Seeing Beyond the Cover: A Critical Analysis of the Missionary Periodical *Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke* 1931-1935

by

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This study analyses a northern-Sotho publication of the Berlin Mission Church, namely, the *Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke.* It is particularly concerned with the similarities and differences in the approaches the German missionary producers of the publication have taken in the selection, reproduction and utilization of photographs of South Africans and Germans. The focus is on the 1930s, the decade during which the publication first came into existence; the decade during which National Socialism was implemented in Germany and a period in which black South Africans were negotiating the challenges of both the British colonial world and growing Afrikaner nationalism. The focus of the study is to investigate the history that shaped the perceptions of class and gender where different racial groups were concerned. It studies how inequality was communicated in missionary photography. The aim of this study is to gauge whether the representations of African people in the *Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke* bear any relation to those of German missionaries. It further explores how the depictions are connected to the context of the time and the perceptions of the people in the separate communities. It investigates the influence of the images in promoting imperialist activity, their influence in encouraging modernity and, essentially, their role and purpose as tool of communication with the congregations of the Berlin Mission Church. Certain stereotypes and inequality in the representation of the different races, classes and genders will be investigated and problematized where necessary.

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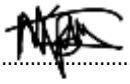
SIGNATURE 

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This study seeks to explore the communication of African indigenous identity across different societies as portrayed in missionary photography published in the early 1930s. In order to do this, I focus on a missionary publication that has to date not received much attention from researchers, namely the *Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke* (1931-1971). This almanac was annually printed for the Transvaal Berlin Mission Church in South Africa. In order to give a more relational perspective to that of the parent country, I shall also refer to another missionary publication, *Der Missions-Freund* (1846-1939), a monthly magazine for supporters of the Berlin Mission in Germany.

The reason for including the German magazine, is because of the way the visual representations that appeared in the South African almanac and the visual representations that appeared in the magazine, were related to one another. And yet the communication with the missionising community in Germany differed from the communication with the missionised community in South Africa. Once these differences have been established, the study will further investigate how the communication targeted at the African community aimed at shaping identity and ideas of the self and the other. The essay also asks whether, and how, the 'self' may have chosen to be represented in the missionary photographs and how the 'self' was portrayed to exist within the particular community.

The study thus works from the premise that by the 1930s not only Germans were being shown pictures of Africans, but that Africans were also being shown images of themselves, as well as Germans. My study is concerned with the way in which perceptions are shaped through circulation of photographs that communicate the lives and experiences of European missionaries and missionized Africans. It focuses mainly on how the type of imagery a community is shown influences the way in which they view another community and/or even themselves.

The work that missionary historian Paul Jenkins conducted on photographs from the communication network of the Basel Mission, will strongly guide my study theoretically and methodologically. Jenkins' research was influenced by the work he did in the Basel Mission's archives, where he developed a particular interest in missionary photography. He initially investigated the documenting of missionary photographs according to the order of occurrence as per the dates allocated to them in the archives. His focus in this respect was specifically on the first generation of mission photographers in West Africa. Secondly, he focused on the work of the earliest missionary photographers. In his research Jenkins was concerned with the relationship between photography in the context of a missionary organisation and the perception of the social environment in which the missionaries operated (1860- 1945).

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Berlin Missionary Society (BMS)

The first missionaries from the Berlin Missionary Society (hereafter BMS) to set foot in South Africa arrived in Cape Town on 17 April 1834. By the end of the nineteenth century they had mission stations all over southern Africa (and also in East Africa and China). They continued with their work in South Africa until the 1970s, when the churches established through the mission work became independent African churches (Pakendorf 2011:106). By the 1930s, there were many different Christian denominations to choose from (if they so preferred), for Africans in what was then known as the Transvaal (today Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and North West Provinces). Yet in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, engagement with the German missionaries was the first encounter with European ways and traditions for many indigenous people. It therefore makes sense to trace the African encounter with the Berlin Mission in the Transvaal back to these early beginnings. This will be elaborated on in the next chapter. Suffice to say here, is that the BMS was constituted from a Pietistic and Lutheran heritage. In essence, the society valued inwardness in spirituality, which was characterised by hard work, self-discipline and a discomfort with urban cosmopolitanism. The society's policy not to get involved in secular politics prevented them from

confronting secular authorities, often limiting their will or efficiency to object to injustices and racial prejudices practised in the colonial state (Pakendorf 2011:106).

The missionaries were expected to maintain communication with the Board in Berlin regarding the events of the mission work. The communication took the form of frequently written reports carrying information about their activities in the native lands; these included diaries from which news was extracted for various publications.

1.1.2 Missions' Communication Network

The *Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke* was a missionary calendar for the Sepedi/ Northern Sotho speaking Lutheran congregations in the former Transvaal, South Africa. It was produced for circulation to the Lutheran mission's church in the Transvaal. It had a print run of approximately 3000 copies per year and it was initially printed in Germany and then later in South Africa. *Der Missions-Freund* was a magazine printed in Germany for supporters of the Berlin Mission there. The two above mentioned publications both form part of the missionary society's dense communication network. Paul Jenkins (1993:89) explores the nature of these networks by focusing on the operation and communication of the missionary society. He looked specifically into the history of the Basel Mission with their images from numerous different parts of the world. These images date from the year 1860 to 1945. In his research Jenkins observes that the Basel Mission was initially concerned with words rather than images, before turning in more earnest to the visual medium. This was similar for the Berlin Mission, as will be discussed below.

According to Jenkins (1993:92) mission photography counts amongst the technology and the communication systems that connected the West (western Europe and north America) with the events and happenings in African, Asian and Oceanian societies. The choice of the nature of communication systems to be used in the field was dependent on the funding the missionaries received from their

support base in the West. From around the second half of the nineteenth century the advancement of photography as a means of communication created the opportunity for any missionary society to bring together a supply of photographs from their areas of work.

1.2 Need

The need to study images in missionary periodicals in the German-speaking era had been highlighted by a conference held in Mainz in 2016 (Kriel 2016). The conference was followed by a book which attempted to address the current dearth of research on missionary images of Africa prepared for German readers (Becker & Stornig 2018). However, very few participants in this conference (and even fewer contributors to the book) went even further by asking what images readers in the 'mission fields', like South Africa, may have seen, and what could have been shown to them. My study aims to respond to this gap.

Besides the *Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke* there was also other missionary material produced for South African readers,[1] like the magazine, *Die Brücke* (meaning the bridge), meant for (white) descendants of German Missionaries in South Africa (Kriel 2015:20), and the *Moxwera wa Babaso* (meaning friends of the black people), meant for African members of the Berlin Mission Church. The *Moxwera*, as a monthly periodical, was the South African equivalent to *Der Missions-Freund*. Ideally, the three South African publications; *Thsupa*, *Brücke* and *Moxwera*, all three in which the white missionaries had held editorial power, should be included in any comparative study. However, owing to the absence of images in the other two (*Moxwera* and *Die Brücke*), my study will focus on the annual almanac*, Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke,* which had plenty of illustrations, and in that respect, it is the South African publication which is the most comparable to the illustrated German publication *Der Missions-Freund.*

[1] My study focuses specifically on publications in the Berlin Mission stall, but there were of course many other more generalist mission periodicals circulating in South Africa in the 1930s, amongst others the *South African Outlook – a journal dealing with missionary and racial affairs* (1922-1996).

The *Thsupa,* which claims the most elaborate space in my study, was often found to be sold out, which highlights its popularity to the people it was aimed at: the members of the northern-Sotho-speaking Berlin Mission Church. This contributes to justifying my research: if the calendar was sold out, it clearly had some importance or relevance to the congregants who consumed it. The above premise raises the importance of the question: what was communicated in that almanac, whether its depictions of the 'native' supported notions of othering or primitivism, or whether it allowed space for some African-Christian self-expression.

In the *Der Missions-Freund,* the reportage on the Transvaal featured amidst plenty of reportage also on numerous other mission fields all over the world, whereas the *Thsupa* featured mostly, but not exclusively, images directly related to the Transvaal connection with Berlin. Kriel and Fossey (2018:65-91) had conducted exploratory research on images in *Der Missions-Freund*, but only for the period until 1918. As far as could be established, this study will be the first to subject the *Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke* to scholarly scrutiny in its own right. This almanac has played a role in the shaping of perceptions through imagery and text, but the current study will frame the research specifically within the field of missionary photography.

1.3 Scope

My study entails an asymmetrical comparative analysis of two missionary publications. My primary focus is on the history and distribution of images in *Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke* during the years 1931-1935. I use the history and distribution of images in *Der Missions-Freund* over the same period as a "reference point" (Kocha 1999:40) for context and critical reflection. By including comparative references to *Der Missions-Freund*, I also emphasise the importance of viewing all the missionary publications as participants in a communication network in and between Germany and South Africa. Within the limited scope of an MA study, the reading communities in other parts of southern and eastern Africa – as well as China, which had also been part of the Berlin Mission network, were not included in the research.

To inform this aspect of the communication network I shall firstly discuss the theories of Paul Jenkins in connection with his study of the Basel Mission. This raises certain questions regarding the production and circulation of missionary publications; particularly the circulation of photographs that were part of the communication network. It asks questions such as: Who had taken the photographs and submitted them to the editor? By whom were these publications made? For whom were the almanac and magazine produced? By which institution were they published? I shall also discuss their printing history. What content was portrayed in the individual images and what was the overall impression posed by the collection of photographs? Having carefully scrutinised the context in which the images were produced and circulated, my study will proceed to analyse the images themselves.

Furthermore, my study employs the writings of Edward Said in the discussion of post-colonial theory; which includes the study of the exotic other, orientalism, self-stranger projections and perceptions, tradition and modernity. I focus specifically on the circulation of images in the transcontinental network and therefore I also employ the work of Patrick Harries as well as Nicholas Mirzoeff. To expand on missionary media, I adopt the theory and methodology developed by Felicity Jensz and Hanna Acke.

1.4 Aim of the Study

Following Brewer and Gardner's already mentioned argument, the aim of the proposed study is to establish to what extent the images in the *Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke* may be interpreted as opportunities for African Christian self-expression. In order to do so, I shall gauge to what extent the representations in the *Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke* differ or bear similarity to the depictions in *Der Missions-Freund*. I further explore how the depictions are connected to the context of the time and the perceptions of the people in the target communities. I investigate the influence of the images in promoting imperialist activity, their influence in encouraging

modernity and, essentially, their role and purpose as tools for communication with the Berlin Mission Church's congregations.

1.5 Research Question

The study questions what African Christians of the Berlin Mission Church in South Africa were shown in the almanac *Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke.* As asymmetrical comparative reference point, I also view what German supporters of this church were shown in *Der Missions-Freund*, a popular monthly magazine of the Berlin Mission. The focus is on the years 1931 to 1935. Rather than only asking what European Christians who supported mission work were shown in publicity material aimed at them, I pertinently ask what missionized African Christians saw in publicity material aimed at them within their colonial context. Implicitly, inversely, it is also asked what the selves represented in the photographs were willing and able to show to others about themselves and their relations.

1.6 Literature Review

1.6.1 Literature on Missionary Photography

Jenkins' work on the history of the Basel Mission, as mentioned previously in this chapter, has laid a very useful foundation for the work I intend to undertake in this study. It not only illustrates the awakening towards the visual within the Basel Mission, which was initially concerned with words rather than with images. It is also the growing realisation in missionary studies of the centrality of visual material as medium of local as much as of transcontinental communication (Jenkins, 1993). T. Jack Thompson provided a guide to using missionary photographs in research in his 2012 publication *Light on Darkness? Missionary Photography of Africa in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries.* Through his approach to visual representation, stereotyping and the power of the camera, he emphasised the need to shift the research emphasis from a history of the missionary societies to a story as viewed from the perspective of the missionised communities (Thompson 2012:239). In his review of this book, Tait (2013:55) summarises Thompson's guidelines towards a more critical appraisal of missionary-generated photographic material by citing his "key questions, such as: Who is the photographer? Why were

the photographs taken? And How did the African subjects react to being photographed?" Adam Jones (2013) and his research associates from Leipzig University illustrated the value of such an approach to photographs as "sources" in the volume *Through a Glass, Darkly*. *Photographs of the Leipzig Mission from East Africa, 1896-1939*. Several South African scholars have worked on photographs featuring local communities and their encounters with Europeans (see for example Raditlhalo's (2001) review article), but the photographs of the Berlin Mission in the area north of the Vaal River has thus far remained relatively un-researched, except for Kirkaldy and Wirz's provocative study *Picturing the Soul* (2000) on visual material related to mostly Vendaland, and their focus was primarily on the late-nineteenth and not on the twentieth century.

1.6.2 Literature on the Berlin Mission Society

Gunther Pakendorf (2012:289-303) provides very useful context on the work that the Berlin Missionary Society was involved with in South Africa. Pakendorf places emphasis on language, culture and customs as means of fulfilling the desire of naturalisation and the need for continuity. German migrants to South Africa are said to have merged with those of Dutch descent and in the process lost their individual distinction as Germans. They were recognised as part of the Afrikaner and Dutch community. Pakendorf investigates the history of how the Germans came to be in South Africa; their identity when they arrived and the way they expressed it while they were in the country, in which parts of South Africa they were active, the existence of German churches and missionary communities in the South African society and the influence of language in shaping culture. The general good relations between the Berlin missionaries and the Dutch-Afrikaner landowning farmers and political administrators in the Transvaal will be taken into consideration in my study.

1.6.3 Literature on Missionaries and Knowledge; Missionaries Shaping a Way of Seeing the World

Similar to my intended aims with this study, Patrick Harries (2007:2) has been mainly concerned with the missionary society as a site of knowledge construction about Africa. His focus has been on the influence that the missionary gets from the native country and how their knowledge is ordered and shaped by the context of the time, as well as their European background and their new experience of different traditions. Harries's discussion informs my study as it gives context to the aspect of representing the missionized African in photography. Harries examined the way the missionaries limited immersion into the culture and how experiences in the field influenced them, their congregants, as well as others, to create knowledge systems that made their changing world meaningful. He also analysed the multiple narrative practices used by the missionaries (an aspect that I will look deeper into in my study).

Jean and John Comaroff (1991) give context of the pre-apartheid and apartheid experience and how decisions by white authorities regarding the experience of Christianity and the church influenced the missionized Africans. They highlight the responses of the missionized Africans to the imperialist ideas that administered a mentality of segregation over centuries. The Comaroffs question the making and remaking of consciousness. They investigate the mediation of gender, class, and ethnicity. They explore the world of a South African missionized society which is, more broadly, also applicable to other parts of the globe where the missionized were regarded to be 'savages' in need of salvation. For these 'savages' to obtain this salvation they had to become 'civilized' by 'discovering' themselves. And in the process of 'self-discovery' the 'savage' was exposed to and conversed into the culture of modern capitalism.

Nicholas Mirzoeff outlines decolonising as requiring the attention of an individual in order to claim rights and establish what is right. For decolonisation to take place, societies must claim back their right to look (Mirzoeff 2011:1). The right to look is argued not to be about what one sees, but rather about looking at someone to

show compassion, friendship and solidarity. Mirzoeff adds that the right to look also affirms autonomy. It is the way in which one individual invents another, and the same is done back. Mirzoeff mentions that visuality is the authority that has power over what we can see. The information, ideas and images that make up visualization are influenced by the visualizer. The autonomy found in the right to look is conflicted by the authority of visuality. Mirzoeff maintains that the right to look preceded the authority of visuality. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the individual to remember this.

Essentially, Mirzoeff investigates how certain authorities have had the power over the visual representation of others and argues that the individual can claim back the power of representation through their choice of self-representation. He illustrates this specifically at the hand of missionary encounters in New Zealand. My intended study will test the extent to which his findings in this context resonate with the missionary encounter in the Berlin Mission Church in the Transvaal of the 1930s.

1.7 Theoretical Approach of the Study

The theoretical approaches of the authors discussed in the literature review will guide the way I intend to work with the photographs from the two selected missionary publications. Jenkins, Harries, the Comaroffs and Mirzoeff have all been influenced by the ground-breaking work on postcolonial theory led by Edward Said.

My research also includes the study of the exotic other, orientalism, tradition and modernity. The above is essential for the study as it tackles concerns about the representation of the native body. This will assist in distinguishing whether (or not) the representations in the two publications that are being investigated perpetuate certain stereotypes and ideologies when it comes to what is portrayed and shown about and to the ‘natives.’ It will focus on Edward Said’s theory on Orientalism as theoretical base for the above-mentioned ideas. The ‘orient’ is to be considered a concept invented by Europeans. It is a place of romantic and exciting experience,

characterised by exotic life forms, haunting memories and landscapes. The orient is the place of Europe's oldest colonies, the space where its ideas of the 'other' were ever circulated. The orient is regarded as the contrast to European ideas, identity and culture. Although the orient is considered the opposite of all things European, it assists in creating European culture and in carrying out certain ideologies. The European culture and ideologies are made prevalent in the images they take, in their written and oral communication, in their doctrine and scholarship, as well as their colonial style and bureaucracies (Said 1978:1). Missionaries were entangled in these processes.

1.8 Research Methodology

Semiotics aids in understanding the way communication works. In semiotics, a sign resembles any distinct component of meaning. It can refer to anything with the ability to communicate something such as images, gestures, sounds, scents, and words. A sign can be a referent to a social construction. Visual studies scholars use semiotics critically to decode a text, i.e. the process of conveying information from code to plaintext (Reyburn 2013:61).

The sign is argued to be a construct of two components, the signifier and the signified. The signifier is the actual text (film, painting, image, word). The signified is the meaning made by the receiver of the text. The relationship between the signifier and the signified is not necessarily direct. Therefore, signs are subjective in that they can bear more than one meaning. The notion above can be referred to as the polysemic nature of signs (Reyburn 2013).

Texts are read under the four orders of signification: denotation, connotation, myth, and ideology. Denotation is the literal meaning of a sign. The connotation is the meaning assigned to the sign from social and cultural influence. The myth is closely related to the ideology and it is the socially constructed 'truth'. The ideology refers to the system of ideas that believe certain thoughts to be obviously true or obviously false.

1.9 Brief Outline of Chapters

Chapter two outlines the history of the Berlin Missionary Society and their communication network. It briefly covers the founding of the society and looks into their influence in South Africa in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. And, lastly, through connecting the history with the people that were influenced by the BMS at the time, I bring together this history and the publication that is under study. In chapter three the *Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke* is approached under the genre of missionary periodicals. The content and features of the publication are assessed here. The *Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke* is considered as both an almanac and a missionary periodical, owing to its nature. Lastly, in chapter four I conduct a semiotic analysis of missionary photography in the *Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke*, with photography in *Der Missions-Freund* as comparative reference point. In this chapter the myths and ideologies communicated by the images are elaborated upon. The study concludes in chapter 5.

Chapter 2: Historical Context of the Berlin Missionary Society and their Influence in the Transvaal

2.1 Introduction

The *Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke* (hereafter referred to as *Thsupa)* exists as one of many publications in the stall of the Berlin Missionary Society (BMS). By the time the *Thsupa* was founded, the BMS had already been active for almost a century. The BMS was formed and led by ten men of which most if not all were aristocratic professors, from Prussian society, who exercised a form of Christianity that had patriarchal roots. The BMS was officially recognised as the Society for the Promotion of Protestant Missions among the Heathens (in German it is called *Gesellschaft zur Beförderung der evangelischen Missionen unter den Heiden).* Its founding years date from 1824-1834 (Pakendorf 2011:106-107).

The ten men came together in Berlin on 29 February 1824 to write out a promulgation which would govern the foundations of the BMS. The BMS was initially concerned with three main objectives: to raise funds to educate and take care of students, send them on missions overseas, and continue to support them while they were on mission so they could share the knowledge they had with all who were willing to learn (Poewe & van der Heyden 1999). From its genesis it rejected the idea of affiliating itself with state powers and following the direction of the society of its time. The BMS had a dislike in modernity[2] and the cultural practices of its founding times, which included the industrial city, ubiquitous materialism and the representatives of that society (the working class and cosmopolitan intellectuals) (Pakendorf 2011:107).

[2] The Protestant ideology according to the Comaroffs (1997:274-275) for a long time was based on moral advancements in the primary part of life (this being the domestic state of the Godly family). Essential to their belief was that ones' domestic conduct tells a lot about one's religious character. Central to the Protestant household was the woman who had the responsibility of taking care of the children, receiving no wage but nurturing a family unit consisting of mother, father and child. All this is regarded to happen under the backdrop of industrial capitalism. The Comaroffs argue this family unit to be a construct which represents middle-class modernity, where there existed a remodeling of relational production, parenthood, class, and gender: which were all subjected to and existed alongside the age of the factory systems.

The BMS was founded upon the Lutheran tradition which was rooted in Protestantism.[3] It was the events surrounding the ideas projected during the Reformation that inspired Protestants to begin the Pietist movement in Europe, causing Protestant churches to branch into missionary organisations. The BMS stood as one of the branches that was formed (Mminele 1983:1).[4] With their set-out objectives, as stated in the first paragraph of this section, the BMS established themselves across different parts of the world: China, East Africa and South Africa, with the Transvaal being their largest point of influence in the latter (Mminele 1983:1).

The sections of this chapter which follow here, maps out the historical background that pertains to the context in which the *Thsupa* publication existed. It initially looks at the first arrival of missionaries from the BMS in the South African hinterland: the type of community they came into and the types of people that they came across. The context it focuses on is of the late nineteenth to early twentieth century in South Africa when the missionaries were highly active in this area.

It is essential for the analysis that the historical contextualisation should be from the nineteenth century into the twentieth century as most of the characters that are mentioned in the *Thsupa* are individuals that began their work in the area during the nineteenth century. The period of the nineteenth century is also referred to in some letters in the publication which is under investigation. As for the twentieth

[3] Protestants had an altercation with the Catholics during the 1500s which was influenced by a movement that was recognised as The Reformation (Chaunu 1989:11). The Reformation had several leaders at its forefront yet the most prominent were Dr Martin Luther (who is recognised as the father of Lutheranism) and John Calvin (who is recognised as the father of Calvinism) (Mminele 1983:9-10). The impact of the Reformation saw its peak in 1536 when, amongst other events, the ruling body from the city of Geneva took a united decision to abide by the regulations of the Reformed on 21 May 1536 (Chaunu 1989:11-12). Although what happened in Geneva does not pertain to this study, it is essential to understand that the impact of the Reformation was spread across Europe and widely across Germany. It was as a result of these events that the northern states of Germany became predominantly protestant, which explains why the missionaries from Berlin in Brandenburg who eventually came to South Africa in the nineteenth century, were protestant and not Catholic. The Protestants came to be known as such due to their radical drive against the Catholic Church. The name Protestant was derived from the recognition of the people that stood against the Catholic Church as engaging in the act of 'protesting'.

[4] Catholics also had missionary projects and also established mission stations. But because the white settlers in the Transvaal, the Boers, were strongly anti-Catholic in their Protestantism, they were more welcoming of missionaries with protestant leanings.

century, it is essential in that it marks the time in which the publication came into existence. It is therefore necessary that the social, political and religious context of the twentieth century is discussed to aid in identifying the ideological norms that guided the formation and reception of the publication. It is further necessary to connect the missionary endeavours in South Africa with changing trends in missionary work worldwide during the twentieth century (1920 and 1930 specifically). For this reason, the World Mission Conference that took place in Edinburgh in 1910 will be discussed. This chapter finally gives a brief account on the foundations of the *Thsupa* as a publication in the Sotho-speaking areas of South Africa.

2.2 History of the Berlin Mission Society in South Africa

2.2.1 Berlin Missionaries' Arrival and Early Endeavours in the Sotho-speaking Areas in South Africa during the Nineteenth Century

The first missionaries from the BMS to set foot in South Africa did so in Cape Town on 17 April 1834. They were the third mission society to arrive in South Africa (Pakendorf 2011:106-107). On 24 September 1834 the first Berlin mission station in South Africa was established in the place which is known as Bethanien (English: Bethany; currently known as the area southwest of Bloemfontein in what today is the Free State). This station was purposed to serve the Koranna population of Bethany. J. du Plessis (1965:212) mentions that the Koranna were a clan of 'Hottentots' [Khoisan] who had moved to Bethany from the east.[5] The first 25 years of the BMS in South Africa was met with disappointments, difficulty, complications, and internal disputes. Young missionaries would have disputes amongst themselves and they would face a lack of interest from the Koranna people (Mminele 1983:20).

[5] The Koranna had managed to gather for themselves guns, making them a danger to the nearby Basotho and Batswana.

Figure 1 : Map by Merensky of South Africa's provinces and peoples 1903, the Hoffmann collection of cultural knowledge website, 2019.

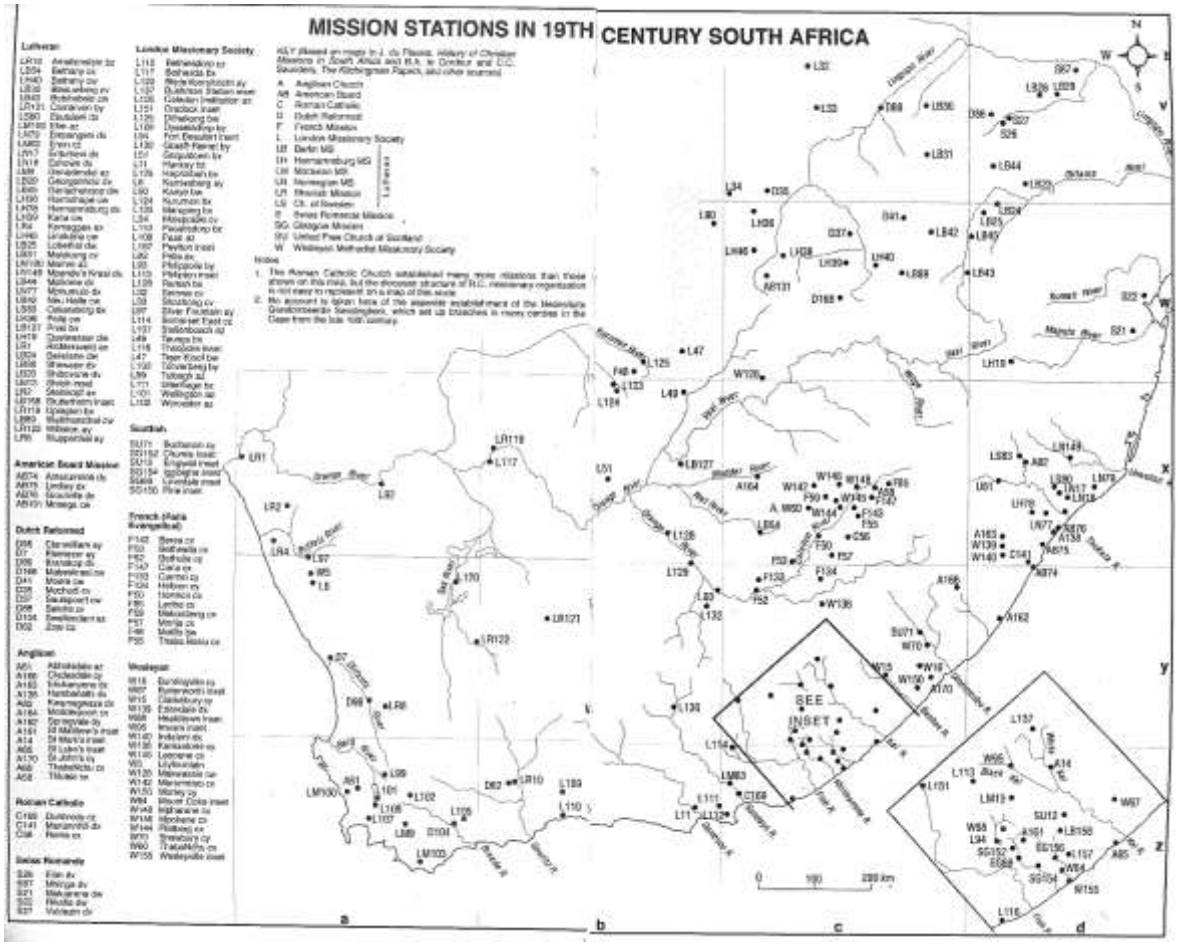


Figure 2: Map representing South Africa and the mission stations that existed in it during the nineteenth century. (Elphick & Davenport 1997)

Figure 1 and Figure 2 illustrate the positioning of mission stations in South Africa. Following the work in Bethany, by the early 1860s the BMS had stretched their reach across South Africa to different racial groups. Mminele (1983:20) mentions that the mission stations that were established in South Africa were as follows: "Two in the Cape (Amalienstein, Ladysmith), three in Xhosaland (Bethel, Wartburg, Petersburg), one in the Orange Free State (Pniel), and two in Natal (Emmaus, Christianenburg)". It was in the same year (1860) that word was sent out by the ruling board in Berlin that another mission field needed to be established. This commission saw its way to the Transvaal where the BMS would have its greatest breakthrough. Besides this request by the ruling board, there were other regulations that were introduced during this time.

There were certain regulations that were formulated within the BMS in the 1860s. They decided that only the members that had a skill for learning different languages would be the ones to be trained for the purpose of working in the mission. Prospective missionaries had to be proficient in seven languages, namely Greek, Latin, Hebrew, German, English, Dutch, and at least one indigenous language. As part of their five-year study programme, the prospective missionaries were required to deliver their first sermon in an indigenous language before they could marry and be ordained. The seminary training received by the Berlin missionaries instilled in them the duty to pass on the Christian traditions to the indigenous communities that they later found themselves working in (Poewe & van der Heyden 1999). They were also able to produce documents in the indigenous languages. About six decades later the *Thsupa* becomes one such document.

The northern and eastern parts of the Transvaal were undergoing drastic change in the years 1860-1890. It was an era in which white settlers were asserting their hegemony. Not only did these changes happen in the Transvaal but also in other part of South Africa. The military governors ceased to be in authority any longer as local officers appointed by a non-racial franchised, which was authorized, took up this power in the Cape Colony. In Natal the African people were ruled by agents of the metropolitan government. The Boers that lived in the interior parts of South

Africa formed two republics of their own governance which was constituted by a racial franchise made up of men of European descent. Etherington, Harries and Mbenga (2010:319) state that: “The growth and expansion of these very different settler states was conditional upon the conquest of original inhabitants and the alienation of their land.” The pressure for acquiring land and the need for labour was inspired by the growth in wool-farming, and plantation agriculture, and the mining of diamonds that began in the interior of South Africa. These phenomena stirred the British colony into expansion, therefore the demand for the land and labour to accommodate their expansion plans. During this period race became the prime means of social organization, belonging, and a means through which certain people could be marginalized and ostracized.

In 1869, the Basotho’s land had become subjected to British rule (J.S. Bergh & A.P. Bergh 1987 [1984]:66). During the four years of British rule in the Transvaal (1877-1881), the Bapedi kingdom was subjugated. After winning their independence from Britain in 1881, the Boers affirmed their sovereignty as a republic more firmly – not only towards Britain but also against African rulers, who still asserted their own independence. Boer attempts to secure access to African land and labour resulted in a series of wars between the Transvaal Boers and indigenous polities like the Balobedu, Bahananwa and Bavenda.

It was against this background that the Berlin Missionaries established their network in the interior of South Africa. Alexander Merensky and Heinrich Grützner established their first mission station in the Transvaal on 14 August 1860 amidst the Bakopa (The missionaries chose to name this place Gerlachshoop). It was in 1861 that Merensky and Grützner were assigned new recruits (Carl Endemann and Albert Nachtigal). Merensky decided to relocate further north into the Transvaal where he was received by Chief Sekwati the first, leader of the Bapedi people (Mönnig 1967:25).

Kirkaldy (2009:604) mentions that rulers of indigenous subjects that permitted missionaries to operate in their communities did so with personal agendas; they

had the expectation that the missionaries would provide them with rifles, or act as liaisons between them and the Boer and/ or British, and provide them with the education and health facilities that would complement the already existent traditional ones. The overall expectation of the rulers was for the missionaries to assist them to manage in the environment that was in constant transformation. Chief Sekwati warmly welcomed Merensky and Grützner into his 'Pedi tribe'[6], and he allocated a place to them in Chief Mametse's (the chief that was subject to him) village.

The Pedi polity was made up of a number of chieftaincies in the Maroteng area, with a single dominant chief who would set the tone for the rest. The area they lived in was comprised of mountains, valleys and hills. Delius (1983:48-49) estimates that the Maroteng Kingdom had a population of about seventy thousand. In terms of distribution of labour, it was dominantly women that worked in the fields; they also made pottery and used clay for the huts and yards. Women also had the duty of making blankets and sleeping mats; they would make beer and also fetch water from streams; cook and grind grains; they also had the duty of fetching wood for the fire (to use when cooking or for keeping warm in winter). The duty of the men was to hunt and herd cattle; they would assist in the fields when it was harvest season. Men were also involved in woodwork and the assembling of roofs for the huts. They were also known for their skills in metalwork (Delius 1983:49). Kirsten Rüther (2002:361) states that one of the resounding themes even since the 1800s was that male dominance over women was held highly. Both missionaries and South African chiefs felt the urge to maintain male rule over women and saw

[6] 'Pedi tribe' is mentioned in inverted commas as it is a problematic term. The research of Peter Delius (1983:xi) focuses on the Pedi polity (native governance). He mentions that the term 'Pedi' has been employed as an identification for all Sotho-speaking people from the northern and eastern parts of the Transvaal that were occupants of the Maroteng (Pedi Kingdom) area. The term is regarded problematic as the Maroteng area was a flexible area that Bantu-speaking people from other backgrounds could also inhabit. It also was not restrictive to the inherently born Pedi people, allowing for them to easily relocate outside of the Kingdom. Therefore, packaging all African inhabitants of this area as being part of the Pedi is problematic.

Furthermore, the concept 'tribe', although widely used in popular discourse in South Africa, has become circumspect in its use amongst scholars because of the way this word had been used to categorise and rule African communities by colonial authorities. It has also been used in the 1960s as a means to isolate the African people into divided groups (Skalnik 1988:68).

female diversion from their authority both as a threat and a detriment to social order. This idea of social order is the crux of Christian congregational practise.[7]

On 28 August 1861, with the permission of Chief Sekwati, the Kgalatlou mission station was founded. This station was recognised as the first to be built in Bopedi, later known as Sekhukhuneland. Chief Sekwati died on 22 September 1861, which was shortly after the missionaries had begun residing in Bopedi (Mminele 1983:22-23). Rüther (2004:210) neglects information about the rule of Chief Sekwati and mentions that Merensky and Nachtigal were first received by Chief Sekhukhune who, according to Mminele (1983:24) succeeded Sekwati. Disregarding the rulership of Chief Sekwati accordingly distorted the reading of the incident to follow, that happened between the missionaries and Chief Sekhukhune. Peter Delius (1983:1) argues that the contemporary [1980s] view positions Chief Sekhukhune as a man of pride and significance to his people.

Mminele (1983:24) hints that Chief Sekhukhune seemed to be the opposite of Chief Sekwati. He was said to be bright and powerful yet contrary to his father, Sekwati, he was ruthless. Sekhukhune was initially well disposed towards the missionaries, permitting them to establish more mission stations. With four mission stations existent by this time, the drive towards providing elementary education, with Bible knowledge and singing hymns being the main subjects, was well underway. The influence of the BMS was growing in Bopedi. This meant that Africans were taught to read and write. A few years later Sekhukhune reassessed his attitude towards the missionaries as they had attracted more people's attention to Christianity than he had anticipated (Rüther 2004:207 & 210).

Sekhukhune held that the missionaries were to serve no other role besides teaching his people. He emphasised that they had no role in healing his people. Some of the Chiefs' people abided by his strict command yet others believed the

[7] The contrary is that women could protest traditional patriarchy by moving onto a mission station, and subject themselves there to the patriarchy of Christianity – not that they always saw it that way themselves (Peel 2002:144).

missionaries to be a means to their attainment of power, wealth, and protection, and as a result resorted to conversion. Some royal descendants also had begun conversing with the missionaries (Rüther 2004:210). The motive of these prominent subjects of the Chief was their hope to attain the knowledge that the missionaries had.

Rüther (2002:359-360) argues this was also played out in the clothing that the Africans began wearing. She mentions that wearing certain clothing (of European influence) allowed Africans to express their identity, yet it did not necessarily assist in creating it. Wearing certain clothing was more about upholding a certain image. This image allowed those that wore these clothes to implement certain distinctions in accordance with the connotations that onlookers would form within a given time frame. The ability of clothing to have a certain level of power over the onlookers inspired certain critical thought by the church authorities regarding what the clothing meant and how it influenced their authority.

Over and above this, the view of Christianity being an escape into a new way of living fuelled quarrels between missionaries and African evangelists (also known as national helpers by the missionaries). The quarrels were over initiation rituals, removing of hair, dress, beer consumption and polygamy. It is argued that the above-mentioned issues were the least of the concerns that missionaries had with Africans. Their main concern was the Africans' will to possess power or dominion (Poewe & van der Heyden 1999).

The interest towards missionary activity was expressed by the Chief's subjects that were in leadership roles within the community, including his gunsmith and ngaka (doctor) (Rüther 2004:210). Mminele (1983:24-25) maintains that Chief Sekhukhune regarded the attitude of these subjects to be disloyal and this, amongst other events of resistance displayed by other chiefs, stirred him to resort to hostile treatment of the missionaries and their followers. Two traders of Western descent visited Sekhukhune and informed him that Merensky and Nachtigal were sent by the Boer government to spy on him.

Sekhukhune then reassessed his attitude towards the missionaries and he began a series of persecutions in the hope that his subjects would denounce their faith (Mminele 1983:25). When he realised that his efforts against the missionaries were not working, he was infuriated and in the year 1865 he banished all missionaries and all their native subjects who followed the Christians, from his community. However, the BMS still managed to establish their system of networks in the eastern and northern parts of the Transvaal. Thereby they were creating a transnational brotherhood between the congregants in the Transvaal, greater South Africa, and the congregants in Berlin, Germany (Rüther 2004:207 & 210).

Merensky, after having been banished, and fleeing from chief Sekhukhune, was assigned the duty of finding new dwellings for the sixty-nine native refugees from the Bakopa people. Bank (2015:171) mentions that Merensky had no choice but to move to Botshabelo where he found refuge under the wing of the South African Republic[8], whose racial laws he agreed with. Altogether eighty-five adults and thirty children decided to make Sekhukhune's younger brother, Johannes Dinkwanyane, their chief, and for the time being they also settled at Botshabelo. They were later united with one-hundred and thirty other Christians from Bokopa under the guidance of Joshua Ramapudu.[9] (Mimele 1983:29-30).

Merensky founded ten schools in Botshabelo (Mimele 1983:36). He preached for the last time in Botshabelo on 6 January 1882 and baptised eighty-five people on that day.[10] By the time of his return to Germany, the BMS had established stations in Lobethal, Arkona, Khalatlolu and Mossegu (Rüther 2001:136). He was succeeded by Theodor Carl Nauhaus

[8] The Zuid-Afrikaaansche Republic was the official name the Boers gave to their Transvaal state.
[9] Neither Dinkwanyane nor Ramapudu settled at Botshabelo for good. Delius (1983) emphasised that Dinkwanyane's decision to leave the mission station in 1873 was prompted by his objection to Merensky's dual role as pro-Boer landlord and Christian leader.
[10] In Germany he later became editor of the *Der Missions-Freund.*

At Botshabelo, Nauhaus introduced rules that the African Christians who had desired to source work outside of the mission station were to be issued a letter of recommendation that needed to be handed to the missionary in the area where they would be working. He also required that parents of the students should have the responsibility of maintaining the school. In 1888 he was charged with the responsibility of taking control of the entire seminary were he also implemented new rules (Mminele 1983:95-6).

In 1890 multiple African Christians (close to 500 of 1500), households and families from thirteen different congregations forsook their churches in Sekhukhuneland to form a national one which they recognised as the Lutheran Bapedi Church. Rüther (2004:208) mentions that these leaders included Martinus Sebushane, an ordained Pedi-speaking pastor, Johannes August Winter, an ex-minister in the BMS, and Chief Kgoloko, a non-Christian man who led the Bapedi for a decade. Africans that sought independence from the missionaries in Mphome were not successful during the years 1890 and 1892. Timotheus Sello, well known African pastor, supported the missionaries and this aspect also fuelled the setback experienced by the Africans. Mminele (1983:96) mentions that the cause of this drastic move amongst the African congregants was a pre-Ethiopiansist[11] spirit which spread across African and non-African missionary churches alike. This spirit brought about a drive for independence amongst the Africans.

This action shocked the BMS in Berlin, and it also affected the seminary as the students started looking for quicker ways in which to get ordained. Phisho, son of Martinus Sebushane, amongst other learners, was involved in violent activity with the secessionists at the seminary which resulted in his expulsion. In 1891 the seminary had to close down because of a lack of interest amongst learners to attend. Until 1903; the ‘white’ Berlin Missionaries were too suspicious of ‘black’

[11] Ethiopianism was a religious movement that existed amongst Sub-Saharan Africans that had the urge to break away from colonial church authority and form their independent churches. The term was first coined by a former Wesleyan minister, Mangena Mokone, who formed the Ethiopian Church in 1892 (Comaroff & Comaroff 1997:100).

pastors to ordain them. These events also resulted in a financial crisis for the school at Botshabelo (Mminele 1983:97-98).

2.2.2 The early Twentieth Century and the Berlin Mission in the Sotho-speaking Areas of South Africa

German Missionaries had good relations with members from the Dutch Reformed Church and the Boer community in general. Although they firmly believed that it was their duty to safeguard their African followers, the Berlin missionaries tended to take the side of the white people residing in South Africa (Elphick 2012:172; Pakendorf 2011:112-113). There was a divide in the approach of the white English and the white Afrikaner churches towards South Africa's African population. The Afrikaners believed in a segregationist approach which left many black Africans in a subordinated social standing. The English approach was a more liberal one and perceived to be more understanding of Africans, because, in theory, at least, it held open the possibility for Africans to be assimilated into white society as 'civilised' equals. The BMS were in general more in support of the approach of the Afrikaners. Relations between German and British missionaries drifted even further apart with the introduction of a new missiology schooling system during the 1880s (Elphick 2012:173).

In the year 1899 the British Empire took the Boer settlers of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal to war (Evans 1999:6). During the South African War, the loyalty of the Berlin missionaries in South Africa was towards the Boers. In contrast, several missionary followers were in support of the British to the extent of even assisting in fighting against the Boers (Pakendorf 2011:112). Some male descendants from the German missions joined arms with the Boers in battle. Several German-constructed buildings lay in ruins after being destroyed by the British. Elphick (2012:172-173) mentions that the British missionaries of the Anglican and Non-conformist denominations accused the Boers of being unsympathetic to missionary work amongst African people.

2.2.3 The World Missions Conference in 1910 and its Impact on Berlin Missionaries' Perspective

In 1910 the four colonies that were ruled by those of European descent in South Africa (namely the Cape Colony, Transvaal, Orange Free State, and Natal) merged to become known as the Union of South Africa. The merge was motivated by the Europeans' yearning to implement, as Elphick and Davenport (1997:5-6) put it, their "native policies". It is argued that the Union parliaments did not waste any time in drafting segregationist statutes that took over the relations of Europeans and Africans throughout that century. This was a testing time for Christian believers in the South African congregations.

In 1910, on a global note, a World Missions Conference was held in Edinburgh. The Conference took place from 14-24 June 1910. It involved 1215 delegates. The reports consisted of a couple of hundred sections on sharing the gospel message with people that were not Christian, missionary training, teachings of how the church should relate to its state, and teachings on Christian unity. All these teachings were shared with all delegates present in the form of printed copies. Those regarded as major role players within nineteenth and twentieth century Christianity were present at the conference (Bevans 2010:2).

The event encouraged an enthusiasm and a desire for progress amongst the Protestant missionaries who attended the Conference (Elphick & Davenport 1997:6). At this 1910 conference the Germans were in union with the English-speaking missionaries in decreeing to uphold a common fidelity to an agreed evangelising method. This was a very rare occurrence as one has come to discover from what has been mentioned above: the Germans were in favour of the Boers and did not necessarily share commonality with the English-speakers or British. This union which was fostered between the Germans and British by the conference was, however, short lived (Elphick 2012:172-173).

South Africa experienced a dramatic degeneration in racial relations resulting from the new policies stated in the Natives Land Act of 1913 (Elphick & Davenport

1997:366). The new policy prompted expropriation of land from the indigenous residents of certain spaces and this led to a decline in their standard of living over the years (Mtshiselwa & Modise 2013). During this time many Christian groups where Europeans and Africans existed within the same society started to gain conscience that African people were being stripped of their power. Europeans restricted African access to land, appropriated African labour, and denied them political liberty (Elphick & Davenport 1997:5-6).

2.2.4 The First World War and its Aftermath

German missions have a history of being anti-capitalist and anti-modernist and for this reason they refused for the lifestyle in the city to go on uncontested. This can be traced all the way from the Reformation and the attitude of the founding fathers of the BMS as stated in the introduction of this chapter. Consequently, the rapid industrialisation of South Africa in the early twentieth century posed a challenge to the methods of the Berlin Mission. African communities were now no longer necessarily centred around chieftaincies in agrarian societies. Many were embracing modernity in the ‘cities of the whites’ where they migrated to for work (Elphick 2012:175).

The First World War (1914-1918) however, brought about a depreciation in the German mission in terms of its rapid growth and unification. German missionaries in and around South Africa – and the rest of the British Empire – found themselves under surveillance – some even being confined to camps for long periods of time, which left mission stations either neglected or in the hands of African evangelists. Communication between the parent Board in Germany and the missions in South Africa experienced a collapse.

In the 1920s missionaries could no longer take leave from their duties as no new missionaries were being sent from Germany. Missionaries were no longer getting financial support from Germany for either salaries or maintenance or further development of the churches. The churches in South Africa had to sell their silver

in order for them to continue to maintain their needs for daily living (Pakendorf 2011:112).

In the years after the First World War Germany was itself in a deep financial crisis. From 1914 to 1924 the mission had to make ends meet with its own resources. This strife brought about a decline in the influence that Germany had within South Africa. The BMS were in a bad financial space and this discouraged the growth of South African missionary activity and influence, and most of the land that had been occupied by the Germans also had to be sold during this time. The BMS did struggle later to re-establish their influence in South Africa (Pakendorf 2011:112 - 113).

Elphick's (2012:173) view of the period when the First World War broke out in 1914, is that the British and the Germans used propaganda to criticize and speak badly of each other. J.H. Oldham, the first Administrative Director of the International African Institute, and a man who is said to have had influence on African affairs, tried to intervene by invoking and rekindling the atmosphere of the Edinburgh Conference (Bennett 1960:356). He requested that a prayer should be held to address the war that was taking place in Germany, yet the director of the BMS at the time, Karl Axenfeld, declined to issue it to his fellow Germans.

In the context of Germany, some of the people that were sent to war were the ones working for the BMS. The BMS in Germany experienced a decline in donations which affected their operations in distant lands. As already mentioned, their missionaries in South Africa were either living under very constricted conditions, or were in confinement, or even abhorred. These missionaries would receive word about the destruction of their land of origin and yet they could not do anything about it. It was difficult for Germans to attend other mission conferences of a global nature owing to their disregard for all who had assisted in destroying their nation. It was only in 1928 that 8 missionaries from Germany – out of a total of 236 – attended a national missionary conference. It was, however, mostly those Germans who could speak English that found it appealing (Elphick 2012 :173-174).

2.2.5 The Effects of the Nazi Rule on BMS Members

Gustav Warneck (who had been a professor of missions at Halle in Germany during the period of 1897- 1908), travelled to South Africa in the 1920s and encouraged the BMS missionaries to divert from the converting of individuals and rather move into converting whole clans. Bank (2015:173) argues that Warneck was influenced by German Romanticism.[12] Warneck was said to maintain that converting individual Africans caused them to be separated from their native communities and principally removed from their heritage. In this he was diverting from early pietist ideals of reaching and converting the individual. He therefore appealed to the BMS missionaries to make Christians of entire nations; by this he proposed that Christianity should be dispersed into entire facets of culture/ heritage. This was to be achieved through diligent devotion to learning the native tongue and ethnographic study (Elphick 2012:173).

The name of Siegfried Knak appears on several occasions in captions for images in the *Thsupa* publication. Knak became director of the BMS in 1921 and held the position for twenty-seven years. He was heavily involved in criticising the English-speakers in Africa. By 1931 the Great Depression had made its way to Germany and the Nazis were in power. In 1931 Knak wrote a book called *Zwischen Nil und Tafelbai* (Between the Nile and Table Bay). This book was meant to convince Germans that, regardless of the social and political challenges they were faced with, missions were still a worthy cause to support. Knak was convinced that the English-speakers were influencing Africans in a bad manner by exposing them to industrialization which would exploit the Africans as they participated in labour and he argued that this would eventually Europeanize them out of their native heritage and customs (Elphick 2012:175-176).

[12] At the time of the Reformation, when Martin Luther was influential, the focus was away from the way one looked on the outside and institutional constitutions, and rather towards a conversion of the inner self. Although the Lutherans maintained structure and order within the church, their theological ideas were regarded to be focused on the spirit. Their goal was towards transforming the inner self of each individual. In the nineteenth century, however, the idea was moving away from the individual toward the nurturing of the community, an idea of the growth and glory of a national church (German national church).

Knak maintained that imparting the heritage of Europe on Africans was promising a sense of paradise which was impracticable. Knak rejected secular culture, suggesting that African contact with Europeans had tainted their culture and way of life. He was urging his fellow missionaries and fellow Germans to assist in restoring this lost identity by continuing to fund the mission (Elphick 2012:176). It can be argued that Knak shared common sentiments with the already-mentioned Warneck and also with Carl Meinhof[13], a pastor-ethnographer-turned Professor of African Languages in Hamburg. They believed in the transformation of not just individuals but whole nations back into their 'primitive' ways, where they were 'honourable' and respectful and willing to assist those coming from outside.

2.2.6 Berlin Missionaries and the Making of Apartheid

Andrew Bank (2015:167) argues that the two men who are thought to have been at the forefront of apartheid ideas have in some way been influenced by German ideologies as they both obtained their tertiary education in Weimar Germany. These two men were Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd (1901-1966) and Werner Max Eiselen (1899 -1977) – the son of Berlin Missionary Gustav Eiselen.

Ernst Ludwig Gustav Eiselen had his education at a Theology institution in Germany, which was regarded unusual amongst his Berlin Missionary Society contemporaries. In the 1880s he then went on to study Lutheran Theology at the University of Tübingen and Friedrichs in Halle-Wittenberg (Bank 2015:171). Before he embarked on his journey to South Africa in 1889, he toiled for one year as an assistant minister and teacher in the Prussian province of Brandenburg. He got married to Dorothea Nauhaus, the daughter of Carl Nauhaus, within a year of his onset in Botshabelo. Dorothea was nineteen at the time and she was more than ten years younger than Gustav. Promptly following their union in marriage was

[13] Carl Friedrich Michael Meinhof was born on 23 July 1857 and died on 11 February 1944. He was a German linguist and one of the first linguists to be educated in Indigenous languages. He taught at the University of Hamburg in Germany, which stood as an attraction to many who aspired to become, or already were, missionaries. He wrote the book *Grundriss einer Lautlehre der Bantusprachen* (Introduction to the Phonology of the Bantu Languages) (Pugach 2004:825).

their assignment to establish a new mission station in the north at Arkona in Sekhukhuneland. Gustav and Dorothea lived in Arkona for close to a decade. Arkona was a remote area comprised of two small huts. Gustav often had to travel out to neighbouring communities in order for him to reach out to people with the Christian message (Bank 2015:171). A year after Gustav and Dorothea were transferred to Botshabelo, Werner, their last child, was born. The family spent the years of the South African War in Germany, only to return in 1903 when Werner turned four. He received home schooling until the he was 13. Gustav, Werner Eiselen's father, was amongst those in the Berlin Missionary Society persuaded toward transforming clans instead of individuals. Bank (2015:167) mentions that in the published articles that Gustav wrote, he emphasised the inferiority of African people to Europeans not only in their colour, looks and smell but also in their character and inner self. Werner, having grown up under his father's wing, was thought to believe this.

Bank (2015:166-172) emphasises that Werner Eiselen was the "architect of apartheid", and that he was influenced by his tertiary education in Weimar Germany. He is also said to have been influenced by the notion of *volkekunde,* which is regarded an Afrikaner nationalist ethnological tradition which lent a hand to the legitimisation of apartheid and has been found to have German roots. Although *volkekunde* was initially seen as stemming from Afrikaner nationalism beginning in the 1940s, it was discovered that *volkekunde* has a prior connection to the apartheid-sympathetic Berlin Missionary descendants in South Africa. It is also closely related to *Völkerkunde* (ethnology) which Carl Meinhof taught. *Volkekunde* influenced the taciturn nature of racism and racial ideology as a subject matter in twentieth-century South Africa. Werner Eiselen was well educated in African languages and could therefore communicate his ideas with African people that he encountered and those that were exposed to his writings.

It should therefore not be surprising that Werner Eiselen wrote contributions to the *Thsupa* publication in the 1930s. The first time a contribution by him appeared, he was introduced to the readers of the *Thsupa* (1931) with a short description of his

position and importance: the son of Rev. Gustav Eiselen from Botshabelo, and one of the most knowledgeable people on the languages and 'the behaviours' of the different black people in South Africa. This rather apolitical celebration of Eiselen's brilliance is quite contrary to the way he has been discussed more recently in Bank's (2015:171) research.

Eiselen's laudation in the *Thsupa* was written by the editor of the publication, Rev. Carl Adolf Hoffmann, who himself was soon to be transferred to Botshabelo to lead the Berlin Mission Church Seminary there. Hoffmann's missionary career had started forty years before, in 1894. He was 25 years old and he had just completed his Seminary training with the BMS in Berlin. He was sent to begin his work in Gutu in Mashonaland (today known as Masvingo in Zimbabwe). However, Hoffmann did not remain in Zimbabwe very long. He would be stationed in the northern part of the Transvaal (Mphome) until his promotion to Botshabelo in 1934. He concluded his career as head of the Berlin Mission in South Africa and remained in South Africa until the end of his life (Kriel 2012:18). The legacy of this editor of the almanac is quite different from that of Eiselen the politician. Yet Hoffmann's position as editor of the *Thsupa* gave him authority over the subject matter that the publication dealt with. He also contributed to the publication as an author, which means that some of his thoughts influenced the people that got to read it.

The first letter that appeared in the first (1931) edition of the *Thsupa*, was titled *Ngoaga o mofsa* (which in English means A New Year). The letter talks about this new almanac that has been introduced, called the *Thsupa*, and it mentions the content that is presented in the publication. This letter seems to have been written by Gustav Eiselen. The letter that follows this one was written by Mission Inspector Schoene from the Mission House in Berlin. The title of his letter is Direlang Morena ka thabo! (which in English is: Serve the Lord with joy!

As one can see from the paragraph above, Hoffmann was not alone in the production of the *Thsupa*, but was joining forces with other missionaries – as well as native African writers – in producing the calendar. In the first five years of the

existence of the *Thsupa*, all the authors recognised in the publication, were male. The first black author to appear in the *Thsupa* of 1931 was Jesaias. W.B. Letsoalo, and letters written by him also feature in the calendars of the four subsequent years. The above stated information about the contributors to the *Thsupa* informs the discussion of the publication and its features in the next chapter.

2.3 Conclusion

The patriarchy in the Christianity of the BMS is long rooted in its history from its founders down to the BMS missionaries that later found themselves in South Africa. From its founding years the BMS has been concerned with documenting their manner of conduct, this is initially seen through the documenting of a promulgation that the founding leaders agreed upon, which would set in stone their mission as a Christian society which was concerned with spreading the word of God across the world.

This brief historical introduction around the authors Eiselen and Hoffmann sets the tone for the discussion of the *Thsupa* publication and our understanding of the relationships therein. Information about the African author, Letsoalo, also brings into context the relationship that Hoffmann may have shared with the African authors in order for him to have considered their work for the purpose of the publication.

Chapter 3: Paging through *Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke*

3.1 Introduction

The first authority that could influence printed documents that were distributed in South Africa, was the Dutch East India Company, the authority to the Dutch who were the first Europeans to settle in South Africa in 1652 (Kolbe 2005:22). The first printing press recorded in South Africa was the one that Johan Christiaan Ritter, bookbinder of German descent, brought with him in 1784. The evidence of documents created by this printing press, however, could not be located. In 1792, Ritter requested some equipment from the Lords Seventeen[14] (the leaders of the Dutch East India Company) that would be sufficient for a printing office. His request was approved on 28 June 1794 on condition that the press should be placed in the Castle, and that it should only be utilised for the Company's official documentation (Smith 1971:14-15).

One of the earliest almanacs that exists in South Africa was found amongst the Ritter documents. In fact, this almanac is claimed to be the oldest existing document to have been printed in South Africa (South African Library 1971). The almanac was from 1796 and is preserved in the South African Public Library in Cape Town. The image that appears on the almanac seems to have been engraved and some of the letters do not look typed (Smith 1971:14). There is also evidence of other almanacs which were distributed during the years 1795, 1796, and 1797.

According to Martyn Lyons (2011:123-124) the seventeenth century was the heyday of the almanac. Almanacs were early reference books which functioned as diaries that conveyed annual highlights of the area in which they were produced.

[14] Lords Seventeen, also known as Chamber of Seventeen, or Council of Seventeen, or Assembly of Seventeen, or Heeren XVII. They were the Council in control of the Dutch East India Company. (Trotter 1928: 21-22). The Dutch East India Company (or VOC – Vereenigde Oostindische Maatschappij) was the shipping company that set up its halfway stop at the Cape of Good Hope for their shipping enterprise between Europe and East India (Elphick and Davenport 1997:16).

They could include astrological tables, periodicals and prophecies, the days on which to celebrate religious holidays, important fairs and the setting of court laws. Almanacs were more than just calendars as they provided detailed instructions on farming, which included advice regarding the right weather for when to sow. Along with information about farming, they offered recipes for cookery and herbal medication. In the eighteenth century, almanacs contained more objective material, which was owing to the rejection of astrological and prophetic practices by the supporters of the Enlightenment. Almanacs were able to avoid surveillance from the government for as long as they refrained from mentioning politics.

By the time the *Thsupa* came into existence in 1931, people in South Africa had long been exposed not only to almanacs, and Bibles, but also to different types of printed documents, including official documents with written laws, official instructions, rules and regulations (Smith 1971:11-12). The history of printing in the British-controlled Cape Colony is relatively well recorded and will not be further elaborated on here. In order to contextualise the history of the *Thsupa* we take a leap into the northern part of South Africa, claimed by white settlers as from roughly the middle of the nineteenth century and commonly referred to as the Transvaal (trans-Vaal – across the Vaal River)

In 1880 the BMS initiated a printing project to provide the different northern Sotho communities of the Transvaal, as well as the Bavenda, with reading materials which appeared in their native tongues. Most of this material was produced in Northern Sotho/Sepedi. The Transvaal Rebellion (First Boer War) of 1881 affected printing activities in Botshabelo. And so, the printing project came to a standstill and the BMS in the Transvaal decided to opt for a cheaper and practical option, which was to import printed materials from Berlin and London in bulk (Mminele 1983:93-95). By the year 1882, the printing press at Botshabelo was almost ready to function as an independent entity, as it had both a printing and bookbinding section. This project not only encouraged readership amongst Africans in the Transvaal but also asserted the status of Botshabelo as the pinnacle of the BMS's operations in the region.

The aim with this chapter is to give an overview of the content that appears in the *Thsupa.* It also places the *Thsupa* in the context of the genre of missionary periodicals as understood by theorist Hannah Acke (2013). This chapter also gives a brief historical background on the situation of orality and literacy in the interior of South Africa, which is to serve the purpose of contextualising the possible readership within the area targeted by the BMS. I shall also briefly compare the *Thsupa* to its South African precursor, the *Almanaka*, and its sister publication, the *Mogoera oa Babaso*. As the focus is on the *Thsupa*, I shall not include detailed background on the *Der Missions-Freund* publication, but rather, comparisons will be made where these can contribute to a better understanding of the role and the place of the *Thsupa* in the missionary communication network.

3.2 Publications related to the *Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke*

As stated in the introductory chapter, there are several publications that could have been considered for the study, but because of the nature of their content they did not quite fit the requirements for the purpose of this study. These publications included the *Almanaka ea Mission ea Berlin, Mogoera oa Babaso* (1908-1938) and *Der Missions-Freund* (1846-1939). The first two publications included hardly any images, and the latter was aimed at a German, and not a South African, audience.

The *Almanaka* is only briefly mentioned in the 1931 *Thsupa* as its predecessor. More research will have to be conducted in the archives of the BMS to establish the reasons for the management's decision to replace the *Almanaka ea Mission ea Berlin* with the *Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke.* Most certainly the BMS would have been interested in serving their 'market' of converts in the best possible way. And the inclusion of more photographic images would have contributed to the calendar's popular appeal. This would have been strongly supported by Carl Hoffmann, the Chair of the Berlin Mission's Literature Commission in the Transvaal and also the editor of the *Thsupa* in the early 1930s.

The *Mogoera oa Basutho*, which means “the friend of the Sotho people” was a monthly newspaper founded in 1908. By the 1920s, it became *Mogoera oa Babaso* and later still, when the Sepedi orthography changed in the late 1930s, *Moxwera wa Babaso*, meaning “the friend of the people”. It was printed in South Africa, in Middelburg, close to Botshabelo. Initially it was edited by a white missionary, J. Trümpelmann from Vaalmanstaal (Wallmannsthal near Pretoria), who was also one of the contributors to the *Thsupa* publication). Eventually it had an African editor, Epaphras Magagabise Ramaila, who was a renowned intellectual and author (Mweli 1930). What *Der Missions-Freund* was for German congregations in and around Berlin, the *Mogoera* had to be for African congregations of the Berlin Mission in the Sepedi-speaking areas. The *Mogoera* however, carried hardly any images in it.

Der Missions-Freund was a monthly periodical which was distributed in Germany to people supporting the BMS. It was published and circulated in the German-speaking communities since 1846. The publication carried in it reportage from all the countries and places where the BMS had an influence. It also included images from those places and the work conducted on the Berlin Mission Stations and in the Berlin Mission Schools. Every issue also reported on the Berlin Mission’s activities in South Africa. *Der Missions-Freund* is seen as an equivalent to the *Mogoera* in that they were serving the ‘sending’ and ‘receiving’ Christian communities in Germany and South Africa respectively, with monthly news reports. The significant difference is that the *Der Missions-Freund* carried images and the *Mogoera* not (Kriel & Fossey 2018:176), and it is under this premise that the *Der Missions-Freund* is used in the study: to show similarity and contrast between the information and images that were conveyed to the Germans, and those conveyed to the Africans. The German audience was provided with news with images from all over the world on a monthly basis via *Der Missions-Freund*. The African audience received news without photographs from the *Mogoera* every month, since the Mission Society could only afford to provide them with visual material once a year, and these illustrated news articles were then carried in the annual publication, the *Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke.*

3.3 Missionary Periodicals as a Genre

The genre of missionary periodicals was at its peak during the nineteenth century when several missionaries made their publications available to different people from different backgrounds of different social standing, different ages, and to converted people that did not originate from the "parent continent". Parent continent in the context of this section is the place that the missionaries originated from and where their mission society was first established (Jensz 2012:234). Acke (2013:225) claims that, in order to interpret or make sense of a genre, one needs to investigate its "discursive" and "historical" components.

The "discursive" refers to the repetitive behaviours within a certain genre; this means that there must be certain tropes that occur in several publications, films, or music of the same nature to qualify it as a genre. And for the "historical" component, genre needs to exist within a certain convention, and should be regarded as a genre (Acke 2013:225).[15] Tzvetan Todorov[16] (1990:17) who is Acke's influence in the above subject matter, explains the discursive and historical properties of genre in more detail. The historic property of genre is characterised by the discourse that supports it. Todorov gives the example about the genre of tragedy. He mentions that the genre is supported by theory that is written about tragedy. He adds that this discourse is in the existence of the word itself and the meaning governing it. He also adds that the tragedy in itself has features that can qualify it as being a genre outside of the history that informs it. The historical component is therefore the evidence of the existence of that particular genre, meaning that any form of genre should have a historical bearing or historical trail that precedes its existence and accordingly also informs the genre itself.

The discursive component claims that any form of discourse can be made to follow a certain set of rules. Therefore, different texts take up different meanings in

[15] Hannah Acke, in her essay 'Missionary Periodicals as a Genre: Models of Writing, Horizons of expectation', uses Tzvetan Todorov's theory in *Genre in Discourse* to analyze a missionary periodical from the Swedish Evangelical Missionary Society, known as *Missionsförbundet.*
[16] Tzvetan Todorov (1939-2017) was a historian and literary critic who wrote about, amongst other things, literature, discourse and genre (Todorov 1990).

accordance with the rules that govern them. Todorov mentions that the discursive properties stem from the “semantic” elements (anything relating to the language or logic within a text), or the “syntactic” elements (how certain parts within a text bears relation to one another). It could also derive from the “verbal” elements (which Todorov states as “the material manifestation of the signs themselves”) found in a text. He mentions that the differences in genres or acts or any form of speech are marked by the above forms of discourse (discursive properties) (Todorov 1990:18).

Therefore, single bodies of texts need to adhere to the conventional codes as determined by the genre. Periodicals can be defined within a genre of their own as they have distinct qualities, although different periodicals deal with different subject matter. Prior to an extensive discussion of Acke’s contribution, it is crucial to state that the periodical she discusses was created for consumption by the people from its “parent continent”, much like the *Der Missions-Freund* publication, which was for the German audience where the BMS originated from. The *Thsupa*, on the other hand, is a publication which was addressed to the missionised societies, or the branch societies, in the interior of South Africa. In the case of the *Thsupa* it would be the Sepedi-speaking communities that shared relations with the BMS and that made use of it as reading material.

Missionary periodicals could serve multiple purposes; such as distributing religious publicity, carrying religious messages, and cultivating a homogeneous religious distinctiveness amongst those who consume these publications. Such periodicals also communicated a common missionary unity, asserting and sustaining a power over the world and power in the context of religion, educating Europeans about geographical, ethnographical and scientific knowledge gathered from ‘native countries’. It also served as a mouthpiece from the missionaries to those people that were not within the congregations (Jensz 2012:234).

Missionary periodicals first started appearing in the eighteenth century. The Anglican Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts produced printed documents in the eighteenth century portraying both ‘heathen’ and

'homeland' missions. In 1706, the Pietist Lutherans in Halle sent out missionaries to India and after four years the pietist leader, August Hermann Francke, created a periodical. The publication was called the *Hallesche Berichte* and was intended for the use of the missionaries and German-speakers. The genre of Protestant missionary periodicals was shaped more in the nineteenth century as it became widespread in Britain during that time (Jensz 2012:234&237).

Periodicals are easier to be reproduced, distributed and got to reach a wider population in comparison to books. Therefore, missionaries found periodicals to be a good medium for distributing information pertaining to the state of missionaries' endeavours. Periodicals were not only intended to reach the general public and congregants, but the hopes of the missionaries were that the periodicals would also reach those in positions of influence, such as the government or state leaders of the areas in which they were being distributed. Periodicals also served the purpose of celebrating the achievements made by the missionaries. The content of missionary periodicals was exclusive of the information from the secular world and generally[17] also non-inclusive of other missionary societies. This meant that the content in the periodicals was in essence self-centred and, accordingly, fed into a self-celebratory culture. The periodicals therefore tended to neglect the political, economic and social realities that affected their existence (Jensz 2012:239-241). In doing this, they projected focus and emphasis upon the things pertaining to the missionary endeavours and affecting the missionary congregation and leaders.

Jensz's claims regarding missionary periodicals are also applicable to the *Thsupa* as an almanac. This makes sense when following the argument that almanacs had as from the seventeenth century already started to pave the way towards the production of periodical literature, when intellectuals started to make changes to them as reference books. For more advanced readers, the almanacs were used to serve the purpose of a calendar. Almanacs were given characteristics that would

[17] *Der Missions-Freund* included news from other missionary societies on its back page.

render them engaging or interesting to a specific, anticipated, target audience. This means that different almanacs were made for different groups of people, for example farmers, travellers, women, missionaries, and in the case of the *Thsupa*, the missionised congregants of the Berlin Mission in South Africa (Nicolson 1939:2-4).

Periodicals were not necessarily based on historic accounts, but rather the current events that the missionaries where experiencing (Jensz 2012:242). Acke (2013:227) refers to the covering of current events and news as the 'currency' of periodicals, and states that this has relation to periodicity. Although currency was maintained by the missionaries, as they would write about events that were current to their experiences, the periodical would however only reach its readership at a later stage, which meant that the information was not necessarily current to its readers (Jensz 2012:242). Acke (2013:226) goes into the details of three properties when considering to define the genre of missionary periodicals. These properties include: formal, rhetorical, and thematic properties. John Frow[18] (cited by Acke) informs the discussion of the three properties of genre. All the above will be discussed in detail in the sections to follow where the *Thsupa* will be explored.

3.4 Thsupa Makaba a Kereke

3.4.1 The Structure of the *Thsupa* and its Relation to the Almanac

When paging through the *Thsupa* it is found that the following layout is common to all five publications:

- cover page,
- one or two letters,
- calendar (which also includes daily Bible verses to read),
- instructions (on how to post letters, parcels, and money),
- public holidays,
- the changing of the month in the specific years,
- moon and solar eclipse (of the specific year),
- news of the year,
- the rising and setting of the sun,
- famous or popular news in South Africa,

[18] In his book *Genre: The New Critical Idiom*.

- the residential addresses of the native commissioners (list),
- black chiefs (in the Transvaal & Orange Free State),
- a letter pertaining to the Berlin Mission,
- a letter pertaining to things that influence the Society or the readership in some way,
- addresses of the Berlin Mission Pastors (southern Transvaal),
- addresses of the Berlin Mission Pastors (northern Transvaal and Orange Free State)
- a list of authors (with the exception of the 1931 publication)

There are usually a couple of letters that follow after the calendar. The order of the headings may differ in terms of positioning, yet the headings and content stated above occur in all five publications. The *Thsupa* can be considered a hybrid; it exists both as a missionary periodical and an almanac, as is clear from its features identified above. In his study focusing on Europe in the eighteenth century, Joao Lisboa (1989:509) emphasises the widespread appeal of almanacs as reading material amongst people with little or no access to any other form of reading material, since they carried absolutely necessary information about different things. It makes sense that the *Thsupa* would have served a similar purpose to mostly first or second generation textually literate African communities.

Another common phenomenon to the *Thsupa* that Lisboa (1989:509) affirms from his study, is the occurrence of calendars in almanacs. The almanacs studied by Lisboa also included calendars with indications of holidays, days on which to fast, and other useful information related to public Christian worship. Lisboa states that the almanac was intended to be accessible to peasants as they had no means to purchase other books that would serve the purpose of guiding them through their daily needs. The same can be imagined of the *Thsupa* readers that did not have much exposure to other forms of documentation. An overview of the three properties of genre as stated by Acke is discussed below.

3.4.2 An Overview of the Three Properties of Genre

Acke (2013:227 & 230) mentions that in periodicals the formal organisation, which is the first property of genre, is informed by the general components. These components include the layout and font, the format and size, periodicity, typography and the length of the articles, the inclusion of pictures, the masthead and the manner in which it was printed. She also mentions that periodicity in publication is marked by its continuity in maintaining the same type of format and layout throughout its publication. Periodicity is the main component of the formal organisation that Acke discusses. Periodicity is informed by its sub-component, which is currency. This sub-component works together with a continuous generic display or layout to encourage a fascination with the publication amongst its potential readers. Readers are also persuaded to experience what Acke refers to as "feelings of reliability, stability and familiarity." These feelings are evoked by the maintenance of a commonality amongst all issues of the same publication.

The second property of genre for missionary periodicals, as Acke (2013:230) puts it, is the "rhetorical structure". The rhetorical structure involves the way in which the message is conveyed between the one who sends the message and its recipient. This entails whether the message conveys the following: necessities, possibilities, a level of formality, knowledge or belief, obligation, desire and permission – which all form part of the message that is communicated and received between the two parties. Authors who write in missionary periodicals, for instance, can communicate "immediacy" or "mediated relations".

This brings us to the third property, which is the "thematic content", according to Acke (2012:236). The thematic content is characterised by the existence of repetitive tropes within the content of the missionary periodicals. This repetition can include iconography, discussions, argumentation, characters and the manner in which they are portrayed within the periodicals. Acke (2013:236) mentions that there are multiple resounding themes or tropes within missionary periodicals. She lists these themes in the following order: the biblical call to make disciples of all nations; the transition from 'heathen' to convert; communication regarding the

condition of world spirituality; and the planting of missionary stations in different regions. All these themes can also be gathered from the *Thsupa*.

3.5 Unpacking the Genre of Missionary Periodicals in the *Thsupa*

3.5.1 Mastheads and Cover Pages: Layout of Text and Image

All the *Thsupa* publications have resounding similarities. For the *Thsupa* these similarities are presented in the details of the publication. To begin with, this can be seen in the cover pages of the *Thsupa* featured in Figures 6, 8, 9 and 11, which also show some differences and some similarities to the *Almanaka* (Figures 3, 4 and 5). Kriel (2018) discusses how the missionary society insisted on mapping out and dictating the scenes that should be featured on the covers of these publications. For the *Almanaka* of 1925 (Figure 3), Willi Leue, the missionary responsible for the northern Sotho book distributing depot in the Transvaal, requested a cover page adorned with a colourful illustration of a scene from the Bible. When considering the amount of money it would cost the mission to produce this, they offered him a different design instead: an often recycled “mission-scape, complete with cross, globe, snow-peaked mountain (Kilimanjaro?) and exoticized shore” (Kriel 2018).

Figure 3: Cover page for the 1925 Almanaka ea Mission ea Berlin, *in. Kriel (2018)*

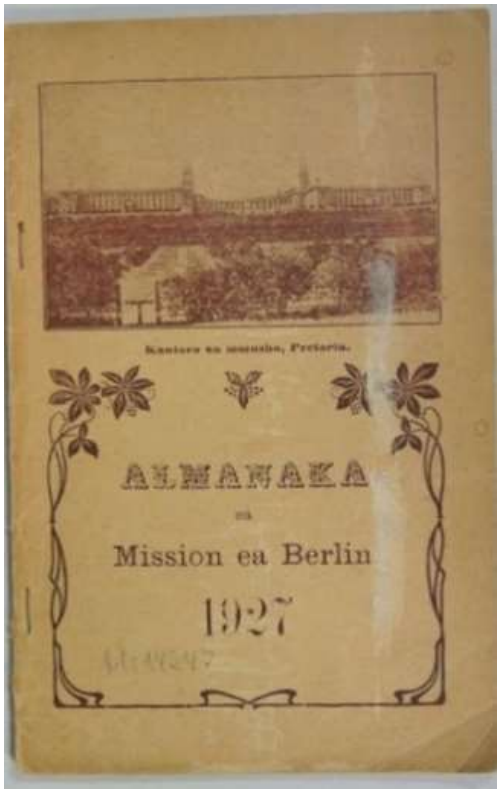


Figure 4: Image of the Union Building on the cover of the Almanaka ea Mission ea Berlin *1927*, *abebooks.com.*

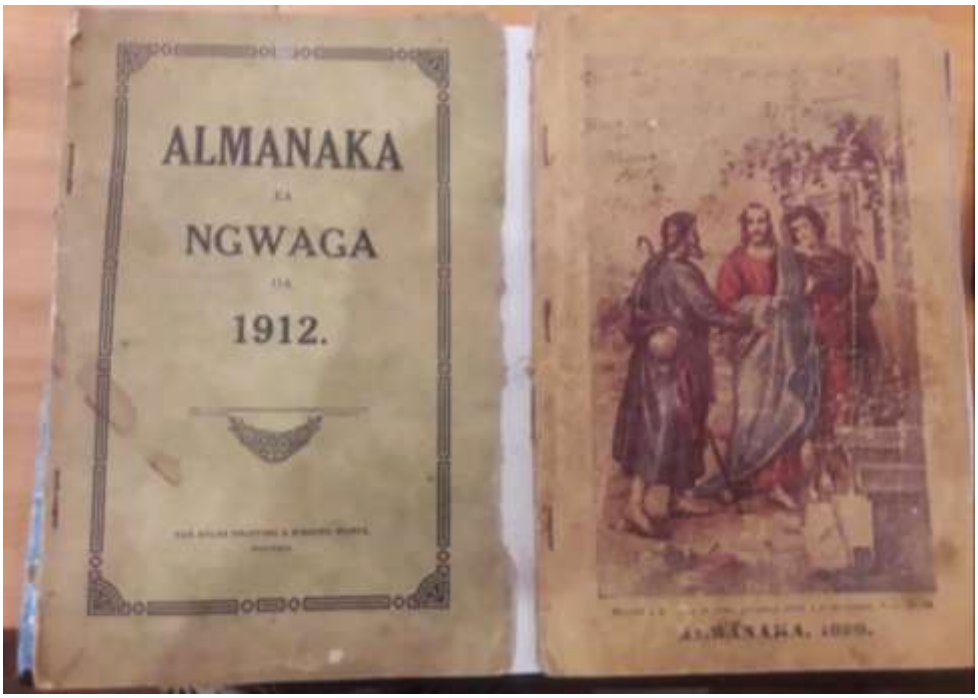


Figure 5: Photograph of the 1912 and 1929 coverpage of the Almanaka*.*

From this decision taken by the BMS authorities regarding the cover page, one can see that there were limitations owing to budget constraints and printing possibilities. And therefore, the consistency of representation in terms of typography, subject matter, and cover features was compromised. Figure 5 is a representation of the cover page of 1912, one of the older *Almanaka* that still exists. This particular *Almanaka* publication can be argued to show the limitations of printing in the earlier years. Its cover does not have any illustration or image on it. There are no articles written in it. Perhaps this was also because it was printed and published locally, by The Atlas Printing and Binding Works in Pretoria. Next to this publication, also in Figure 5, is the 1929 *Almanaka* (Figure 5), for which the prior request by Leue, to adorn the cover with a colour illustration of a biblical scene, had been realised. The rest of the publication was printed by O.H. Schultz from Middelburg in Transvaal. This shows how the *Thsupa* developed from an almanac to becoming a hybrid combining the features of an almanac and a periodical.

The *Thsupa* publications adopted the style of cover that Leue had earlier requested for the *Almanaka*, including biblical scenes on the cover page, as can be seen in Figures 6, 7 and 10. This shows a repetitive trope of biblical scenes being employed as the first thing that readers saw when they received the publication. For one thing, the cover pages of both publications (*Thsupa* and *Almanaka*) made use of illustrations (sketched or painted) to inform the large part of the cover page, and both publications also featured the date of the publication as well as its title in large type. This can be argued to also maintain the periodicity of the publication, as Acke (2013:227) refers to it, despite of the fact that the older publication was remodelled. The typeface differs in each publication and the themes of the illustrations seem to become more complex in the *Thsupa*. The *Almanaka* of 1925 (Figure 3) and that of 1927 (Figure 4) portray illustrations of places. Figure 4 portrays a monumental government building, the Union Buildings of Pretoria.

The *Thsupa* publication's cover pages differ from the *Almanaka* in that they all portray illustrations of people and not places. As mentioned above, some of the issues of the *Thsupa* under investigation, are characterised by illustrations of biblical stories. The 1933 (Figure 8) and 1934 (Figure 9) issues are constituted from images of the prominent leaders of the Berlin Missionary Society over the years. Figure 8 celebrates the Swedish king Gustav Adolf, a prominent figure in Lutheran Christianity. In the first letter in this edition of the *Thsupa*, it is explained how, on 2 of November 1632, he led the dispute against the Roman Catholic Church. This event is significant to the BMS, as the existence of the Mission relied on the occurrence of this event in history. Therefore, it can be argued that, in order to communicate this event and acknowledge the role of one of the leading men behind it, carried significance in terms of propaganda.[19] It portrayed the identity of the mission to the missionized society, which connected the new African church to a long history of European Protestantism.

Missionary periodicals are also known to be a source of propaganda about the missionary society that produced it. Looking into British and French missionaries, Nicholas Thomas (1992:378-379) stated that, in propaganda, the African is imagined through a British lens, which also borrows from the French manner of viewing Africans, where they are dispositioned as lacking in terms of enlightenment. Thomas mentions that Africans' positive attributes in terms of their personal achievements in their social development, are not emphasised or explored in the imagination of the missionisers. The above is also seen in the case of the Berlin missionaries' encounter with Africans. In relation to the *Thsupa* one would argue that the African imagination as being enlightened was not so much a point of emphasis, yet it did appear in some instances in the ways that Africans were spoken of and how they were represented in *Der Missions-Freund*. The propaganda that can be traced in the *Thsupa* is discussed further below.

[19] The term propaganda came into existence in 1622. This was the period in which the Roman Catholic Church, led by Pope Gregory XV, formed a committee of cardinals called *Congregatio de propaganda fide* (College for the Propagation of the Faith). The purpose of the committee was to participate in missionary activities against Protestants during the Counter Reformation. The word propaganda was associated with religion until the First World War. In 1914 "propaganda" began to be recognised as "sinister manipulation of public opinion by official elites" (Messinger 2017:146).

The headers, or what Acke refers to as the masthead/nameplate of a publication, also assist in maintaining the periodicity of a publication. The headers on the cover page of the 1931-1933 issues of the *Thsupa* are the same, with the only change being the inclusion of diacritical marks above the letters ‘e’ in the word *Kereke* in the 1932 and 1933 publication. The headers of 1934 and 1935 display a totally different use of typography.

Figure 6: Illustration of a biblical scene: cover page of the 1931 Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke.

The first cover page of the *Thsupa* (1931 publication) is constituted by an illustration portraying the scene in John 20:16 in the Bible, where Mary refers to Jesus as Master. This illustration is followed by the images of two prominent German leaders who had worked in South Africa, as well as the first letter, titled “*Ngoaga o mosfa*”, which means “new year”. The author of this letter is a man who was mentioned in the previous section of my study as one who held much respect amongst his contemporaries in the BMS, namely Gustav Eiselen. The information is presented in some sort of ordering of leadership in terms of it first placing focus on Jesus, who is the anchor for all the themes that are mentioned in the thematic content of the periodical. The existence of the Lord Jesus is usually listed as the main reason the other themes are spoken of so repetitively. Jesus is thus the first to adorn the first cover of the *Thsupa*.

The first image to be portrayed includes the image of the Mission Director, Dr. Siegfried Knak. The image that follows this one includes in it a representation of the Mission Inspector Mr. Schoene, then trailed by the letter of Gustav Eiselen. All the above-mentioned leaders are of European descent. One can argue that the second order is that of Europeans leaders followed. The representation of Africans as individuals devoid of European presence in this particular publication only figure later, where chief Piet Mohlamme Mathebe is represented on page 27. This ordering of information can be argued to communicate a certain hierarchy of power to the readers, as certain people occasionally are meant to appear first, before others. The same phenomenon is gathered from the *Almanaka.*

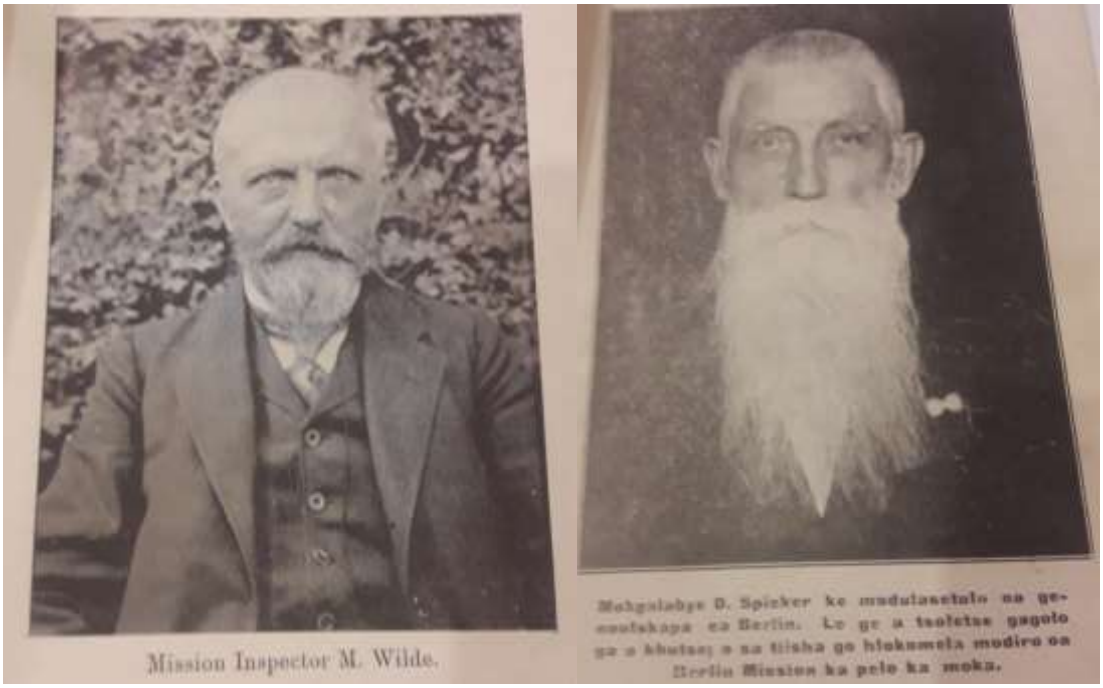


Figure 7: Images of two European men from two different almanacs. Almanaka ea Mission ea Berlin *1912 and 1929.*

In Figure 7, we see two different representations of men of European descent. Both these images are the first to appear in their respective publications. The portrait image of the European leader appears as a resounding trope in the *Thsupa* and its placement within the publication speaks to the ordering of information. This speaks to the long heritage of racial ordering and celebration of patriarchy within the publications of the BMS. The covers of the *Thsupa*, as previously stated, are dictated and agreed upon by the parent society in Germany. In the illustration of

the second issue of the *Thsupa*, it portrays the biblical scene of John 9:5 (Figure 8). There is an inconsistency in the manner in which the book of John is spelt as compared to the previous publication yet the commonality lies in the focus again being on Jesus and his importance to the world (in this case his importance to the BM followers).

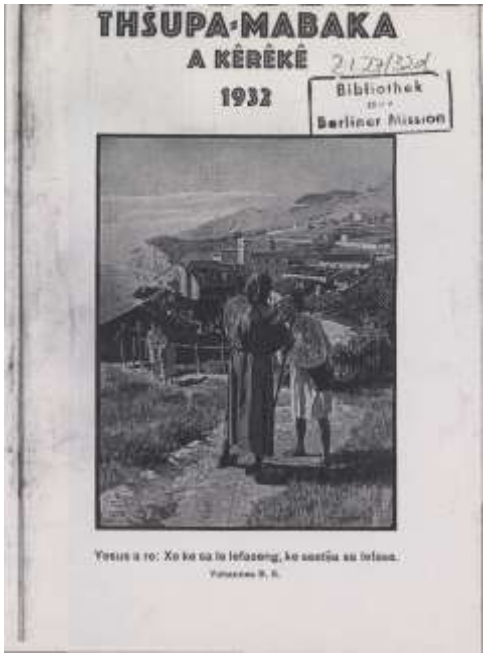


Figure 8: Illustration of a biblical scene: cover page of the 1932 Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke

The verse in John 9:5 reads as follows in English: “But while I am here in the world I am the light of the world”. The story portrayed in Figure 8 is the one of Jesus healing a blind man. This could be seen as an illustration that affirms to the African congregants of the BMS that they are a part of the world, and so the light of Jesus is also shining upon them. This is to make them feel included in the narrative, and also in the affairs of the BMS which claim to have Jesus at their centre.

The illustration is followed by what appears to be a list of Reverends (Ministers) in the Transvaal and Orange Free State area. Then there is an illustration of a lot of men who are said to be from Venda and amongst them is Mission Inspector Schoene. This is followed by his letter, which is titled “Lerato la Kristus le re xapeletša” (The love of Christ compels us). Then follows an illustration of a church in “Duits” (Germany) and more information pertaining to Germany. Trailing this is

also an illustration of the missionaries as they were leaving Germany on their way to South Africa. The publication also places significance on the leadership of the church by featuring them as the initial information that one is confronted with when one starts to read the calendar. Here we also see the theme of the biblical call to make disciples of all nations; which is communicated in the illustration of the German missionaries leaving their country of birth in pursuit of reaching those far away with the knowledge they have learnt about God.

Figure 9 (left): Illustration of Gustav Adolf: cover page of the 1933 Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke.
Figure 10 (right): …and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chest and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. (Matthew 2, 11). 1933. Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke

Featured on the cover of the 1933 *Thsupa* is King Gustav Adolf. This is followed by a letter titled “Morêna Gustav Adolf: moxale o moxolo wa Kêrêkê ya Luther” (Mr/ Lord Gustav Adolf: the great hero of the Lutheran church). This letter is followed by another which is written by the President of the BMS, K.O. von Kameke, which is titled “Tumediso xo badiri ka rena le xo diphuthexo tsa Berlin Mission ya xeso ya Luther kua Transvaal” (Greetings to the labourers/ workers from us and also to the Lutheran congregations of the Berlin Mission in Transvaal). This letter is

followed by an image of the President. Thereafter comes an illustration which is reminiscent of rock painting, which illustrates the biblical scene of the birth of Jesus (Figure 10). Unlike in the previous publications, the illustration of this biblical scene comes only right before the calendar. Yet the focus on the leadership of the church is still maintained.

Figure 11: Illustration of prominent Berlin Mission leaders: cover page of the 1934 Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke.

The prominent leaders of the BMS featured on the cover of the 1934 issue (Figure 11) only makes sense once the first letter, which is a contribution by Mission Inspector Schoene, is read. Schoene mentions that the 1934 issue serves the purpose of celebrating “lekxolo la mengwaxa” (one hundred years) of Berlin Mission work in the country of South Africa. Therefore, all prominent leaders that contributed to the establishment of the Berlin Mission are featured on the cover of this publication. This letter is preceded by an illustration of African men sitting around a fire, in their midst are the German missionaries Wedepohl and Trott. The letter is exceeded by a letter from the President of the BMS, reflecting on the past of the *Thsupa.* While it was still the *Almanaka*, the cover page would also consist of its prominent leaders and depictions of the church in Berlin. This speaks of the

consistency in communicating familiarity and recognisability to the reader which speaks to the formal organisation of the periodical as stated by Acke.

Figure 12: Illustration of a biblical scene: cover page of the 1935 Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke.

The 1935 issue of the *Thsupa* includes an illustration of a biblical scene (Figure 12) on its cover page. The biblical scene is from the book of Matthew 15:21-28. This portrays the story of a gentile women who persists until Jesus has mercy on her and heals her demon possessed daughter. Maybe the intention when deciding upon this cover was to communicate that Jesus has mercy on everyone, both Jew and Gentile and that therefore, he is merciful towards the Africans as well. This illustration is followed by a list of the members of the Literature Commission of the Berlin Missionaries in Transvaal. This is followed by a letter titled “Ba xešo baratexi!” (Our beloved!) written by Mission Inspector Schoene. There is an image below which shows him standing with other Ministers, holding what appears to be a cross. An image which illustrates the event of the selection/ordaining of Ministers by Mission Director Dr. Knak follows, and then an illustration of the house owned by the “grandfathers” of the Berlin Mission in Berlin, trails. A letter about the Berlin Mission written by Johannes Baumbach follows and included in it is an image of Minister R. Jensen. The letter mentions how he had passed away and how peace is wished upon his family.

Mirzoeff (2011:1) states that the right to look is the condition or right in which the self can subscribe to self-governance. In this state the self participates in the act of seeing the other and both invent each other. He argues that it is a space in which the self seeks knowledge of the other in order to allege ownership over it or determine what is correct. For the purpose relating this theory to the content of the publication, the self will be said to represent the Western world (in this case the German leaders of the BMS, and the German authorities dictating the content of the publications), whereas the other will then be the African people represented in the publication. The Europeans come into the space of the Africans and learn their ways while teaching them their own ways. The ordering of information within the *Thsupa* reflects the view of the authority figure, determining what is most essential for the missionised to be confronted with when they first open the publication (West 2016:75).

When analysing the images and information that is written in the first few pages of the publications as described in the paragraphs above, one can see the focus of these pages is on the Europeans and what they choose to communicate to the Africans. The Comaroffs (2008:63) mention that the missionaries had two quests in the mission field: the first quest was to spread what they considered as the 'good news', also known as the gospel, about Jesus Christ; and second was their quest to civilise the missionised. The first quest is fulfilled in the *Thsupa* through the biblical iconography portrayed in some of its cover pages and the emphasis on and incorporation of Bible verses in the letters written by the authors. The *Thsupa*'s adoption of the second quest, one can argue, is embedded in the communication of daily life and conduct within the church and the images that have been chosen, and what is portrayed in them.

The Comaroffs (2008:63) also elaborate on what they call the evangelical rhetoric. In this context the missionaries participate in the act of persuading the missionised about truth found in the Bible. What the Comaroffs observe, is how the Europeans, notwithstanding their capitalist and imperialist aspirations, also disrupted the

spiritual patterns of some of the Africans (which can be argued, affected all Africans) by proposing a different Deity. And so, adorning the pages of the *Thsupa* with the message about Jesus and celebrating the leaders that made it possible for this message to reach the Africans, reinforce their regard for what is most important and what they want the African to see (first).

3.5.2 The Typography and Written Content in the *Thsupa*

This section points out the content that is written in the *Thsupa* and briefly also refers to its German equivalent the *Der Missions-Freund* which was referred to earlier in the Chapter. Part of its formal organisation is for the periodical to maintain a sense of familiarity or recognisability. The features that are portrayed in the format of every page must be familiar to its usual readers. Acke mentions that changes in the layout of a periodical can be viewed as an attempt to portray the publication in a modernised manner to remain relevant to the readers. These components also go hand in hand with the component of stability, which is to maintain a standard identity that readers will at first glance be familiar with. The typography used inside the *Thsupa* publication is the same in all five publications. The letters in the *Thsupa* seems to be printed using the same type in all 5 publications and the font size also seems to remain the same. The serif type is quite related to Times New Roman. This communicates two of the sub-components of the periodical, which are stability and familiarity, as can also be seen in the calendar within the *Thsupa*.

In all the issues under investigation, the calendar section of the publication is preceded and exceeded by a number of letters and images. The calendars also appear in the same format and layout in every issue. The calendar is designed in such a manner as to engage its reader on a daily basis. Each calendar includes a planned-out Bible study programme. This can be seen in the verses that accompany each day of the calendar. It indicates which verses should be read in the morning and which should be read in the evening of that particular day. This is a consistent occurrence within all the issues of the *Thsupa*. The verses allocated for a certain date in the year remain the same throughout all five issues. This

carries the quality of familiarity so characteristic of the formal organisation of a periodical.

It is announced in the first letter of the 1931 *Thsupa* that the publication had taken on a new identity. As this section focuses less on the photographs and more on the text, it is a point to note that the *Der Missions-Freund* publications have more elaborate textual content than the *Thsupa*. And besides having more textual content *Der Missions-Freund* also abides to the requirements of what Acke (2013:227) refers to as the currency in periodicity. The currency of this publication can be seen in the portrayal of the front covers as depicted in Figure 12. The cover pages of the publication maintain the same design throughout the years that are depicted. Since *Der Missions-Freund* appeared monthly, it was possible for it to carry the most recent information of the different countries in which the BMS was based. As an annual calendar the *Thsupa* was more restricted in this respect. Below I elaborate on how the difference in the frequency of appearance can also suggest differences regarding the audiences of the respective publications.

The monthly German audiences were afforded the role of being overseers of global affairs. This affirms their position of authority or superiority over those they had influence over. *Der Missions-Freund* also gave German readers a glimpse into the work of other missionary societies, which broadened their scope of reference. The German readers were privileged in as far as the scope and the variety of information they were exposed to, were concerned. Although the *Thsupa* also broadened the vision of the African readers, it was more elaborately channelled towards Germany as the centre and the source of knowledge and authority. The *Thsupa* was also focused on grooming the African congregants into a BMS restricted manner of life, were their conduct was determined for them and was also regarded as the qualifying factor for their Christianity.

Figure 13: Cover pages of the Der Missions-Freund *of 1910, 1925, 1931, 1932,1933, and 1934.*

The readers of *Der Missions-Freund* were exposed to more frequent information regarding different missionised destinations whereas the audience in South Africa received information from their German headquarters only once a year in the form of a calendar. As already mentioned, the Sepedi-language newspaper, the *Mogwero*, which did offer monthly news, was not an illustrated periodical. In this sense the Berlin authorities had far more control over the textual and visual content their Sepedi-speaking congregations had access to, compared to the readers of *Der Missions-Freund*, who not only received more frequent, illustrated reportage from the Berlin Mission, but was also situated in a society with a text-and-image rich print culture (of secular as well as religious leanings) in the German capital.

Said (1979:24-32) states under his study of German Orientalism that it had a sense of “intellectual authority”. He mentions two dominant themes, which are knowledge and power. The supremacy of the Occident (West) rests in their knowledge of the Orient (non-west). Knowledge in this instance is abandoning one’s familiarity and comfort to pursue a nation beyond one’s horizon of influence and acquaintance. It is to familiarise oneself with the foreign (indigenous, exotic, alien). The power then rests in knowing ‘them’ (the Orient), as the process renders ‘them’ as the familiar. The South African *Thsupa* readers in this sense occupied a subordinated space. They did not get to know much about the German societies besides the support that they contributed to make their nation a better place through their disposition to carry the message of truth. Their German counterparts who consumed *Der Missions-Freund* on a more frequent basis were exposed to South African indigenous cultures and ways of life (although not always portrayed in the contexts Africans would have preferred to present it themselves). And with this knowledge, power was afforded the Germans in that they culturally possessed more.

Within the two publications, the *Thsupa* and *Der Missions-Freud*, there was a clear target audience that was being anticipated and the images that were included in each publication were there to serve a given agenda. In *Der Missions-Freund* the anticipated audience was the German congregants and supporters of the Berlin Mission Society, and therefore the resounding themes were around showing them

the state of the missionised – both in Africa and in Asia – and why it was essential to contribute towards a change in their state of being. This is emphasised in the presentation of the Africans in their 'primitive' state and labelling them accordingly as the 'heathens'. *Der Missions-Freund* also depicted a clear binary between the 'Christian' and the 'heathen'. The *Thsupa,* which anticipated a Sotho-speaking audience interested in the affairs of the BMS, therefore communicated to this audience with the intent to win them over into their congregation and their culture. For them to be won over, there was an emphasis on portraying the culture, heritage and history of the BMS and its prominent leaders. There was also an emphasis on communicating the hierarchical order through which everyone operated, and the different positions in the congregations and how they could be beneficial to the transformation of African culture for 'their own good'. This can also be picked up in the ordering of information within the publications.

3.5.3 Authors of Letters in the *Thsupa*: Immediacy and Mediated Relations

The second component of genre in missionary periodicals was said to be the rhetorical structure and under this the notions of immediacy and mediated relations fall. According to Acke (2013:231) these are related to the manner in which the author relates to the readers, or audience. Immediate relations are those that suggest a close relationship between the author and the reader. Immediacy is communicated when the reader is referred to as a "companion of the mission", or when the missionaries request the readers' support in prayer or through donations. As a "companion of the mission" the author would find it easy to request their assistance in contributing toward the mission or praying for the missionaries; therefore, suggesting that the type of relationship that the missionaries shared with the readers was an immediate type of relationship. In the *Thsupa* publication the readers were to some extent placed at a distance; they were often referred to as *badiri* which is "workmate" or, in this case, fellow- or co-labourers in the context of church affairs. It can be argued that a "workmate" does occupy a level of companionship. Yet, when compared to the "Duits" women that are mentioned in the same issue, one can believe something different about the level of companionship shared between the authors and the "Duits" readers.

I am referring to the caption “Basadi ba bagoera ba Missione ba ma-Duits kua Berlin” which accompanies a picture in the *Thsupa* (1931:8). This means “the female friends of the mission from Duits, in Berlin”. In the letter that proceeds this caption, these women are said to gather together to sew different types of clothes at Mr. Grute’s house. In the process of sewing these, Mr. Grute tells them stories of the current situation in the mission field. They then engage in prayer for the mission and in singing songs of worship to the Lord. The clothes that they make, are sent to the mission house where they get sold for the mission’s cause. These “Duits” women are referred to several times in the different publications as friends of the mission. Although they may not be the readership that the *Thsupa* publication are aimed at, they are referred to with immediacy. This can bring about the question of whether or not they were referred to as occupying a higher status in comparison to the African readership who are referred to as fellow /co-labourers.

The notion of the social self can assist in shedding more light on the above-mentioned concern. According to Brewer and Gardner (1996:83) there has over the years developed a cross-cultural perspective. This cross-cultural perspective maintains that connectedness and belonging are not necessarily associates or should not be considered to occupy mutual space in the notion of self and other. Its differences rely on how the self is understood/ interpreted. The social self can be understood as either individuated or interpersonal. The self, however, can simultaneously possess both attributes, and depending on the context they find themselves in, they will subscribe to that which is most fitting. The self seeks to define itself in the process of engaging in relationships with others. Their self-evaluation is accumulated from the identities they are confronted with in the social groups they participate in. The next level is to investigate the existence of the self within interpersonal relationships and interdependence to others.

It is argued that interpersonal and collective identities exist as extensions of the self. The difference is in whether they exist as ‘personalized bonds of attachment’ or ‘impersonal bonds’, which are considered to stem from common identification

with some symbolic group or social category, within social associations. Collective social identities do not exist as a result of personal relationships amongst group members. Social identity is then the notion of self which is depersonalized. The manner in which the authors in the *Thsupa* address or write about both the South African and German societies and congregants of the BMS speaks to the type of identity and relationship that they held with each society respectively.

Mediated relations refer to material which is included in the publication which is not addressed to the companions of the mission directly. This could be letters that are received from a different mission or that pertain to a different mission. Mediated relations can also be letters that are addressed to the secretary of the mission or family members. The communication that the *Thsupa* publication shared about the "Duits" women as mentioned above, can be regarded to have been a combination of mediated relations and immediacy. It can be read as immediacy because, although the letter may not have been directly pertinent to the Sepedi-speaking readers, it was still addressed directly to them. It becomes mediated as it was a relationship that the missionaries had with the "Duits" which were from the parent society. The letter can also be seen as the quintessential missionising medium. One can reflect this back to the biblical letters in the New Testament, like the ones by Paul to the different congregations. This speaks to a larger body of missionary visuality.

Acke (2013:231) mentions that most missionary periodicals are constituted by multiple letters by different missionaries from different areas. She argues that letters are the main form for communicating their experiences and endeavours to the parent country where they had limited, or seized to have had any, direct contact with their parent society. Letters are also significant in periodicals for their habit of carrying immediacy. The *Thsupa* contains a host of letter from different writers with different subject matter pertaining to the missionaries of the BMS and the work they do.

Letters were to serve two purposes in the context of missionary periodicals. The first purpose was that readers perceived these publications as genuine and trustworthy sources and therefore they held a level of authoritative value to their consumers. The second purpose they served was to stir emotional connectivity between the readers and the authors (especially those who wrote most frequently). Acke (2013:232) argues that the two above-mentioned purposes did not just serve as impact on the readers but it also created in the author a feeling of being one with the readers.

3.5.4 Key Authors of the *Thsupa* and their Influences

Carl Hoffmann is recognised as the editor of the *Thsupa* publication in the list of authors at the end of the 1933, 1934 and 1935 issues each. The first two issues did not provide a list of authors. Yet, Carl Hoffmann's initials and surname appears after certain letters in those issues as well. On page 29 of the first issue, J. Baumbach also addresses him as the editor of the *Thsupa*, confirming that he must have been the editor from the beginning.

As one can see from the tables below, Hoffmann was not a lone man in the production of the *Thsupa*, but he joined forces with other missionaries as well as native African writers in producing the calendar. In the first five years, all the authors that were involved in the production of the *Thsupa* were male. Looking at the tables above, one can see that there were more authors of European descent than there were Africans. Some of the authors appear in all five issues while other only appear once or twice. The different authors served different roles within the publication. There were authors that were assigned specific tasks, for example: in every issue J. Truempelmann would be writing the section on the popular news events in South Africa at the time of publication. Each year from 1931 to 1935 there was a letter titled "Missione ya Berlin" (The Berlin Mission) which was always written by J. Baumbach.

Table 1: List of contributors in the five Thsupa *publications as they appear in the successive issues.*

1931	1932	1933	1934	1935
(no list in the issue) G. Eiselen S. Schoene (Missioninspector based in Berlin) After calendar: J. Trümpelmann J. Baumbach C. Hoffmann Dr. Werner Eiselen (with description) Jesaia W.B Letsoalo (Kratzenstein) Pastor Abraham Serote (Bothšabelo) Pastor G. Kuhn (Kimberley) P.E. Schwellnus	(no list in the issue) S. Schoene (Missioninspector based in Berlin) After calendar: J. Trümpelmann J. Baumbach G.H Franz (with description) P.E. Schwellnus C. Hoffmann Jesaia W. B Letsoalo (Kratzenstein)	C. Hoffmann K.O. von Kameke, President of the Berlin Mission Missions-Inspector Schoene Dr. v. Warmelo, Government Ethnologist. Dr. W. Eiselen H. Liebenberg (Government school inspector) J. Baumbach J. Truempelmann, E. Mamabolo J. Makuse Morutisi J.W.B. Letswalo,	Praesident K.O. von Kameke wa kua Berlin. Missions-Inspector Schoene Inspector G.H. Franz P.E. Schwellnus G. Kuhn H. Muller, J. Baumbach J. Truempelmann W. Trott Mr. P. Matsika	Missions-Inspector Moréna Schoene J. Baumbach J. Truempelmann, Charles Machaba Senior Pastor P.E. Schwellnus Teacher H.M.J. Hoffmann Teacher Jesaia Letswalo W. Trott Franz Motau

Table 2: Table presenting content of the number of African and European authors that participated in the making of the Thsupa *as well as the number of letters that appeared in each issue of the* Thsupa *from 1931-1935.*

Publication years	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935
Number of African contributors	2	1	3	1	3
Number of European contributors	8	6	8	8	6
Number of letters by African authors	3	1	3	1	3
Number of letters by European authors	14 (5 by Hoffmann and 3 by Schoene)	8 (3 by Hoffmann and 2 by Schoene)	9 (4 by Hoffmann and 1 by Schoene)	10 (1 by Hoffmann and 2 by Schoene)	10 (2 by Hoffmann and 1 by Schoene)

The European author who features the most in the publications besides the editor, is Mission Inspector Schoene. One would argue that his role as inspector in the mission qualified him as a dominant figure and therefore his involvement in the communication network amongst the Sepedi-speaking supporters was necessary. Schoene participated as an author in all five the issues that are focused on in this study. The letters he wrote usually appeared in the first few pages before the calendar. In the 1935 issue his letter was the first one. It is titled “Ba xešo baratexi” (Our beloved). In three of the five issues, his letter was the first to appear. This positioned him as the first voice ‘of reason’ and also communicated his position in the social hierarchy of the South African BMS.

Direlang Morena ka thabo!

[Missionsinspektor Schoene-Berlin.

Direktor D. Knak le nna ka kgaogelo ea Modimo re fihlile ga botse mono gagesho leetong la rena la go tsoa Africa. Re ka se ke ra lebala badiri le diputhego tsa kua moshola oa leoatle nageng ea South Africa. Ka mehla eohle re tlo tumisha Morena Modimo ka baka la modiro oa Gagoe o mokgethoa dipelong tsa banababo rena ba tumelo. Re rapelela le ba ba fukolago mo diputhegong le ba ba se shogo ba dumela. Modimo a ke a le shegofatshe lena ba le balago mafoko a, gore a le fe matla le tla le tie mothong oa ka gare ka moea oa Gagoe, gore Kristus a dule dipelong tsa lena ka tumelo. Ephes. 3, 16—17. Gape le tle le direle Morena ka thabo! Psalm 100, 2.

Botata ba Missione ea gesho mono Berlin le bagoera ba modiro oa rena mono Duitsland le bana mono diputhegong tsa gona ga ba lape go re botshisha ka mo le phelago ka gona mmeleng le moeeng. Director Knak le nna re a sepela byalo beke e ngoe le e ngoe le diputhego le bagoera ba rena mono Duitsland 'me re ba botsha tsa kgaogelo ea Modimo e re e bonego mo go lena. Re gopola baruti bagesho ba ba rategago le baruti bahase le bomeester le bateacher le bagolo le badumedi bohle ba diputhego le basadi ba bona ka moka le bana ba bona ba ba rategago, 'me re eletsha bagoera mono Duitsland ka leruto la moea, gore ba le thushe ka go le rapelela go Modimo, Baroma 15, 30, gape gore ba direle Modimo ka thabo ka go nchetsha Missione dineo tsha bona.

Mo pukuaneng ē le bona discantsho tshe dingoe tsha Duitsland. Discantsho tshē di rata go le bontsha modiro oa bagoera ba rena oa go direla Missione. Lerato la Kristus le ba gapeletsha. 2. Kor. 5, 14. Lerato la mopholoshi oa rena eo fkhuetshego rena le lefase lohle phateng ea sefapano le letago la Modimo oa rena eo a tsohitshego Morwa oa Gagoe lebitleng bagoera ba Missione ba Duitsland ba rata go thusha gore di boleloe mo gare ga lena. Gommo fao le gona ga ba lape le go ditlaishego di le gona. Ba direle Morena ka thabo.

Mohlang ki bootshego mono Duits ka ea le kerekeng ea bana bao ki bego ki lekile go isha dipelo tsha bona go mopholoshi ka mengwaga e mentshi. Ke mo ba banyenyane mo gare ga bona ba bego ba tshoelela ba ntumedishetsha ka mantshu a rategago 'me ba nneela pondo ba re: „ke se re se neelago bana ba baheden kua Twetla". Bana bao ba ma — Duits ba phela le batsoadi ba bona bodilding le bohlaking byabogolo, fela mahlo a bona a be a phadima go ba mpha neo ē. Ka mengwaga e mebedi ba be ba kgopetsha dipenni go batsoadi ba bona, gore ba kgone go kolekela neo ē le go nneela eona. Ba be ba direla Morena ka thabo.

Lebakeng la monyanya 'oa Pentekoste ka etela bagoera ba Missione ka thuko ea botlhabatshatshi. Ba be ba shetshe ba kolle gore ki tlo ba anegela 'isha modiro oa Modimo kua Suidafrika 'me

4

Serve (Work for) the Lord with joy!

(Mission inspector Schoene- Berlin)

Director D. Knak and myself by the grace of the Lord we arrived well here at home on our journey from Africa. We will not forget the workers and the congregations overseas in South Africa. Every day we will praise the Lord God because of his remarkable work in the hearts of our siblings in faith. We also pray for those that are sick in the congregations and those that have not yet believed. May the Lord bless those that read these words/letters, so that He may give you power to be strengthened in your spiritual person, so that Christ may remain in your hearts in Faith. Ephes. 3, 16-17. And that you also serve the Lord with joy! Psalm 100, 2.

The matter with our Mission here in Berlin and the friends of our work here in Duitsland and those in the congregations do get tired of asking regarding your physical and spiritual health. Director Knak and I go week after week to congregations and friends ‘therefore we tell them about we tell them about the grace of God that we see in you. We miss our beloved resident Ministers and the black ministers and the men and teachers and the elders and all the believers of the congregations and all their wifes and their beloved children, ‘Therefore we advise friends here is Duitsland with love and spirit, that they help you by praying to God for you, Romans 15,30, also it says serve the Lord with joy through giving gifts to their Missions.

In this book you see other photographs of Duitsland. These photographs love to show you the work of our friends for the service of the Mission. The love of Christ compels them. 2 Cor. 5,14. The love of our saviour which covered us and the whole world on the cross and the brightness of our God who gave up His Son in the grave friends of the Mission of Duitsland love to help so that the it is spoken amongst you. Therefore, in that they do not get tired even when there is suffering, Do for them Lord with Joy.

The times I returned to Duits and went to their church I had tried to commit their hearts to the saviour over many years.

Figure 14: A letter from the Thsupa *of 1931 and its translation*

Given what has already been discussed about the friends of the mission in “Duits” in the *Thsupa* (1934:15), and also looking at the translated letter of the *Thsupa* (1931:8) as depicted in Figure 14 above, one can argue that the relationship that German author Schoene had with the “Duits” seems to be characterised by a more personalized bond of attachment. This bond of attachment can be argued to have been stronger than the bond which he shared with the South African congregants and society (Brewer and Gardner 1996:87).

Jesaias Letswalo was the African author who had written the most frequently of all the African authors in the *Thsupa;* in the 1931, 1932, 1933, and 1935 issues. His writing style was different in that it did not clearly encompass a mediated or immediate mode of communicating. His style in the 1932, 1933, and 1935 publication can be said to be reminiscent of African storytelling, or the parables in the Bible. He mapped out three different scenarios in the three respective publications and preceding the scenarios he gave a lesson which could be learnt from each. The part where the lesson was told can be argued to communicate immediacy as the author communicated oneness with the readers by his use of language. He used words like *rena* and *re,* which refers to ‘us’ and ‘we’.

In the 1935 publication Letswalo titled his letter as “Ó bolailwe ke mmaxwe” which means “he/she was killed by their mother”. In this publication he gave a story of a female drunkard who had a son, and she looked to her son for provision as his father had passed away. The son sought work in the city (according to the orthography it can be assumed that his master was of European descent). The son was away for a long time, to the point that the community started to think that he had passed away. However, he was saving money little by little and when he saw it to be enough, he went back to his community. Upon arrival he was met by his sister and he left his luggage with her, only carrying with him a gift. When he arrived as his mother’s house, she was drunk and therefore did not recognise him. He asked for a place to sleep and she offered up some space. He then told her that he had something to give her, which was covered, but he said he would do so the next day, and yet he handed it to her. He went to sleep, and she became curious

of the content and eventually opened it and found bronze coins. This discovery made her anxious and she started to pace up and down. She then started to prepare for bed but while she was sleeping, she experienced heaviness and she was tossing and turning. She then went outside and there she found a machete and she used it to kill her son. A few moments after, her daughter arrived in excitement, telling her that her son was back. And they both burst in tears at the realisation that she had killed him. Letswalo gave an elaborate lesson in which he also included Eli from the Bible as a point of reference.

The letters that Acke studied abided to a certain structure. The structure of the letter would begin by stating the location and date and the particular time they were produced. They would then include a greeting of some sort. The ending of the letter would be accompanied by final salutations and wishes. Below the letter would be the name of the author. A not so frequent addition to the letters was the inclusion of a Bible scripture which was placed below the location and date (Acke 2013:232). The *Thsupa* took on a similar form in some of the letters that were written, especially at the beginning. The letters in the *Thsupa* as opposed to the ones that Acke mentions, were not identified as letters in their titles, yet one can tell from reading them and looking at their structure that they are letters. And by their structure it can be argued that they are reminiscent of the letters that appear in the Bible.

In the first letter of the *Thsupa* issues the first paragraph usually served as an introduction to what would be elaborated upon in the rest of the letter. As stated earlier in the study, the letters were addressed to the fellow/co-labourers (the BMS's African followers in the Transvaal). The introductory paragraph was followed by a Bible quote or a verse which was stated but not always necessarily quoted. For instance, in the 1931 issue the second letter was written by missionary Schoene; he initially spoke about his and Dr. Knak's safe trip back to Berlin and then he reassured the congregants, referring to them as workers, that he had not forgotten about them. Then he mentioned how he was encouraged by the work that they had accomplished in South Africa and that they were continuing to pray

for those that were ill, and also for the 'heathens.' He then said that he hoped that the Lord may bless them and those that read these letters/ words (*mafoko*) so that their inner souls might be strengthened, so that Christ could reside in their hearts in faith. This introduction was followed by two biblical quotes from Ephesians 3:16-17 and Psalm 100:2, which were incorporated into the introduction.

The first letter in the 1935 issue also had a biblical quote from Isaiah 24:16. The first letter in the 1934 issue did not quote the biblical scriptures but rather referred to them. What is fascinating about this introduction is the positioning of the author. For instance, the 1934 letter by the first author, Schoene, started off by stating his endeavours around different areas in the Transvaal and how he met with Head Pastor Mr. Wedepohl and Pastor Trott to discuss how to make sharing the Gospel more effective. He then proceeded to thank the Lord for his blessings upon the mission, the schools and upon the 'heathens'. He then mentioned that he humbled himself before the Lord as he acknowledged that they also had their faults and inabilities. This path is similar to the manner in which Paul the apostle in the Bible would address the church.

In the first chapter of Romans, Paul began by stating his position or rather his call to apostleship. This call served for him to share the Gospel. He then stated the role of God and Jesus and what They had done and continued to do in the lives of the people he was addressing. He also stated the response that the people should have pertaining to what God and Jesus had done for them. In the book of 2 Corinthians, he humbly reassured those that he was referring to that he did not speak to them because he had dominion over their faith, but rather that he was there to assist them. The connection that the letters in the *Thsupa* had to the letters in the Bible, which in themselves already possessed an authoritative space, would have made the letters seem familiar to the readers that had biblical knowledge. The letter can also be argued to be positioned as reliable text owing to its authoritative connection (Acke 2013:234). I would suggest that the authors of the *Thsupa* can therefore be said to have spoken from a place of humility but with a

sense of authority. The aspect of reliability and familiarity to support an emotional response from the readers, was mentioned in the previous section.

It is also essential to note that all the authors of the publication were men. This speaks to the patriarchal system which was conflated with the colonialism of the time,[20] where men constructed ideas about society for society. Oyewumi (2004:1) mentions that Europeans have positioned themselves as 'the source of knowledge' and as 'knowers'. The first author to write in the first issue of the *Thsupa* of 1931, was Gustav Eiselen, who was the father of Werner Eiselen as mentioned in the previous chapter. The first letter, titled "Ngoaga o Mofsa": is preceded by three images (an illustration and two photographs). In the opening paragraph Eiselen personified the publication referring to it as a man and a young, strong boy. He mentioned that the periodical had existed for over 20 years and it was recognised under a different name. It was previously called "*Alemanaka"*. Now the periodical would no longer be called by its old name, but it took up the name of "*Thsupa-mabaka-a-kereke"* (Eiselen 1931:2).

What is interesting is how Eiselen referred to the *Thsupa* as a male figure instead of a female, or even just was what it is, an object/ an almanac; could this perhaps speak to his worldview, of man dominating conversation and communication? In the nineteenth century, however, the idea was moving away from the individual toward the nurturing of the community, an idea of the growth and glory of a national church (German national church). Gustav Eiselen (Werner Eiselen's father) was amongst those in the Berlin Missionary Society persuaded toward transforming clans instead of individuals. In the letters that Gustav wrote for *Der Deutsch Afrikaner* (A German language magazine produced for German South Africans) during the early 1920s, he emphasised the inferiority of African people to Europeans not only in their colour, looks and smell, but also in their character and inner self (Bank 2015:171-173).

[20] The above can be seen in the light of colonial authority and colonialism which coincides with patriarchy. The Lutheran church structure, amongst other similar churches, is marked by the celebration and support of patriarchy.

Eiselen further mentioned, in the first letter of the *Thsupa*, the content that would be included in this publication. He mentioned that the content consisted of the Word of the Lord, also information pertaining to their church, everyday prayer, matters regarding their congregations and chiefs in their surrounding areas. He then edified the book and mentioned that it gave all its readers good gifts (*Thsupa* 1931:2). This section gives a summary of the content to be expect within the periodical. Eiselen can also be argued to have written in a manner which is reminiscent of the letters in the Bible, which can also be argued to communicate a level of authority. Paul Lehmann (1946:328-329) mentioned that the protestants obtained biblical authority from the content thereof. He stated that the authority of the Word in the Bible was not obtained from the person who preached or taught about them, but from God who had written the Bible. The protestants were considered firm believers to whom all pertained to the mind and the soul, the Bible being the only guide credible for their guidance. Lehmann further added that the Bible's content was the lesson it gave pertaining to the life of Jesus Christ, which was the life which would often be emphasised in the *Thsupa*. The authority of the Bible as content, therefore, was engulfed in the belief of the protestants that it was the sole guidance in matters of faith and the soul. One can argue that the Sepedi-speaking members of the BMS may have shared the same sentiment as their leaders with regard to this matter.

In every issue of the *Thsupa* there appeared a listed account of all locations where the Native Commissioners stayed, as well as a list of Berlin Mission Church Pastors and their addresses, and a list of African chiefs and their whereabouts, ending with a list of all authors and a specification of their position in society. These lists speak to how many stations have emerged as compared to the previous year, and therefore the growing conversion of heathens into Christians. As far as content was concerned, the letters in the *Thsupa* and *Der Missions-Freund* were typical of the kind of themes that could be expected in a missionary periodical. Some of these are elaborated on in the next paragraphs.

Acke (2013:237) maintains that in the metaphoric representation in missionary periodicals, there has been a clear contrast in the depiction of darkness versus light. In *Der Missions-Freund* the trope (the resounding theme) is seen more clearly than in the *Thsupa*. The trope depicted is one of racial othering, where there is a clear binary opposite that can be distinguished between the 'civilized' and 'uncivilized' in the context of Europeans and their interactions, or rather encounters, with Africans in their 'native state'. Some of the South Africans, or so-called indigenous people, are being represented as 'other' within the above-mentioned publication. For an understanding of racism in terms of the *Thsupa* publication the letters by Werner Eiselen and Nicholas van Warmelo will be discussed.

Werner Eiselen, having grown up under his father's wing, was thought to believe that Europeans were a more superior race than Africans. He is also said to have been influenced by the notion of *Volkekunde,* which is regarded an Afrikaner nationalist ethnological tradition which lent a hand to the legitimisation of apartheid and has been found to have German roots. It was discovered that *Volkekunde* has a prior connection to the apartheid-sympathetic Berlin Missionary descendants in South Africa. It is also closely related to *Völkerkunde* (ethnology) which Carl Meinhof taught. *Volkekunde* influences the taciturn nature of racism and racial ideology as a subject matter in the twentieth-century South Africa. In Bank's (2015:167) words, the "muting of the role played by racism and racial ideology in twentieth-century South Africa has, to some extent, been reflected in the literature on the history of *volkekunde* ..."

Werner Eiselen contributed two letters to the *Thsupa* publications that I focus on. The first appeared in the 1931 issue and it was titled "*Diswanto tsa Kgale*" (Old photographs). The second appeared in the 1933 publication and it was titled "*Nna naxa ya South Africa ka tokelo ke ya bomang*?" (Who does the South African land belong to?). Werner Eiselen (1933:38-39) began his letter by stating that Africa is a Roman name meaning "the black piece of the world". He then gave an animal metaphor in which he equated the 'black' people in South Africa to a cat that went

to report a dog to the king of the animals, the lion, about its stolen meat. The 'white' people of South Africa are equated to the dog in the metaphor. The lion asked the cat where it found the meat in the first place and the cat failed to respond, and both animals were accused of theft. Eiselen went on to say that, like in the metaphor, the land of South Africa belongs to neither black nor white people as none of the two originate from this land, claiming that some of the first people in southern Africa were from Asia. He went on to say that Africans marry people using cows, however, if they were to travel throughout Africa they would not come across any bush animals like a cow there. He continued that if you would go to Asia, you would come across flocks of animals that almost look like the cows here in South Africa. Arguably, such letters regarding the origin and belonging of people was produced to justify white people's taking over of land in South Africa and governing it.

Apartheid is deemed to stem from an inward focused Christian Afrikaner nationalist ideology that had its bases on self-advancement (Bank 2015:167). There is a lingering idea that the fundamentals of apartheid were initially around the quest to gain political longevity. Although the purpose of this study is not so much focused on a discussion of apartheid, it is beneficial to map it out in order to understand the segregationist ideas that were perpetual in the BMS thinking.

The difference between 'othering' and 'belonging' is normalized by the construction of boundaries governed by binary opposing, racially composed categorisation of representations. Looking at Eiselen's metaphor, one can deem it convenient that he assigned the Europeans the connotation with the dog, which in most cases is represented to have dominance over the cat, which he associated with the African people. Another author that was influence in a similar way by Meinhof and also participated as an author in the *Thsupa*, was Nicholas van Warmelo.

In the 1931 issue, Van Warmelo wrote a letter titled "*Na Sesotho se xesu se timela ka xo reng*?" The title in English means "Why is our Sotho disappearing?" He began this letter by stating that before white people came to the Transvaal, Sotho-speaking people did not receive any news and were only exposed to their own

language and none other than that. He stated that when the English men came with all their technology (cars, ships, guns and trains), and their language which was different from Sotho, they were not very keen to learn Sesotho as they said it was too 'difficult'. The Sesotho speaking people then realised that the English-speakers were 'intelligent', and they wanted to be like them (1931:32-34). Looking at Van Warmelo's writing, one also picks up the elevating of the status of the Europeans by associating them with words such as 'intelligent' and also communicating the desire of Africans to be like them.

Frantz Fanon (1970:17-18) had begun his argument by saying, "to speak is to exist absolutely for the other." This statement, although simple, gives an introduction into a power dimension in which the one speaking is seen to be submissive to the one listening. Fanon stated that the black man had two dimensions in which he communicated. The first was between his fellow black people and the second was that which occurred with white people. He mentioned that the behaviour of the black man changed when confronted by either of the dimensions. Fanon argued that this change was owing to the subjugation brought about by colonialism. He added that it was a belief that by having the knowledge to speak a certain language one had access to the world and attitudes from which it originated. Therefore, fluency in a certain language suggested power.

Fanon (1970:18) further stated that the colonised was confronted with the language and culture from the colonial parent country (the land of the coloniser). The black man became 'whiter' when he rejected his blackness to adopt the culture and language of the white people. This informs why the Sotho-speaking South Africans that Van Warmelo spoke about, sought to learn the language of the Englishmen. They believed that *therein* was the possession of the Englishmen, their power and intelligence.

Sara Pugach (2004:826-827) stated that Van Warmelo was also influence by Meinhof. Van Warmelo was concerned with the connectivity amongst different clans in South Africa. Given that the period from the 1930s was marked by

segregationist theories, one of the major ideas which influenced Van Warmelo was that the moving away of the Africans from their 'native roots' into a space of integration into the ways of the West, was disrupting the flow of the social system. The Africans were believed not to be ready for the 'civilization' brought about by the people from the West and, accordingly, having been excessively exposed to it, resulted in behaviour which was disapproved of by those in positions of authority from the West. The way in which this cycle of unacceptable behaviour was to end, would be through implementing certain restrictions for the Africans to abide by.

Compared to Meinhof who remained in Germany, Van Warmelo had more experience working amongst the African people. In 1930 he was appointed as Government Ethnologist for the Native Affairs Department, which placed him in a position where he could influence major decisions without the burden of being questioned. The segregationist strategies sought to separate ethnic groups into their fixed tribes and get them back to their own way of life to eradicate competition and maintain the position of white people as dominant in terms of class-classifications (Pugach 2004:827).

Within the context of the people residing in and around the Transvaal, there was more than just racial othering. There also existed a tribal othering, and othering within Christianity. The tribal othering can be discussed for instance in the relationship that the Northern Sotho people shared with the Ndebele people. In the Transvaal, as stated in the previous chapter, the Pedi polity was made up of more than just congenital Pedi people (Deluis 1984[1983]: xi). The population of congenital northern Sotho people believed themselves more inclined towards getting an education and being literate. Therefore, they viewed themselves more superior in comparison to the congenital Ndebele people that occupied the same space as them, who were rather opposed to the idea of gaining literacy.

The above of course stems from a stereotype that the Pedi held regarding the Ndebele people, that they were, as Hofmeyr (1991:633-634) put it, "'hard-headed', maleducated country bumpkins." In the previous chapter it was also discussed that

the native people in the Transvaal sought to acquire knowledge from the missionaries in order to gain power. Hofmeyr went on to state that there was a claim towards the access and attainment of literacy as having the ability to overcome the bounds of poverty and being able to foster innovation in underdeveloped spaces. Hofmeyr highlighted that the expected promise of literacy for the attainment of power and novelty is false.

The othering within Christianity existed in the perceptions and communication of converts against the perceptions of non-converts, or those regarded to be 'heathen' in the *Thsupa* and *Der Missions-Freund* publications. This othering is not bound in race, but rather in religious classification and position. Acke (2013:236) mentioned that there were also recurrent types of characters that the mission periodicals referred to. She listed them in the following order: the European missionaries (most recognised as Priests/ Preachers in the *Thsupa* publication), the converted natives (regarded mostly as helpers and evangelists, in the *Thsupa* some also occupy the position of teachers in the schools), the last were those regarded as the 'heathens'. In the *Thsupa* there was an additional character, the 'friends of the mission' from the parent country, and the *Thsupa* also recognised some African leaders as preachers. In the periodicals that Acke studied, the first character (The European missionaries) had the authoritative freedom to produce the letters which were to appear in the main publication as an authentic account of their own experiences. The second character (the native convert) could also participate in producing their own accounts yet in most cases their accounts were written on their behalf by missionaries.

In the *Thsupa* publication there were native writers, yet these native writers were limited to communicating only with their fellow native population. This aspect will be discussed further in the next section. The third character (the heathens) were denied the opportunity of writing in order to represent themselves and their ideas in these publications; the same went for the fourth character, as I identified it: the "friends of the mission". The friends of the mission, which were the "Duits", were for the most part well-spoken of – in comparison to the heathens, who were in the

most part ridiculed. Both these characters, however, were spoken for and spoken of.

In another contribution to the *Thsupa* (1931), Missions Inspector Schoene, who was writing from Berlin, began his letter by stating his and Director Knak's safe trip back home from Africa. He stated that the church members and young children within the church in "Duits" contently enquired about the physical and spiritual wellbeing of the congregants in South Africa. This aspect speaks to the potential readership from Germany who were exposed to periodicals which were similar as the *Thsupa* but rather produced in German. One such periodical was *Der Missions-Freund*.

In her study Acke (2013:236) listed the types of actions that the missionaries would account for in periodicals, namely, "preaching, prayer, visiting people, talking, singing, reading the Bible, holding services, baptising, translating, learning languages, celebrating Christmas, erecting buildings, handing out medicine, giving money, writing letters and diaries, and other occupations of the missionary daily life". These themes combined are pertinent to both the *Thsupa* and *Der Missions-Freund*. The readership of the *Thsupa* will be discussed further in the next section.

3.6 Communication Network and Readership

Periodicity, as Acke (2012:226) has mentioned, is the accessibility of the periodical to a mass readership. This access is given or rather made available by the mission societies that produce the publications. Carl Hoffmann played a major role in fostering and contributing to this transcontinental communication network that the missionary societies had built (Kriel 2018:3-4). Hoffmann would gather verbalized or uttered knowledge from his African contemporaries and attempt to render it in the form of printed documentation, which he learnt from his place of origin (Germany). And by occupying the position of editor for the *Thsupa*, he also contributed immensely to the knowledge that it carried.

In the German printing network, the books that were made for the consumption of indigenous people were compiled in their respective languages and not necessarily intended for use by Germans. The texts that were produced in German would not have much of an influence on South African converts of the BMS, as they were (besides to their own languages), exposed rather to English, and even Afrikaans, than German. Therefore, for any African that had the desire to participate in the transnational communication network of the BMS, they had to be aided by a German-speaking missionary. Hoffmann, unlike his African contemporaries, had access to both the network connecting him to the parent country and the network connecting him to the indigenous people. Hoffmann accordingly assumed the role of mediator for African people that wanted to communicate their stories to a German readership and he also produced documents for the native readership (Kriel 2018:6).

Although the communication network posed as a way of reaching the other continent without having been there, it was governed by oppressive dictations. Pakendorf (1997) maintained that the Berlin Mission Society functioned in the form of a hierarchical structure. This hierarchy is seen in the communication network where the Africans had to report to a European in order for them to communicate to a European nation. The ability for them to communicate on their own without a mediator, was stripped off of them. Africans were denied access to education which would permit them to communicate in the language of mediation with the parent country.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter mapped the *Thsupa* as part of the genre of missionary periodicals. The features of an almanac were also discussed, and it was illustrated that the *Thsupa* adhered to the structures of an almanac. The *Thsupa* can be argued to have functioned as both, and within the genres of a missionary periodical we have seen it carrying familiarity. This assisted those that were its audiences to find it recognisable. It also carried ideas of immediacy and mediated relations which speaks to the professional relationship that the missionaries shared with African

congregants as opposed to the friendly relationship that they had with their German supporters.

The *Thsupa* is also seen to have conveyed the same tropes throughout all five the issues under investigation. It shows the interaction of the missionaries with non-converts, known in the publication as ‘heathens’. It also used biblical authority to convey its importance to the African readers. This importance was further perpetuated by the calendar, which carried within it daily scripture that the congregants had to cover for that particular day, also suggesting that the readers ought to rely on the *Thsupa* for daily guidance. A Europeanist culture was imposed on Africans, yet the reports that went from the German authors to their native land argued that Africans did things ‘differently’. The print culture of the BMS for the missionised audience attempted at plugging them into a European Christian tradition and hierarchy.

Chapter 4: A Semiotic Analysis of the Photographs Published in the *Thsupa* and *Der Missions-Freund*

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter a semiotic analysis will be conducted from a purposive sample of the images within each of the identified themes. Images are analysed with the major focus being on the *Thsupa*, and some references made to *Der Missions-Freund*. This will entail an in-depth discussion of the images that feature in the five issues under study. This study will take into consideration the discussions from the previous chapter and mention how they inform the context of the images that will be investigated in this chapter.

The chapter will begin by giving an overview of the initial themes found in the images. The themes will be further discussed together with the findings that constitute each theme. The chapter then moves on to a brief discussion of the themes which are then integrated into the in-depth step- by- step semiotic analysis, including denotation, connotation, myth and ideology. The theorists that will inform the analysis include Nicholas Mirzoeff, Belinda Bozzoli, and Robert Morrell amongst other theorists. They will inform discussions on photography, masculinity and certain ideologies such as patriarchy, colonialism and capitalism. The study will end off by tackling controversial imagery that carry themes that appear in the *Der Missions-Freund* and not the *Thsupa*.

4.2 Overview of the Images Categorised from the *Thsupa* and *Der Missions-Freund* as well as the Supporting Background

The *Thsupa* of 1931-1935 includes 74 images. The themes that were identified from the images are as follows: Depictions of building structures, leadership roles inside and outside the BMS, portrayal of woman, and, finally, the depictions of family dynamics inside and outside the BMS. Under the theme of building structures, the topics that emerge, include: church structures in South Africa compared to Germany, different modes of transportation (in Germany and in South Africa), and diamond fields. Under leadership roles, the topics include: church

leadership (directors, missionary-inspectors, and pastors), chiefs, evangelists, male congregants, and witchdoctors. The depiction of women is investigated under the topics of 'heathen' vs. Christian practices, attire, and domesticity (childcare and subordination to the husband). And lastly the theme family dynamics carries the topics of marriage, polygamy, and monogamy.

As already discussed in the previous chapter and further emphasised in this one, the *Thsupa* was a publication that was written and approved by the German leadership within the South African Berlin Mission Church. It comes as no shock that the major parts of the publication presented a celebration of German leadership, or rather, leadership as practised by German missionaries, as well as a celebration of German culture. The first few pages of every issue either displayed a German icon (in the form of a leader/s), or a monumental German structure (church buildings or a town in Germany). The German church structure which the *Thsupa* depicted, was the one in "Duits". The illustrations in the publication also included biblical scenarios (found in the 1931, 1932 and 1935 issues). These can be argued to communicate the leadership of Jesus as experienced and revered in the BMS.

Church dress in the *Thsupa* was usually portrayed as covering the body almost completely. For men it was usually in the form of suits and at times with hats (most common for African Christians). Christian women were mostly depicted with bright clothing covering the bodies from neck to ankle. Christian women were also mostly depicted with their heads covered, usually in the same colour as their clothing. There were male African Christians depicted dressed as common men (labourers, herders, farmers perhaps). Those outside of the church who were regarded 'heathers' (especially women), were depicted with less body covering. African women were often portrayed with their breasts not covered.

Women were portrayed to assume secondary roles or subordinated positions in their different situations. Women in families were often assigned the domestic role of caring for the children – or, this is what was depicted in the images where only

women are seen to be carrying the children in their arms. Women were also depicted mostly in the presence of men, who were usually described in the text as women's superiors. African children were depicted either as part of a family, a household, a school group, or as people in need of help because of illnesses.

From *Der Missions-Freund*, I only focused on those images from the 60 issues that appeared from 1931 to 1935 that pertained to the South African Sepedi-speaking context.[21] It is therefore difficult to talk about the tropes that this publication portrays in its entirety. I will rather comment on specific images that illuminate the South African context and contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the images that appeared, or failed to appear, in the *Thsupa*.

Many topics in *Der Missions-Freund* are similar as the ones in the *Thsupa*; yet there are some that are unique to *Der Missions-Freund*. The initial difference is that the 1931-1935 issues of *Der Missions-Freund* did not place an emphasis on the depiction of African chiefs. The African authority figures that got portrayed were teachers, helpers, and an evangelist – with only one African king and his three wives. Modes of attire were also depicted (mostly focusing on those regarded as 'heathens' in contrast to congregants). What *Der Missions-Freund* depicted that would not feature in the *Thsupa*, was the topic of African 'heathen' practices (traditional healers/ sorcerers, polygamy).

4.3 Contrast Between 'African' and 'German': a Semiotic Analysis of the *Thsupa* and *Der Missions-Freund*

4.3.1 Buildings and the Assertion of Authority

The first theme that the study tackles, is the one on built structures. Of those in the *Thsupa,* the South African buildings are all roofed with straw – except for the churches. The South African church structures are only depicted from the exterior with the exception of one, which appears in both the *Thsupa* and *Der Missions-Freund* publication. The *Thsupa* has depictions of multiple images of churches in

[21] Every monthly issue of *Der Missions-Freund* displayed images from mission fields all over the globe, including many different parts of not only Africa, but also Asia and the Americas.

Berlin. The churches in Berlin are portrayed both from the exterior and the interior. These churches seem more intricate in terms of size and adornments as compared to the South African structures. The rest of the buildings from Berlin are depicted from their interior with people occupying the space inside.

In *Der Missions-Freund*, amongst the images related to the Transvaal, there is no focus on European buildings. The buildings that appear are churches and schools for Africans, and apart from these, there are huts made with branches that are stacked side-by-side. The huts have people around them, with the exception of one, captioned to be a chief's 'kraal', which is devoid of any people. The church buildings and schools are also depicted with people outside. There is only one image (apart from the one shared between the two publications) which depicts a man in the interior of a school building in Botshabelo.

Figure 15: The interior of the Medingen Church (in Modjadji), Der Missions-Freund, *1931.*

The denotation of Figure 15 is that it is the interior of a building. It has benches that are stacked on two sides of the space. There are plants which are arranged in the inner part of the interior. There is also what looks like a stand which is positioned above the space from the staircase. The space is devoid of human beings. The caption to Figure 15 can be translated as "the interior of the Medingen church (in Modjadji)".

When looking at the connotative meaning, one can say that a church is associated with sacred practice. The church is connoted as a large space which is there to accommodate a community of believers and visitors. The protestant church is also associated with pastors, elders, and deacons who are there to teach the congregants, and so the foyer or stage area in the front of the church is extensively made use of by these figures of authority. The staircase leading up to the stage can also communicate the notion of being elevated to a place which is closer to God. The Protestants had broken with the Catholic tradition of adorning the church with excessive images and expensive art, which explains the use of plants and light sources (candles) to communicate life, purity and righteousness. In Figure 15 one finds the seven candles stand which has close association with the candle stand described in the Bible in the book of Revelation. Churches are also known to have the central aisle from the doors of the church to the stage in the front of the church. The church is also associated with the reading and sharing of the word of God from the Bible, considered to be sacred and divine. The church is also a place of prayer, this is the act of transcending the worldly physical communication and communicating in the spiritual realm.

The next step is to discuss the myth found in the representation. In order to do this stereotypes and binary opposites are elaborated upon. The binary opposite is found in its comparison to the church in Berlin. As mentioned above the church in Figure 15 is devoid of people, makes use of natural elements for decoration and for seating it has benches which are supposedly made of wood. The embellishments in this structure seem like plants. Figure 15 is different to the image of the first church (Figure 16) which is represented in the *Thsupa.* The church in Berlin (Figure 16) is connoted as having people in the interior and the building seems monumental given the position of the shot which is from a top view. Figure 16 is also adorned with chandelier and stained-glass windows, and other large decorative ornaments. What is different in the two buildings is not only their difference in structure or emphasis, but also their difference in terms of the audiences that were to consume each image.

The church structure in Figure 15 was meant for a European audience. One can argue that its emptiness comes across as a metaphor for the emptiness that the missionaries had to fill in the Africans. Also, the church needed to be filled with African congregants. This perpetuated the stereotype that Africans were backward, undeveloped and uneducated and were susceptible to subjugation by European authority and colonial powers (Iliffe 2007[1995]:131). The structure in Figure 16 was meant for a South African audience. This structure was meant to portray progress and dominance to validate the leadership of Berlin missionaries in the lives of the South African congregants that read the publication. One can argue that the myth of progress (affluence) and advancement was perpetuated by Figure 16 and the myth of cultural backwardness and lack of advancement was portrayed through Figure 15.

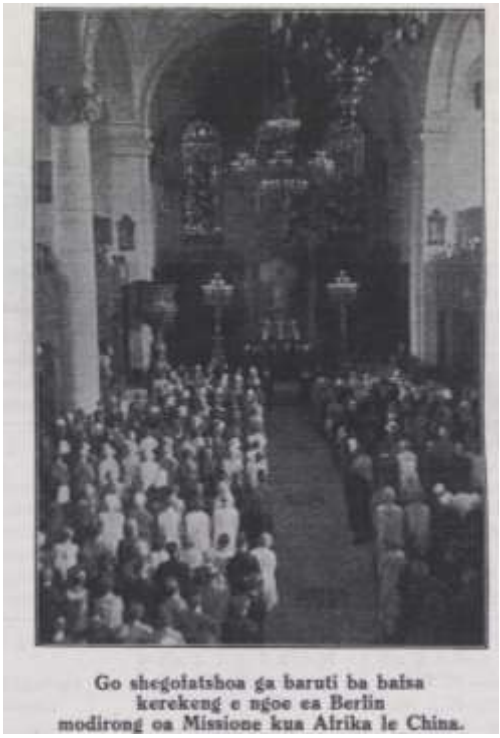


Figure 16: The ordaining of new teachers at the church in Berlin for mission work in Africa and China, Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke*, 1931.*

The representations of the European churches, as depicted in the *Thsupa,* are usually from the top view/ distant view to show the churches' magnitude and large building structure. The portrayal of the buildings in South Africa, as compared to the European buildings, is vastly different. This also applies to those building

structures that did not occupy the title of “primitive” or “indigenous”; those that carried Western influence in terms of structure. The building structures in South Africa, although developed and influenced by Western styles, are minimal compared to the European buildings. The buildings in Europe are monumental in structure and can be said to claim an authoritative space to the onlooker. According to Radford (1997:327), the Dutch Reformed Churches which existed in the Cape also had a simplistic design in terms of church structure, since this denomination was also against embellishments within the church. The lack of technology to improve their church structures meant that their five buildings existent in 1795 would continue to prevail well into the nineteenth century in the same style. The same could have been the case for the BMS in South Africa. One could imagine that they did not have the technology or manpower to create as large a structure as was produced in Europe. And this lack within the context of South Africa was then used as justification for the need of European intervention within the country to improve their standard of living.

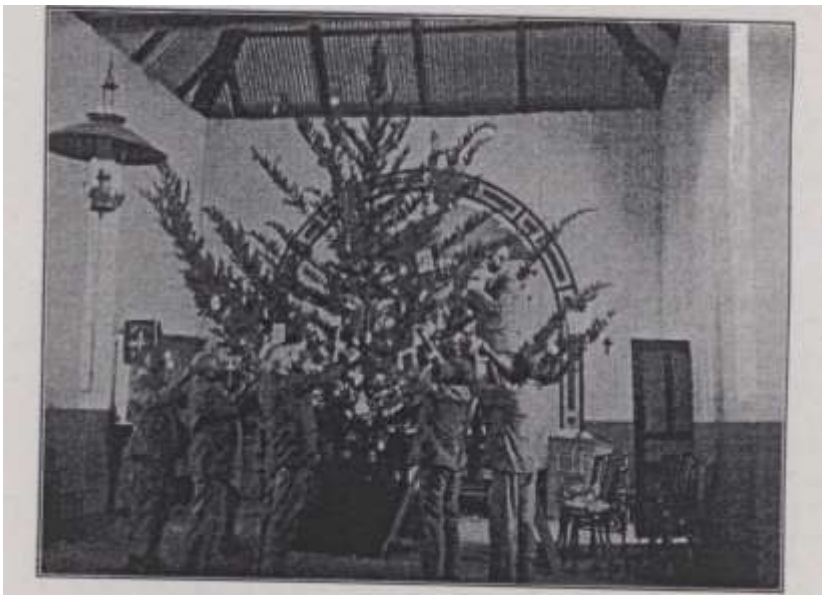


Figure 17: Decoration of the Christmas tree by Superintendent Hoffmann and his church elders for the congregation’s Christmas celebration, Der Missions-Freund, *1935: Our blessed Botshabelo in South Africa, from Missionary Superintendent Carl Hoffmann,* Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke*, 1931.*

When looking at the denotation in Figure 17, there are six men; all the men are in the process of hanging what one would regard as ornaments on the tree. The men and the tree are inside a building. The men seem to be dressed in dark suits. There

are chairs to the right and one of the men is standing on a step ladder. The connotation of the men is that they can be argued to show some sense of unity and understanding between them as they are all participating in the decorating of the tree. The men also seem to be dressed in the same attire (suits) which speaks to the understanding they shared in terms of manner of conduct within the church. Suits are associated with affluence and social significance. There is what looks like a pine tree which has come to be recognised as a symbol of Christmas (Tille 1892:166). In the image there is one European man amongst African men.

The binary opposite in this image is ‘African’ and ‘German’. The putting up of what is known as a Christmas tree and the decoration thereof was originally a German practice which was carried with them wherever they found themselves to be (Tille 1892:166). The European man in the image can be said to be teaching his culture to the African men who seem to be comfortably participating. The binary opposite is also one of affluence against poverty. The image above portrays African men who can be said to have been affluent by virtue of their attire and their willingness to participate in Western culture. The building structure that they find themselves in is also one that is associated with progress and advancement from huts and grass steads which has become a common association with African people and poverty. African culture tended to be associated with a sense of ‘lacking’ when compared to European culture at the time. Gabriel Idang (2015:100) mentions that culture has been defined by the possession or lack of material articles. Figure 17 suggests the myths of church planting and converting the indigenous followers.

The image speaks of the ideology of Protestantism being perpetuated. The members of the BMS were protestants. As has been mentioned in chapter 2, the BMS was concerned with three main objectives: to educate and take care of students, to send them on missions overseas and support them on a continuous basis while they were there, and lastly, this was for the purpose of them sharing their knowledge with all people who were willing to learn (Poewe & van der Heyden 1999). In Figure 17 the African men who seem willing, are being engaged in European culture as part of church planting and church-establishing purposes. The

tree here becomes a metaphor for the relationship that was being created between the African congregants and the European leader.

The image of the tree being decorated by Hoffmann and some African congregants was the last one that appeared in the 1931 issue of the *Thsupa*. The same image appeared also in the 1935 issue of *Der Missions-Freund.* And since the putting up and decorating of a tree was known to be a German tradition, it would have brought a sense of familiarity to the readers of *Der Missions-Freund*. Hoffmann is seen as the only man of Western descent amongst five men of African descent. As discussed above, the size of the buildings in Africa as compared to the European ones, is vastly smaller in structure. During the 1930s, apart from the caption confirming so, the reader would have been certain that this was shot in Africa, because of the number of African individuals in the building and the size of the building. There were very few South Africans that could travel to Germany as compared to the number of Germans traveling to South Africa, as can be observed in Figure 18. This speaks to the flow of messages from Europe to Africa. And this brings us to the topic of transportation.

Figure 18: Baruti ba bafsa ba tloxela Berlin ba yo selela mono Afrika (The new pastors are leaving Berlin for the crossing over to Africa), Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke*, 1932.*

When paging through the first five issues of the *Thsupa*, only three images will be found that portray transportation. The first is the one reproduced here as Figure 18 and the second is the one reproduced as Figure 19. Figure 18 showcases transportation produced through modern technology whereas Figure 19 portrays transportation through the use of animals. The third image shows two European men on horseback surrounded by natural elements such as plants and in their background is a mountain. Apart from the two men there are no other people or building structures around, the image is reminiscent of the myth of empty space (Van Eeden 2009:149).

In the *Der Missions-Freund* the narrative around transportation is similar to the one in the *Thsupa*, except for the fact that both the two images that could be identified, were shot in the Transvaal. The first image is a depiction of a huge number of people with vehicles parked to the right of the image (Figure 20). The people seem to be of European descent judged by the way in which they are dressed and the saturation of their skin tone in the image. The second image is of an African man standing alongside a donkey, which is also portrayed to be in a natural space, and behind them seems to be a water source.

In discussing the denotation, one can say that there are multiple German people (suggested by the caption) exiting a building while other are standing in front of a vehicle and three men are sitting inside the vehicle. The vehicle is marked with a number and a chequered strip, indicating that it is a taxi taking the passengers to a train station. The vehicle therefore connotes that the people in it are going somewhere. The people are a mixture of working class and ruling class people; this is suggested by the clothing they are wearing.

Cars are in this instance associated with travelling far distances with the intention of reaching foreign ground with the word of God. The taxi would have taken them to the train and by train they would have travelled to a harbour where they would have boarded a ship. The binary opposite is the men in the car and everyone else (women, children and other men) outside of the car. This binary opposite suggests

that it is the man who is charged with the responsibility to travel abroad. The other binary opposite is motivated by the caption which states that the men in the car are new pastors who are leaving Berlin (which can be considered their comfort), a place of safety, to go to Africa (which can be regarded a foreign land of unfamiliarity), a possible place of danger. This also speaks to the myth of masculinity, as foreign lands are strange and dangerous and only a being with strength and resilience would be brave enough to take on the challenge.

The thoughts of travelling abroad can be argued to be evoked by certain verses in the Bible. Matthew 28:19-20 states, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” These were the words that Jesus shared with his disciples and one can argue that the Christian men that are being seen off in Figure 18 have adopted this scripture as justification for their desire for travelling abroad.

Figure 19: Stefanus Mathibako o sela noka ya Lehlaba (Stefanus Mathibako is crossing the river of Lehlaba), Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke, *1935.*

In Figure 19 the denotation is a man who is holding a stick and a donkey with some baggage on its sides. The man and the donkey are standing in water. The man wears a hat, a jacket and pants that are rolled up. By the way the man is dressed and the stick that he is holding, one could connote that he is a farm worker or just a common man. As a farm worker one would argue that he carries the stick to control the herds, but since there is no herd to validate this, one can assume that the stick could be there to assist the man on his journey, which may be considered a long one, judged by the pack the donkey has to carry. Both the man and the donkey seem to be in the water which makes it seem like the man is only using the donkey to carry his pack and not necessarily as personal transportation. So, in this instance, it makes sense for this man to be carrying a stick, which can be assumed to be there to assist him carry his own weight on the long journey. A similar narrative can be read for a common man, only that he would be herding his own cattle. The stick could also be for the purpose of measuring the water level for safety purposes.

The binary opposite is foregrounded when this image is compared to the previous image (Figure 18). The binary opposites are technology depicted through the car, building structures with windows, curtains and a light source next to the door of the building, as opposed to nature through the depiction of a donkey, a water source and a tree in the background of Figure 19. The other binary opposite is European people compared to the African man. The man in Figure 19 fits the stereotype of a farm worker/ servant / labourer or common man, and by virtue of this seems of lower social standing compared to the ministers that are preparing for their journey to South Africa. This can be argued in his use of a donkey to carry things around while he walks as well as the context in which he is portrayed; it would not be fitting to place a car in the context of this natural space. With regard to his clothing, he seems to be wearing a shirt underneath his coat and his hat looks rather informal. The myth of the African being one with nature and the myth of primitivity are being maintained through the depiction above. Figure 19 also shares meaning with the Biblical instances in Luke 1:1-5 where the donkey was the form of transport for long distances when Mary and Joseph had to travel from Bethlehem to Jerusalem

on a donkey. Here we see that, although the African man is not presented as possessing social privilege as the men in Figure 18 who travel with a car might have, he is however still assimilated to a scenario which has divine value. Therefore, he is afforded the existence in the narrative of Christian believers and given the right to have access to Christian practice as the European men.[22]

Ideology of capitalism where a certain class of people claims capital dominance by representing the 'other' as inferior to themselves. Jackson II (2006:76-77) mentions that the black male body is represented as exotic, foreign and strange in order to maintain cultural dominion over it. The black male representation is often depicted as inferior to the white male representation. In Figures 18 and 19 we notice the difference in capital status by virtue of how the two are represented and how society distinguishes material wealth through what one possesses.

Figure 20: Diamond Field in the vicinity of Lichtenburg, Transvaal, Der Missions-Freund, *1932.*

The denotation of Figure 20 is that there is a large group. There are people dressed in suits and beside them towards the right are a number of vehicles. The space looks devoid of any building structures. The caption suggests that the area is a diamond field. Vehicles as stated above connote social dominion and freedom.
The ideology of this is one of imperialism. When delving into the imperialist project this image can bring about many questions, the initial being the significance of the

[22] Stefanus Mathibako is recognised as a man who accompanied Carl Hoffmann on his journeys to different lands for the purpose of sharing the Word. They are said to have always used horses and donkeys as their mode of transport (*Thsupa* 1935:37). One would assue that Hoffmann would be riding his horse while Mathibako went on foot driving the donkey.

inclusion of an image of diamond fields in the German Mission's newspaper. The latter being, the exclusion of this type of imagery in the South African magazine. It makes sense that other scenes of everyday life are not portrayed in *Der Missions-Freund* publication, yet how does this scene relate to the activities of the Missionary Society? Mirzoeff (2011:196) states that 'imperial visuality' is the assertion or designing of modernity from the perspective of those who have imperial power. It exists as a way of controlling biological forms of dominion. It brings about the understanding of history in terms of a time frame.

Imperial visuality claims that the 'civilized' existed prior to the 'primitive'. In this stance the 'civilized' are at the forefront of existence although they existed in the same time frame as the 'primitive'. The 'primitive' is rather regarded to be existing in the past. Mirzoeff (2011:196) argues that this hierarchical view of time encouraged the ordering of space where humans could be governed under the authority of Christianity and 'civilization'. Missionaries sought to reconcile the two different spheres by bringing together the 'civilized' with the 'primitive' through religious discipline, thus mission.

In the nineteenth century the changes in the trading systems where goods could be exchanged for money brought about a change in the needs and want of people. The change created a society in which people could be rewarded for their work (whether hard labour or intellectual), a distance emerged between the privileged and the unprivileged, and class classification could be ordered in accordance with the 'value' one held to the society. Owing to the changes mentioned above, the missionaries that had the goal to civilize the African communities believed that the correct introduction of commodities and commerce would assist in the civilizing process (Comaroff 1997:219).

The hope of those with imperialist agendas was that the introduction of these commodities would foster a change in desire, new industry, new ways of creating wealth, and essentially a newly formed society. The limitations to this new experience for the newly formed society was that Africans would be encouraged

to experience it in a Christian based practice (Comaroff 1997:219). Many missionaries were not in support of the modernisation that were happening in the countries they came from that was also part of the reason that they could adapt better to the South African setting as it brought to them a renewed imagination and way of life. They were coming from countries that were starting to boom in terms of the industrial revolution.

The portrayal of the diamond field represents potential for wealth and trade which is embedded in capitalist ideas and informs the Western perspective of civilization, although the existence of diamonds in the native (African) countries does not suggest that the countries are in themselves civilized. These images exist in the *Der Missions-Freund* publication and there is no image in the *Thsupa* that resemble similar ideas or bears relation to this. The question is why the writers and editors of the BMS found it essential for them to have an image of this nature in the publication intended for a German audience and not intended for an African audience.

The ideology of capitalism and consumerism/ imperialism (rather) are evoked by the situation. Said (1993:7) mentions that imperialism is the act of deliberating about, inhabiting, and taking dominion over land which one does not possess. The land which is taken over during imperialism is one which is already inhabited by others and belongs to others. In Figure 18 Germans are portrayed to have the freedom to move from space to space, thus rendering the African to be limited and in principle not advanced. Africans did not have the technology to assist in creating transport to move far distances let alone travel abroad. This phenomenon can be argued to have aided in the way they perceived their European counterparts and the authority that they had towards them because they came to believe that Europeans had more knowledge about everything.

4.3.2 Leadership Roles and how they are Depicted

The majority of the images in the *Thsupa* are depictions of men (they appear in groups, as pairs or as individuals). The depictions of the African men, who are

depicted devoid of other people, are long (full body) shots or wide (half body) shots. The depictions of the European men, who are depicted devoid of other people, are close-up shots (zoomed in facial shots) and wide shots. Of the men in group situations, some are depicted in nature whereas others are depicted to be in areas with building structures/ a structure in their midst. Of the men represented as individuals some, of them are in the natural space and others are juxtaposed to building structures.

The portrayal of men in the 1931 *Thsupa* contain shared visual tropes which endorse a certain hegemonic code. This is owing to the poses they give, the size that the images occupy in the publication, and the manner in which certain characters are positioned and what they are juxtaposed to. A majority of the European men portrayed in these images appear to be wearing, what is considered today, as formal attire. Most are looking directly into the camera. One such example is the second image (Figure 21) that appears in the 1931 publication.

Figure 21: Missions-Inspector Mr. Schoene, when he was here in South Africa in 1928 and 1929, as well as Pastor H. Jonas, and Mr. Josef Motane, Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke, *1931.*

The denotation of Figure 21 is three men who are standing outside two building structures. There are trees which are positioned beside and behind the building structure. The men are all wearing suits. When looking at the caption of this image

one can say that the man on the far left is a mission inspector. The man right next to the mission inspector is a pastor, yet the man on the right that is positioned a bit further from them, is not given a professional title, he is just referred to as Mr. All three men seem to be dressed in suits which connote professionalism and/or affluence. Behind the men are two building structures which look like huts with thatched roofing which are associated with indigeneity. Huts are a connotation of a rural area. Behind the huts are trees which are a marker of nature.

The binary opposite in this image can be argued to be one of hierarchy and subordination. It can be argued that there is a hierarchy in the social standing of the men depicted in Figure 21. A mission inspector is regarded highest in the hierarchy because the pastor reports to him. The pastor holds a higher post within the context of the church than the other congregants as he is regarded as the leader. Somebody who holds the title Mr. is not necessarily recognised as holding authority over anyone, unless is it specified that he is a leader of a family household which is not made clear. The men also conform to the stereotype of being masculine men. The men above represent the myth of ideal masculinity. Yet Hearn (2004:60) hints that although there is a hierarchy in the representation of masculinity, a man holds a higher social standing compared to women and children.

In order to substantiate the argument of the portrayal of hierarchy the placement of the figures within the image is further elaborated on here. According to the rules of perspective drawing, the foremost object can be determined by its height in relation to the other objects (Norling 1999:85-86). In this instance the two German man are closer to the front in terms of perspective whereas the African men is further back. The observer's attention is in most instances drawn to the object that is made to stand out or that is placed as the attention point. Perspective is regarded to be representational tactics that are convoluted within the entertainment industry as well as geometric illustrations and it is a means of ordering society (Mirzoeff 1999:38).

Figure 21 can be argued to communicate racial hierarchy through the placement of figures within a photograph. It is suggested that western thought has been governed by the notion that one's biology determines their destiny. This thought claims that the social hierarchy of class and difference is determined by the race that an individual fall under. Further than just class, an individual's biology is believed to also determine their race and gender. Body in these societies (Western) is treated as the bearer of meaning. In other words, the body, when looked at, can tell your race, gender and class. This is owing to what Oyěwùmí (2005:163) states that in Western culture the body is seen as a purely physiological entity as can be seen through the historical genealogical studies of the body. The studies pointed out physical differences within bodies against a 'European prototype'. Any physical body that may have been perceived to be different to this body (the Europeans prototype), was seen as deviating from the original; and therefore subordinated. Oyěwùmí (2005:164) goes on to describe how this has created a historically gendered gaze on which social order is founded within Western culture.

In further analysing Figure 21, one notices that, over and above the notion of perspective mentioned above, the roofs of the building point to one man and there is a sense of empty space above him, which places him as the focus in the image. The man possessing the focal point in the frame is standing with his hand against his hip and he is looking away from the camera. This particular pose is associated with confidence and dominance. The other two men are looking straight into the camera. The African men is depicted a bit further back and his arms look more restrained as compared to his two European counterparts'. This brings about questions of the existence of hegemonic masculinity within the representation of the Berlin missionaries' experience.

According to Hearn (2004:54), hegemony is the way in which the dominant social and political power of class structures controls the remaining classes. Hearn (2004:60) states that hegemony is the domination of other class groups through force. There is also a normalisation of specific practices and beliefs by the

dominant power. According to Hearn (2004:55) hegemonic masculinity involves the categorisation of men into an idealised group. This patriarchal construct creates a contrast to the 'other', creating a binary whereby the hegemony is that of the male who is regarded to be more masculine and the 'other' (which include all men that are regarded as less or not masculine) are seen as subordinate and less dominant. This creates a masculine hegemony for the categorisation of men. Therefore, hegemonic masculinity can be argued to be the myth that takes place in Figure 21 and in the placement of images where European men are represented in a more prominent position (occurring first or in the focal point in images) in comparison to the African man. The figures below will assist in showing that hierarchical ordering of hegemonic masculinity also exists in the placement of images in the publications.

The dominant ideology can be said to be that of colonialism. Morrell (1998:605) mentions that colonialism allowed for a formation of new forms of masculinity to exist. He mentions that although all masculinities have a shared rulership over women through the exercise of patriarchy, hegemonic masculinity subordinated the gay, black and working-class men and is exclusive to white ruling class men.

To bring further context to the visual trope mentioned earlier on in this section, all images containing the depictions of men devoid of women and children in the first *Thsupa* publication will be investigated. As it can be observed in the images below (Figure 22) there is a narrative of authority figures as communicated by the positioning of images within the publication. The images that occur before the calendar are depictions of European leaders, one example being Figure 21 which was discussed above. The images that appear after the calendar are: firstly, the chief of the Bantoane, followed by an African Evangelist who teaches at Chief Makhushane's village, underneath of which is a depiction of Chief Makhushane and his elders, followed by Bavenda instrumentalists, and lastly the elders of Kratzenstein who are decorating a tree (Hoffmann being the only European amongst them, his name is written out in the caption whereas the other African leaders are not mentioned by name).

1931

Before calendar

After calendar

Figure 22: The depictions of men in their order from the first image of men devoid of women to the last, Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke*, 1931.*

According to Hearn (2014:57), the hegemony of the masculine male becomes the binary to any other subordinate categories of men that do not conform to the idealistic male. Hearn further states that through the social relations of these structures, mediums such as mass media and advertising support the idealistic notions of hegemonic masculinity, resulting in idealised notions of masculinity as being a social construct. Therefore, mass media, in essence, is used as a tool to communicate social order and how certain groups of people should behave. In the 1931 to 1935 *Thsupa* publications, it can be seen how the binary in the Western hegemonic masculine structure is supported. The African man in Figure 21 can also be argued to exist in this image because he has conformed to the ways of Western approval.

Okon (2014:192) states that colonialism fuelled missionary activity in Africa in the nineteenth century. He mentions that missionaries, traders and colonial administrators had a common desire coming into Africa. He mentions that "Christianity has become the religion of civilization and development." In the images presented in the *Thsupa* and *Der Missions-Freund,* the trope of religion being juxtaposed with elements which represent civility and development in communities in Africa is ever prevalent. The latter is all which does not conform to this (which includes the trope of heathenism which is juxtaposed with ideas of uncivilized and strange) and is predominantly in *Der Missions-Freund.* Such images were made a spectacle to emphasise the perpetual lifestyles in Africa that needed healing from missionary supporters in Germany, all who would have been moved when observing such images when reading the publication. The image below (Figure 23) can be taken as an example. The myth of hegemonic masculinity can be seen in this narrative from the first issue of the *Thsupa*. And with the myth of hegemonic masculinity, is the ideology of patriarchy (Morrell 1998:608).

Figure 23: Missions-Inspector Schoene when he was in Venda, giving the resident believers from there a blanket for the altar, the one he brought for them, from Toichi, Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke*, 1931.*

When looking at the denotation of Figure 23 one can say there is a group of people seated while others are standing. There is a hut-shaped building structure on the left. There are mountains in the background. Trees also appear to the righthand side. The standing men are holding up what looks like a cloth with a cross sign on it. The connotation is that there is one African and four Europeans that are standing while the rest of the Africans appear to be seated (standing amongst people that are sitting puts one in authority over them). The Africans, though portrayed in a closer perspective, are not portrayed to be facing the camera with exception of the one that is standing and the ones seated can be argued to therefore not be given as much significance as those that are standing. The Europeans are facing the camera and the attention of the *Thsupa*'s readership can be argued to be projected to them, therefore making them significant. They hold in their hands an altar blanket with a cross on it. The cross has over time become the universal symbol for Christianity (Stott 2006 [1986]:26).

The binary opposite that can be seen is Europeans who are standing and holding up an altar blanket as opposed to Africans who are seated. The Europeans can be said to be representing the change that they are physically bringing into the colonial sphere in the representation on Figure 23. They are carrying Christianity with them

and presenting it to those that are believed not to have it. The landscape that appears behind the people is reminiscent of the ‘underdevelopment’ of the community. There appear hills in the background, and on the left is a hut.

Mirzoeff (2011:1) argues that empires are built on visual authority. This authority manifests itself in control. The overseer in the event can be argued to have control over what is significant to be seen and what is not. In the context of Figure 23 above the overseer’s focus is on the missionaries as well as on what they are holding up. Mirzoeff (2011:474) coins ‘the right to look’ to be the opposite of visuality. Visuality is the way in which the past is seen through imagination which has been derived from information, imagery, and ideas. The authority of visuality goes to the person with the ability to order what is visualized. For authority to hold and be taken seriously, it recurrently needs to be renewed to be recognised as the ‘norm’, The recurrent renewal faces threats of constant contestation. Africans, though under the authority of Europeans, are said to have had a mindset of contesting power and control (Poewe, K & van der Heyden, U 1999). The myth of white supremacy and whites being the carriers of all knowledge, was therefore perpetuated through continuous renewal in response to African contestation.

Figure 24: Lord Piet Mohlamme Mathebe, Chief of Bantoane (District Pretoria),
Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke, *1931.*

In the depiction above (Figure 24) the denotation is that there is a chief of the Bantoane, Piet Mohlamme, as suggested by the caption. He is depicted to be standing outside of what seems to be a house and beside him is a chair which is overlaid with animal hide. Significant of the animal hide is connotations of power and characteristics that the individual is represented to uphold. A leopard is known to be strong and fast and these character traits are associated with the chief. The animal hide, in most cases in African tradition, is placed on the throne of the chief and now it is seen on a chair. Sandra Klopper (1996:65) mentions that the leopard hides and clothing made from leopard hide have been an indication of the rule of a king since the time of King Cetshwayo of the Zulu (1873-1879). And from then onwards, many more rulers adopted the leopard skin as a symbol of their position as authority figures in society.

The binary opposites in the image is civilised against uncivilised. The house and the clothing the man is wearing as well as the chair can be argued to be influenced by a ‘civilised’ culture, which has in the past been associated with the west

(Occident). The animal hides on the man's shoulder and the one on the chair can be argued to represent 'uncivilized' culture, which is associated with the east (Orient). The depiction of this chief stands out from the rest of the images, because its dynamic differs from the other depictions of chiefs in the 1931 issue of the *Thsupa*. Firstly, this chief is depicted as a lone man devoid of other people. In the 1931 issue, other chiefs are depicted with advisers, elders and other counterparts e.g. Figure 25. The relation that this depiction might bear to the other depictions, is its inclusion of the sense of Africa as primitive. Yet in the broader sense this image bears the clearest depiction of Western influence on African culture as it juxtaposes African tradition with Western development (the built house and the clothing the man seems to be wearing and perhaps even the chair that carries the leopard hide).

As discussed in the image with the Chief of Batoane that the leopard hide was a sign of prestige, strength and leadership for the Africans, the European response to the hide was the opposite in the nineteenth century. This perception may have changed over the years owing to the Wests' constant exposure to such imagery and the acceptance of such as normal Africa tradition, however the roots how the hide was regarded remains fixed in ideologies that support western dominance. It is therefore under this premise that I discuss the earlier perception by the Europeans. The animal hide to European missionaries was regarded to be dirty and primitive. Therefore, anyone who wore this was received as filthy. Most of these European missionaries had a background of exposure to the textile industry and in this respect, they sought to rectify the dressing or non-dressing of the African. The clothing introduced by the Europeans was expected to be met by open and welcoming arms. The missionaries were motivated by the bourgeois believe that clothing should serve the purpose of comfort to the one who wears it, and therefore thought Africans would jump at the idea of wearing a 'better set of garments' (Comaroff & Comaroff 1997:225- 226). In the chief one notices the myth of ideal masculinity and primitivity through the inclusion of leopard skin.

The ideology that can be depicted is one of colonialism, one can see the influence of the west on African culture. From the suit that the man is wearing, to his shoes, the chair next to him, as well as the house behind him are all influences from the west. And this was all the result of the colonial encounter.

Figure 25: Chief Makhushane from Phalaborwa, with his elders (leadership is suggested in ditona), Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke*, 1931.*

The denotation in Figure 25 is of six men. Five of them are seated on the ground while one is standing upright. The trousers of all the men are rolled up. There are trees behind them and there are two hats on the ground. The two hats that are placed on the ground also suggest that the men might need protection from the sun or they could be there as status symbols. The men seated do not have any shoes on their feet, which would have come across as strange to the European observer at the time – an apparent incompleteness in the appropriation of the Western attire. The men are said to be in positions of authority as suggested by the caption.

The binary opposite comes in when comparing the feature of the image with the suggestion in the caption, or rather comparing them to other representations of chiefs in the *Thsupa*. This comparison has already been elaborated upon at the top. They are represented in nature, which can bring out questions of primitivity.

When compared to the image above this one is devoid of any form of development or European ideas of innovation. The way in which the Africans appropriated European dress for their purposes, can be seen as their process of innovating. The men in Figure 25 can be argued to be associated with the myth of primitivity as they are depicted in nature with no shoes on. Yet a counter argument can be that by virtue of their clothing they have adopted western manners of dress and also adhere to civilised behaviour.

Maxwell (2011:61) mentions that where the depiction of chiefs was concerned, there was conflict between the maintenance or discard of African traditional practises in the depiction. He mentions that in the mission field, especially where the taking of images was concerned, there had to be a bond or relationship formed between the missionary and the chief. This bond between the two could play a major determining factor towards the success of missionary activities. The bond also gave a good impression to the parent church to show that their expectations were being met.

The chiefs were usually the bases or starting point of any missionary activity as they were the leaders of their society, and had authority and trust over their subjects. The chief was also central to the missionary's educational experience because the missionaries had to learn their mannerisms and conduct in order to create good relations with them and accordingly with their subjects as well. If the chiefs could be Christianised then they were like what Maxwell terms as "Living Trophies", where their conversion would be made a spectacle of in mass circulated publications (Maxwell 2011:61-63).

Figure 26: The female chief Modjadji with her elders (leaders/ advisors), Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke*, 1932.*

Over the five years under investigation, only one representation a of Chief appeared in *Der Missions-Freund*, and this was of a male chief. In the first five issues of the *Thsupa*, an image representing female chiefly authority appeared only once, as can be seen in Figure 26, depicting Chief Modjadji and her elders. The denotation of Figure 26 is that there are three people who are said to be in positions of authority as suggested by the caption. In the glowing garment to the left is Chief Modjadji. The two men beside her are said to be her elders ('Matona' signifies someone in leadership – elders, or someone that should be respected). All three of these people are seated on what looks like leopard skin. Behind them is a house. One cannot see what the chief is wearing as she is covered with a cloth. Her elders, however, seem to be clothed in suits, yet the one to the far right does not seem to be wearing trousers.

The connotation can be found in the fact that, as Maxwell (2011:65) explains, in most instances' chiefs preferred to be depicted with their traditional markers for chieftaincy. As seen above, for chief Modjadji, this was the leopard skin she is seated upon. Maxwell adds that this was a common practice for African leaders from various communities across different areas: they wanted the "symbols of their authority" to be depicted. Queen Modjadji was also associated with her ability to

call the rain, which made her a supernatural figure and gave her significant authority amongst those that recognised her abilities.

Modjadji, by virtue of being a woman, also represented a counter-visuality against the visuality of her time, which was generally associated with the male as authority figure. The binary opposite in this regard, has already been alluded to and will be further discussed in the chapter: how women were usually depicted as subordinates and as occupying domestic roles. This norm was subverted by the representation of a woman of authority who was acknowledged as such in the publication. Queen Modjadji was not only well known for her ability to call upon the rain, but she was said also to possess the ability to withhold it. This latter ability positioned her as a supreme chiefly figure amongst the Lobedu people. Recognition of her authority was also essential for the missionaries who wished to work amongst the Lobedu. The Queen was known to be inaccessible, and seeing her was determined by a prior arrangement to do so, and waiting for access to be granted. It is believed that Europeans were not granted access to the real rain queen but that rather her representative (sister) would stand on her behalf and pose as the chief. The power of the rain queen and the secrets behind it was to be preserved and safe guarded. Only as from 1896 would access be granted more readily to government officials and others whose reasons were considered worthwhile for seeing the queen (Prinsloo 2005:815- 816).

The rain queen's ability to effect rain in far-away places also motivated even the Zulu king, who was regarded stronger (for he had a military force), to seek assistance for their vegetation. It is said that no kingdom was ever prepared to attack the Lobedu, as that would feed the possibility of incurring drought and famine (Prinsloo 2005:815). Here, one can see a counter-myth to the myth of male dominance, which is subverted by a woman in power. Yet the counter-myth was still imbedded within representations of blackness as "strange" and whiteness standing for progress. It took a claim of supernatural abilities for Modjadji to be recognised as a female authority figure. And, the text stated that the house in front

of which the queen is sitting in the image, was built for her as a gift from the missionaries.

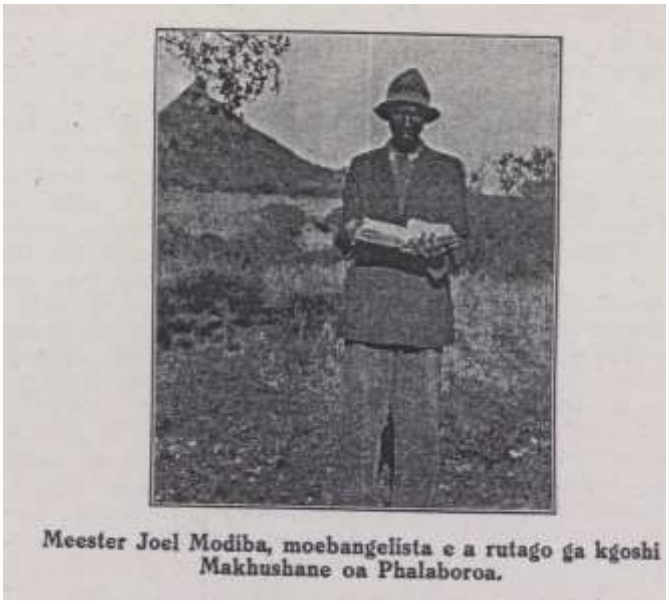


Figure 27: Mr Joel Modiba, Evangelist who teaches at Chief Makhushane in Phalaborwa, Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke*, 1931.*

Looking at the denotation of Figure 27, there is a man who is holding a large book. He is dressed in an oversized suit and on his head is a hat. Behind him are trees and a hill. He looks as if he is standing in a bushy area. The caption identifies him as an evangelist. The book he is holding connotes education and literacy. The suit he is wearing could be one that was passed down to him as it looks oversized. He is surrounded by nature which connotes that he is in a rural area or bush.

The binary opposite is the features of the man and the environment he finds himself in. The suit the man is wearing and the book he is holding are suggestions that the man is educated and is in some position of authority. The surrounding environment shows no cultivation or domestication or 'development'. The myth of masculinity is portrayed by the man. Also, the image carries the myth of progress and advancement through education.

Chiefs who valued sacred traditional practises experienced difficulties with African evangelists; some of these difficulties where detrimental to life. The differences

became more of a problem when the African evangelist was of royal blood. Such an evangelist was regarded with no compassion for not taking heed of valued traditional customs. These customs included rituals held when someone from the royal family died, the chief's ability to call for rain. Failure to adhere to the customs would threaten the position of the chief. It is mentioned that it often took two to three generations before chiefs began to be curious about Christianity. It is also argued that chiefs that were governed by sacred values experienced inner tension with the idea of converting to Christianity as their positions were of a religious nature (Poewe, K & van der Heyden, U 1999).

The man depicted in Figure 27 is understood to be an evangelist and he is holding a book, educated to teach his own people. As he is represented in nature, (he has trees and a hill behind him), one can argue that reading is made to seem exotic. This may perhaps be how the image was interpreted by white readers when it also appeared in the Afrikaans monthly magazine, *Die Huisgenoot* in January 1933 (Hoffmann 1934:6).

In the *Thsupa,* aimed at fellow members of the Berlin Mission Church, an image of an evangelist may have been interpreted differently. Reading was a sign of enlightenment. The aspiration of being in leadership would require for Africans to become like the European to even have a shot at being in leadership. They would have to follow the laws of the system and make it in the system before they could begin to make decisions in the system.

Figure 28: At the witchdoctor (direct translation: priest of magic): Prayer for the healing from disease, Der Missions-Freund*, 1934.*

The denotation of Figure 28 is that there are two men who seem to be kneeling down. The man on the left is wearing clothes that leaves his arms bare while the one on the right looks like he has rags covering his upper body while his legs are left bare. The man on the right is holding what looks like a small calabash. There is a leafless tree between them, and a wall made of sticks, as well as a hut. The man on the left has his hands together which connotes that he is praying or paying respect. The hut is associated with rural areas. The two men kneeling facing each other are associated with African ritual practises.

According to Seroto (2010:66) the BMS regarded certain African religious practices such as sorcery and the use of magic as 'heathen'. When looking at the images of Christians compared to the images of those regarded as 'heathen', one can see a binary opposite between the two depictions in terms of action, clothing and setting. The common binary opposites are: clothed/half naked, modern clothing/traditional clothing, modern building structures/grass and log huts, 'primitive practice'/ 'civilized practice'. *Der Missions-Freund* had stronger emphasis on depicting 'heathens' than the *Thsupa*, because this aspect of depiction could assist BMS workers in justifying their interventions in the mission field to their supporters in Berlin. The man on the right in Figure 28 represents the stereotype of African

traditional helpers. In African culture it is regarded a taboo to represent sacred rituals, let along talk about them. In the representation above we see the opposite being portrayed, which increases the probability that the scene must have been staged, perhaps even by Christian 'actors'. The representation in Figure 28 differs from the images in the *Thsupa* specially regarding the way authority and chiefs were presented. Contrary to the Western authority figures, as well as the African chiefs portrayed in the *Thsupa,* authority figures in the *Der Missions-Freund* were being portrayed as 'traditional'.

In Figure 28 both men are bowing down. Yet, unlike the man on the left, the man on the right is holding up a container (similar to a calabash) in his hands. The act of bowing down or kneeling in Christianity and Western Culture more generally, was regularly understood to have been a way of showing respect to someone who was of higher authority than the self. Kneeling in this instance, however, meant access to the transcendental (relating to a spiritual realm). Kneeling here, is power; power to know and the power to heal. Sacred traditional practises like these were not portrayed in the *Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke* (1931- 1935). This was most probably because the BMS did not want the African followers to believe that they were in support of such practises.

In African society traditional doctors were believed to be very powerful as they could communicate with the spiritual realm. As not all people could communicate in the spiritual realm, those with the ability to do so were elevated in society and regarded as part of authority. Yet the men in this image can be seen to be dressed strangely, and we know that this image was intended for a German audience which was 'looking' in order to 'see' the need for Christian intervention. Accordingly, they would be motivated to continue to support the missionaries so they could encourage change in such communities.

4.3.3 Marginalization of Women and Representation of the 'Other' in Images

In the *Thsupa* there is only one images that depicts a woman in solitude. And there are only two images that portray women devoid of men and children. In both these images the women appear in the context of a group and not as individuals. The rest of the images portray them alongside children and men. And in most of the images where they are portrayed with men they are portrayed to occupy a subordinate position; this is either within the church, in a family household or in the workplace where they are usually identified as teachers.

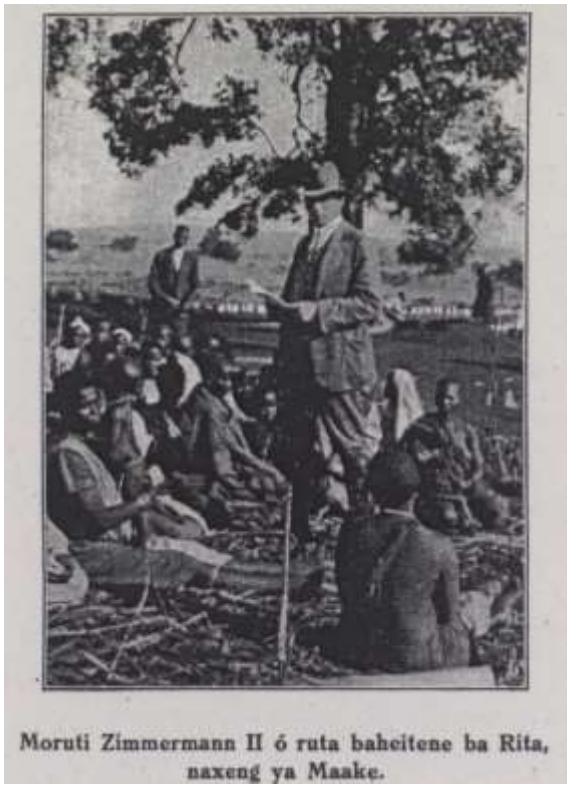
Figure 29: The mother of Makusana Malatsi of Phalaborwa, Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke*, 1932.*

The denotation of Figure 29 is of a woman who is seated on a mat with a blanket covering her legs and no clothing on her upper body. Behind the woman is a hut with a roof made of straw, and a wall made of woven branches. She must be of a mature age, as can be connoted from the white hair that seems to be above her head. She looks frail and her arms are skinny, possibly from malnutrition or a condition related to old age, and yet she must have been the mother of a man of some significance, labelled as "Mister Makusana Malatsi" in the caption. The hut and wall made from stacked branches connote that she is in a rural area.

The binary opposite to the image above is a young healthy woman (more like the one that can be seen in Figure 32). Van Eeden (2009:149) states that images of those regarded as 'savage' 'other' have been in production ever since the

nineteenth century to the present day. These images depict indigenous subjects in an objectified stance where they appear as: sexually yielding (especially women), possessing primitive traditions and attire, ‘noble savages’, and most commonly for indigenous women, bare-breasted. As argued by Bunn (2001:128), the African landscape has been subjected to similar objectification. The African landscape can be viewed as the threshold that brings the self and the savage into co-existence. In this space it would be necessary to make visible, or accessible, certain forms as means to maintain dominion over those regarded as ‘savage’. A clear depiction of this phenomenon can be observed in Figure 30 here below, where the myth of the ‘primitive/savage poor black woman’ can be seen. The ideology at play here is one of patriarchy. Bozzoli (1983:140-142) views the rejection of women by men in terms of how patriarchy is informed by capitalism. In order for patriarchy to maintain its power, women are being excluded from the benefits of capitalism.

The notion of infantilization is a phenomenon argued to have been employed by the missionaries in representing the indigenous people. Under this phenomenon, the indigenous were treated as lacking maturity and therefore could not be afforded the freedom of making big decisions. In the context of this study, it can be seen in the extent to which the African Christians did not have the freedom to choose the information that was placed in the *Thsupa*. One could argue that the woman depicted in Figure 29 did not have much of a say in the manner in which she was depicted and presented in the publication, or rather, that she had no control over the type of meanings she had come to embody in the representation (Thomas 1992:379).



Moruti Zimmermann II ó ruta baheitene ba Rita, naxeng ya Maake.

Figure 30: Moruti Zimmermann II ó ruta baheitene ba Rita naxeng ya Maake: Pastor Zimmerman II is teaching the heathens of Rita in the wild fields of Maake, Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke, *1935.*

The denotative meaning of Figure 30 is that two men are standing up amongst a group of people sitting down. They seem to be sitting on grass or straw and behind them is a large tree. The men are dressed in suits while those seated are not fully clothed. There is no building in the background, just bare land with vegetation. When looking at the connotation, one can say that the above image is a juxtaposing of two different social classes of people. Standing, as the focus of attention, through the centralizing use of the camera, is a European man in what appears to be a suit and a hat on his head. Another man, who appears to be African, is positioned further back. Around the white man seems to be a group of people who are seated on the ground. There is not much certainty as to whether the people seated are male or female, yet one seems to be holding a toddler and the other one on the far right seems to have her breasts outside of her garment. The people seated on the ground appear to be either scarcely clothed or covered in cloth. Christians regarded being clothed as being close to godliness (Comaroff & Comaroff 1997:223). As a result, by the virtue of their nakedness, it can be argued that the group of people seated had not yet been converted to Christianity.

The binary that is gathered from this image is that of Christian against 'heathen'. In the images with people that are captioned to be 'heathen' there is a notable trope of not being fully clothed, which has also been discussed in the previous chapter. Clothing in the Western Christian world resembled one's attempts (or lack thereof) towards 'civilizing' oneself and ultimately signalling how far one was in the process of sanctification. The missionaries believed that what Africans chose to wear would affect the way in which they carried themselves and what they believed in. So, the lack of clothing can be argued to have meant the lack of belief in God, as suggestive by the beliefs of the German Christians. Although clothedness meant so much in terms of defining one's spirituality, the pursuit of fashion was regarded of an evil nature. The desire to purchase clothes for the purpose of looking good was argued to manifest from lust, vanity and selfish pride. In this regard, within the context of the church, clothing served as a marker or banner for one's spiritual conversion and a new choice of conduct (Comaroff & Comaroff 1997:223).

Although missionaries worked hard at maintaining their view of clothing as a marker for spiritual conversion, the African people that were confronted by these ideologies understood the concept differently. To some Africans the garments were sanctification and the putting on of the garment meant that they were Christian and the taking off of the garment meant that they were back to their selves outside of Christianity. To be a 'heathen' meant not to belong to a certain religious group as regarded by those who were part of that group (Comaroff & Comaroff 1997:223-224). Therefore, in the context of the BMS, considering someone as 'heathen' by their dress code, is problematic. Not all that were dressed as Christians had been spiritually transformed and not all who refused to wear the garments were oblivious to the Christian faith. We learn that certain chiefs had the desire to be converted and perhaps were, but because of customs they remained in their native garments (Poewe K & van der Heyden U 1999).

Van Eeden (2004:24) states that the colonial landscape existed in such a way as to highlight or emphasise the superiority of the coloniser over the colonised. In their pursuits of creating a hierarchical order between themselves and the colonised, colonisers celebrated their imperialistic ideas and made them seem normal. Harries (2007:102) mentions that in the nineteenth century, to Europeans, African landscapes were depicted as the place where they discovered lands that were 'lost' and 'primitive'. Africa was mapped in such a way that the origin of its people seemed a brief occurrence from the time it was first encountered by the Europeans. One can argue that such is also the case for the depictions and writings about South Africa in the *Thsupa* and *Der Missions-Freund*.

Van Eeden (2009:147-148) states that there were clear binary opposites that assisted in maintaining ideas of difference in the colonial sphere. Van Eeden lists these binaries as follows: "civilised/ uncivilised, tame/ savage, unnatural/ natural, urban/ rural, white/ black, contained/ unfettered, moral/ licentious, fractured/ harmonious and rational/ irrational." She mentions how photographs created for the western gaze took traditions and natural areas and reduced them to object form. This is the place where the exotic 'other' was represented in simplicity and naivety through photography. This new form of representation gave rise to new themes in visual collections. In the 1930s there was a prevailing trope of unnamed subjects, women wearing traditional attire; seen as the embodiment of tradition and an enduring primitivism or, what Van Eeden terms to be "'native' beauty". The myth that one can gather from the representation above is of white being associated with cleanness, educatedness, purity of soul (Christian), and being clothed (therefore the norm). The other myth is of black being unclean, uneducated, impure of soul ('heathen'), and naked (therefore strange).

The ideologies which can be identified here are those of colonialism and capitalism – or rather, imperialism. Bunn (2001:128-129) states that South Africa, as a colonial landscape, was seen as a depository for romantic visualisation. He mentions that it was owing to the increase in capitalist ideas in the world. Landscape and its symbolic power became a factor of importance to the settlers

and their capitalist motives. He mentions that the colonial space rendered the existence of those that were not considered as indigenous in what was considered to be exotic spaces, to be normal. Bunn mentions that there were certain ordering devices put in place in an illustration which adjudicated for a space to be considered as colonial landscape. For example, Figure 30 can be read in terms of the colonial framing because the European ruled the space and Africans conformed to the rulership. A similar trope is observed in Figure 31.

Figure 31: Group of heathen and Christians at a missionary religious service at Kalava in Bavendaland, Der Missions-Freund, *1931.*

In the representation above (Figure 31) one can denote a group of people, some wrapped in cloths while others are not. They are surrounded by trees. In the background are mountains. The people seem to be clothed in bright garments. When looking at the connotation, the people sitting in the foreground appear to be young because of their smaller posture. Further away from the camera, are what looks like more mature people with bright cloths on their bodies and above their heads (the bestowing of headdress was a common practice within the BMS). There also seems to be people that are dressed in a different set of clothing also positioned further back. Suggested in the caption is that there are 'heathens' and Christians in this image with no specification of which are Christian and which are 'heathen'.

Images of the exotic 'other', even though unintended, are offensive, belittling, and inconsiderate of the culture of the people or the people that they represent (Van Eeden 2009:147). The image above (Figure 31) stands for a body of binary opposites that are created for the Western gaze. The representation is placed in *Der Missions-Freund* of 1931, which means it was intended for the consumption of German BMS supporters and followers. Some of the people depicted in the foreground are not fully clothed while other people in the background seem to be fully clothed and also wearing cloths over their heads. The caption further perpetuates the binary opposition by stating that the people in the image are made up of a group of 'heathens' and Christians. This can be argued to be the binary opposite of religious significance and even that of class. The myth of primitivity is perpetuated.

Given what has already been mentioned about nakedness and its association with being 'heathen' one can assume that those people portrayed in the foreground are the ones that are regarded to be 'heathen' and that they are made a spectacle of by virtue of their placement in the image. Much like the image in Figure 30, those that are regarded as 'heathen' have to be depicted in a natural setting with trees and grass and no form of building structure in their surrounding area. Therefore, it was a misconception by the African believers that this sole act of putting on 'Christian clothes' qualified them as having the status of being Christian.

Colonial powers are said to employ the feminization of African landscapes in their pursuit for power. It is argued that in pursuit of power and control the African land can stand for ideological ideas of the empty land which permits tempering from anyone coming from without. The representation of African women as objectified and African landscapes as empty gives permission for colonization to take root in their existence (Van Eeden 2009:149).

4.3.4 Family Inside and Outside the Berlin Mission Society

Family households in the *Thsupa* are all represented as heterosexual couples that seem monogamous in their practice of marriage. There is one image that portrays

a chief with women kneeling next to him. Their role or position as wives is not identified in the caption as had been the case with a similar image in *Der Missions-Freund*. In the *Thsup*a, women portrayed within the context of family tend to assume domestic roles as compared to the men who seem to uphold the leadership roles. Women are depicted kneeling, holding their babies, or standing next to their husbands who are portrayed sitting on chairs.

Figure 32: Pastor F. Reuter of Medigen, he conducted the wedding of Rahel, daughter of pastor Josef Mokitimi, and Eliya Boke, Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke*, 1932.*

In Figure 32 the denotation is of three people standing beside each other. The caption suggests that the white man is a pastor, the black woman and black man have just been married. There is a connotation of a European man who is dressed in priestly garments (long robe which reaches the toes and a white collar). Beside the European man is an African woman who is dressed in a bright garment with a bright *doek* above her head. And lastly, standing beside the woman, is an African man who seems to be wearing a suit. The binaries we see is one of black and white, woman and men. The myth supporting the composition is heteronormativity; a heterosexual relationship is being portrayed. The other myth which is upheld, is one of monogamy.

Figure 33: 'King' Seloane in Phalaborwa with his wives, Der Missions-Freund*, 1932.*

The image above (Figure 33) occupies a full page in the *Der Missions-Freund* publication, with the caption being the only text. When reading the denotation: there is a man who is fully clothed; sitting beside him are four women who are not fully clothed. The women have adornments around their necks and on their wrists. On the left is what looks like a hut with a roof made of straw and to the right is another dwelling made of sticks. The caption suggests that the man is a king who is sitting beside his wives. The location connotes a rural area with the two structures that are made of straw and sticks. Judged by the way they are dressed, they could have been mistaken for ordinary village folk.

The binary opposite to this depiction can be found in Figures 32 and 34. Both these Figures were depicted in the *Thsupa* to resemble the type of relationship between a man and a woman that was acceptable within the church. These acceptable relationships were characterised as being heterosexual and monogamous. The relationship which is depicted above, is characterised as the practice of polygamy within African societies. In this instance it is also associated with African authority. Therefore, suggesting that African culture carried a myth of strangeness and backwardness, this image was further supporting a patriarchal ideology.

Polygamy was one of the practices that were forbidden in the BMS and regarded as pagan. The BMS often faced a dilemma of either adapting to the practises of

the South African people they encountered or completely distancing themselves from this manner of life that was so different to their pietistic religion. On the one hand they regarded such practises as close to the works of the devil; yet on the other hand they encouraged Africans to maintain their ways of life and not to try and imitate Europeans (Seroto 2010:66-67). Polygamy was portrayed more often in the German publication than in the South African one. An image bearing a resemblance to Figure 33 did appear in the *Thsupa* (1933:30), but the caption did not specify whether the people kneeling were the chief's wives or just family members.

In Figure 33 the king and his wives are represented in what appears to be a traditional homestead. The king's wives are not fully clothed yet the king himself is fully dressed and his head is also covered. Here, being clothed can also be associated with power or dominion. Behind them is what appears to be huts made of grass and logs. The binary opposites portraying the difference between Western and African leadership can also be applied to this situation. In Figure 31 and 32 one sees people that are fully clothed in a modern type of clothing and a modern type of house in the background. In contrast, the caption for Figure 33 clearly states that it is a king with his wives, emphasising – or rather exposing – that he is a polygamist.

The 'heathen' women are often portrayed not fully clothed, in contrast to those regarded as Christian. Another observation that can be made in both depictions, is how women's significance are marked in terms of whom they are married to. It is interesting how 'heathen' women are portrayed as naked and in need of covering. This explains why *Der Missions-Freund* placed emphasis on images of 'heathenism' in full page images with only the caption as accompanying words. Such images were used as vehicles for missionaries to show the severity of the situation in Africa and to persuade and/or encourage further funding instruments. The portrayal of the Christian women and their stature was more 'dignified'. Yet the Christian woman was still in many aspects represented in her domestic role, she was usually not given a name (unless she was the daughter of one of the

church leaders) and only existed as support for her husband and as a mother to their children. And the portrayal of Christian women and children in group settings also stripped them of their individuality and therefore, any form of autonomy over themselves. The myth of patriarchy can also be observed here.

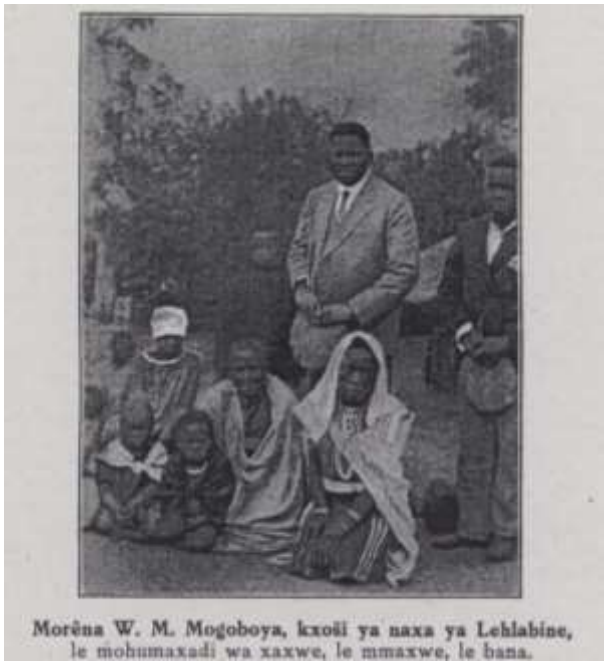


Figure 34: Lord W.M. Mogoboya, chief of the nation of Lehlabine, with his wife, his mother, and children, Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke*, 1935.*

The above image (Figure 34) denotes a man standing beside two young men and in front of him on their knees are three women and two young children. Behind the people are trees. The caption suggests that the man is with his wife, his mother and his children. All the males are on their feet and all the women are kneeling down. By the way in which the men are dressed, one could argue that they connote a high social standing. The women and young girls have clothes covering their shoulders which was also a common practise within the church at the time.

The binary opposite lies between the men and the women. The men are standing while the women are kneeling. Kneeling is associated with submissiveness. The image and caption also support the myth of a heterosexual relationship and monogamy. This image can also be read against that in Figure 33. The men in Figure 34 can be said to be well-groomed as they are wearing suits and

respectfully hold their hats low on their hands instead of above their heads. The man in Figure 33 is seated and has his hat on his head. Mirzoeff (2011:14) mentions a “hierarchy of civilization” which existed within the colonial sphere. The hierarchy placed those who were ‘cultured’ and had the means to use resources for production of knowledge at the top. Meanwhile, those that fell under the banner of uncivilized, unkempt, uneducated and, in essence, primitive, were at the bottom. In the instance of the three depictions above, the one that can be regarded as ‘cultured’ is the European man who was given the power to lead the two African people into a ceremony that was considered to be in agreement with the ways of the BMS.

The BMS had what was called a *Platzordnung,* which were the rules and regulations put together at Botshabelo in order to have social command over the mission stations. Merensky, as one of the founding leaders, was adamant that any practice that was in conflict with the Word as stated in the Bible, was prohibited. This included worship of what was regarded as false gods, rainmaking celebrations, sorcery, adultery, drunkenness, gambling, *lobola* (marriage through the use of cattle as dowry), polygamy and circumcision. Merensky combined his spiritual authority with worldly authority to uphold an arduous power and rule over those who followed him (Seroto 2010:66). Therefore, by representing the practice of monogamy and the marital ceremony that agreed with the rules of the BMS in the *Thsupa*, the African congregants were expected to consume these representations and aspire towards them. The portrayal of the forbidden practices, polygamy and sorcery, within the context of *Der Missions-Freund* on the other hand, maintained the normalisation of the presence and influence of Europeans in South Africa.

Ethnographers are said to have defined the segments of civilization which have been fostered by the political disjoins that occur between the structures of culture and anarchy. Mirzoeff (2011:14-15) then goes on to say that culture is encompassed by art, religion, customs, and modes of knowledge. He further states that European culture is regarded to take precedence over all other cultures.

Photographs in themselves do not bare much meaning yet meaning is given them through interpreters that use elements from culture to understand their meaning. It is argued that images taken in the field by ethnographers are influenced by the ethnographers' experiences of that field. Yet on the other hand, they are also guided by their subjectivity and frame of reference (Davison & Mahashe 2012:48). Given this, it can be argued that the use of the camera when portraying male individuals places them in positions of superiority, with more emphasis on portraying the European men, rather than their African counterparts, in such positions.

Seroto (2010:66) mentions that it is believed by African artists and academics that African missionary followers were estranged to their cultures and customs by the missionary societies, and that they were groomed into the Western manner of conduct. This is said to have been maintained by missionaries that glorified Christian culture as the main authority and disregarded and downgraded African culture to the status of "'pagan' and 'uncivilised'", as Seroto puts it. Over and above this glorification of Christian culture is the habit of regarding certain Western practices such as monogamy, European attire and decorum, to be part of their project of Christianising their African followers. Africans were to live a 'pure' and 'holy' life which meant they had to discard or rid themselves of their cultural norms and behaviours that missionaries regarded as an inhibition of their new belief system.

The *Thsupa* publication as such can also be argued to have maintained the pursuit of communicating a Christian culture to its followers. It portrayed life as it was (ought to have been) lived in and around a Christian society. The relationships that were regarded as commendable were portrayed. The type of fellowship amongst Missionaries and believers was also portrayed. And the way of life that was hoped to be maintained by the followers was mapped out in images and text (as discussed in the previous chapter). Authority was also communicated in terms of highlighting or making a spectacle of certain people through the way in which they

were portrayed. This can be related to the characteristic way in which a missionary periodical used to carry religious propaganda.

Propaganda is said to be some form of communication which is aimed at the masses in order to impact them with an idea which has not yet been made familiar to them. The main aims of propaganda are to change the individual's mode of thinking into a collective manner of thought in order to guide the masses into a certain collective goal. The message is usually carried by a strong or highly esteemed leader to the people (Marková 2008:41). In the BMS, especially in the *Thsupa*, since their strong leaders were not yet familiar to the readers, the editor or writer often felt the need to edify certain individuals and communicate their leadership role to guide and convince the readers into accepting them as such.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter was constituted by a semiotic analysis of images found in the *Thsupa* and *Der Missions-Freund*. The semiotic analysis assisted in discussing the denotative, connotative, myth and ideology found in the images. It can be concluded that the BMS had certain myths that they wanted congregants to live by, some of which were influenced by their Protestant roots, others by the messages they read in the Bible (which was connected to their beliefs), and lastly the societies they found themselves in and the resounding ideologies upheld therein.

The *Thsupa* communicated to South African readers the myth that Berlin was the capital of an advanced nation, with large church structures and advanced transportation systems. The idea that Berlin missionaries could travel to South Africa affirmed this image of progress and influenced the desire of Africans to be like them. Africans were portrayed through this myth to be in subordination to Europeans, but were shown that they could have access to European possessions and status by employing certain habits and manners of conduct. This access to European possessions was also afforded them through conforming to colonialism, which exposed them to Europeans and European culture.

However, the myth also entailed that, no matter how close Africans got to being like Europeans, they could not possess as much authority, since they were culturally backward and limited by their disposition. Africans were rather afforded access to Christianity and Christ, as that was all that could help them out of their strange ways. So, these Africans were taught in the manner and conduct of a Protestant. As Protestants and BMS congregants they had to reject their culture, which was regarded as 'heathen', in exchange for a manner of life pleasing to the overseers of their new chosen faith. BMS congregants were expected to exist in heterosexual monogamous families. These family households were marked by the existence of a patriarchal authority figure in the man, while the woman assumed the domestic role of taking care of the children and submitting to her husband.

Der Missions-Freund communicated to the German readers the myth that South Africa was undeveloped with many people that were yet to be converted to the Christian faith. The building structures were not that big and they could not accommodate as many people as the churches in Berlin. Therefore, the myth was that Africa needed European intervention in order to learn how to grow their churches. And further myths claimed that Africans were uneducated and undeveloped and did not have the knowledge to be able to create the means to build any bigger buildings, which meant that they could not govern themselves and therefore ought to conform to the hegemonic rule of European men who knew more. Africa was viewed as having a lot of resources that did not necessarily belong to anybody, and Africans did not know how to make use of them. With the imperialist ideas that the Europeans had, they were best to handle these resources. The other myth was that Africans were primitive and engaged in strange practices such as sorcery and polygamy and therefore needed to be saved from their backwardness. And for this reason, it made sense to pull resources from the parent country to support these changes that needed to happen in Africa.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1 Summary of Chapters

The purpose of chapter two was to contextualise the making of the Berlin Mission Church, which was the church of African congregants founded by the Berlin Mission. Their African congregants resided within the interior of South Africa. The Berlin missionaries were part of the Berlin Mission Society with the parent church based in Berlin, Germany. The Berlin Mission Society also had mission congregations in other countries, but for this study, the focus would be especially on the Transvaal, where their influence was strong amongst the northern Sotho speaking communities. The *Thsupa* publication was meant to serve this system and network of people. In the 1930s, which are the focus of this study, the Berlin missionaries were in control of this publication.

In the history of the BMS in the interior of South Africa we observe the clash of three different authorities: The state authority/ government, the 'native'/ indigenous authority through chiefs, and the missionary authority. The missionaries of the Berlin Mission in South Africa had good relations with the state power, the Boers, in as far as they adhered to their regulations and compelled their African followers to do the same. The missionaries were trying to make good subjects of the indigenous congregants in their churches. The chiefly authorities individually had their own viewpoints of the missionaries. Sekwati was very welcoming of the missionaries, but Sekhukhune was sceptical and later banished them from his land. The missionaries had authority over their followers and in turn reported to authority in Berlin.

From the literature discussed in chapter two it was clear that the African congregants desired power and believed that acquaintance with European missionaries and traditions would somehow get them closer to that. Some were rather interested in the status attached to possessing more power and more influence within the church and this is where Africans began to seek independence by forming their own congregations. The Berlin Missionary Society were worried

by the desire of power which was displayed by Africans. During the nineteenth century Berlin Missionaries were against the idea of appointing Africans as ministers; only in special cases African helpers were ordained to serve as evangelists.

Towards the twentieth century missionary perspectives began to change. Missionaries moved away from their traditional values of transforming the spiritual self, towards transforming whole communities. This shift in perspective was camouflaged by a desire to define German, English and African congregants within a hierarchy where Germans were at the very top and Africans at the bottom. Werner Eiselen, who is regarded the architect of apartheid, is argued to have been influenced by these ideas. In contrast to him, is Carl Hoffmann, who played a major role in the production of the *Thsupa* publication.

The 1910 Edinburgh conference becomes significant to the history of the twentieth century as it marks a time that different missionaries from across the world could meet with one accord. The missionaries realised that they were no longer planting mission stations. They now had congregations of indigenous Christians. There indigenous Christians had started having their own voice and had grown into maturity. The societies had realized that they could no longer speak on behalf of their Christians – however, the Berlin Mission was slow in realising this.

Chapter three gave an overview of the background of missionary periodicals in South Africa. It then explained the purpose that missionary periodicals served in the context of missionary societies. This chapter went on to discuss the genre of missionary periodicals. Missionary periodicals, as Acke states, subscribed to three components, namely formal organisation, rhetorical structure, and thematic content. Within these components existed sub-components. In the formal organisation the discussion was around the currency, reliability, stability and familiarity of the text to its readers. It was established that *Thsupa* abided by these sub-components. The employment of these sub-components contributed towards the recognition of the text by its readers and the response that it stirred within them.

The rhetorical structure consists of communication of immediate and mediated relations. The *Thsupa* was seen to include more of immediacy rather than mediated relations. This is because the text in the *Thsupa* for most of its part was written in a manner that directly addressed its readers. In the context of the *Thsupa* these readers would be the co-labourers of the BMS in the Transvaal. The *Thsupa* was also found to include letters, which are reminiscent of biblical text in their structure. The connection that the texts have to biblical content assisted in positioning the *Thsupa* as an authoritative text amongst those that recognised the biblical authority embedded in it. The authors were also found to have employed the style of biblical letter writing. They appear to have been communicating with humility, yet the style of writing and its familiarity through the use of recognisable biblical texts, rendered authoritative power messages in the *Thsupa*.

The thematic content is the reoccurring themes which constitutes the common tropes communicated within the genre of missionary periodicals. The recurrent themes that I emphasised in my study of the *Thsupa* were: civilised versus uncivilised; light versus darkness; Christian versus heathen, and othering versus belonging. The notion of othering was found to have occurred in three ways within the context of the Transvaal society and within the *Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke* and *Der Missions-Freund* publications. It occurred as racial, tribal, and religious othering.

It was indicated that the *Thsupa* functioned in a transcontinental communication network. The texts and images for the *Thsupa* were produced both in South Africa and Berlin, yet the final publication was determined, printed and published in Germany. Although the South Africans had the means to print and publish their own material, they did not have the funding to include their own illustrations and they did not have the education or power to be able to communicate in the transcontinental sphere on their own terms. There was a strict hierarchy within the BMS which ordered information and essentially ordered and restricted behaviour.

This can be seen initially from the influence that Carl Meinhof and his ideas about tribes had on some of the authors that wrote in the *Thsupa*.

Chapter four captured the visualization of both South Africans and Germans as presented in the *Thsupa* (for a South African audience) and the *Der Missions-Freund* (for a German audience). Through a semiotic analysis the emerging tropes were discussed in order to establish possible stereotypes, myths and ideologies communicated by the BMS in the publication. I commented firstly on the assertion of authority through the representation of space and place. European church buildings and structures were portrayed as monumental structures whereas African buildings were simplistic and occupied less space. The use of the camera in defining the space inside and outside of the built structures guided the vision to perceive the space in a certain way. The position of shot and area of focus aided to emphasise the magnitude of certain places and highlight the inferiority of others.

Second was the discussion of the dominant themes which were identified according to their representation of different forms of leadership, including: African leaders (chiefs, traditional healers/ doctors), European leaders (church ministers, inspectors, directors as well as founders). I also portrayed those that were in subordinate leadership roles such evangelists. The European leadership was viewed as the hegemonic leadership when compared to the African leadership. It was discussed how the publication used the placement of images either before or after the almanac section as part of its mechanism for the ordering of information.

While the *Thsupa* generally portrayed the superiority of men, a counter representation was seen through the representation of a female leader, Queen Modjadji. The common trope that was identified in the representation of African leaders was their use of traditional signifiers of authority e.g. leopard skin. The study also showed how women were marginalised and, in most cases, were assigned the title of ‘heathen’ for wearing their traditional attire, which revealed parts of the body that made European viewers perceive them as ‘primitive’.

The study also looked into the representations of family dynamics. The *Thsupa* seems to have portrayed what was acceptable within the BMS mean while *Der Missions-Freund* placed emphasis on the contrary. The *Thsupa* portrayed monogamous family units that had the women in a subordinate position through the manner in which they were portrayed (either kneeling down, carrying a baby, standing beside a man seated on a chair). Through the manner in which *Der Missions-Freund* portrayed women, they were represented as marginalised. I also discuss the representation of mining activities in South African by Europeans for the consumption of a German audience.

In the above we see the authority of the editor and publisher of the publication and what they chose to reveal and hide to both the South African and German societies. What was also revealed is how the periodical could function as a bearer of meaning and also as a propaganda mechanism to communicate a celebration of Western leadership and culture to the South Africans. The periodical was used to carry out controversial messages to the German audience to show them the 'type of life' South Africans lived in the hope to maintain financial support. The study has found that the representations in the periodicals were planned out according to the audience that would receive them and what the colonising society wanted to carry out to the colonised society.

The German missionaries believed that the Africans were uneducated, undeveloped and therefore lacked knowledge about the Bible and about God. Their intention was therefore to use publications such as the *Thsupa* in order to communicate to them on a monthly, even daily basis (depending on when the readership decided to read the publication) what it looked like to be a Christian in the BMS. To the South African congregants, they communicated ideas about whom to look up to as leaders, manner of conduct within the church and outside the church, dress code for Christians and family dynamics in the Christian household. As for the German readership, whom they relied on for funding, much emphasis was placed on communicating the things that were happening outside

of the church space that needed to be changed, and also their intervention in the lives of those that were not yet converted.

5.2 Contribution of the Study

Research in humanities does not always have a directly measurable impact, however the findings of the proposed study contributes to a broader project of re-configuring the cultural knowledge that impacts on the national consciousness. Greater understanding on the shaping of indigenous knowledge amongst modernising African elites with access to international networks in the past, is the backdrop and foundation for conviviality in the present.

The research itself is concerned with a global topic which has affected many cultures and people over centuries. As some of the most vital information in the periodicals can only be found in archives in Germany, it gives the opportunity for South Africans to access knowledge about the country that had been captured and stored in spaces that many would not be able to access themselves. This gives South Africa an opportunity to liaise with Germany in terms of preserving historical content. This research also contributes to the sciences, in this case the social sciences, by investigating publications that have been overlooked or rarely discussed. These publications are a hub of knowledge regarding indigenous people and their practices. The photography in the publications do not only show the influence of Western culture but also places focus on the experience of the indigenous people.

5.3 Limitations of the Study

The initial challenge was that the original copies of the *Thsupa Mabaka a Kereke* and *Der Missions-Freund* are in Germany, so getting all the material required for the study took some time. The sources that carry the information about the BMS were not many and the ones that seemed to capture more in-depth information were written in German or Afrikaans. This prolonged the process as certain information had first to be translated and flagged as either important for the study or not. In the case of some pictures the quality could also not be enhanced so as

to present a clearer idea of what the pictures conveyed. As the *Thsupa* is written in Northern Sotho from close to a century ago, it took a while to get translations together in order to understand the context of what was being written about (taking into consideration the orthography of the time and different writing styles of the authors).

Owing to the focus of my study on the Berlin Mission Church and Germans supporting Christian mission work in the 1930s, certain details pertaining to the time were neglected. For instance, this was also a time during which the Nazi party came to power in Germany and a fantasy of the revival of the German colonial empire that was lost during the First World War, started to circulate in popular periodicals. It was also a time of harsher racial politics in Germany – and South Africa. The idea of missionising and converting to Christianity people in other parts of the world, was not always approved of by the Nazis, who argued that German people could spend their hard-earned savings better than to invest in mission work. Also, the Berlin Mission had to start censoring themselves in order to assure that they would be allowed to continue publishing their periodicals. One must ask: Did the Berlin Mission Society indeed go as far as they could to distance themselves from the Nazis, or are there in their publications hints of approval of/ excitement about the possible prospect of Germany returning to Africa as a colonising force?

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

Further research would see this study doing an in-depth discussion of German history and not just the South African historical background of the same years. It would compare both the historical content from Germany with information stated in the *Thsupa* and *Der Missions-Freund*. With this the study would also make *Der Missions-Freund* a point of focus in order to give a more in-depth reading of the content of the publication. The study would also seek to find more information on the *Mogoera wa babaso*, and how its content related to that of the *Der Missions-Freund.* The study would also seek to discuss more of the authors and their backgrounds and other possible South African publications that they may have

contributed to. A study of the historical background of the authors would serve the purpose of gathering how their backgrounds informed the ideologies that were embedded in the information they reproduced. The origin of the cover pages of *Thsupa* and illustrations can be further investigated. This will assist in giving more information about the types of people that informed the imagination of its African Christian readers.

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