provide a panoramic overview of what was at stake in the DRC missionary activities at the time of missionary activities in South Africa. Self-preservation and self-interest dominated their mission agenda. Love for oneself and preservation of own interest influenced the DRC more than love for a stranger. The church had ideological logic that justified self-interest at the expense of the indigenous people and, at the same time, mixed politics with piety for mission. Finally, its mission policy was profoundly influenced by white politics of self-preservation.

7.2 The Trajectory of the Study

The study was guided by the following research questions.

a) What guided the DRC in its early mission policy to the black people within the boundaries of South Africa? Did the whites' economic interest as perpetrated by the legacy of colonial right of conquest and acquisition of land play a significant role in the DRC Mission Policy or not? To this research question it was established that racism and attempts to keep South Africa for the benefit of white people was at the centre of the DRC Mission Policy.

b) Why were the black Christians residing at the Kranspoort Mission Station forcefully removed and the black people residing outside of the mission station invited to replace them? To this question it was found that the black people residing at Kranspoort became aware of their rights and started striving to have them. As the entire country fell under the influence of the liberation movement, Kranspoort was under the danger of being taken by the black people. A plethora of apartheid laws had to be enacted to keep it under white people. Their removal was cardinal to the benefit of white minority in the vicinity.

The researcher is the son of a DRC evangelist and a black South African that suffered the consequences of apartheid, which allowed him to be an outsider and insider to the situation within which the DRC Mission Policy operated. This inspired the researcher to investigate the puzzle. As a young person who was innocent and ignorant of all the DRC mission motives in the northern part of South Africa, the researcher did not suspect any wrong intentions but instead heralded white missionaries as heroes that sacrificed everything for the sake of black people. But when the researcher saw their involvement in the brutal policies of apartheid against the same people they wanted to convert to Christianity, he got a knock in his faith. Like Moses who investigated a 'burning' bush in the middle of the desert, the researcher was enticed to check the mission motives of the DRC among black people by making a historical overview of its mission policy. It was the mission policy that would reveal the involvement or non-involvement of the church in the agendas of the state.

The researcher used the conflict perspective theory espoused by William Chambliss to guide the study. Chambliss argues that every society is subjected at every moment to changes and the social

change is ubiquitous. In its life every society experiences social conflict and the conflict may lead to change. Individuals within the society may cause constraints to bear on the rest of the society and resistance may ensue as a result.

The researcher found Chambliss's theory very helpful since the events at Kranspoort suggested change in both black and white society. White authorities effected change through the introduction of suppressive laws on black people and in turn black people resisted those laws. The struggle which was waged by the African National Congress in Johannesburg was exported to Kranspoort to try to solve problems there. The two forces led to the eventual confrontation and conflict in 1955 at Kranspoort where about 102 families were forcefully removed. In the same decade (1950-1960), a series of black suppression laws were introduced to curtail the behaviour of black people by white government and force illegal compliance.

According to Chambliss, society is a place where various struggles take place and the conflict is often engineered by the state in order to maintain social institutions through coercion. To Chambliss state coercion often leads to social inequality which in turn benefits those who are greedy and pursue wealth for their own narrow interests. For the researcher, the conflict theory was the best entry as it best explained the Kranspoort conflict.

Chapter Two of the study discussed the events in the Cape that led the DRC to get involved in mission work outside of the Cape. Influences from other churches made the DRC get involved in missionary work, as mentioned in the chapter. Moreover, the arrival of the DRC and Lutheran missionaries in the north was also discussed. The role of black evangelists and their coincidental convergence with missionaries around the area of Soutpansberg was also mentioned. Their role in pioneering mission work among their people is missing in the records of missionaries as if white missionaries would not do anything without them.

These black evangelists served as preachers in the remote areas where missionaries could not go and served missionaries' personal needs such as getting wood and maintaining their garden and their surroundings. They were also bodyguards and served as advisers to the missionaries in cases where missionaries were ignorant. These unsung heroes knew the language of their people, they

knew their cultural impediments that held them back from accepting Christian teaching and they were also more mature and human to interact with their people.

Chapter Three traced the factors that were responsible for the development of mission policy. Land issues and the plight of the poor white and the emergence of the black elite that fought against inequalities made the white government introduce stringent rules that would ensure forced compliance. The 1935 DRC Mission Policy was the direct product of the forces of the 1913 and 1936 Land Tenure Acts that pushed black people into barren land, rendering them ‘hewers of wood and drawers of water’ (Malala 2015: 23).

Chapters four, five and six analysed the actual events that took place at Kranspoort Mission Station. The role played by resident missionary Rev. Lukas Van der Merwe and mission secretary B.F. Stofberg were discussed. Moreover, individual black leaders such as Walther Segooa, Ramphele and others were scrutinised. Conflict with Stephanus Hofmeyr’s descendants and the DRC on the ownership of the land were assessed as well. In addition, ensuing court cases including the Land Claim Court of 1998 with former Kranspoort residents who were forcefully removed in 1957 received attention. The last chapter contains a summary and conclusions.

7.3 Findings and Recommendations

It is the researcher’s conviction that the findings and recommendations from the study will not make much sense without explaining the milieu and the historical factors that were at play that not only shaped the DRC Mission Policy but also compromised its prophetic voice where it was needed the most. In this concluding chapter, the researcher looks at the following items:

- 1) Colonial view of the right of conquest and the seizure of land from non-Western people;
- 2) How the system was applied in South Africa;
- 3) The black resistance to the system; and
- 4) Cultural prejudices that justified violence and motivated the DRC Mission Policy.

7.3.1 Colonial view of the right of conquest and seizure of land from non-Western people

White racial supremacy and Western dominion and ‘civilisation’ over the world were seen as the ultimate development of the human race (Johnson 1994:2). White supremacy was conceived as the rationale for Europe’s pre-eminence in world affairs (Ibid). By definition, non-Western people were non-Christian and Western people were Christian and they had the exclusive right to supremacy in world affairs (Johnson 1994:2). With their colonial self-imposed supremacy, they perceived themselves as having the right of conquest and acquisition as a means of gaining title to territory from the indigenous people (Johnson 1994:2). In Africa, Africans interest and self-determination did not matter. The Europeans saw their role as that of civilising native people. They did not realise that their arrogance, subjugation and enslavement of Africans were against their own tenets of civilisation. In Africa, the idea of conquest and control took strong root culminating into a systematic and legalised ‘discrimination shaping the social order, economy and political structure of the whole country in a more pervasive way than elsewhere’ (Worden 2012:73). The right of conquest with its resultant forceful acquisition of land from indigenous people was diametrically opposed to their very Christian religion that preached love, justice and mercy to other human beings.

Korman (1996:ebook) defines the right of conquest as the right of the victor, in terms of military victory, to the conquered territory and its inhabitants. In terms of the international Western law, the only requirement for the title was the effective possession of the conqueror of the conquered land (Ibid). Usually this was presumed to have occurred when the military conquest was followed by the effective extinction of the political existence of the conquered (Ibid). What is inherent in the right of conquest is that the superior force is capable in itself of conferring rights on itself without any compensation to the conquered (Worden 2012:29).

During the colonial period, the international relation recognised war as one of the rules of decision and conferred the right of ownership on the conqueror (Korman 1996:ebook). This practice was applied in South Africa by both the British and Afrikaner republics when they annexed black territories and destroyed their polities (Worden 2012:29). The wars waged against indigenous people in South Africa by settlers were not necessarily provoked but were as a result of black people refusing to surrender their land and pay taxes to the invading forces (Worden 2012:27;

Kgatla 1988:14). The classical colonial methodology of acquisition of land and its inhabitants was ‘the right of conquest through military might’. Conquest through military power was seen as a legitimate method, if not God’s way, of obtaining the land. The language of legitimation was coached in paternalism and informed the ‘language of rights’ (Cousins & Walker 2015:41). Sontag, a Lutheran missionary stationed at Blaauwberg Mountain (Northern Transvaal) during chief Malebocho and the Boere Commando war, heard the General Piet Joubert saying, ‘The best method of taming blacks was to shoot them dead and [then they] are quite tame’ (Sontag 1894:78).

7.3.2 How the system was applied in South Africa (Limpopo)

Under the leadership of President Paul Kruger in the 1880s and 1890s, many African polities were annexed through military means (Worden 2012:29). Although the British had extended their control over the Transvaal, Afrikaner republics had their share in subduing black chiefs and taking their lands (Kgatla 1988:14-15). Assaults on Ndebeles (in the east), Barolong (in the west), Vendas in the north and Pedis in the north-west yielded Afrikaner control over the area and in that way paved the way for missionary expansion. Indigenous independence was eventually destroyed in search for their land and their labour (Worden 2012:30). However, the indigenous territories did not give up without a fight and sometimes the intruding force was rebuffed and halted. For example, Ba-Venda under their paramount chief Makhado forced the first DRC missionary Stephanus Hofmeyr to vacate the Kranspoort Mission Station for 20 years when he fled for his life in 1865. According to Maree (1962:66), chief Makhado refused to return weapons in his possession to the white commando in the area. The incident led to a fierce battle between the Afrikaners and Ba-Venda. Ba-Venda was eventually defeated but only because they had inferior weapons (Kgatla 1988:41).

Apart from colonial acquisition of land through war there were many myths that tried to legitimise how the land was acquired in South Africa. Johnson (1994:9) contests that one of myths perpetuated in South African history was that when colonists arrived in South Africa they moved into an ‘empty space’. This was around the same time when black people arrived in the interior of the country from the north.

According to Johnson (1994:9), the myths served to legitimise white claims to land occupation and the war they waged against black people. Studies have shown that South Africa was occupied by bantu-speaking people and Khoikhoi as well as San people at least more than 10 000 years before the arrival of Dutch settlers (Worden 2012:9; De Villiers 2014:39; Van Aswegen 1990:48). But one particular perception of white people about black indigenous people was an obsession of extreme repugnance with blacks. Johnson (1994:25) asserts that the settlers projected what they disliked in their culture onto the black people. The psychological thought that shaped colonial views was a 'symbolic inversion' that labelled blacks as 'libidinous, uncontrolled, lazy, disrespectful' and immoral (Worden 2012:25) which justified white control and dominance over them. Images of thievishness, indolence, and immorality guided white perceptions of black people (Ibid). It was in this context that a plethora of coercive laws were promulgated during the settlement of whites in South Africa (particularly during apartheid rule) to check and control any movement of black people as discussed in Chapter Four of this dissertation.

7.3.3 Black resistance to colonial invention

The acquisition of black territories through white superior arms did not go easily. Johnson (1994) argues that the strength of the African resistance to the imposition of white rule was so great in the Eastern Cape that the British government of the Western Cape decided to abandon the territory. As argued towards the end of Chapter Four, black chiefs in the Eastern Cape, Free State, Transvaal and Natal held their own against white invading forces. Even though the colonial power reduced them to slaves and farm workers, it does not mean they did not show their integrity by fighting for their land. The African resistance and protest against white rule continued into the 20th century and intensified in the 1950s when more stringent laws against black people were passed. The struggle continued until 1994 when blacks were given the opportunity to cast their vote for the first time in their history.

7.3.4 Cultural prejudices that justified violence and shaped the DRC Mission Policy

Sound foundation for mission in a racially divided South Africa

In conclusion I highlight six propositions that are highlighted here to define a sound foundation for mission in a racially divided South Africa:

1. God's mission or the church's mission

The debate of who is the author of mission between God and the church has long been settled among ecumenical bodies. Mission belongs to the Triune God and the institutional church is being invited to participate in that mission. This mission of God is transformational and empowering to the extent that the church can only participate in it with humility and contrite of heart (WCC Commission of Mission and Evangelism 2013:1). Self-awareness with bold humility is some of the requirements for the church as it participates in the movement from God to the world (Bosch 1991:300). Such awareness and humility eliminates forms of arrogance, self-interest and ideological preference (Ibid). Tutu (2005:3) calls this transformation transfiguration as something which will unlikely happen but happens out of the grace of God.

2. Inclusivity

In South Africa, whites have been socialised to believe that they are not equal to blacks and for them to change their attitude is a near miracle. Regardless of the difficulty of this change, the point of departure should be the tenet of scripture. The inclusion of blacks in matters that affect them to the level that they (blacks) feel included is a legitimate development and is fully consistent with scripture (Cottrel 2013:19).

3. Recovering true identity and vocation

Identity and vocation are discovered through relationships (Meyer 1999:189). Inequality, power and its misuse destroy relationships. In South Africa, black and white relationships are 'bleeding' from constant provocation (Tutu 2005:15). To move towards a healthy church, it is necessary to develop healthy relationships that empower and give life to both groups. A church that embarks on God's mission without these core elements is not going to succeed (Kemper 2014:190).

4. Focusing on the end

The church needs to determine what God's mission is in its situation and remain focused to the point. There are many things that may distract the church's attention but measurable objectives should be set and regularly checked to ensure that they are realised (Meyer 1999:120). Mission belongs to the recipients and they should own the process and the need for change (Ibid:123). One should always guard against human greed and self-interest that prey on the weak. The missional church should check and guard against those forces that are opposed to the true transformation of *Missio Dei* (Bosch 1991:191).

5. The church as a servant of liberation

Human relations are often marred with sin based on the web of lies that promote self-interest and the misery of the poor (Meyer 1999:123). The deception in worldviews, cultures and how society is structured should be detected and confronted. Only when the truth is discovered, justice is done and peace is restored can one speak of the mission of God (Ibid:123). Christian integrity is the hallmark of Christian living (Ibid:123). The church can only be a church if it is the servant of liberation announcing the dawn of the Kingdom of God (Goba 1988:95). As Boesak (1977:68) put it, the work of Christ is and His Kingdom is discernible in the secular, social relations and political battles for liberation of the time. The mission of the church should include a struggle for the liberation of the oppressed.

6. Inclusive intimacy and transforming equality

Mission of God to humanity in Jesus Christ is based on intimate and inclusive transforming relationship. Those who were strangers are reconciled in His church and they become one (Belhar Confession 1986). Equality becomes a normative framework for the new community that is based on unity, reconciliation and justice. Those who were separated by hatred and bitterness find their new identity in Jesus Christ who is both the 'Son of Man' and 'Son of God', the only person who possesses these two natures. He is there as an example to be emulated and followed by those who met a radical encounter with him (Heidelberg Catechism). This new relationship is self-transcendent and ever reaching out to the other to be incorporated in the new community that is transformed by the love. It is intimate because the walls that were separating members of the new

community have been broken down and annulled (Adonis 1982:2). The defining moment of this new community is equality and justice for equality without justice is like rain without water.

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DIV 86 Heirs of Stephanus Hofmeyr

DIV 1910 Correspondence between Hofmeyr's and DRC

DIV 2405 Correspondence and Court Judgements

DIV 2406 Court Records

DIV 2407 DRC and Government Correspondence

DIV 2408 Court Papers: Hofmeyr Farm School

DIV 552 Minutes of Presbytery of Kranspoort

SIN 2503

SIN 733



CONSENT LETTER

I, Mashonelo Anderson Magwira, am a student of the University of Pretoria doing research at the Kranspoort Mission Station for the period 1946-2006. I want first-hand information of the people involved in the forced removals who returned after the high court order of 2006. You are thus hereby kindly requested to respond to the questionnaire to enable me to complete my research project. Your name will be kept anonymous as well as the information you provide.

Rev M.A. Magwira

CONSENT LETTER BY RESPONDENT

I, Ben Molalathoko, hereby consent to participate in providing information as far as I know to the research project by Rev. M.A. Magwira. I understand that the information will be treated confidentially with my name kept anonymously.

BEN MOLALATHOKO

