A History of Christianity in South Africa

Volume 1

JW HOFMEYR and GJ PILLAY
(Editors)

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A History of Christianity in South Africa
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Foreword

For a long time now, there has been a need for a new book on the history of Christianity in South Africa. Du Plessis's *History of Christian Missions in South Africa* written in 1911 and Gerdener's *Recent Developments in the South African Mission Field* (1958) have served us well and remain useful source books. Peter Hinchliff's little book *The Church in South Africa* (1968) is one of the few available on the subject. Du Plessis and Gerdener focused on the missionary expansion of the churches and their work obviously needed updating; Hinchliff aimed only to provide a brief overview of the main Christian denominations.

In this book, instead of describing the rise and development of the divergent Christian denominations or their missions, the different church traditions are placed as they emerged alongside each other within certain key periods of South African history.

This approach obviously raises the thorny problem of periodisation. Were the periods to be marked out using the key sociopolitical epochs in the country as a whole, or are strictly ecclesiastical epochs or trends to be used? Should the vantagepoint of reading this history be changed from that of the emergent church traditions to that of the laity or those people who have been marginalised? While changes on perspective would no doubt elicit new and interesting information on the past, any deliberate choice of one perspective would limit others. Indeed, it is not difficult to contrive a frame of reference for the whole project in which a contemporary issue becomes a Procrustean bed for all of South African church history. Would it not be better to integrate the insights of these different perspectives on the past into the one story?

As work on the book progressed, it became increasingly clear that South African Christianity and the concomitant ecclesiastical developments and counterdevelopments (of mainline and indigenous churches) were directly influenced by the changing sociopolitical circumstances. For example, the present cleavages within South African Christianity were to a large extent determined by the proclivities of the colonial governments, the tension between British and Dutch, the course of the subjugation of black South Africans, the rivalry between the two white factions that led to the South African war, the postwar settlement that determined the union of the four colonies into what is "South Africa" today and the political manoeuvres that led to apartheid, one of the most daring attempts at social engineering. The social implications of the prevailing sociopolitical order often determined when, where and how even the most indigenous forms of Christianity emerged (e.g., Tile's attempt at establishing a Thembu national church, the emergence of Unzondelelo in Natal and then its transference to

Swaziland, and the rise of the Ethiopian churches and several of the Zionist churches).

Placing church history within periods determined by key political events does not necessarily limit the discussion on the inner life of the church, its worship, liturgy, doctrine and mission; nor does it exclude other factors that may have influenced ecclesiastical developments; for example, the rise of the African initiated churches, in which factors such as culture, cosmology, ethos, ethnicity and economic circumstances also played a role. The writers of this book have been mindful of these themes. A more detailed analysis of these and other themes which may have been limited by the periodisation chosen here, will appear in volume 2.

Following a chronological order in which the different church traditions are discussed alongside each other, posed the difficulty of how to complete the description of individual denominations and how to follow, to the end, themes in the periods outside those in which they emerged. Authors of later chapters have in many cases returned to a discussion of these themes. However, in order to offer a picture of the development of South African Christianity as a whole, continuity of some of the parts had to be sacrificed. It is hoped that at least the origin of key church historical developments and their contexts are adequately covered. Extended reading lists after each chapter and at the end of the book offer guidelines to more information on specific themes.

Revisionist historical writings have cast some new light on the role and influence of the churches on South African society. These studies have, in the main, been critical of Christian mission; even its humanitarian work has not received unqualified approval. While these critical insights have been incorporated into the book, the aim in volume 1 is to provide a narrative covering more than 300 years (a feature conspicuous by its absence in revisionist writings on South Africa). A study of particular themes would have allowed for more multiperspective analyses (e.g., liberal versus revisionist), but the primary purpose was not to produce a social history of Christianity. These and other themes will also receive attention in the next volume.

The eleven historians from seven South African universities who have collaborated to produce this work hope that their efforts will assist in the ongoing interpretation of Christianity in South Africa and that this book will stimulate further research. If this volume helps in awakening church historical interest, it would have served its modest purpose.

JW (Hoffie) Hofmeyr
Gerald J Pillay

Contents

Introduction: Religion and society in pre-colonial South Africa xiii

Khoisan religious belief xvi
World views and religious expression within Bantu-speaking communities xix
Conclusion xxiii
References and further reading xxiv

Portuguese and Dutch Settlement in southern Africa 1

Chapter 1: Christianity in the period of Dutch colonisation 8

Early Roman Catholic beginnings 8
The Reformed faith is introduced 11
The first traces of missionary work in South Africa: The arrival of the Moravians 22
The Lutheran Church is established 24
Further missionary attempts 26
The involvement of the "neglected ones" 27
Christianity amidst the other religions in the early centuries 28
Conclusion 30
References and further reading 30

British settlement in South Africa 33

Chapter 2: Christianity in the period of English colonisation 36

First period of British occupation, 1795–1803 39
Moravian missionary work 40
The first British missionary societies 42
Batavian rule 45
The second British occupation 46
The Cape is ceded to Britain 51
The LMS and concern for civil liberties 52
Methodism 59
The Scottish churches 67
The Roman Catholic Church 76
The Anglican Church 79
The Cattle Killing 85
Conclusion 87
References and further reading 88

Chapter 3: The boer emigrants and their church 93

Why the emigration? 94
The attitude of the Dutch Reformed Church in the Cape 96

The Cape synod of 1837 ... 98
The presbytery of Graaff-Reinet ... 100
Changes in the attitude of the Church in the Cape ... 103
The Church on the trek road ... 104
Three religious denominations originate in pioneering circumstances ... 111
Emigrant, missionary and missionary society ... 115
Ecclesiastic consequences of the emigration of 1835–1840 ... 119
References and further reading ... 121

Chapter 4: The expansion of Christianity in the nineteenth century ... 123

South Africa in the 1860s and 1870s ... 123
The expansion of Christianity at the Cape during the second half of the nineteenth century ... 124
The expansion of Christianity in Natal in the second half of the nineteenth century ... 132
The expansion of Christianity in the Orange Free State in the second half of the nineteenth century ... 136
The expansion of Christianity in the Transvaal in the 1860s and 1870s ... 138
Conclusion ... 142
References and further reading ... 143

Gold and the change brought about by its discovery ... 145

Chapter 5: Christianity, imperialism and colonial warfare NB ... 150

The South African War: 1899–1902 ... 150
Anglican endorsement of the war ... 152
Quakerism and the pacifist imperative ... 154
Anti-war Nonconformity ... 156
Wesleyan imperialism ... 157
Presbyterian influences and Lovedale ... 160
London Missionary Society attitudes towards the South African War ... 161
Catholicism: sceptic of imperialism? ... 164
Dutch Reformed churches and opposition to imperialism ... 165
Ethiopianism and African Independent Churches: the legacy of war ... 167
References and further reading ... 169

Chapter 6: Christianity in the years before union ... 172

Churches, African clergy and theological training ... 172
The ambiguities of the African clergy in changing times ... 175
Mission and the beginnings of the black struggle ... 177
The general missionary councils ... 186
The Christian Zion Church in South Africa ... 187
The Apostolic Faith Mission ... 190
The Full Gospel Church ... 191

The Assemblies of God in South Africa 192
References and further reading 193

Afrikaner nationalism 195

Chapter 7: Christianity during a period of 'national consolidation' 200

On segregation 201
The Church at large 204
From missions to congregations: the establishment of local churches 205
African indigenous movements 209
The liberal alliance: English-speaking churches 219
From participation to isolation: Afrikaner Reformed churches 225
The one and the many: from denomination to ecumenism 231
Other aspects of church life and experience 235
Roman Catholicism 239
Conclusion 241
References and further reading 242

Segregation and apartheid 246

Chapter 8: Christianity in South Africa since 1948 251

The Dutch Reformed Church and separate development 253
Some "white" voices against apartheid 254
1948: an ecumenical watershed 256
The South African Council of Churches 258
The church unity commission 259
Black leadership in the church 260
The evangelistic fervour of the fifties and beyond 263
Apartheid legislation challenges the churches 266
The churches' struggle against apartheid 269
Sharpeville, Cottesloe and the Christian Institute 273
The message to the people of South Africa 276
Black consciousness and black theology 277
The PCR of theWCC and the Hammanskraal Resolution (1974) 279
Soweto – 1976 281
The churches declare apartheid a sin and a heresy 283
Reforming apartheid 284
The SACC: 1984 287
The Kairos Document 288
The DRC statement on church and society 289
Disinvestment and economic sanctions as means of fighting apartheid 290
The Catholic Bishops' Conference of May 1986, regarding economic sanctions and justice 293
"Standing for the truth" campaign of the SACC 294
The Rustenburg consultation 294
The way forward 297

References and further reading 298
Some further reading 301

Appendix A: Statistics 305
Index 312

Religion and society in pre-colonial South Africa

The study of pre-colonial South African communities has advanced greatly since the 1960s. Studies of early Khoisan (whose history dates back millennia) and Bantu-speaking peoples (who have lived in southern Africa for some 1 700 years) by anthropologists and archaeologists in particular have added enormously to the state of knowledge about their societies. As a result of this work, we are far better informed than previous generations about the economies and life-styles of these first inhabitants of the subcontinent.

Accompanying such a growth in understanding of the early communities has been a deepening of awareness of their world views and belief systems. These are often classified under the term 'traditional religion'. This can imply that the early peoples of southern Africa had fixed, timeless and unchanging ideas about their deities, the world and their own identities. Such an assumption needs to be strenuously resisted. There can be little doubt that, as the material circumstances of people altered through history, so too their world views and religious outlook shifted and developed. This can be convincingly demonstrated from the fortunes of the speakers of Khoisan and Bantu languages during the last two centuries, and there is no reason to assume that their situation or their beliefs were totally static during the preceding centuries.

Many modern scholars of religion in Africa are critical of the insights as provided by anthropologists into traditional belief. They have argued, with some justification, that the picture presented by anthropologists is of societies which experienced little development or change. In addition, anthropologists have been criticised on the grounds that the value of their interpretations is limited, because they have been confined by too great a focus on the present. These disadvantages have also been noted by historians – but this does not negate the outstanding contribution that social anthropologists have made to our understanding of pre-colonial and non-literate communities. Many of their findings can be used with good effect to reach a clearer understanding of the nature of belief prevailing in pre-colonial South Africa.

In recent years, some blurring of traditional boundaries between academic disciplines has occurred, and historians, anthropologists, archaeologists and specialists in the study of religion have been more open to cooperation with one another. This cross-fertilisation between previously relatively clearly demarcated fields of study has meant that fuller and more nuanced studies of pre-colonial communities have been produced. In particular, historians have utilised the work of others and incorporated it into a more historical framework. For a number of reasons, however, the religious systems and beliefs of the pre-colonial speakers of languages Khoisan and Bantu of southern Africa have not been well represented in the work of historians, while church historians and historians of Christianity have perhaps been even less interested in the 'traditional religions' of the subcontinent.

One important reason for this relates to sources, which presents a crucial area of difficulty. The lack of documentary evidence and written records has meant that historians and church historians have neglected the religious and cultural practices of African societies. The use of oral evidence has partially overcome such disadvantages, but it has not encouraged historians to investigate carefully the origins and changes which characterised African religious beliefs before the advent of Christianity. Archaeological remains continue to be analysed and studied by professionals, but these, by their nature, have tended to reveal more about the material conditions and economic life of early communities than their belief systems. Innovative use of artefacts in recent times has, however, enabled archaeologists to gain considerable understanding of the outlook of early societies from within their own perspective, and to explore their world views with a greater degree of confidence.

It remains true, however, that, because of the nature of the evidence, speculation rather than certainty surrounds the precise nature of pre-colonial belief systems. The clues that survived the far-reaching transformations of the last three centuries have been imaginatively interpreted and decoded, but certainty about such questions will always remain elusive.

A further reason for the neglect of 'traditional religion' lies in the cultural superiority and great condescension which explorers and settlers of European origin showed towards the indigenous groups between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. Almost all dismissed what they observed of the ideas and religious observances of these groups with abhorrence and derision. These attitudes have persisted well into the twentieth century, most particularly in the mind of the public. Nowhere is this better illustrated than in the writings, journals and reports of Christian missionaries during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Such records provide invaluable descriptions and observations of local societies, but they are imbued with the conviction that the role of 'higher civilisation' was to rescue African societies from their 'savage', 'primitive', 'heathen' and 'barbarous' beliefs and customs. Even though many academic practitioners have long dispelled such ideas from their work, the notion of

access to *Tsui//Goab*, and worked closely with him in the protection of the fortunes of communities. One important hero was *Heitsi-Eibib*, about whom many legends and myths existed: he could assume many different forms and was able to reincarnate himself after death. His many graves throughout the region of Khoikhoi settlement were marked with heaps of stones, where people could stop and add stones and branches, in order to secure their success as herders of livestock and as hunters. Ancestors played a lesser role in Khoikhoi religious belief, but their graves were also carefully tended and they were appealed to in times of crisis. A lineage through ancestors and heroes to *Tsui//Goab* thus existed. *//Guanab*, an evil god, appeared to be in opposition to the forces of good, being the cause of sickness and death.

Livestock played an important role in keeping open the channels of communication with the supernatural world. It was slaughtered in thanksgiving, and also to appease evil forces. Ritual dances and celebrations were frequently held at new or full moon. There is some evidence that medicine people were able to cure illness and people possessed by evil spirits, but that such powers were not always used in a positive fashion, and they were sometimes accused of spreading disease and death.

The Khoisan were the first people encountered by Europeans after their colonisation during the seventeenth century; most Europeans assumed that they lacked a religious life because of the absence of temples or formal places of worship. This was clearly a misconception: the Khoisan recognised a dualism between good and evil, they had a developed system to make sense of creation, life, death and the well-being of society and the individual, and their beliefs were firmly rooted in the social structures of their communities. Such beliefs, even if unsystematic, enabled many people to cope with and make sense of their lives.

World views and religious expression within Bantu-speaking communities

The earliest speakers of Bantu languages settled mainly along the south-eastern coast and in some river valleys of the northern interior from as early as the third century AD. They were, in addition to their hunting and herding activities, cultivators of crops, and lived in small but dense settlements. After about 1 000 AD, pastoralism assumed greater importance, as did the mining of minerals; settlements became larger, supporting greater numbers of people, and were scattered across the interior of southern Africa. Trade in cattle and precious minerals between different communities also began to grow in significance, and helped to forge large, stratified societies in places such as Mapungubwe and Phalaborwa.

By the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, much of the interior of southern Africa was inhabited by people who spoke related Bantu languages. There were two main groups: the Sotho-Tswana, who inhabited the interior plateau of the

Christian and European preeminence has lingered, resulting in great ignorance of traditional beliefs at best, and explicit hostility at worst.

This introductory chapter relies on the investigations and insights of a number of researchers from different fields. Space permits neither an exhaustive nor a comprehensive treatment of the nature of religious expression among the indigenous communities of southern Africa. Before the pre-colonial inhabitants of southern Africa were confronted by European colonists (many of whom adhered to Christian beliefs) after the end of the fifteenth century, all the peoples of the subcontinent had deep-seated and complex religious beliefs which were thoroughly embedded in their communities. In addition, their religious systems were neither rigid nor static, but were subject to new influences and change as groups encountered and interacted with one another. As will be seen in later chapters of this book, the advent of Christianity provoked significant transformations in religious practice among indigenous people, but it should not be assumed that change dated only from encounters with missionaries and established Christian churches. Interaction in the pre-colonial period prior to such contact resulted in dynamic and developing beliefs, rituals and practices.

Although this section only touches on a few features of traditional religious expression in southern Africa, one should not lose sight of the significance and integral importance that religious expression had in the lives of indigenous people. Historians of Christianity in particular need to note its role in shaping the spread, development and expression of Christianity in the region during the last two centuries. The European expressions of Christianity imported into South Africa did not merely supplant 'traditional religion' in the lives of Africans. The different belief systems engaged with one another on a variety of levels in the decades and centuries after the initial contact between them. African peoples respectively ignored, adopted relevant practices and strenuously resisted Christianity, using their religion as part of their response to colonial expansion and conquest.

There has also, at times, been a reluctance among some commentators to use the term 'religion' to describe the belief systems of traditional African societies. These have frequently been dismissed as 'mythologies' or 'cults', too 'primitive' to deserve the label 'religion'. While there is an absence of doctrine and clearly formulated creeds in the Western sense, this does not negate the presence of clear religious beliefs and tenets among pre-colonial southern African people. They undoubtedly expressed belief in a being or beings superior to themselves, who had the power to sustain life. They had ideas about life after death, and about the presence of good, evil and misfortune, which manifested themselves in the present rather than an apocalyptic future. These were present both on a communal and personal level, and there is every reason for them to be understood as the religious expressions of pre-colonial people.

Thus, no serious student of the religious history of the subcontinent can afford to ignore 'traditional religion', despite the methodological difficulties its study

entails. It was of great significance to the people of the region for many centuries before the commencement of Christian mission, as well as in the period thereafter. Certainly, the advent of proselytising Christians posed one of the most severe – perhaps the most severe – challenges with which traditional religions had to cope, forcing adaptation, but this did not invalidate the concepts of religion and worship which had slowly formed and altered during previous centuries.

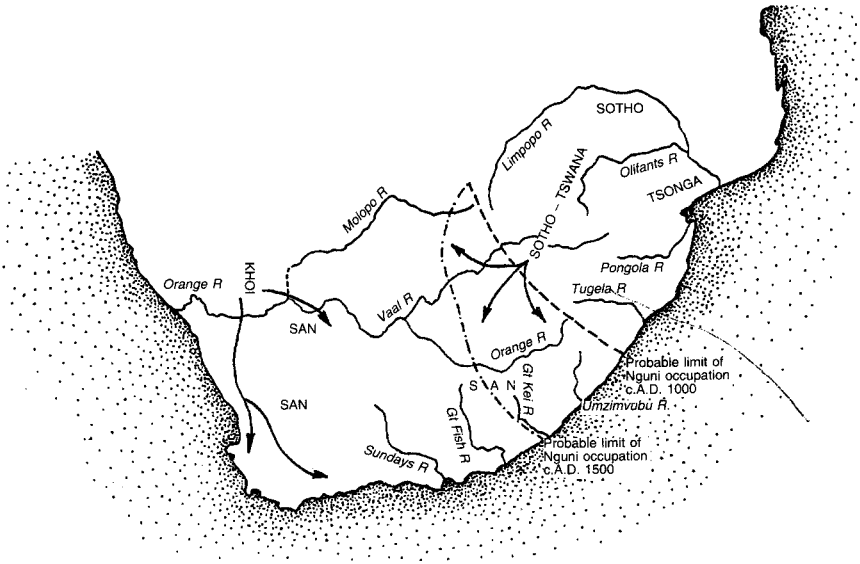
Khoisan religious belief

Speakers of Khoisan languages have inhabited southern Africa for thousands of years. The way of life of these people was similar: they were nomadic, living in small, flexible and egalitarian communities which were well suited to their hunting and gathering economies. Contrary to common assumptions, such a life-style was not precarious, but was effective and highly functional. They moved about neither aimlessly nor haphazardly, but exploited the natural environment judiciously in accordance with their needs. Early European settlers were dismissive of the people whom they called 'Bushmen'.[1] They regarded them as being similar to wild animals, simple and childlike, incapable of religious thought or belief, and many attempted to exterminate them. Though Europeans almost succeeded, enough evidence has survived of Bushman life for such stereotypes and misunderstandings to be rejected. In particular, the rock art of the Bushmen – once regarded as little more than simple depictions of everyday life – provides numerous and vital insights into Bushman beliefs and rituals; indeed, it can only be interpreted within the religious context of their communities.

Religion was part of the fabric of daily life of the Bushmen, and was deeply embedded in their social and economic activities. Links between the physical and supernatural worlds were believed to be close, and were frequently reinforced and transcended on regular ritual occasions. The most important Bushman deity was the creator */Kaggen*, who manifested himself in different animal forms, but who also lived the life of an ordinary Bushman. The spirits of the dead lived on, and were believed to be responsible for misfortunes such as illness. People were able, however, to counter the power of such spirits with the assistance of 'medicine people' or shamans, who acted as a bridge between the two worlds, and who were also responsible for the rock art and engravings.

Shamans were not a privileged class of people who were removed from daily activities, but were ordinary men and women within the communities. Perhaps

1 As with so many South African names, terminology presents a problem. 'Bushman' was a word used by early Europeans, and was an insulting and derogatory word. In much twentieth-century writing the term has persisted, and, although not intended as a term of ridicule, it has carried connotations of a 'simple', 'primitive' people requiring condescension and pity. Much academic literature refers to the 'San' (plural 'Sonqua' or 'Soaqua') which probably meant 'original people' or perhaps 'to gather'. 'San', however, also presents problems, in that it may also have been a derogatory term, used to refer to people who did not own livestock. There has thus recently been a swing back to the word 'Bushman' in academic literature, a practice which this chapter follows.



The peopling of South Africa before 1652

as many as half of the men and a third of the women were able to enter a trance-like state and to offer ritual services to all members. Trances were entered during the regular ritual dances of the communities, which normally occurred at night, around campfires. The trance-like state was reached after a period of intense concentration and rhythmic dancing to the clapping and singing of seated people. Dancers danced vigorously, shaking and falling until they entered a trance, when it was believed that supernatural potency entered them. They were then able to offer cleansing and healing services to their communities, by drawing sickness out of people and returning it to the supernatural world and the spirits of the departed. Some shamans also had the power to control rainfall and the movement of animals.

Rock paintings represented the experiences of shamans in trances, and was an important way in which shamans communicated their vision of the supernatural world to their people. It is unlikely that the paintings were done while shamans were in a trance-like state, but they were probably made while in a normal state of consciousness. The sites where the paintings were (which were not distant sacred locations where selected people gathered, but were often places where communities lived) served to draw the physical and spiritual worlds together. Graphic visual representations of the spiritual world reminded people of its immediacy in their lives, and its control over those matters which guaranteed the continued existence of humans: controlling animals, rain-making and managing and healing sickness.

The visions which shamans had of the spiritual world were often complex and occasionally very individual. It was essential, however, that their representations be accessible to all members of communities, and the messages from the spiritual world were depicted in terms that were familiar to all. Animals, for example, featured prominently in rock art: they were important not just as a source of food, but also because they were visible and possessed strength and power. Depictions of animals often contained both animal and human characteristics, representing the merging of identities and the transference of the power of the animal to humans. Nowhere can this better be illustrated than in the representation of the eland, a central religious symbol among the Bushmen. Eland, the largest of the antelope, were reasonably common, were a source of meat and fat, and played a central role in celebrations surrounding events such as puberty and marriage. The eland was a symbol of unity and abundance, and a shaman who relied on the eland as a source of power was greatly respected. In paintings, the dying eland was often portrayed as exhibiting the same behaviour as a person in a trance: sweating, trembling, falling and bleeding from the nose. Humans were often shown as having animal characteristics, and the presentation of half-man, half-antelope figures were further evidence of the close symbolic links between the physical and spiritual worlds.

Bushman rock art occurred throughout southern Africa, and the underlying cosmology which is revealed through the art suggests a relative uniformity in belief. Researchers have shown that such a similarity also existed between the Bushmen and their close Khoisan relatives, the Khoikhoi.[2] The Khoikhoi language was also closely related to the family of languages spoken by the hunter-gatherers. The two groups differed mainly in regard to economic activity: some 2 000 years ago, the Khoikhoi acquired livestock and adopted a pastoral way of life, though they never completely abandoned hunting and gathering. Khoikhoi herders settled along much of the southern African coastline and in suitable parts of the interior with their flocks of fat-tailed sheep and cattle, and many probably maintained close ties with the Bushmen, despite the considerably different life-style that livestock ownership entailed.

Khoikhoi belief also involved a world in which good and evil operated in competition with one another. The supreme god was *Tsui//Goab*, who was the creator and protector of the life of the community. He was a source of prosperity and abundance, the guardian of people's good health, and, most especially, the controller of the environment and of rainfall. In a sense, he was the personification of natural forces producing rain. As the rain god, he was the focus of an annual communal ritual sacrifice. Founding 'heroes' or sky-gods had direct

2 The term 'Khoikhoi' means 'men of men', and was a preferred name by which the Khoikhoi described themselves. Europeans called them 'Hottentots', a word which was probably derived from one of the Khoikhoi dance chants, and which came to be applied as a term of insult to people regarded as possessing inferior culture and intellect and indulging in crude behaviour.

country, and the Nguni-speakers, who lived along the eastern coast. Although there were regional variations in language, political organisation, economic activity, settlement patterns and cultural and religious practices, there were also significant common features.

In almost all communities, the basic social and economic unit was the homestead, which was presided over by the oldest male, whose power was derived from his genealogical superiority. The head of the homestead allocated labour tasks, grazing fields and water resources; he was also the ritual elder within the homestead. The next structure within society was the clan, comprising a number of homesteads. They consisted of people who shared a common name and whose adult males claimed a relationship to one another because of descent from a common ancestor – although outsiders were frequently incorporated into clans. Homesteads and clans were grouped into larger political authorities, called chiefdoms, which were presided over by chiefs who exercised considerable political and economic power. Chiefs could exact tributes from people under their jurisdiction in return for political and military protection. They adjudicated in disputes, and could expect people to perform various labour functions. They were also believed to have special powers of communication with ancestors, which gave them a vital religious function and boosted their power within their communities.

Speakers of Bantu languages shared a similar belief in the existence of a high god or supreme being, who had created the universe. He was associated with the origins of the world and manifested impressive power, but he was also removed from the affairs of people, demonstrating little interest in his creation. Names varied among different people: to the Sotho-Tswana, for example, he was *Modimo*, to the Xhosa *uQamatha*, *uThixo Mudzimu* or *uDali*, to the Zulu *uNkulunkulu*, and to the Venda *Raluvhimba* or *Mudzimu*. Creation myths were simple: most Nguni-speakers believed that the creator 'broke off the nations' from a bed of reeds, while many Sotho-Tswana held that human beings emerged from a hole in the ground or in rocks. The Tswana spoke of a specific place: a hole in a rock at Lowe, near Mochudi, where ancestors emerged and left their footprints. Some, particularly the Sotho and the Pedi, believed that the high god was responsible for the working of nature, particularly in the elements of storm and rain.

The high god was, however, distant and inaccessible; it was the ancestors, rather, who were believed to sustain and nurture the interests of their descendants, and were the important bridge between the physical and spiritual worlds. The ancestors traditionally did not intercede between people and the high god, because they operated on another level. The claim among some (such as the Xhosa) that the ancestors played an intercessionary role is most likely the result of Christian missionary influence in the nineteenth century – an example of a shift in belief in the face of new challenges from outside.

The ancestors were the spirits of the dead members of the lineage or clan; the lineage generally stretched back between four and five generations, although this could be longer for important chiefs and royal lineages. Ancestors were thus part of the lineage, and as such were seen collectively and not as individuals. The burial of a dead person involved rituals which were designed to incorporate the spirit of the deceased into the lineage, and in which he was specifically requested to 'return to his home' to care for his descendants. They then formed a recognised category, and groups had a specific name for them: *badimo* among the Sotho-Tswana; *amathongo*, *ukhokho* or *izinyanya* among the Xhosa; *amadlozi* or *amathongo* among the Zulu; and *mudzimu* among the Venda.

Ancestors continued to take a close interest in the affairs of their descendants, and were generally cast in a benevolent role as protectors. They were intimately involved in the details of daily life and took an interest in the well-being of their families, homesteads and clans. Ancestors could, however, become offended or worried, and illness and misfortune were commonly interpreted as a sign that ancestors were communicating their displeasure to the living. Ritual activities – most often the sacrifice of an animal and the sharing of a communal meal – then had to be undertaken to restore a state of harmony with the ancestors of the homestead.

Ancestors were thus not remote or distant figures, and death did not act as a barrier between the living and the departed. Ancestral ritual also served to reinforce the authority of elders, heads of homesteads and chiefs, as their position in the lineage, conferred by birth, made them mediators between people and the ancestors. As such, it may be interpreted as a conservative force within communities, as it sought to maintain social relations which had been inherited from the past.

Although ancestors were understood to be responsible in certain circumstances for misfortune, this did not account for the operation of evil. Ancestors sent illness or misfortune in punishment for some breach of custom, religious or kinship duty; in such a situation, people were responsible for their actions. While such illness or affliction was bad, it was not considered to be evil. Evil was far more malevolent, threatening the basis of social life. Such evil was introduced by outside human agents, such as witches or sorcerers.

Witches and sorcerers were individuals who used the forces of nature and their own powers to inflict harm on other people. They were classified under one term: *baloi* among the Sotho-Tswana, and *abathakathi* among the Xhosa and Zulu. There appear to have been distinctions between the two roles. Witches – who were invariably believed to be women – were born into the role, and, because powers were inherited, were often unaware of their ability to cause destruction and harm. They either used their innate powers directly, or they used familiars – animals such as hyenas, snakes and baboons or mythical beasts such as the *thikoloshe* and *impundulu* – to cause injury. Witches frequently acted against their own kin, thus posing a potentially deadly threat to social structures.

Sorcerers, on the other hand, were ordinary people, and were usually male. They attempted to influence the course of nature through the use of medicines and magical rites. The activities of sorcerers were antisocial and caused harm, even death.

Both witches and sorcerers were seen as menacing and uncontrollable. Witches were deeply feared among the Nguni, but the Sotho-Tswana regarded sorcerers as a greater threat. When they were discovered within homesteads, they were banished from communities and their property was confiscated; they were also sometimes tortured and put to death in an effort to expel evil forces from society. While misfortune attributed to ancestors could be assuaged by rituals and sacrifices, the darker and more hostile forces of evil required more significant action. Diviners, with skills to ward off harm and intervene against evil, played a crucial role in countering the activities of witches and sorcerers.

Diviners – called *ngaka* or *seloali* among the Sotho-Tswana, *igqirha* among the Xhosa, *isangoma* or *isanusi* among the Zulu and *nanga* or *mingome* among the Venda – were the most important religious functionaries in African religion. They possessed the power to interpret the cause of misfortune, and to distinguish between the misfortune caused by ancestral anger and that resulting from the actions of witches or sorcerers. Their status was closely linked to that of the ancestors, who were responsible for their vocation by sending a specific sickness upon chosen diviners. Most diviners among Nguni-speakers were women, while Sotho-Tswana diviners tended to be men. After the illness, people apprenticed themselves to an experienced diviner and underwent a period of training which lasted up to two years. They were isolated from their homesteads during this time, and trained in the use of medicines and in dance methods which were designed to induce a trance-like state, to facilitate communication with ancestors. Thereafter, they were initiated as diviners within communities, and many often specialised further in various techniques of divination.

Diviners mainly used various spiritual methods to counter the forces of evil, while herbalists were trained in the use of medicines derived from animals and plants. They were ordinary people who were not as closely associated with the ancestors as were the diviners. Many possessed a wide knowledge of the healing properties of plants, while others specialised in various medicines and in different healing and cleansing activities. Medicine was used to promote the prosperity of the homestead, to improve interpersonal relationships, and to protect and nurture crops, livestock, dwelling places and personal property. Herbalists often worked closely with diviners, and together they rendered vital functions within homesteads and chiefdoms.

Although chiefs had mainly political responsibilities, they were also at the centre of religious practice and ritual. Because of their structural genealogical position as the most senior person in the ruling lineage, chiefs had close relationships with the supernatural and with influential ancestors. Chiefs also presided over various communal rituals which were intended to maintain the

well-being of chiefdoms. These rituals blended religious and magical elements, and enabled chiefs to claim sacred approval of their political power. One of the main communal rituals was rain-making, for which most chiefs assumed ultimate responsibility, although they were assisted by diviners and special rain-doctors. Other rituals involved ensuring the fertility of the land and the crops, the celebration of the harvest, the protection of the country against lightning and hail, and the maintenance of stability and order in communities through the strengthening of the chief and the army. Both the person and the office of the chiefs were boosted in this fashion, and religious ideology underpinned their political power.

Although there were many regional and local variations in religious expression and practice, traditional African religion amongst the different tribes in southern Africa shared many common characteristics. The understanding of the high god, the role of the ancestors, the symbolism and influence of evil, and the activities of diviners proved comparable with one another in the many different homesteads and chiefdoms across the subcontinent. In addition, religious expression and practice were deeply intertwined with the political, social and kinship institutions of Bantu-speaking societies. Religion supported the power of chiefs and the senior members of homesteads, and was thus integral to the organisation and the functioning of society.

Conclusion

Despite the obvious and serious difficulties which exist in attempting to reconstruct pre-colonial religious belief and world views, researchers from various disciplines have managed to uncover a considerable amount of information on these aspects, far more than the above outline might suggest. The exact religious practices and outlook of people living more than 500 years ago remain elusive, and will do so for ever, although clues can be interpreted imaginatively. We can be more certain of conventions and traditions since then, because of evidence from a variety of sources, not least among the people themselves.

Religion often acted as a conservative influence within society, and both symbolic understandings and ritual practices underwent minimal change. Bushman rock art reveals continuity of belief and understanding over many centuries. Among the Xhosa and Mpondo, for example, remarkable stability can be observed between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. But there were also periods of rapid change, such as that experienced in Zululand and Natal at the end of the eighteenth century, when new royal and religious ideologies replaced older rites and rituals.

The advent of Christianity, which first appeared permanently in the mid seventeenth century, and began to expand more deliberately and aggressively during the nineteenth century, was probably the most severe challenge to

confront African traditional religions. The most recent rock art, completed between about 1700 and 1860, reveals the stress and confusion experienced by the Bushmen. The conquest and virtual extermination of the Bushmen and the Khoikhoi meant the almost complete disappearance of their religious values by the middle of the nineteenth century. While African chiefdoms remained politically cohesive and economically intact, Christianity did not pose a severe threat to traditional beliefs. Chiefs were able to ignore initial missionary attempts at converting their subjects, or used the missionaries for their own personal prestige and to economic advantage.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, however, colonial and capitalist advances were beginning to place considerable pressure on Bantu-speaking societies. By the end of the century their subjugation was complete, and they were drawn into a new set of economic, social and political relations. Chiefdoms and their inhabitants were absorbed into a new order. Their political and economic independence were terminally undermined, as the forces of capitalism, mining, industrialisation and urbanisation gathered pace. The religious beliefs and ritual practices which had identified the chiefdoms were thereafter transformed, frequently in a relatively rapid and dramatic fashion.

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Portuguese and Dutch settlement in southern Africa

The early voyages of discovery round Africa will always be associated with Prince Henry (1394–1460), third son of the Portuguese king, John I. A legend current at that time concerned a Christian monarch, Prester John, who was associated with distant Ethiopia, which in the ignorance of the times was confused with India. Prince Henry's avowed ideal was to reach the kingdom of the legendary priest-king and to enlist him as an ally against the Muslims. A further purpose was to extend the sway of Christianity through these voyages of discovery.

Though Prince Henry himself never sailed on a voyage of discovery, he was the driving force behind the expeditions which emerged. In 1419 Madeira was annexed by the Portuguese crown. By 1445 the Portuguese had sailed beyond the Senegal River and discovered Cape Verde. After Prince Henry's death, the equator was crossed in 1471, and in 1484 Diego Cam reached the mouth of the Congo River.

Towards the middle of 1487 Bartholomew Diaz set out on his historic voyage. After several months at sea he went ashore either at Fish Bay or at Mossel Bay, took in a supply of fresh water and engaged in a skirmish with the Khoikhoi, killing one of them. Diaz then continued his voyage eastwards, passed the present Algoa Bay, and having reached a river, decided to return. On this homeward voyage (at the beginning of March, 1488) he erected a cross at False Island (or Kwaaihoek), just west of the Bushmans River mouth. Diaz finally returned to Portugal in December 1488. Thereafter, Vasco da Gama sailed forth to discover the sea route to India. In the course of this lengthy quest he touched at St Helena Bay and Mossel Bay, and on Christmas Day he sailed past a beautiful strip of land (probably Pondoland), to which he gave the name *Terra Natale*.

By 1505 the Portuguese in South East Africa had erected a fort at Sofala (32 km south of Beira). The first missionary to work in this area was a Jesuit, Gonzalo da Silveira, who near Inhambane was successful in converting to the faith a chieftain named Gamba (1560). Later he went to the Kalanga tribe inhabiting the region between the Zambezi and Sabi Rivers. The chief of the tribe (the Monomotapa) was baptised in January 1561, but the Muslim traders brought the Jesuit missionary into disrepute with him, and Silveira was martyred on 16 March 1561. The work was continued in Gamba's village by another missionary, Fernandes, until he was recalled to India some years later.

Priests of the Dominican order established themselves in Mozambique in 1577, bringing the gospel to Sofala, Sena and Tete. The

evangelisation of Sofala was firmly established in 1586 by Joao dos Santos, who pursued his missionary work with such ardour that more than 1 700 local people were converted during his stay of three and a half years. Other religious orders, among them the Jesuits, wished to work in the region, but a regulation of 1610 stipulated that the Dominicans alone could do so.

Attempts were again made to do missionary work in the kingdom of the Monomotapa. In 1631 a Christian prince, Manuza, succeeded to the throne. His successor was a pagan but he too embraced the Christian faith shortly after assuming power. During an impressive ceremony on 4 August 1652 he was baptised. By 1667 there were sixteen Christian enclaves in South East Africa south of the Zambezi, of which the Jesuits controlled six and the Dominicans nine. Further to the north, in Mombasa and Malindi, Augustinian missionaries had been active since the end of the sixteenth century. Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Portuguese strove to establish the Christian faith on the island of Malagasy.

Missionary activity was arduous and often frustrating. A constant complaint of the missionaries was that conversion brought about little inward change in the lives of those baptised. Tension was caused by the continual insistence on the part of the missionaries that their converts should alter their way of life.

By the end of the sixteenth century Portugal had lost its maritime supremacy, and later also its role as a major European power. The major settlement and development of the southernmost part of Africa fell to the Dutch, who were Protestants.

The Dutch used to ferry merchandise from Portuguese colonial ports in the East to all parts of the European continent. In 1580 Philip II of Spain, who at the time was waging war on the Netherlands, became ruler of Portugal as well. He ordered all Dutch ships which called at Portuguese ports – now under Spanish rule – to be seized, and the Dutch were forced to seek trade elsewhere. They decided to sail to the East themselves, and in April 1595 the first Dutch vessels rounded the southernmost tip of Africa en route to the East. To the Portuguese the first port of call on the way to the East was usually Mozambique. The Dutch, however, preferred to touch at the watering places of Sao Bras (Mossel Bay) and Saldanha (now Table Bay) on their voyages to Java and Sumatra. The unhealthy rivalry among the several Dutch trading companies was brought to an end in 1602 by their merger in a chartered company, the Dutch East India Company, under a board of governors called *Heeren XVII*. In 1619 the permanent headquarters of the Company were established at Batavia (Djakarta) in Java.

The decision of the Council of Seventeen of the Dutch East India Company (DEIC) in 1650 to establish a reasonably strong refreshment station at the Cape, ushered in a new era in the history of southern Africa. Henceforth Europeans were to be a permanent part of the southern African scene with dramatic consequences for the social structures of the indigenous population, for group relations in an increasingly complicated racial situation and for the economic and political development of the subcontinent.

At the time of the DEIC's decision to establish a refreshment station at the Cape, the inhabitants of the Cape consisted of the indigenous Khoikhoi herdsmen and San hunters, collectively known as the Khoisan. Elsewhere in South Africa at that time there already dwelt various black Bantu-speaking peoples. Although the Khoisan and other black groups had a common origin, vastly different life-styles, languages and cultures had emerged over thousands of years. The extension of European influence, beginning at the Cape and reaching towards the interior, was to bring about radical change in the whole structure and nature of South African society during the following three centuries.

At no time was it the intention of the DEIC to make the Cape a launching pad for a European settlement in the interior. Its sole concern was to make the trade between the Netherlands and its commercial empire in the East Indies profitable. The Cape was to serve only as a safe harbour and convenient halfway stop for the Company's ships and sailors. During the entire period of the Company's rule the administration at the Cape was subject to the will of the Council of Seventeen, with its monopolistic commercial policy.

The history of the Cape Colony under the DEIC can be subdivided into three periods: The first period, from 1652 to 1699, saw its development from a refreshment station to an agricultural colony. This process was begun by Jan van Riebeeck and completed by Simon van der Stel. In the ten years of his rule between 1652 and 1662, Van Riebeeck accomplished much important foundation work. The foundations of Cape Town and the Cape Colony were laid, the refreshment station was established, considerable vegetable gardens and orchards were planted, and the livestock of the Company grew in number through trade with the Khoikhoi. Van Riebeeck also experienced a number of setbacks. In the early years in particular there were harvest failures and a lack of food – it was thirty years before the colony was able to provide enough grain for its own needs. The colonists also clashed with the Khoikhoi who stole their cattle as well as those of the Company. The DEIC followed a monopolistic policy; the low prices they paid for products gave rise to serious complaints from the farmers.

By the end of Simon van der Stel's rule it seemed as if the possibilities for the agricultural development of the colony had been exhausted.

The second period under the DEIC in the Cape Colony, from 1699–1779, saw the establishment of stock-farming in the colony and the move to the interior. This was made possible by Governor Willem Adriaan van der Stel. The policy of the Company directors in this respect was ambivalent. On the one hand they wished to encourage stock-farming which required the provision of loan farms further and further away from Cape Town. On the other hand they feared the increasing administrative costs brought about by territorial expansion. It would seem that the desire for increased stock production triumphed.

The third period, from 1779–1795, was characterised by tensions between the colonists and the Company. By 1770 the rapid expansion eastwards had progressed to the Great Fish River and the presence there of large numbers of black people impeded the surge. The failure of the Company to act strongly against cattle theft by the black people, among others, led to increasing resentment among the cattle farmers and in two districts the authority of the Company was shirked. Even among the inhabitants of the Cape and the cultivated areas, dissatisfaction with the DEIC had greatly increased by 1779.

There was a slow but steady increase in the population of the Cape, notwithstanding losses incurred by smallpox epidemics in 1713 and 1755. White immigration was significantly up by the year 1700, mostly because of the free passage offered by the DEIC and the opportunities for European immigrants to practice intensive agricultural methods in cultivating the land. The largest group of immigrants during this time was the French Huguenots. In the period 1700–1815 immigration figures dropped, chiefly due to decreasing opportunities for intensive agriculture and the fact that the DEIC could no longer guarantee a free passage to the Cape. In the 18th century the white population at the Cape chiefly grew by natural increase.

Of further interest was the large number of slaves, in comparison with the number of whites. As fewer female than male slaves were imported, their natural increase was fairly small, particularly in the early years. As a result of regular importation their numbers grew steadily and by the middle of the eighteenth century they were more numerous than the 5 100 free burghers. By 1806 there were 26 720 whites, 29 256 slaves, and 17 657 Khoikhoi.

In 1807 the importation of slaves was forbidden, and at the general abolition of slavery in 1834 there were 39 000 slaves as opposed to 65 000 whites. The white population was rapidly increased by immigration schemes, such as the arrival of the British Settlers in 1820.

At the end of the eighteenth century the various social groups in the Cape colony could be clearly distinguished. Cape Town, the only city, housed a variety of inhabitants such as dock workers, management officials, the military garrison and other citizens, both merchants and smugglers. Cape Town was also the market for the agricultural products of the farmers. Secondly, in the various districts around Cape Town there was a well-developed and fairly prosperous agricultural area which produced, among others, wheat and wine, the mediterranean climate being highly suitable for agriculture. These people kept close contact with the city and were known for their beautiful homes in the Cape Dutch style and the high standards of their economic methods and civilisation. They were well versed in new ideas and possessed luxury articles which had been imported.

Another social group was to be found in the desert and semidesert hinterland on the other side of the folding mountains. Extensive stock-farming was their only subsistence. Having only little contact with Cape Town and the world beyond, their standard of living and development was low in comparison with that of the farmers around Cape Town. Finally, as the remaining Western-orientated social group, a group of nomadic cattle farmers and hunters, without property or a fixed place of abode, lived at the very borders of the colony.

From the early part of the eighteenth century the phenomenon of the trek-farmer became more common. This was associated with the transition from agriculture to stock-farming. And while stock-farming required less capital and labour, the search for new grazing had high priority.

Hunting expeditions carried out by those who had moved to the interior provided information about conditions further inland, thus promoting the process of expansion. The considerable increase in cattle herds and the resulting exhaustion of grazing land forced farmers to move further and further away from the established areas. After the separation of the Stellenbosch district from the Cape in 1682, the proclamation of new districts was simply an acknowledgement that the Company could no longer control the movement to the interior.

In the isolated interior, the trek-farmer became a great deal more self-sufficient than his contemporaries living in the environs of Cape Town. The living standards and economy in these isolated regions were extremely primitive. Contact with markets was very difficult, and for the farmers on the border, virtually impossible. Imported goods were expensive, and the trek-farmers learnt to provide for themselves as regards food, clothing and equipment. Such a life on the fringe of colonial society promoted a certain independence and individualism, while resulting in considerable social and cultural isolation.

These trek-farmers moved not only in an easterly direction but also northwards. They eventually reached the Orange River frontier where a sort of consolidation took place. With these population movements brought about by the actions, for example, of the trek-farmers, the dissemination and circulation of new ideas and spiritual movements were limited. The isolation of the new and unknown resulted in the development of a certain rigidity in attitude.

These trek-farmers must be clearly distinguished from the Voortrekkers (who left the colony because of the resentment against the British policy regarding the eastern border). It is particularly interesting that the "Doppers" (strict Calvinists) can be identified with the original trek-farmers of the north-eastern Cape Colony in more than just a purely ecclesiastical sense.

The importation of slaves (chiefly from India and East Asia) to the Cape from the very early years of the settlement had drastic repercussions for every level of society, especially in the area of labour and race relations. Another influential factor was the eastern border situation and the conflict between groups of widely differing cultures, as has already been mentioned. The Khoikhoi fell victim to this conflict. The disintegration of their culture was accelerated by their inability to counteract white expansionism.

In the meanwhile change was hindered by deep underlying social forces. Contrary to the generally accepted view, the Cape was one of the most closed and unbending slave-trading societies in the era of European colonisation. Cape society in the eighteenth century was increasingly dominated by a privileged white group that was determined to maintain and strengthen the line between slave and free, black and white.

The attitude towards the Khoikhoi at the Cape raised specific problems for Van Riebeeck, for it was a matter that gave rise to seriously divergent views. In general, the encouragement of a positive attitude towards the Khoikhoi was a high priority both for the sake of preserving peace and encouraging exchange transactions between them and the settlers.

As early as the 17th century ministers tried to open the worship services to all races. However, some of the white church members objected to this practice on the grounds that the Khoikhoi and the slaves were "dirty people".

The primary concern of the Dutch East India Company at the Cape during the period 1652 to 1795 was the protection of its own commercial interests. Relations between the different ethnic groups living in the Cape Colony were largely a matter of secondary importance, in comparison with commercial considerations. From the very

beginnings of the colony, whites exhibited by their words and actions feelings of racial superiority towards the imported slaves and the various autochthonous peoples with whom they came into contact: the Khoikhoi, the San, the Nguni and the Sotho.

CHAPTER 1

Christianity in the period of Dutch colonisation

Several centuries after the Khoisan had settled in the central and western parts and the Nguni on the eastern board of what was to become "South Africa" did the first Europeans reach the southern tip of Africa. They were primarily motivated by expansionist, economic and eventually colonialist reasons. In these early periods there was probably still a largely adventurous and fairly romantic attitude among the white settlers seeking to expand their interests in new territories and continents.

It was primarily people from the southern and northern parts of Europe who eventually played a role in the European settlement of South Africa. The Roman Catholic Portuguese and the Reformed Dutch brought Christianity to the country.

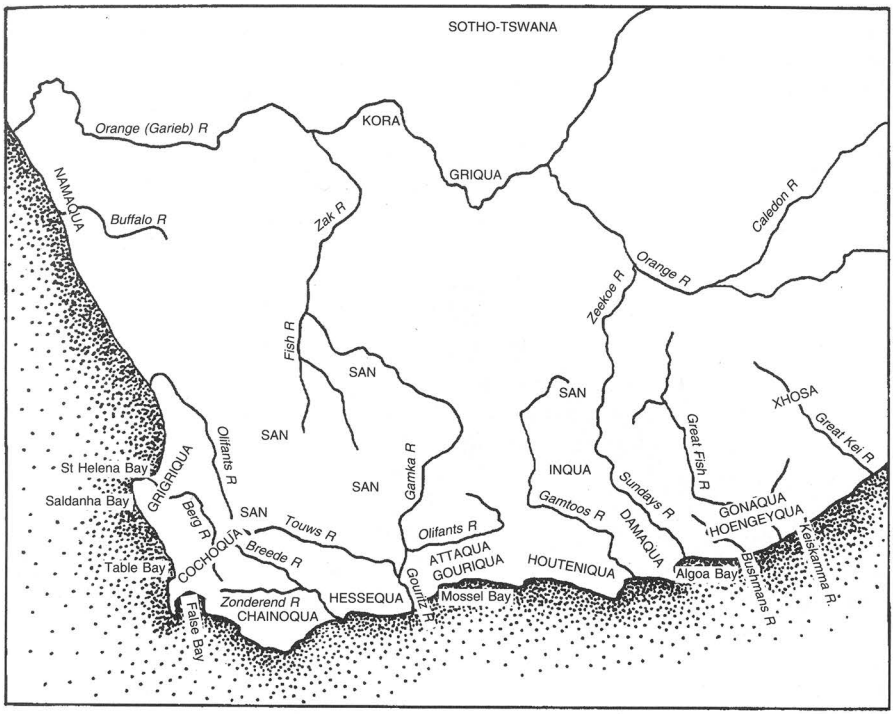
Some decades later, Moravianism, Lutheranism and some English traditions became established. Though there initially existed a very monochrome ecclesiastical picture, the great diversity (from the beginning of the nineteenth century onwards) led to the eventual establishment of a pluralist South African Christianity.

In the pages that follow, the aim will be to sketch a picture of the beginnings of Christianity within a multicultural context. As far as is possible, the inclination will be ecumenical, while cognisance has also been taken of socio-political and theological developments.

Early Roman Catholic beginnings

Roman Catholicism preceded Reformed Protestantism, but without lasting results. Only in 1737 would the endeavours of missionaries truly begin to bear fruit. Following some of the Portuguese voyages of discovery late in the fifteenth century, there was considerable missionary activity in Portuguese Africa early in the sixteenth century, but it is unlikely that it spread to the Cape.

After the death of Francisco d'Almeida in 1510, the Portuguese tended to avoid this area as far as possible. Joao da Nova, however, during his third voyage of 1510–1512 built a small hermitage or chapel at Angra de Sao Bras,



Khoihoi groupings in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

the current Mossel Bay. When Manuel de Mesquita Perestrello called there in 1576, the walls of that building were still standing. The history of the Catholic Church in Natal began in 1635 when the *Nossa Senhora de Belem*, a Portuguese ship, ran aground near the Umzimkulu River on its way from Goa to Portugal. The captain decided to build two vessels to take the passengers and crew to Angola, rather than subject them to the difficulties of an overland journey. It was one of the crew members, Joao Ribeiro de Lucena, who had previously undertaken this fateful journey (after the wreck of another ship, the *Sao Joao*) who persuaded his companions that the chances of survival that way were slight. It was while the above-mentioned two boats were under construction that a group of sailors, together with a priest, set out to build a chapel. This was probably the first Catholic chapel in Natal.

The Catholic priests who called at the Cape were mostly received kindly by the local officials. Care was taken, however, to see that they did not exercise their religious functions. As early as 1653, Jan van Riebeeck held conversations with a German priest, Martin Martini, who was returning to Europe aboard the company's ship *Oliphant*. It was from him that Jan van Riebeeck heard about possible sources of gold and slaves in the vicinity of Lourenço Marques, the

present Maputo. In the year 1660 the Catholic bishop of Malagasy and four other priests were saved from the ship *La Marechole* which was wrecked in Table Bay. Although hospitality was extended to him, he was prevented from saying Mass. In 1670 another ship from France, *Le Phenix*, arrived at the Cape. It had a bishop on board, together with a number of Capuchins. Most of the crew were ill and were permitted to stay at the Cape for a few months. Although the passengers were treated in an hospitable manner, the clergy were not allowed to celebrate Mass ashore.

One of the earliest indications of Catholics being present at the Cape dates from 1685. It was during that year that a ship, *Chevalier de Chaumont*, carrying the French ambassador to Siam, called at Cape Town. The party aboard this ship, which also included some Jesuit astronomers and mathematicians, was well received by the Governor, Simon van der Stel. The language used for conversation was mostly Portuguese, the lingua franca for communicating with foreigners, slaves and people in the ports of call en route to the East (Brain, 1975:2).

Also, throughout the eighteenth century there are records to indicate the arrival of foreign ships at Cape Town and aboard these ships Catholic priests were often to be found. Apart from some who visited Batavia clandestinely and who were deported back to Europe via Cape Town, others visited Cape Town somewhat more openly. In 1739 a Jesuit priest, Father Coppin, visited the Cape with two missionaries "in civil garb" (Brain, 1975:6) and lodged with a Frenchman who received Catholics and said Mass secretly.

In 1758 the arrival of fourteen French ships in Cape Town caused some uncertainty among the population but their alarm could rather be attributed to the fear of a possible attack by France and the subsequent spread of Catholicism. In a report to the Amsterdam classis the (Dutch) Reformed Church at the Cape stated that the majority of the ships were peacably minded so that "we still enjoy the costly pledge of freedom and religion. May God remain with us and protect us so that we may never become slaves to the Antichrist Papal Babel" (Brain, 1975:7).

Once again in 1781 another French fleet arrived in Cape Town to protect the Cape against a possible attack by the English. On board ship was a predominantly Catholic contingent of French troops which had been sent to strengthen the local Dutch garrison. The peace of Versailles in 1783 brought an end to the so-called French occupation. Until the end of the rule of the Dutch East India Company and the beginning of the first British occupation in 1795, Catholic believers at the Cape were denied the right to practise their religion and were even deprived of the means to do so.

Something of the general attitude towards Roman Catholics is well captured in the following excerpt dating from 1785: "Concerning the adherents of the Romish Faith, there is no toleration for Catholics at the Cape. The public exercise of the religion was prohibited. Catholic children were baptised in the Reformed Church, and apparently instructed in this religion. In the view of the

great significance that is attached by Catholics to ceremonial, it is impossible for them to live in a country where sacred rites of religion like the celebration of the mass were prohibited. They have no means of obtaining an indulgence or of having extreme unction administered" (Mentzel, 1785:132).

The Reformed faith is introduced

The Protestant tradition had its origins in South Africa with the arrival of the Dutch in 1652, the early German settlers in the 1660s and the French Huguenots in 1688. The Dutch and French elements were largely Calvinistic. On 6 April 1652, Van Riebeeck arrived in Table Bay. For the first few months at the Cape, some ninety people lived in tents. The first sick-comforter at the Cape was William Wylant, who was also responsible for the spiritual welfare of the people. While it is true that the sick-comforter did not have the status or the qualifications of an ordained minister, we may not regard this initial period of thirteen years before a permanent minister arrived at the Cape as one in which the church was incompletely constituted. Although there was neither an ordained nor an elected church council, this in no way implies that the Christian church was non-existent.

William Wylant worked at the Cape until his departure for Batavia in March 1656. He was succeeded by Pieter van der Stael who served from March 1656 to September 1663. He in turn was followed by Ernestus Back, who had the misfortune to be an alcoholic, and at the beginning of 1665 the commander shipped him off to Batavia. The fourth sick-comforter, Jan Joris Graa, had scarcely been in office for a month, before he died in June 1665. Two months later the first permanent minister, Johan van Arckel, arrived to commence his ministry.

The white population at the Cape consisted of officials, soldiers and sailors of the Company, and a few women and children. The soldiers and sailors were of various nationalities, with diverse religious backgrounds; their crudeness and dissolute habits were to become a byword, so that Van Riebeeck had to rule them with a rod of iron. On the religious side he himself set a good example for his subordinates. He also took a strong stand regarding the attendance of services. Only one service was held each Sunday, in the morning. Wylant would have liked to have held two services, but Van Riebeeck decided that, since the men had worked so hard all week, two services would have been excessive.

Although a number of Khoikhoi became economically involved in the establishment of the refreshment station at the Cape, there was at first little interest among them in the religion of the white settlers. The first Khoikhoi male was baptised only in 1662; three women, however, had been baptised by then. In the meantime the question of the baptism of slaves' children was raised. In 1665, after the arrival of the first permanent minister at the Cape, the Reverend Johan van Arckel, several such children were baptised.

For a proper understanding of the Reformed tradition at the Cape, we need to know something of the ecclesiastical and theological situation in the Nether-

lands at this time, as it was a decisive factor in the establishment and expansion of the Reformed Church in that region.

The theological climate in the Netherlands was affected by three factors in particular: first, it was clear that Cartesian philosophy had begun to influence theology. Cartesianism, as expounded by the Roman Catholic philosopher René Descartes, propounded a rationalism which, by its very nature, was bound to have a negative effect on the church's doctrine. A second factor was the influence of the movement under the leadership of Johannes Cocceius, who adopted a covenant theology and an allegorical interpretation of Scripture. This movement led to a strong reaction in orthodox Reformed circles, the reaction being led particularly by Gysbert Voetius, a professor at Utrecht. A third decisive factor was that loyalty to Reformed confessions of faith, as time passed, developed into a doctrinal orthodoxy.

One of the after-effects of the Synod of Dordt was that ecclesiastical and theological orthodoxy became even more dogmatic. In some instances faith was reduced to an arid system of doctrine. The tendency towards more rigid orthodoxy eventually led, in about 1650, to a reaction in the church in the Netherlands, centred on the formation of religious groups within the church. This was a form of experiential pietism with an inner-orientated religious individualism. The earlier phase of this movement was popularly known as the Second Reformation, stressing personal spiritual piety (free from subjectivism), and was able to avoid some of the negative characteristics of pietism. Leading figures in the Second Reformation were Gysbert Voetius, Johannes Hoornbeeck and William Amesius. The pietists were represented by Bernard Smytegelt and Wilhelm à Brakel whose *Redelijke Godsdienst* was greatly appreciated by church members at the Cape.

It is sometimes said that these authors were pietistic through and through, and that the devoutness which runs throughout Dutch Reformed history like a golden thread, can be traced back to these individuals. However, a clear distinction should be drawn between a positive form of piety and the negative elements of pietism. To this must be added that all devout writers cannot be described without qualification as being pietistic. The spirit breathed by the works of the "oude schrijvers" (old authors) also spoke of the fall of Man in Adam, his inability to aspire to good, his salvation through the predestinating grace of God and the absolute sovereignty of God.

The writings of the "oude schrijvers" in particular, exerted a strong influence on religous developments in South Africa in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. They spoke out against the unspiritual state of the nation, ministers and congregations. They pleaded for a personal commitment to Christ. To them, experiential religion was of primary importance. Although nothing was done to undermine the church, the clergy, the sacrament and the covenant, they regarded rebirth as having priority. They also assumed a fairly strong Puritan point of view. They pleaded for the observance of the Sabbath and the carrying

out of the commands of the Lord. The church had to be pure and had to be cleansed of all that was unholy. Finally, they had a high regard for the Scriptures and for the Heidelberg Catechism.

Certain aspects of the Second Reformation had a strong influence on the formation of the Afrikaners' religious thinking in the eighteenth and eventually also in the nineteenth centuries. Representatives from these circles were strongly critical of the spiritual condition of the church, its ministers and the people. Although they respected the office of the minister, they were concerned about those ministers who had no clear sense of a spiritual calling. In opposition to a false mysticism they focused on the work of Christ. They stressed the importance of experienced religion and the new birth without intending any disrespect to the church, the clergy, the sacraments and the covenant.

Arrival of the French Huguenots

In 1688 the population at the Cape increased considerably with the arrival of the French Huguenots. The Edict of Nantes, which had granted the Huguenots a certain degree of religious freedom, was revoked in October 1685, which resulted in a great number of Huguenots fleeing from France. Many emigrated to the Netherlands. Exactly at this stage the directors of the East India Company were attempting to find suitable colonists to settle at the Cape. Between 1688 and 1700 some 150 French-speaking people settled at the Cape, establishing themselves mainly in the districts of Drakenstein (Paarl), Stellenbosch and Franschhoek.

The minister accompanying the Huguenots to the Cape was Pierre Simond. He took responsibility for the church services at Stellenbosch and Drakenstein, alternating with the sick-comforter Mankadan. The French-speaking people in the Drakenstein area in the meanwhile petitioned for a teacher and eventually Paul Roux was appointed both to this position and as reader in the congregations.

In 1689 the Huguenot members of the Stellenbosch congregation requested permission to constitute themselves a separate congregation with their own church council. On 15 June of that year they addressed a request to the Council of Seventeen, asking that a presbytery similar to that of Batavia be created for them. On 28 November a delegation waited on the Council of Policy to present their case in person, only to be sternly rebuked by the Council and admonished to meet their obligations, and not to pester the Council again with such impertinent requests. Not that their request was unreasonable: in the Netherlands and in Batavia there were separate Walloon congregations; they had not dreamt that the Council of Policy would consider a request for similar privileges at the Cape impertinent.

On 30 December 1691 the first church council members were elected in the Drakenstein congregation, where Simond was appointed minister. In 1700 he

asked to be allowed to return to Europe, but his congregation opposed his request because they valued his services so highly. This put him in something of a dilemma, since he had already disposed of all his possessions and delivered his farewell sermon. The next year he again sought permission, but was requested to remain in Drakenstein until a successor reached the Cape. Henricus Beck eventually arrived in April 1702.

Though Beck was bilingual, he was expected to preach only in Dutch, although more than two-thirds of the hundred or so members of the congregation were not fluent enough in Dutch to be able to follow a sermon preached in it. Consequently the congregation requested that Beck be allowed to preach in French once a fortnight. The Council of Seventeen would have none of it, and urged the Council of Policy to act in the Company's interests.

The first permanent minister at Stellenbosch was Hercules van Loon, who arrived in 1700. For reasons unknown he committed suicide in 1704. Seeing that there was no manse in Drakenstein, Beck moved to the minister's house in Stellenbosch. He conducted worship in Drakenstein once a fortnight, preaching once a month in French.

E.F. le Boucq landed at the Cape on 30 March 1707 and immediately proceeded to Drakenstein. When he discovered that there was neither school nor church nor manse, he refused to remain and returned to Cape Town, promising to go to Drakenstein to conduct worship four times a year. The sick-comforter for the Dutch-speaking people in Drakenstein was a man named Bosman, who conducted services in Dutch on Sundays, while Paul Roux conducted those for the French people, and Beck came over from time to time to administer the sacraments. In 1714 the congregation again acquired the services of its own minister, in the person of Petrus van Aken. Services continued to be held occasionally in French up to 1726, but after that the use of the French language died out completely; the French had been absorbed into the Dutch-speaking community.

Lichtenstein describes the Huguenots in the following vein: "It was from hence that the religious sense diffused itself in so large a measure over the whole colony, and this sense it is which, during an entire century, has preserved these people from becoming wholly degenerate and savage. Although in many other parts it has taken the unfortunate direction, concerning which so much has been said, it has here maintained itself in nearly the true and genuine spirit of protestantism. The troubles excited in some part by the exercise of devotion have here found no place: many complaints even were laid before the Commissionary-General against the missionaries, that they had endeavoured to gain a footing in the country by exhibiting attested forms, the aim of which was to prove themselves persons of superior sanctity; and any one who presumed to doubt the genuineness of these forms was immediately stigmatized as being ungodly and evil-minded" (Lichtenstein, 1803–1806:121).

In trying to understand the role of the French Huguenots and their settlement in South Africa it is of great importance to focus on their background in Europe as well. Only then can one view them and their contributions in perspective.

Life and practise within the Reformed Church

Reformed church services had their own character. At the second pealing of the church bells the reader took up his position behind the lectern, which had been placed in front of the pulpit, and began reading from the Scriptures. He followed this by announcing marriage banns and reading out the names of those who had presented membership certificates from other churches, as well as those who had moved from the congregation. When the bells were rung for the third time, he announced the verse of the psalm to be sung by the congregation, during which the minister mounted the pulpit.

The order of worship was as follows: singing (accompanying the minister's entrance); the opening benediction; the ten commandments and the creed; reading from Scripture; opening prayer; singing by the congregation; the sermon from the pulpit; concluding prayer; the closing hymn, followed by the benediction. The offering was taken during the singing. The duration of the service was usually from an hour and a half to two hours. As in the Netherlands, baptism was administered during the afternoon service and took place immediately after the sermon. While in Cape Town infants were usually baptised on the first Sunday after their birth; baptism in the outlying congregations usually did not occur so soon. Holy communion and the marriage ceremony also followed the sermon.

Taken as a whole, the members of the Cape community in the eighteenth century were fairly devout. By contrast, the country folk were sometimes described as being lax in religious matters. It must, however, be added that some country people had to complete a two week journey to attend a church service, leaving their farms at the mercy of vagrants. Because of this, new congregations were eventually created to provide better opportunities for attending divine worship.

With respect to preaching in the Cape, as a medium whereby church members were spiritually and theologically influenced, a short historical overview is appropriate. In the early years of settlement, before the arrival of permanent ministers, extensive use was made of sick-comforters. They were mostly uneducated people from the lower middle class and had a very limited theological training. They were not allowed to preach their own sermons, but were strictly obliged to make use of printed sermons, so that no false doctrines would gain entrance into the church. The sermon books used by the sick-comforter were orthodox, in accordance with the confessions. The official preaching was to transmit pure reformed doctrine, as contained in the Symbols of Unity and interpreted by Dordt.

For a period of more than two hundred years the analytical sermon was most commonly used by the Reformed Church at the Cape. This method laid strong

emphasis on strict adherence to the text. After exposition and analysis of the text, little room was left for application. Abundant use was made of subdivisions and sometimes sermons were greatly extended in length. Usually they were based more on instruction than on proclamation.

Dating back to 1785 Mentzel gives a lively description of baptismal ceremonies: "Christenings always take place upon a Sunday, but there is no stipulated period within which it must occur. A sponsor is selected by the child's father from among his immediate friends, and the two proceed to the church accompanied by a slave woman who carries the child. The ceremony follows the conclusion of the sermon. The baby is taken up to the pulpit-rail and the baptismal service read, to which the godfather makes the responses. The predikant then steps to the front, baptizes the child, and returns to the pulpit; he then pronounces a blessing and offers a prayer. The father of the child must always be present at the christening, for unless it is known that he was ill or far away on a journey, his absence would be misconstrued; doubt as to the legitimacy of the child would arise. Farmers who live in the remote interior come to town so rarely that they bring walking children to baptism and sometimes several at the same time. In such cases both parents attend the ceremony for propriety's sake. There are many causes for the inability of outlying farmers to come to town frequently. Apart from illness of the parents or the children, there might be unrest among the neighbouring Hottentots; the prevalence of wild animals makes travelling dangerous; they might be held up by swollen rivers, or by a drought, when there is neither water nor pasturage for the animals and so forth" (Mentzel, 1785:122).

A few observations will help us gain a rough idea of church life in general, remembering the overall picture contains dark as well as light portions. For the celebration of Communion certain preparations were necessary. After sufficient notice had been given, the minister had to visit his congregation before every communion service. On the Friday before the Communion a strong penitential sermon was delivered. Communion was celebrated six times a year and on a communion Sunday two services were held (on other Sundays, only one). In his journal Valentijn mentions that at one communion service in Cape Town in 1714 only 40 men and 48 women were present and not a single member of the Council of Policy. According to him things were not much better in the interior. It seems, however, that there was no large-scale fall from church activities as was the case in the Netherlands in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Furthermore, it is clear that the church occupied a prominent place in society during this time and the colonists, by and large, held to their spiritual heritage. Most were faithful in attendance at worship and in observing Sunday as a day of rest. They also made use of the available literature, as could be found in various church libraries or other small libraries.

It was the custom of believers to hold regular family worship. In some cases this was done early in the morning; in other cases even three times a day. Sometimes slaves and Khoikhoi were included in the family worship. Lichten-

stein once gave the following striking description of religious life in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century in the region of Graaff-Reinet: "The day's work of a Karoo farmer begins every morning after sunrise with the singing of a psalm and reading of a chapter from the Bible. Not only the children but the slaves and the Hottentots had to be present at the family worship, and it was they, especially the women, who knew and sang the most beautiful psalms by heart. At evening, when the work of the day was finished, a Hottentot woman washed the feet of the whole family, and again family worship was held. The slaves squatted along the wall while the house father read a religious meditation out of one of his old sermon books, and then closed with song and a prayer. On Sunday a solemn service was held, during which a long sermon was read."

The religious life of many church members was sound and balanced and it was these people who formed the nucleus of church life. Some of the travellers who journeyed around the Cape Colony from time to time, such as Barrow and Campbell, bear witness to the scriptural and doctrinal soundness of the preaching. In the meanwhile, various travellers in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries described certain informal religious practices. These meetings were a gathering around the Word of God and were initiated by the ministers; the sort of gatherings advocated by someone like Voetius and his followers, rather than that arising from German pietism. Seeing that some members lived so far from the church (sometimes up to 160 km) these types of practice helped to meet a particular need.

It is of interest to focus on some of the characteristics of the people living in the north-easterly region of the Cape Colony. They were conservative in their life-style and deeply attached to the customs inherited from their Dutch forefathers, and this influenced their religious views as well as the way they dressed and lived. It was this conservatism that also influenced their attitude towards national affairs. The Cape Patriots was a movement closely associated with the people on the north-eastern border, amongst whom a new spirit and new ideas were prevalent in the Cape from 1778. A national consciousness was growing among them, whereby they regarded South Africa as their own fatherland. Although the Cape Patriots had had contact with the Patriots in the Netherlands, they emerged through their own struggle to remove grievances and to obtain greater freedom and rights. In church matters they observed their responsibilities and in their moral principles they were strict. They sought biblical guidance in moral and ethical issues, studying the Heidelberg Catechism and W.A. Brakel's *Redelijke Godsdienst*. They were careful in their contact with other people and on account of their isolated existence, sometimes a little haughty.

The family and home played a key role in the preservation and transmission of faith and values. Faith was nurtured through the Word of the Lord and confession. It was a social group, determined by religion. It was also from this basic group that individuals linked up with the wider society as opportunity

afforded. The free burghers, stock farmers and nomadic farmers did not live as isolated individuals. It was usually with the help of family and relatives that they moved, settled and defended themselves. The biblical guidelines which they deeply revered, together with the circumstances in which they lived, meant that they attached great value to a sound family life. It was also in the context of family and home that the Bible, together with other spiritual books, came to be honoured and read.

For the people isolated in distant districts, the Bible had tremendous significance. Apart from the Bible and a few edifying books there was virtually no other literature available from which pioneer families could build up a knowledge of language. It was also practically the only book available for reading and doing lessons. This attachment to the Bible, together with the uniformity of their life-style led to a uniformity of convictions which was further strengthened by the quarterly communion, marriage and funeral services which brought the burghers together from time to time.

In their situation of isolation the Bible served as their guide in virtually every cultural, economic and political matter that arose. Just as their isolation had a definite influence on the physical circumstances of the farmers, so the Bible influenced their spiritual world, especially through the regular family devotions held in the scattered households. These households were depicted as Christian and patriarchal families, living in a rural society, with the family Bible as unifying force.

The foundation for an evangelical tradition in South Africa was already laid in early times at the Cape. Initially the spiritual life of the Dutch who settled at the Cape in the middle of the seventeenth century proved to be fairly unemotional and was often a matter of form which exercised little influence over the everyday life of the congregation. This trend was continued in the eighteenth century too. In the latter part of the eighteenth century there were different signs of disquiet, with the deadly deism of this period in evidence in Protestant Christendom.

One of the first foundation stones for a tradition of evangelicalism in the history of South African Christianity was laid in the form of Dutch pietism by those adhering to the tradition of the Dutch Second Reformation.

During the latter part of the eighteenth century a couple of Dutch ministers who were influenced by the Second Reformation as well as the evangelical awakenings in Britain, served at the Cape. The most prominent ones were M.C. Vos and H.R. van Lier. In the course of the decades thereafter the arrival of especially Methodists and through them the influence of revivalism and evangelicalism all worked together to strengthen an evangelical tradition in South Africa.

The early organisation of the Reformed Church at the Cape

The early organisation of the church at the Cape may appear strange at first. From 1602 the consistory of Amsterdam acted for the classis in all matters

excepting those pertaining to the examination and commissioning of ministers to the East, which the classis regarded as its peculiar province. In 1621 a commission was appointed to supervise Indian Affairs, the *Deputati ad res Indicas*, whose members were to act as deputies of the classis. Thereafter other *classes* began to act in the interests of the churches in India, appointing their own *Deputati ad res Indicas*. The need for liaison arose among the several commissions. The managing directors of the Company were therefore requested to appoint a central body to direct ecclesiastical affairs in the East Indies. This was refused. Nevertheless, the other *classes* still desired closer cooperation, if only through correspondence, but the synod of North Holland thwarted all attempts to attain this end. This explains why the Cape Church corresponded mainly with the Amsterdam classis.

The church in the East Indies derived its existence from the active interest of a trading company. The Company's board of management consisted of seventeen directors (Heeren XVII), but the local government was entrusted to a governor-general and a Council of Policy. Because of the great distance separating the East Indies from the Netherlands, church affairs in the East were usually left to the governor and his Council of Policy. The church was regarded simply as an instrument of the secular authority, to which all requests had to be directed. In 1624 a church order was instituted on the model of that of Dordt but it was adapted to the requirements of the church in India. The local government gave its approval, but the Council of Seventeen did not. In 1643 Governor-general Van Diemen drew up a church order which made the church completely subservient to the state. This did not, however, meet with the approval of the directors either, largely perhaps because of vigorous protests from the mother church. But the secular authority in Batavia continued to act in the spirit of it, thus reducing the church to a mere agent of the state.

The Batavian government's *de jure* jurisdiction over the Cape is clearly evident in such matters as the charges lodged against Wylant for delivering his own sermons, and the instructions issued in 1664 concerning the baptism of slave children. Such intervention in Cape affairs was never so drastic, however, as to unduly influence the evolution of the Cape Church.

The secular authority most closely in touch with the Cape Church was the Council of Policy, which in the course of time became more directly responsible to the Council of Seventeen. From 1652 to 1665 all church affairs were supervised by the Council of Policy, with the commander at its head. The arrival of the first permanent minister, followed by the election of a church council, brought some measure of separation between state and church. Spiritual affairs were entrusted to the church council. All decisions were, however, subject to approval by the Council, which was represented at all church council meetings by its commissioner. The latter was empowered to intervene, at his discretion, in the proceedings.

During the seventeenth century there was no question of any combined assembly at the Cape. In 1665 the first congregation was formally constituted in Cape Town and it was twenty-one years later before the second was established at Stellenbosch. The church made no attempt to effect any obvious connection between the two churches. The reasons were obvious: firstly, as individual congregations they were at that stage attached to the Amsterdam classis; secondly, two congregations could hardly form a combined assembly at such an early stage; and thirdly, because there were so few ministers, the minister at the Cape acted as relieving minister to the Stellenbosch congregation, and this served to provide sufficient contact and fellowship.

As more communities sprang up, closer liaison became necessary. By 1745 there were five congregations, namely Cape Town (1665), Stellenbosch (1686), Drakenstein (Paarl) (1691), Rhoodezand (Tulbagh) (1743) and Swartland (Malmesbury) (1745).

It is remarkable that the government rather than the church was the first to propose a combined assembly. In reply to a request from the Reverend Simond to form a church council along the lines of that in Batavia, the Council of Seventeen decided to allow the Huguenots to form their own congregation – on certain conditions. One of these was that the Commissioner-general could bring matters of importance before the general church council at which the French delegates could be present, to settle disputes, and that external subsidies should be administered not by the Church council of Drakenstein but by "the general church council". This concession was utilised when the Reverend Simond and the Reverend Savoye were heard in the "general church council".

As a result of this concession the government, probably following the example of article 75 of the Canons of Dordt (DCO) (which exhorted neighbouring churches 'in the country' to consult one another about matters of censure) and also following the common practice in Holland, formed a policy and set a precedent which would eventually allow for a combined assembly.

By 1710, Governor-general Van Hoorn proposed a form of classis assembly to handle matters requiring consideration by more than one assembly. The minister of Cape Town at the time, the Reverend D'Ailly, objected to this and nothing came of it. On 11 August 1716 the church councils of Stellenbosch and Drakenstein asked the Council of Policy for permission to meet under the supervision of a Commissioner-general, be it but once a year, to consider the building up of God's church and the furtherance of unity among the members, considering that this was the custom in other countries. The Council's reaction was something to the effect that unless the Cape Town ministers requested this and supported it with due consideration of its necessity, the Council would not consider it. This attitude and decision of the government can be easily understood from their desire to maintain authority and participation in church affairs. What is more difficult to understand is the attitude of the Amsterdam classis – they gave little support to the Cape churches in their struggle to institute

an assembly of this nature. Although they considered it an issue of merit, they foresaw a host of problems on the way to realising it.

Eventually the government allowed the representatives of the churches to meet on 17 January 1745 because they realised they would never be able to determine the boundaries of the new congregations to the satisfaction of all, without entering into consultation with the churches. At the following meeting, on 15 January 1747, resolutions were passed concerning the procedures of meeting to be adopted. Members were to seat themselves according to age, regardless of which congregation they represented; elders were to take their places according to the rank of their respective ministers; deacons would not be admitted to future sessions; and the two most senior ministers would act alternately as chairman and secretary.

The third meeting in 1748 received a reply from the Amsterdam classis, expressing satisfaction over the permission granted to the Cape churches to hold an annual meeting. At the same time the classis emphasised the advisability of not calling such a gathering a 'classis convocation' but rather a 'coetus' or 'conventus', since (according to the classis) the meeting of the Cape churches did not have the powers of a classis, such as being allowed to conduct ecclesiastical examinations and appoint and ordain ministers. In their reply, the Cape churches indicated that they had decided to use the designation "gecombineerde kerkvergadering" (combined church meeting).

The combined church meeting discussed a variety of matters, including the baptism of children in a church other than that of the parents, baptism in the home, the ordination of a minister (Ruardus Cloppenburg), the state of the various congregations, and a proposal to introduce church visitation. The church order of the Synod of Dordt had decreed that the classis should apppoint at least two of the most senior and therefore most experienced and suitable ministers to visit its congregations, to investigate whether their ministers, members of the church council, and teachers were scrupulous in the execution of their duties and true to the doctrine of their church. The combined church meeting resolved that a minister of one congregation, accompanied by an elder, should pay an annual visit to all the other churches to investigate conditions prevailing there, and such visitation had to be performed in turn by each church council.

The combined church meeting's most momentous resolution was that concerning church visitation, a practice carried out with unfailing regularity up to 1759. In that year the Council of Policy, acting on instructions from the directors, abruptly abolished both the combined church meetings and the visitations, on the grounds that the combined church meetings served very little purpose and imposed too great a financial burden on those outlying congregations still struggling with debts. This contention was unfounded, for the churches of Cape Town and Drakenstein, both free of debt, bore all expenses involved.

Attempts were made to restore the combined church meeting. At the time of the visit of Commissioners-general Nederburg and Frijkenius, the Cape Church

Council presented a memorial petitioning for such a meeting. The commissioners referred the matter to the Company's directors, and once again the matter was postponed *sine die.*

The first traces of missionary work in South Africa: The arrival of the Moravians

Relatively little missionary activity was carried out among the indigenous population at the Cape between 1652 and 1824. This can be attributed to the fact that the Dutch East India Company had adopted profitmaking as a priority. As elsewhere in the world it aimed firstly to become a successful commercial enterprise. This had the effect that the hands of the church were tied in many ways by the Company. The very limited amount of mission work that was done among the Khoikhoi and the slaves during this period was carried out as a private initiative of certain individuals and was disorganised in nature.

A further factor which influenced missionary work in a very negative way during this period was the racist attitude and behaviour of the whites at the Cape. They often looked upon the local people as being inferior and referred to them in different negative and derogatory terms.

The attention of the Cape Church was specifically focused on the need for a missionary effort among the Khoikhoi when the first missionary, George Schmidt, arrived at the Cape in 1737. He came from a Moravian background and this meant that the local church now had to face the fact that Christian mission would be undertaken outside its jurisdiction. The Moravians formed a separate non-denominational community and one of their major aims was to obey the commission of Christ to proclaim the Gospel.

Various misunderstandings and mistaken perceptions developed between Schmidt and some of the people at the Cape. One of the perceptions that a soldier and the servant of the East India Company had about George Schmidt was not all that positive. "He was definitely a hypocrite and a sham; sometimes climbing on the low roof of the house of Captain Rhenius with whom he lived for a while after his arrival; there he knelt so that all the inhabitants of the castle could see him and pretended to pray. Whether he did actually pray only God and he knew. Since I knew him very well, but saw no Christian expression on his countenance, I was even at the time surprised that Captain Rhenius was so eager to take care of him from the very start" (Krüger, 1966:19).

In turn Schmidt described the people of Cape Town in the following fashion: "The impiety is very great in this country, a real devil of drinking reigns. . ..Most people mock at me, but I take no heed, they do not know what they are doing" (Krüger, 1966:19).

Neither was his opinion of the Reformed ministers very positive. In his view they did not believe in the conversion of the Khoikhoi and they expected that nothing would come from his efforts. The attitude of the local Cape Town

Church Council was not very different, as is evident from a letter to the Classis of Amsterdam. It stated that the Church Council had not yet found any evidence of a Khoikhoi having been converted. This somewhat negative remark was (at that stage) the only official reaction of the church to his arrival.

As regards the difficult question of him being permitted to baptise or not, little documentation is available to draw on. In a report which Schmidt drew up in 1744 he mentioned particulars of a conversation he had had with one of the Cape Reformed ministers, Francois le Sueur. According to this report Le Sueur had told him that one had to begin with the Christians at the Cape. When Le Sueur asked Schmidt who would baptise the Khoikhoi, Schmidt's reply was that he had not come to baptise but to preach the gospel. Le Sueur then, according to the report, advised him to enter the service of the Company, in order to gain the respect of the Khoikhoi, to which Schmidt replied that he had to remain independent. Schmidt definitely did not deduce from it that he was not permitted to baptise, because in 1742 he complained to the governor that the ministers had not warned him from the start against baptising his converts. Eventually, Schmidt was not permitted to continue the work he started at Genadendal. The antagonism against him, however, developed primarily when he baptised his first converts.

One of the most outstanding contributions of the Moravian mission to the ecclesiastical history of South Africa is indeed the system of closed settlements. For quite some time they became models for mission work in general. It was a common phenomenon for many of the early missionaries of other mission societies to visit Genadendal and develop their work along similar lines. The pioneers of the LMS, the Wesleyan, Scottish, French, Rhenish, Berlin, American and Anglican Missions were influenced by the Genadendal pattern for organising missionary institutions. The government, too, considered the Moravian stations to be exemplary. "A network of this type of institution spread over the Colony. Through them, the Gospel was brought to the indigenous population of the Cape" (Krüger, 1966:292). The history of the establishment of Genadendal as Schmidt's first missionary base and therefore also the first South African missionary station makes a fascinating story.

Three factors contributed to the significance of Moravian settlements like Genadendal in South Africa. The first factor was the image of *Hermhut*. The Moravians had not intended expanding Moravianism to foreign countries. It was only for practical reasons that the brethren formed settlements where it was expedient to do so. In order to teach people, they had to settle them. A settlement was only a means to this end, not an end in itself. But as the image of *Hermhut* was strong in the minds of the Moravian brethren, the settlements came to resemble the Moravian settlements existing in Germany.

Secondly, while the Moravians did not easily establish settlements elsewhere in the world, they did so in South Africa because the governors encouraged them, gave grants and even protected them. Without this sort of protection the

colonists would have taken away many of the last land rights from the Khoikhoi. The settlements would not have become what they were and would not have flourished or endured for so long without the encouragement and protection of the governors.

The third factor was the disruption of the indigenous culture. The settlements were broadly criticised for replacing the original mode of living with Moravian customs. It was felt that these missionaries should have preserved the heritage of the unbeliever as far as it was compatible with the Christian gospel. However, in South Africa there was little to preserve. When Schmidt started his work at Genadendal, the Khoikhoi culture had already been greatly disrupted. Mixed groups of people without customs and traditions were gathered together in the settlements, the common bond being the faith and missionaries' way of life. To a large extent the history of the Moravian Church became their own history (Krüger, 1966:294).

In the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it was inevitable that the morality of settlers would fluctuate and together with it the missionary zeal. Mission work was left largely to a few individuals. It could be said that the Khoikhoi and slaves who often had before them the example of dissolute masters and employers, must have become indifferent towards a religion which apparently exercised little influence over the lives of those who professed it. Slaves were instructed in the Christian faith on Sundays but often attempts at evangelising them were somewhat mechanical and dull.

The Lutheran Church is established

The early colonists at the Cape were not all of Dutch origin. A reasonable estimate of the number of German immigrants during the first century of the settlement could be placed at about 28 percent. It would be a fair assumption that most of them were adherents of the Lutheran Church.

From the beginning intolerance of other Christians and denominations was prevalent, although not so much of its own accord. It took a century or two before some denominational tolerance developed at the southern tip of Africa.

The directors of the Dutch East India Company regarded and operated the victualling station at the Cape, from both a political and an ecclesiastical point of view, as part of the Dutch East Indies. Yet the relationship between church and state at the Cape differed from that in the East Indies. This could be attributed to the following factors: The great distance separating the two territories and poor means of communication hindered the government in Batavia from controlling Cape affairs. Consequently the rigour with which it subjugated the church in India could not be enforced with equal severity at the Cape. The Cape was not a trading station but a victualling station which ultimately grew to be a settlement. Consequently there were no trade considerations to shackle the expansion of the church. The control of Cape affairs by the government in

Batavia grew increasingly sporadic and indirect whilst the Council of Seventeen established a more direct rule and supervision of the Cape.

In terms of the charter granted by the States General to the DEIC, the Company was duty bound to promote and extend the true Christian religion in the areas where it operated. This meant that the Reformed Church was the only church to be recognised by the government. Moreover, only members of this church could hold public office, though throughout the eighteenth century this regulation was not strictly imposed.

Shortly after Van Arckel's arrival in 1665 the church council decided that Lutherans of good standing would be permitted to partake of the Lord's Supper. In 1742 a petition signed by sixty-nine people was presented to the Council of Policy, requesting permission for public worship and a minister for the local Lutherans. This was rejected by the Council of Policy on the grounds that it was ill-timed.

In the course of the next four decades various attempts were made to gain recognition for the Lutheran Church. None of them met with great enthusiasm or success. Governor Tulbagh, who proved to be a great stumbling block in the way of the Lutherans, died in 1771. His successor, Joachim van Plettenberg, was far more tolerant towards them. In 1774 a "warehouse" was erected by Martin Melck, but it was clearly intended for use as a Lutheran church. In 1778 the efforts of the Lutheran Consistory in Amsterdam were rewarded when the Council of Seventeen finally proved willing to grant the Lutherans at the Cape the freedom to conduct worship on the same terms as existed in Batavia.

In 1780 the first Lutheran minister, Andreas Kolver, disembarked at the Cape. On 10 December of that same year the "warehouse" was donated to the congregation and formally consecrated. The church council of the Reformed Church at the Cape now had to agree to its use as a foregone conclusion.

At the beginning there was a good understanding between the two congregations. The departure of the Lutherans had the effect of decreasing the number of young people coming forward to profess their faith. This led the church council to take whatever steps it could to ensure that the Lutherans did not expand too strongly at the expense of the Reformed Church.

In the years to come the Lutheran Church was strengthened through German and Scandinavian and later American Lutheran Mission Societies. Cooperation and efforts towards union proved to be difficult because of differences in language and approach. The Berlin and Hermannsburg Missions were strongly influenced by Gutman and Warneck, who held the view that mission work should not seek to divorce the individual from the contexts of family, clan or tribe. The Scandinavian and American agencies, on the other hand, followed the Anglo-Saxon concept shaped by Henry Venn and Roland Allen which aimed at winning individuals to the Kingdom instead of setting out to gather in entire tribes and nations (Strassberger, 1974:63).

Further missionary attempts

Towards the end of the eighteenth century there was a resurgence of missionary interest in Europe, giving rise to the establishment of several missionary societies, i.e. the Baptist Missionary Society (1792), the London Missionary Society (1795) and the Nederlandsche Zendeling Genootschap (1797). This eventually had a direct effect on missionary activity in South Africa.

Four missionaries of the LMS – Dr Johannes Theodorus van der Kemp, Johannes Jacobus Kicherer, John Edmonds and William Edwards – arrived at the Cape in March 1779. Their coming aroused lively interest. Van der Kemp and M.C. Vos invited all those interested in the cause, to a gathering. In this way the South African Missionary Society was founded on 22 April 1799.

The directors of the South African Missionary Society diligently set to work. In Cape Town a layman, Pieter Kuijpers, began to work among the slaves and servants. His work was continued later by a missionary, Manenberg. Under the Batavian regime there were clashes between the Society and De Mist, the governor, who was suspicious of its activities. For one thing, the Society had erected a building in which to hold services, a circumstance displeasing to De Mist, who had no objection to an informal gathering, but refused to countenance divine service. Ultimately, however, he granted permission, and the building in Long Street was consecrated in March 1804.

The Society founded branches further afield. In 1803 there were about five hundred members carrying on mission work in various villages. Unfortunately friction arose between the Society and the Reformed church, whose ministers were not opposed to mission work as such, but thought that it should be done by the church, not by any association independent of the church. As a result, missionary activity was started by some of the congregations. It makes for interesting reading to develop an idea of the regulations governing missionaries at the end of the eighteenth century at the Cape.

These regulations were eventually linked to Article 14 of the Church Order of De Mist. It stated the following:

1. "That all Missionaries, who are upon a legal authority in this Colony, have freedom to proceed into the interior of the Cape for the purpose of teaching and promoting religion and cultivation among the heathen nations.
2. That this however, be done at such a distance beyond the boundaries of this Colony, established by Government, that their schools have no communication with the inhabitants upon these boundaries, much less with those that live within them, either Christians or heathen.
3. That in the schools and meetings to be formed by the Missionaries for the Natives, nobody who has residence within this Colony, and belonging to the common population, be permitted; unless he has obtained for it express leave from the Governor, which leave can never be obtained except in the event of absolute necessity.

4. That all Missionaries, before they proceed to the interior of the country, have to make themselves known to the Governor and Commander-in-Chief, and also to mention the place where they intend to settle themselves, in which case they obtain a certificate from him, in which such place or district is expressed, in order that Government may know at all times where the Missionaries are labouring.
5. That all Missionaries be obliged to send to Government at every convenient opportunity a written account of the state of their schools, in order to know what effect the cultivation of the Natives has had through their care; from what they get their subsistence; what cattle and other things they possess; the nature of the soil which they occupy and plough; the climate, etc."

It still remains a question why it was so easy for a slave or a Khoikhoi to receive baptism. Adult candidates had to show some formal knowledge of the doctrine of the Christian faith. Hence the speed with which the Christian faith grew at the Cape can largely be attributed to the determination of Europeans for it to spread. Except for some converts made by the Moravian George Schmidt, very few others were won because of the lack of full-time missionaries before the 1790s. Some strands of Calvinist theology even seemed indifferent or hostile towards missionary work (Elphick, 1979:118).

The history and achievements of the Christian mission in South Africa leave us with a chequered picture. "No single simplistic judgement of either good or bad can do justice to this history... It is especially the consequences of the entanglement between mission and colonialism, resulting in a mistaken relationship between church/mission and state, which urgently needs to be corrected" (Saayman, 1990:35). This is also true of the very early part of mission and church history in South Africa up to the beginning of the nineteenth century.

The involvement of the "neglected ones"

Not only prominent and leading figures, whites or males took part in establishing Christianity in South Africa. Lay people, the local black community and women also played their part in the first centuries of Christian history in South Africa. Though not many women took part in early developments in the church in South Africa, primarily because of social restrictions, a couple of them did make significant contributions.

One woman who played a significant role in early Christian history in South Africa was Machteld Smith, the friend and confidante of H.R. van Lier and M.C. Vos. She is best known for her religious and social work at Bethelsdorp where she worked with Van der Kemp.

Catharina Allegonda van Lier also contributed to the expansion of Christianity at theCape in early times. She accompanied her brother Helperus Ritzema van Lier to the Cape and died at the early age of thirty-three. She was a popular figure in religious circles at the Cape and her diary was published after her death.

The absence of lay people, women and blacks from historical sources is an old point of dispute. The majority of the early church writers were primarily men. Only by the middle of the 19th century, with the spreading of literacy among the indigenous people, did the first few written records by African men appear. European women missionaries, many of whom were single or wives of missionaries, also left a few records of their experiences. Writings by African women are almost non-existent (Tisani, 1992:67).

An important source of information for the historian of Christianity who is sensitive to the contribution of these "neglected ones", lies in oral tradition. There is, for instance, the need for developing an African perspective on both the work of men and women in the religious context by studying hymns, songs and even the prayers of different people (Japhta, 1988:189).

Christianity amidst the other religions in the early centuries

Although the prime focus of this book is the history of Christianity in South Africa, it is also important to refer briefly to the other religions which received some support from the local population. Apart from traditional religion which received attention from the indigenous population, it was primarily Islam and Judaism which received support.

In the introductory chapter attention was drawn to traditional African religion. The following quotations from descriptions which date back to 1668 and 1698 capture some of the prevailing perspectives:

"No one, however thoroughly he has inquired, has ever been able to find among all the Kaffirs (sic) or Hottentots (sic) or Beachrangers any trace of religion, or any show of honour to God or the Devil. They know nevertheless that there is a being, named by them *'s Humma* who sends rain on earth, makes the wind blow, and produces heat and cold. But they do not pray to him; for why say they, should they pray to this *'s Humma*, who at one time gives excessive drought, and at another excessive rain, when they would rather see it fall moderately and conveniently. . .They also appear to have some superstition about the new moon, for when this is first seen, they all turn towards it in groups, and make merry the whole night, dancing, jumping, singing and clapping their hands, and also murmuring in their mouths. . .They have no churches, nor any sort of congregation" (Dapper, 1668:77).

While Reformed Christianity increasingly became the norm for the Cape settler, the early seventeenth century Cape slaves fashioned their own, to a large extent. Francois Leguat possibly also provided one of the early descriptions of the religious beliefs of certain Cape slaves in as early as 1698. As Robert Shell indicates, when he quotes Leguat:

"There were syncretistic elements of Khoikhoi religious veneration in the Cape slave religion: They say the (slaves) worship only one God, creator of all things, and that they likewise have a great veneration for the Sun and Moon, as

his Chief Ministers whose principal commission is to verify the Earth and all the inhabitants. . .but his adoration is secret and interior. They have neither images, ceremonies nor any other manner of sensible worship, and admit no other law than that of nature. If they feast and dance at the renewing of the moon, it is not to show any respect for her, but like the Hottentots (sic) to rejoice at the return of the Light. In a word they are perfect deists, whereupon I cannot forbear taking notice, by the by, though against all common opinion that there is no real difference to be made between those people, and those we call atheists" (Shell, 1992:48).

The first traces of an Islamic community at the Cape appeared in the seventeenth century. It grew slowly in the eighteenth century and rather spectacularly in the centuries which followed. This growth can largely be attributed to the process of proselytisation at the Cape. The conversion of slaves to Islam was greatly encouraged by their almost entire exclusion from Christianity but also by the ministry of the Muslim priests or "imams" who strongly identified with the black population.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century there was a fairly strong and flourishing Muslim community in Cape Town. It included both slaves and free blacks. Though it is impossible to determine the extent of Islam at the Cape before 1825, the authorities were concerned about the spreading thereof.

It can be stated that between 1652 and 1795 two great proselytising religions appeared at the Cape. "Among rural slaves the impact of Christianity was superficial, that of Islam negligible. Neither religion profoundly affected the Khoikhoi if we may ignore Schmidt's short-lived mission. Both religions had their greatest impact in Cape Town. There Christianity, the classical religion of slaves, made some progress, particularly among the Company's slaves. . .The spread of Islam was more spontaneous. . .but also limited to the urban slaves and free blacks" (Elphick and Giliomee, 1982:125).

The history of Jewish Christian believers in South Africa goes back to the beginning of white settlement in South Africa. One of the very first to set foot on South African soil was probably a sailor by the name of Fernao Martins who was a crewmember in Vasco da Gama's fleet. In 1499 another Jewish Christian, Caspar da Gama, disembarked at the current Mossel Bay when the Portuguese fleet docked there for fresh water.

Until the days of Jan van Riebeeck nothing more was heard of Jewish converts. By 1669 the handful of settlers at the Cape included a small number of Jewish people. Most of them appear to have been divorced from practicing the rites of their faith. "They were either professing more or less perfunctorily the faith of their Christian neighbours, or else had been fully accepted into the membership of the Established Church" (Codrington, 1985:19).

The first Jewish people to be baptised into the Christian faith in South Africa in 1669 were Samuel Jacobson and David Heijlbron. This ceremony took place on 25 December 1669. They were soldiers in the service of the Dutch East India

Company and their example resulted in two unnamed German Jewish men accepting baptism in January 1670. The church records indicate that on 15 January 1673, Abraham (no surname given) was baptised and another baptism of a Jewish person occurred in 1676.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, restrictions on Jews practising their faith had been relaxed somewhat. This, however, did not prevent some of them becoming Christians. The first Jewish congregation in South Africa was eventually founded in 1841 whilst the first synagogue was built in 1863.

Conclusion

Although by the twentieth century a large majority of South Africans would be Christians, from the outset South Africa was destined to be a religiously plural society.

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SOCIO-POLITICAL EVENTS		ECCLESIASTICAL EVENTS
Settlement of Khoisan and black people in southern Africa	Before 1488	
Voyage of discovery by Diaz	1488	
Voyage of discovery by Da Gama	1497	
	1501	Roman Catholic chapel built at Mossel Bay
	1635	Roman Catholic chapel built in Natal
Arrival of Jan van Riebeeck and the Dutch at the Cape of Good Hope	1652	
	1665	Arrival of the first ordained Dutch Reformed minister at the Cape (J. van Arckel)
Arrival of the French Huguenots	1688	
	1737	Arrival of George Schmidt, the first Moravian missionary
	1745	First combined meeting of Reformed Churches at the Cape
Death of Governor Ryk Tulbagh	1771	
Rise of the Cape Patriot Movement	1779	Lutheran Church recognised at the Cape
	1780	Arrival of first ordained Lutheran minister (A. Kolver)
First British occupation of the Cape	1795	Establishment of various missionary societies in South Africa

British settlement in South Africa

The period 1795 to 1880 was one of far-reaching changes in the history of South Africa: social, economic, political and ecclesiastical. This period was marked by various far-reaching changes: dramatic territorial expansion by white and black, various settlements by a number of new groups, the first clashes between white and black, population movements, economic development and finally also conflict between British imperialism and Afrikaner nationalism. All these events had a powerful influence on the church and its development.

With the British occupation of the Cape at the close of the eighteenth century, the new government took advantage of a process of social change that had begun in about 1780, namely the rise of a colonial citizenry which had become involved in senior civil service. The local elite of wealthy farmers in the South-western District who dominated the ranks of the *heemraads* (juries), church councils and the military officers worked together with other important sections of Cape society: farmers in other areas, the developing commercial class and the central government. From the beginning of their rule, the British went out of their way to gain the favour of the foremost Afrikaners.

The establishment of British rule initially brought few changes in the life-style of the inhabitants of the Cape. Geographical factors, in particular, made drastic changes impossible. The great distance of the Cape from other parts of the world, the inhospitable coast, the absence of navigable rivers and the uncertain rainfall, together with a tiny population and a lack of both cheap labour and advanced agricultural methods all counted against the development of the Cape Colony.

The British settlers were also to have a considerable influence on developments in South Africa. These settlers came from a Europe and a Britain which, after the French Revolution and the subsequent Napoleonic wars were faced with serious political, economic and social problems. Although the influx of English to the Eastern Cape was small in comparison to their emigration to other parts of the world, this group of 4 000 people was strongly motivated in their determination to improve their quality of life. This goal, however, was not to be realised in the short term. The new climatic conditions, attacks from the Xhosas and various other disturbances on the eastern border caused many setbacks. Accustomed as they were to the rule of law and a parliamentary government, the settlers were critical of the authoritarian mode of government at the Cape. After 1825 the process of constitutional government and the development of the legal system was gradually implemented. The British settlers were instrumental in establishing a

new kind of society on the subcontinent of Africa which to this day still reflects its British origins.

The autocratic attitude of the British officials in the first decades after the second British occupation in 1806 provoked strong reaction from both the burghers and the black and Khoisan peoples, and even the 1820 British settlers in the Eastern Cape. This autocratic attitude, in addition to new philanthropic legislation concerning liberated coloured peoples and a changed policy for the eastern border all resulted in a large-scale exodus of farmers from the border district of the colony in the 1830s. These events, known as the Great Trek, have been described by the historian Eric Walker as the "central event in the history of the Europeans in South Africa".

The Great Trek was not the only migration in South African history which had far-reaching effects. The Khoikhoi migration to the interior during the seventeenth century was a result of white territorial expansion, as were the Griqua migration to the north-east towards the end of the eighteenth century and then the well-known black population movements, the Difaqane and the Mfecane.

The Great Trek was not great on account of the numbers participating in it, but rather because of the far-reaching implications it was to have. With the passage of time, the Trek was regarded as an Afrikaner national movement and the great majority of the Afrikaner people were later to identify themselves with its ideals.

There can be no doubt that this migration of the Voortrekkers had a dramatic effect on the historical development of the land. It meant, among others, that by the middle of the nineteenth century the interior had been transformed into an interdependent multiracial society, characterised by both cooperation and conflict.

The discovery of gold and diamonds was to have explosive economic, social and political repercussions for the subcontinent of southern Africa from about the second half of the nineteenth century. It ushered in the industrial period and gave rise to a new capitalist society and the extension of white domination of South Africa. The process of urbanisation brought about radical changes to the demographic situation. Political developments left their mark on relations both within and outside the country. For black communities these events brought about the disintegration of their traditional socio-economic structures.

The closing years of the nineteenth century saw outbreaks of violent conflict between Afrikaner nationalism and British imperialism. Afrikaner nationalists feared the destruction of their independence by British imperialism. British imperialists for their part were convinced that the rise and growth of Afrikaner nationalism was a threat to their position in South Africa. The deep suspicion between these two groups, which was

to last long after these wars, eventually resulted in a fierce struggle between a world power and two small Afrikaner republics. These wars were to have significant consequences for future developments in South Africa during the twentieth century: socially, economically and especially politically.

CHAPTER 2

Christianity in the period of English colonisation

This chapter gives an account of the development of the main English-speaking churches in the first half of the nineteenth century. All had their origin in the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope and most in the uncertain period of military occupation from 1795–1803 and again from 1806–1815. At the conclusion of the Napoleonic wars in 1815, the colony was permanently ceded to Britain and became the only British colony in southern Africa. By the middle of the century there were two British colonies (the Cape and Natal) and the Orange River Sovereignty, temporarily occupied by the British. A number of small Trekker republics had come into being in the 1840s, from which the Transvaal and the Orange Free State were to emerge in 1852 and 1854 respectively.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century the San peoples had almost disappeared from the Cape Colony though some had fled to places of refuge further inland. The Khoikhoi had been virtually reduced to the position of landless serfs by the middle of the eighteenth century. Most of them were labourers on Dutch farms and only a few small clans remained independent. Dutch trek-farmers and black tribesmen lived as uneasy neighbours in the frontier districts from the middle of the eighteenth century. Recurrent outbursts of hostility had led the Dutch government to plan the separation of white and black but this had not been accomplished by the time that the British took possession of the Cape in 1795. By the middle of the nineteenth century there were very few black tribes whose lives had not been deeply affected by the presence of white settlers and white political structures in Africa. Tribal chiefdoms still occupied large areas of land, particularly in the Eastern Cape, Zululand, Basutoland (Lesotho) and Bechuanaland (Botswana). Their independence and territorial possession were under serious threat from continuing white encroachment. During most of the nineteenth century peace and stability were precarious. By the end of the century the entire southern Africa had come under white annexation and political control in one form or another.

Religious contact as a form of interaction between black and white was only one among many. From the Cape, Christian missionary work spread in all directions into southern Africa during the nineteenth century. In the account that follows, missionary work predominates. This is because missions were so important in the development of Christian witness and of churches during the first half and even in the second half of the nineteenth century. Any account of the growth of Christianity on the subcontinent must give considerable attention to this aspect. Organisation of church structures and the formation of denominations occurred mainly in the latter part of the nineteenth century. In this development the foundations established in missionary work were often formative. The episcopal churches provided something of an exception. Effective Anglican and Roman Catholic work began only when the hierarchical structures essential to their institutional life were introduced. For an episcopal church to function adequately it must have an episcopacy. Churches that gave more emphasis to the role of lay persons had greater flexibility and could adapt more easily to the improvisation that colonial life required. However, it is noteworthy that both the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches developed their institutional life earlier than other denominations did. Although late in starting effective work in the colonies, they were quicker off the mark with establishing church structures once they had entered the field.

The life of the church and the witness of the gospel exist within a socio-political context that helps shape theology and practical Christianity. The southern African context was very complex and dynamic. The political and social situation was constantly changing. White settler societies were claiming occupation of the land and asserting political rights at the expense of black societies, which were in any case not static. From the late eighteenth century white and black had encountered each other as rivals for the same land in the south-eastern part of the country. It was a pattern that was to be repeated further east in the Natal/Zululand area and in the interior after the Great Trek. As with most frontier societies, colonists moved in advance of the colonial government and the other structures of white western society, including the church. A volatile frontier situation generally meant that when the government did catch up it was most powerfully present in the shape of military force. The pattern is an old one and could be paralleled at almost any time in human history.

Western aggression, cultural arrogance and capitalist imperialism have come under attack from revisionist historians for many decades. The role of the church and, more particularly the missionaries, in South African history have come under heavy criticism. The church and missionaries in particular, have been castigated as the collaborators of an imperialism that was anything but just or righteous (e.g. Majeke, 1952; Etherington, 1978:28). Missionaries have been seen as playing a major role in undermining the life and culture of the indigenous tribes in order to make them victims of easy conquest. But missionaries were generally the first white people to live among black tribes. For this they required

the permission of the colonial government at the Cape – it simply was not permitted for whites to live beyond the boundaries of the colony without government permission. Even this is deemed to give substance to the charge that missionaries were hand-in-glove with aggressive imperialism. Moreover, by the middle of the nineteenth century missionaries were, it is claimed, so disillusioned by the failure of their enterprise (i.e. to win converts) that they had become convinced that 'civilisation' had to come before conversion and that it would most easily come through imperial conquest and programmes of enforced acculturisation (Chidester, 1992:41). All this may be partially true. But the role played by missionaries can never be adequately understood if it is read apart from their primary goal, which was to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to those peoples who had not yet heard it. Missionaries were driven – in their terms 'called', 'compelled by God', 'inspired' – to do this because they believed Christianity's claim to be the only way to 'salvation' and 'eternal life'. In the nineteenth century Christianity was still an exclusive religion. It professed to know the only true God and to proclaim the only true way to find meaning in life and salvation after death. The twentieth century is generally uncomfortable with such certainties. We live in times of theological and cultural fluidity and flexibility that have come about through many different forces. Even the term 'ecumenical', which used to refer to relations between churches or denominations, is now used by many Christians to describe an open and inclusive attitude towards other faiths. Moreover, Christianity is no longer practised or believed as widely in the West as it was during the nineteenth century. This makes it all the more difficult to get into the mind-set of a nineteenth century missionary. In order to understand the missionaries as men and women of the nineteenth century we have to attempt to do this, difficult as it may be.

The story of the church is so much the story of the 'church-in-society' that constant reference to the social framework is unavoidable. But the South African context was only part of the total environment of the nineteenth century church. Ministers, members and missionaries came from a wider background in Britain (or elsewhere) and this was also part of their context. For this reason the account that follows includes reference to the church situation in Britain itself and sometimes also to political and social aspects of life there. The development of Christianity and the churches in southern Africa did not happen in isolation or in a vacuum. There was constant interaction between the growth of Christianity on the subcontinent and the matrix of that growth in Britain itself. Similarly, social, political, economic, educational, cultural developments and changes (or failure to change) in Britain also impinged on the life of the colonies and the churches in them. One aspect needs particular emphasis: nineteenth century society in Britain (and in most other places in the western world) was hierarchically structured and these structures were very rigid, especially in the first half of the century. During most of the century many people, particularly those who held

power, believed that this centuries-old form of social organisation had been ordained by God. There is a verse from a much loved hymn that runs:

The rich man in his castle,
The poor man at his gate,
God made them high and lowly
And ordered their estate.

This verse was sung in many churches until fairly recently. Other examples of this attitude could be cited from every kind of nineteenth century writing. This serves to remind us that class distinctions were regarded not only as part of the fabric of society but as a God-given form of social organisation. In the first half of the nineteenth century most people believed that altering or undermining these social barriers implied tampering with God's ordering of society. We may nowadays deplore this view and we may even believe passionately that we need to eliminate class distinctions from society. But if we are going to understand the nineteenth century church and its work of ministry and mission in southern Africa, we need to recognise that the nineteenth century presuppositions about society were different from many existing presuppositions. Most Christian men and women of the nineteenth century accepted the social distinctions of their time without question. Some began to see the need for marked changes in society and began to work towards achieving those ends. But even their work was often limited because of their own unrecognised social, capitalist and chauvinist assumptions which provided the framework for their lives. Society generally changes slowly, and this has been particularly true of the church. To many the famous cry of the French Revolution for Liberty, Fraternity and Equality seemed – even to those who were looking for change in the nineteenth century – to be too revolutionary for immediate, or perhaps even eventual, acceptance. The levelling of society that socialism and Marxism later proclaimed seemed to jeopardise not only the structures of society but also the accompanying values.

First period of British occupation, 1795–1803

The Cape was first occupied by the British in 1795 during the war against Napoleonic France. Support for the exiled Prince of Orange as well as strategic considerations had led Britain to take this step. The Cape was a valuable stepping stone to the East and Britain did not want the settlement to fall into the hands of her enemies. In 1803 in terms of the Treaty of Amiens the Cape was again ceded to the Netherlands, by then constituted as the Batavian Republic.

In terms of the capitulation of the Cape in 1795 the British agreed to retain the existing institutions of the colony. At the time there were four magisterial districts, or drostdies: Cape Town and its environs; Stellenbosch and Drakenstein; Swellendam; and Graaff-Reinet. Cape Town was the only town of any

significance, with a population of five thousand whites and ten thousand slaves, and with a number of public buildings, including the large Dutch Reformed church at the end of the main street. In contrast the other drostdies were simple villages, with Stellenbosch having a mere 70 houses.

Within each drostdy a magistrate, or landdrost, was responsible for local administration. The two inland drostdies were so vast that effective local administration was hardly possible. They were also a considerable distance from the centre of government in Cape Town and tended towards independence and even defiance towards the governing authority. By 1795 both of these districts were in a state of open rebellion and had declared themselves independent republics. The frontier district of Graaff-Reinet was also the centre of complex struggles for land and water resources. From the 1770s when the easternmost trek-farmers had begun to settle in the areas of Algoa Bay and Graaff-Reinet there was intense competition for the best pastoral and agricultural land. The area had long been disputed between the Khoikhoi and the Xhosa tribesmen. The coming of the trek-farmers intensified the struggle for land and their superior weapons gave them the edge. The Khoikhoi became victims, finding themselves ousted from territorial occupation, caught between the whites with their expansive farming and inheritance practices and the Xhosa who, in turn, were being driven eastwards off seasonal pastoral lands. As this pattern continued into the nineteenth century the Khoikhoi sometimes allied themselves with the Xhosa in time of war. This alliance and resistance to territorial and political encroachment is understandable but it seldom brought rewards for the Khoikhoi. Their participation in Umlanjeni's war of 1851–3 had disastrous effects, for the Khoikhoi lost the lands that had been granted to them in the Kat River valley. When mission stations were established in the colony in the nineteenth century these at least provided a place of refuge for Khoikhoi. Because of this, many white colonists disapproved of the establishment of mission stations, believing them to encourage idleness and vagrancy.

At the time of the British occupation in 1795 the (Dutch) Reformed Church (DRC) was the established church of the colony and still exercised a virtual monopoly over religious life. The only exception had been the permission given in 1780 for the Lutherans to hold services. The German community, mainly merchants, built a fine Lutheran church in Strand Street and supported their own pastor. In contrast the DRC ministers were employed by the DEIC from the start and in 1795 were still being paid by the Dutch colonial government.

Moravian missionary work

The first serious missionary work in the Dutch colony had its origins in German pietism and stemmed from the Herrnhut community of Count Zinzendorf. George Schmidt, a missionary from the Herrnhutters, or Moravians as they were also known, worked in the colony from 1737 to 1744 and instigated missionary

work among the Khoikhoi people near Riviersonderend and later in Baviaanskloof near Swellendam. This was long before permission had been given to the Lutherans to hold their own services. Schmidt encountered many problems in his short-lived mission to the colony. Some of these arose from a misunderstanding between the Moravians and the DRC in the Netherlands about the exact role of each in this pioneering mission. Other problems concerned the DRC claims to exclusive religious prerogatives at the Cape. Depressed by these difficulties, Schmidt left the colony in 1744 and returned to Herrnhut.

Nearly fifty years later, when the attitude in the colony had become more favourable to missionary work, the Moravians resumed their mission. In 1792 three Moravian brothers arrived at the Cape: Hendrik Marsveld, a tailor from the Netherlands, Daniel Schwinn, a cobbler from Erbach in Germany, and Christian Kuhnel, a cutler previously employed at the famous Herrnhut cutlery. These three missionaries re-established the Christian work at Baviaanskloof. An emotional moment occurred when they found 'old Lena' and others who still remembered Schmidt and also found that Lena still had the New Testament that Schmidt had given her so many years previously (Krüger, 1966:55).

The new missionaries still encountered an undercurrent of hostility from Dutch farmers and also from some DRC ministers (Krüger, 1966:52, 61–75). In spite of this antagonism and the political disturbances in the nearby drostdy of Swellendam, the Moravian brethren renewed the work of evangelism and harboured a small but growing community of Khoikhoi and 'coloured' persons at the old mission. The British occupation of 1795 created new difficulties for the Moravians, who were unable to communicate directly with Herrnhut in Germany. But they benefitted as well, especially from the protection afforded them by the British governor, Lord Macartney. Encouragement was given for Khoikhoi to settle at the mission. By 1799 the brethren recorded that they had a population of 1 234 persons and a village of 228 homesteads (Krüger, 1966: 76). A very favourable description of the settlement was recorded in the diary of Lady Anne Barnard in 1798. She was struck by the harmonious singing of the Khoikhoi church members and noted what she called the 'Presbyterian form' of the church service at the end of the day (Barnard, 1924:181–190).

At the suggestion of the Dutch Governor Janssens (1803–1806) Baviaanskloof mission was renamed Genadendal in 1804. It became a model mission, a showpiece visited by nearly all new missionaries to the colony, as well as by many other travellers. In many ways it created the paradigm for mission, with its grant of land, its settled community, its stable missionary staff, its pattern of combining crafts and trades with the proclamation of the gospel, and its disciplined control of the mission residents. Of all the mission stations established in and beyond the colony of the Cape of Good Hope, Genadendal was the one most favourably viewed by the white residents of the colony, though even this mission was the target of settler hostility from time to time (Krüger, 1966:224).

Many external factors contributed to the success of Genadendal. It was situated in a climatically favourable area with good water resources. Far from the frontiers of the colony, it was protected from the turbulence that afflicted many other missionary institutions. It had, moreover, its cutlery-making, a trade that was of value to inhabitants of the colony and was thus able not only to sustain itself financially, but was also able to give evidence of a prosperous business life. The general allegation against mission stations that they were dens of idleness and a refuge for the lazy did not hold at Genadendal, for at least three reasons. First, Moravian policy required that all missionaries be skilled at some craft. The bringing of the gospel was thus always linked to the development of artisans' skills and trades.

Second, the missionaries received no stipend from their home base. Once they reached the mission field they were left to their own devices.

Third, at Genadendal strict discipline was exercised over the mission community. Persons who chose to leave the community lost their membership after an absence of two years. In this way the community was kept free of itinerant members claiming the right to reside there after an indefinite absence. A further point to note about Moravian missionary work is that it generally found favour with the colonial rulers, who encouraged the establishment of further stations. Groenekloof (later renamed Mamre) was established in 1808 and Elim in 1824. In 1823 the Moravians were asked by the governor, Somerset, to take over the colony's leper institution 'Hemel-en-aarde' near Caledon. This work remained in Moravian hands even when the institution was moved to Robben Island in 1846.

Several Moravian missions were developed on the eastern frontier of the colony – Enon (1818), Shiloh (1828), and, in 1860, Engotini. Like other mission stations, these were vulnerable in times of frontier conflict and in the economic and demographic dislocation that followed war.

The first British missionary societies

The year that the British first occupied the Cape, 1795, was also a significant year for the further development of missions. The evangelical awakening that had swept through England in the eighteeth century led to a new Protestant missionary movement that was to reach out to the whole world. In 1792 a Baptist minister, William Carey, published a pamphlet entitled *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to use means for the Conversion of the Heathen.* In the same year, on 31 May, Carey preached a notable sermon on the theme of missions, calling on his hearers to

> Expect great things from God,
> Attempt great things for God.

These words became a byword for missionary endeavour.

In October 1792 the Baptist Missionary Society was formed and its first two missionaries, William Carey and John Thomas, set sail for India. At the time there was no legal opening for missionaries in the territories governed by the English East India Company (EEIC). Carey and Thomas were flouting the prohibition on missionary work as stipulated in the Charter of the EEIC. This charter had to be renewed by Parliament every ten years. In 1793 the evangelicals failed to enforce the changes that would permit missionaries into India, but they undertook an immense public campaign during the ensuing decade. Nine hundred petitions on the subject were presented to Parliament. In 1813 the renewed Charter of the EEIC made provision for the entry of missionaries into India. This massive campaign was led by the evangelicals of the Church of England (the Clapham sect) who worked in cooperation with evangelicals of other denominations. As a parliamentary pressure group they had already combined their efforts in the twenty-year campaign to end the British slave trade. This inter-denominational cooperation in the great social and religious enterprises of the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth is noteworthy. It was to diminish as the nineteenth century advanced and missionary work became denominationally based. From the perspective of the late twentieth century it may seem as if a great opportunity for mutual endeavour was lost.

The London Missionary Society

Carey's pioneering work in India was to lead to the conditions of the Charter of the EEIC being changed. It was also to have other consequences. By 1794 eager letters from Carey reached his former colleagues in England. Enthusiasm ran high as public meetings were held to promote the missionary cause. In September 1795 the Missionary Society was formed (known from 1816 as the London Missionary Society, LMS). This was to be the forerunner of many other missionary societies and in due course became the missionary society of the Independents or Congregationalists.

Two great principles were adopted at the founding of the Missionary Society. The first was known as the fundamental principle and stated that the aim of the Society was to preach and proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ and not to promote any particular form of church government or denominationalism. The second basic principle was that of voluntarism, i.e. that the Society would accept no state support or funds but would be entirely dependent on the voluntary contributions of its members. Inherent to this principle was a latent problem. In England this was an essential principle of independency. In the context of established churches (i.e. the Church of England and the Church of Scotland) voluntarism meant that membership of a congregation was voluntary and not decreed by any state law. It also meant that the support of an independent church devolved upon its members without State assistance. In the colonial

situation this was to create difficulties. There was, firstly, the ambiguous nature of voluntarism within the operations of the Society. Was it to be the responsibility of the Society to support its mission stations indefinitely or would the congregations that developed at mission stations take responsibility for themselves? By the middle of the nineteenth century this was to become a critical question. The other, more explicit effect of voluntarism, namely the refusal to accept funds or assistance from the state, was ultimately also to hinder the progress of LMS missionary development (Donaldson, 1986:389-4).

In the evangelical fervour of 1795 zeal outran discretion, not only in establishing these principles, but also in the haste and enthusiasm to implement the first missionary projects. In 1796 some thirty missionaries set out for Tahiti. Not all were suitable for the work and within four years twenty had abandoned their calling. Before news of these difficulties had reached England, a second missionary voyage had been planned for which the LMS had even bought their own ship, the *Duff*. Thirty missionaries and their families were on board when the ship was captured by a French warship and forced to sail to South America. After many vicissitudes the missionary families were able to return home to England. Twenty-three of the men abandoned their missionary calling.

These early disasters indicate many weaknesses in the initial stages of LMS work. Hasty and over-zealous recruitment was a problem. Not all candidates who were accepted were suited to the work. Lack of training for missionaries was another difficulty. This was remedied to some extent in 1800 with the establishment of a training centre at Gosport under the supervision of Mr David Bogue, one of the founding fathers of the LMS. Other colleges were subsequently established and the society also made use of the existing Dissenting Academies for training missionaries.

The founders of the LMS were not only concerned with missionary work in remote and romantic-sounding parts of the world. In their individual capacities, and also through the society, they were involved in many other Christian and humanitarian enterprises, like the Religious Tract Society (1799), the Bible Society (1804), many home missions, a Protestant mission to France, a Jewish mission in London, and work amongst French and Dutch prisoners-of-war in England. It is important to note this, particularly in view of the criticism levelled against missionaries that they were concerned only with geographical or foreign missions while there were also many missionary needs in Britain itself. Such criticism does not take into account the great number and variety of evangelical and social programmes that nearly all churches in Britain undertook.

The London Missionary Society at the Cape

The first four missionaries of the LMS arrived at the Cape in March 1799: James Kicherer, William Edward, John Edmonds and Dr Johannes Theodore van der Kemp. They were well received in Cape Town by the colonial government and

by Cape Town society. Within a few months they were instrumental in forming the South African Missionary Society (Enklaar, 1988:80).

Van der Kemp was to become the best known of these first missionaries. He and Edmonds started their work beyond the colony at the Great Place of the Xhosa chief Ngqika. Edmonds was soon discouraged and left. Van der Kemp himself stayed only eighteen months and then returned to the colony to work among the Khoikhoi at Graaff-Reinet. His work with the Xhosa seemed to him to have been in vain, but Van der Kemp's preaching may have sown the seed that was to bear fruit in the life of Ntsikana, the first Xhosa to accept Christianity and whose Xhosa hymns are still sung today (Hodgson, 1980:35).

In 1801 Van der Kemp moved his Khoikhoi community from Graaff-Reinet to Algoa Bay, where the military post of Fort Frederick had been established. Reverend James Read had now joined him as an assistant. The frontier was still unsettled and volatile and this exacerbated the problems of the missionaries. In the ongoing conflict the new mission at Botha's Post was burnt down. In 1803 a new site near the Swartkops River was granted to the mission, and became known as Bethelsdorp. This became an important mission in later years and also became the target of continuing settler hostility and vituperation.

Batavian rule

In 1803 the Cape Colony was returned to the Netherlands in terms of the Peace of Amiens and for three years it was ruled by the Batavian Republic. In keeping with the changes that had taken place in the Netherlands, the Cape came under the new influences of rationalism and deism. The Dutch Commissioner-general, J.A. de Mist, and the new governor, General J.W. Janssens, took over the colony in February 1803. In preparation for the transfer De Mist had done a survey of the colony in 1802 and prepared a comprehensive **Memorandum** outlining future policy. The Cape did not remain in Dutch hands long enough for the full implementation of De Mist's policy, but some aspects were introduced. These included the Church Ordinance of 1804 which established religious tolerance in the colony and granted protection to "all Religious associations which for the furtherance of virtue and good conduct respect a Supreme Being" (Wilson and Thompson, 1969, I:275). The Roman Catholic Church was quick to take advantage of this and the Cape Malay community also availed itself of the opportunity to practise Islamic worship, a right first accorded to them during the British occupation.

In terms of the Ordinance of 1804 the colonial government would continue to provide for the ecclesiastical needs of the colony and the DRC continued in its privileged position as the largest church in the colony. But other denominations were also entitled to support. Where the state gave support it would also exercise control. Permission was required for building churches, for religious services to be held other than on Sundays, for observing religious festivals, for employing additional ministers and for ordaining them.

Other changes were introduced into the life of the DRC. The governor's permission was necessary for all services held in the colony. Moreover, in all Dutch Reformed congregations the consistory, or meeting of the elders, had to be attended by a government official, the Political Commissioner designate. The function of the Political Commissioner was to see that there was no political discussion (Bird, 1823:66).

The most important effect for the DRC was the ending of the direct link that had previously bound it to the classis of Amsterdam, a link which had prevailed since the founding of the colony in 1652. The DRC at the Cape was now given permission to establish its own synod, though all decisions had to be referred to the colonial government for confirmation. This was a permissive regulation, not a prescriptive one, and the new synod of the DRC did not meet until 1824. The Cape was by then a British colony and synod minutes and decisions were referred to the Cape government and then to the Colonial Office in London for final approval.

The new regulations of 1804 also provided for government support of other denominations. When the British captured the colony again in 1806 they agreed, as previously, to retain existing institutions. These included the new church regulations which continued to operate until a new Church Ordinance was passed in 1843. By then there was considerable dissatisfaction within the DRC at the existing relationship between church and state, particularly the control that the state exercised over the church. The regulations of 1843 repealed the Ordinance of 1804, confirmed the synodical structure of the DRC, ratified decisions of the synod up to that time, safeguarded ownership of DRC property and maintained the principle that where the state paid a minister's stipend the state had to retain some control in the appointment.

This legislation drew attention to the Erastianism still prevailing in the colony (i.e. the connection between church and state). In 1854 Saul Solomon initiated (in the Legislative Assembly) the process that was eventually to lead to voluntarism as the official religious policy of the colony. Solomon put forward a private member's bill annually from 1854 until 1875, when this important religious principle was finally adopted. Financial support for ministers of various denominations was gradually phased out.

The Second British occupation

With the renewed hostilities between Britain and France in 1806 the British again turned their eyes toward the Cape. In January 1807 British troops landed at the Cape and Janssens was forced to surrender. As before, the Cape was initially held as a temporary military possession and there was no intention of making major changes to its administration. Nevertheless, the flow of events led the British governors of the colony to introduce a number of administrative innovations even before the Cape was finally ceded to Britain in 1815 in return for a sum of two million pounds, paid to the Netherlands.

The presence of British military personnel was important for the establishment of most denominations in South Africa. The earliest ministry was generally in the form of chaplaincy work to the regiments. Usually this ministry was extended to the civilian settlers as well. The period of chaplaincy work was a time of uncertainty and of fits and starts for most denominations. This was partly because of arbitrary action on the part of successive governors and partly because regiments were moved elsewhere. Where the core of a new church came from a regiment, this disappeared when those soldiers left. For example, the Scottish regiments were nearly all Presbyterian and the Irish regiments nearly all Roman Catholic. Both these denominations started with chaplaincy work and both went through a time of crisis when the respective regiments left the colony.

Frontier policy

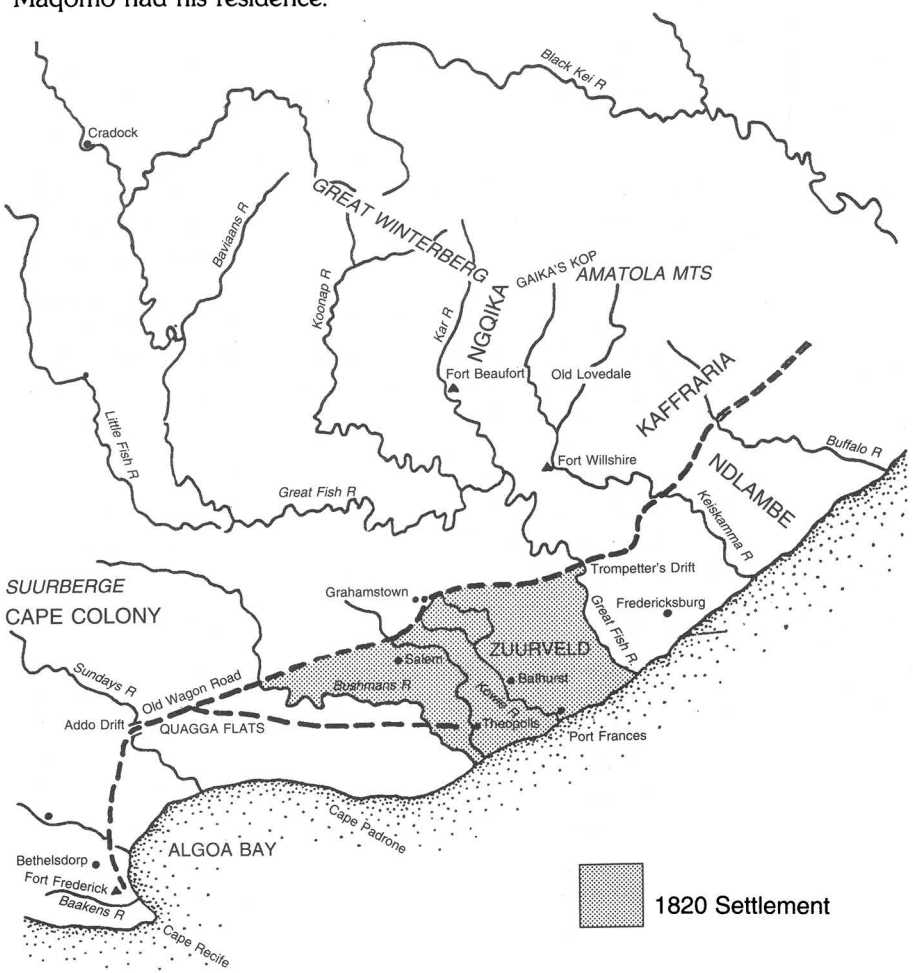
Although the occupation of the Cape in 1806 held no guarantee of permanence, a number of important changes were introduced in the early years of British rule. These mainly concerned the interior and frontier districts, where continuing conflict to some extent justified the changes. Moreover, some of the 'changes' introduced by the British administration had been planned in the latter years of Dutch rule. The British administration was more efficient than the Dutch had been but implemented policies that had already been devised by the Dutch.

From the time when the trek-farmers settled in the eastern areas in the 1770s there had been a disturbed frontier. For about a decade farmers, Xhosa and Khoikhoi lived alongside one another in a precarious peace. From 1780 the Dutch government at Cape Town tried to effect a policy of 'no contact'. This might be seen as an extension of the old 'hedge and canal' policy of Van Riebeeck, who had tried to prevent contact, and therefore conflict, between the Dutch settlers and the Khoikhoi by keeping them apart from each other by means of a hedge and a canal (Thompson and Wilson, 1969, I:189–190). Conflict between the trek-farmers and the Xhosa led the Dutch government to plan a similar solution for the eastern frontier but with more dire consequences for the Xhosa. The plan was to expel the Xhosa beyond the Fish River and to forbid their employment and other continuing interaction between white and black inhabitants in the area of the Zuurveld, i.e. the pastoral lands between the Sundays and the Fish Rivers.

In view of the turbulence at the frontier, the military governor of the Cape, General Cradock, arranged for an investigation into all aspects of the frontier situation. This was undertaken by Colonel Collins, who duly reported in 1809. Some of Collins' recommendations were adopted immediately. The most significant feature of its short-term and its long-term effects was his recommendation that the Dutch policy of 'clearing' the Xhosa from the Zuurveld and removing them to the east of the Fish River be implemented. This was begun while Collins was on the frontier (Maclennan, 1986:58) and was completed in

1812 by Lt. Colonel John Graham of the Cape Regiment, who was appointed Commissioner for the frontier in 1811. By March 1812 all Xhosa west of the Fish River had been forcibly removed.

This drastic action did not end frontier conflict and might even be regarded as precipitating an increase in hostilities. Cattle theft increased in 1813 and in 1819 Xhosa entered the colony and attacked the village of Grahamstown, military headquarters for the entire frontier. The colonial government's response to this was to repel the Xhosa even further east, beyond the Keiskamma River and to create a so-called 'neutral territory' in the area between the Fish and Keiskamma Rivers. The governor of the colony at the time, Lord Charles Somerset, had always regarded this territory as being ceded to the colony and described it thus in official correspondence. The area was a crucial one not only because it contained some of the best water resources along the frontier but also because it had long been the 'heartland' of Xhosa territory, where the Ngqika chief Maqomo had his residence.



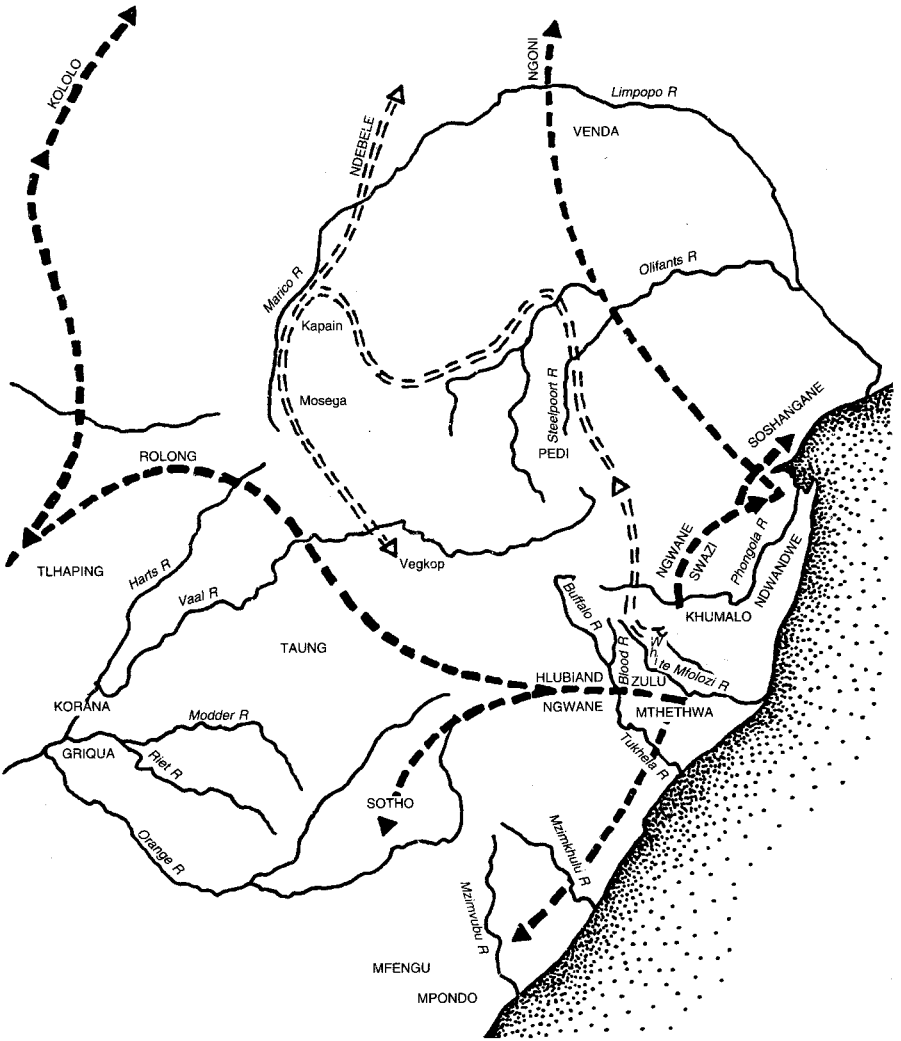
The eastern frontier in the 1820s

In 1825 Maqomo was allowed to reoccupy his former territory in the Kat River valley. After further frontier disturbances in 1829 he was again expelled and the Kat River area was made available to selected Khoikhoi families. They were chosen from two LMS missions, Bethelsdorp and Theopolis. The intention was to create a closely settled population that would be loyal to the colony and would serve as a buffer for the white frontier. James Read, son of the first missionary Read, moved with the Khoikhoi as minister and missionary and the area was also served by a Scottish missionary, Reverend William Ritchie Thomson. The Khoikhoi found themselves trapped between old and new loyalties and in 1851 many of them joined the Xhosa in rebelling against the colony and lost their land as a result. Over a century later the descendants of the original Khoikhoi settlers who had been allowed to remain in the Kat River basin were dispossessed of their inheritance and the area was absorbed into the Ciskei Homeland.

Collins had also recommended that there be a densely settled white farming population along the colonial bank of the Fish River, calling for up to 6 000 settlers to be placed there as protection for the colony against Xhosa invasion. This part of Collins' policy was implemented, but only in 1820 and on the further recommendation of the governor, Lord Charles Somerset. Some 4 000 settlers were selected by the Colonial Office from about 90 000 applicants. They were organised in parties of 100 families under party leaders. Intended as a buffer population on the explosive frontier, parties were placed in the district of Albany on locations that were subdivided for close settlement on smallholdings. But neither the terrain nor, in most instances, the settlers, were adapted to small-scale intensive farming. The presence of a much larger white population led to more contact, rather than less, between the settlers and the Xhosa. This often took the form of illicit trading or increased cattle theft. As a policy for reducing frontier conflict, the 1820 settler scheme failed but the infusion of 4 000 British settlers into the eastern districts of the colony was to change the nature of colonial society and culture permanently.

Circuit courts

Another innovation that was implemented even before the colony had been permanently ceded to Britain was the introduction of circuit courts. Local administration had long been a problem in the colony and the Cape Town-based government had never kept pace with the movement of trek-farmers eastwards and then into the interior from Algoa Bay. Structures of local government were sparse under Dutch rule and in any case the DEIC government usually gave office to local inhabitants, which meant that loyalty to Cape Town was ambivalent at best. The first drostdy in the east, Graaff-Reinet, was established only in 1786. Uitenhage was established in 1804. Within a few years of the second British occupation two new drostdies had been created, George in 1811 and Cradock in 1812. Three further subdivisions provided the districts of Beaufort West in 1818, Albany in 1820 and Somerset East in 1825.



Demographic shifts during Mfecane/Difaqane

The district official under DEIC rule had been the landdrost, usually a prominent local farmer who served in this capacity in addition to handling his farming activities. A district was divided into field-cornetcies, each under the supervision of a local field-cornet who was also a local farmer. One of the main tasks of the landdrost and field-cornets in the interior districts was the summoning of the local men out on commando when trouble necessitated this. Given the distance from Cape Town, it is not surprising that commandos occasionally acted brutally and provocatively, especially towards the San. Bitter enmity existed between the San and the trek-farmers. A commando would decimate the San menfolk and take the women and children into servitude (Marais, 1957:14–19). Commandos

were also active against the Xhosa in the late eighteenth century (Macmillan, 1963:76).

Apart from creating new drostdies, in 1811 the British administration at the Cape introduced circuit courts. Previously the only judicial court of the colony had sat in Cape Town. Locally justice was administered by the landdrost and heemraden who had jurisdiction over minor disputes, mainly concerned with farm boundaries and water rights. Litigation for major offences had to be heard at Cape Town. Circuit courts were intended to create a more accessible and equitable judicial system. There was still no professional court at the Cape and even the Cape Town judges who went on circuit had little or no legal training. Nevertheless, the implementation of circuit courts meant that judicial procedures were more readily available to the inhabitants of the interior, including to the Khoikhoi and San. The missionaries at Bethelsdorp, Van der Kemp and Read, encouraged the Khoikhoi to take advantage of the courts.

The judicial system of the colony was to undergo a complete transformation 17 years later when a professional judicial bench was introduced and district magistrates and civil commissioners took over the local judicial and administrative functions respectively. These had previously been exercised by the landdrost.

Along with the changes in the judicial structures in 1811 came a number of other provisions that were intended to begin a process of ameliorating the Khoikhois' situation at the Cape. In 1809 the governor issued a number of proclamations that had a double effect, on the one hand to place the Khoikhoi under colonial law and on the other hand to meet the labour requirements of the farming community and provide for labour regulation. Known collectively as Caledon's Code, these laws specified that the Khoikhoi were under colonial law, required them to have a fixed place of abode which was to be registered at the landdrost's office, forbade them to move from one district to another without obtaining a pass from the landdrost, provided for written contracts of service, forbade the provision of liquor in lieu of wages, required that debts be recovered through the courts of law and not by illegally detaining Khoikhoi in service when they wished to leave, and gave the Khoikhoi access to the courts of law. In 1812 a further proclamation limited the period for which Khoikhoi children could be apprenticed to a farmer to ten years (from age 8 to 18). The apprenticeship system as it had operated under Dutch rule had allowed for apprenticeship for 17 years, from the age of 8 until 25. Previously Khoikhoi families could be detained against their will by an employer because the children's apprenticeship had not been completed.

The Cape is ceded to Britain

The colony was not formally ceded to Britain until 1815, in terms of the Peace of Versailles and in return for the payment of two million pounds to the

Netherlands. The formal cession meant that changes which had already been introduced, became permanent. It also meant that the colony came under the control of the newly formed Colonial Office in London. This new Department of State had been set up during the war years as the Department for War and Colonies and was nearly disbanded after the war. Since Britain had doubled its number of colonies during the war, this and the need to assimilate formerly foreign colonies into the empire led to the decision to retain the new government department and also the new post of Secretary of State for Colonies.

The Colonial Office was significant for the development of colonial policy along deliberately chosen lines, determining matters like constitutional development, progress towards the emancipation of slaves, territorial expansion, relations with indigenous peoples – not only for the Cape of Good Hope, but for all new and old British colonies. It is a mistake to view the history of the Cape as if developments happened in a purely haphazard way or were solely the result of local events. In determining policy the Colonial Office was guided by political events in Britain itself and by precedents in other colonies. In addition informed colonial opinion was sought from former governors, administrators, military personnel and sometimes from missionaries and settlers. The political influence of missionaries, especially Dr John Philip of the LMS, has often been exaggerated. Missionaries were but one source of information among many.

The LMS and concern for civil liberties

During their years of working with the Khoikhoi at Bethelsdorp, Read and Van der Kemp came to hear of many injustices that Khoikhoi claimed to have suffered at the hands of white farmers and employers. The new legislation and the circuit courts gave grounds for expecting that Khoikhoi and any others who might have been ill-treated would find redress in court. Encouraged by the missionaries, several Khoikhoi engaged in litigation when the first circuit court was held in 1812. Because of these cases, the court held that year came to be known as the Black Circuit. The court cases in Uitenhage "drew widespread attention... 50 charges of murder, assault and unjust treatment of the Khoi were brought forward against the Boers. Nearly all European families were involved. A thousand witnesses of very diverse backgrounds had to be heard" (Enklaar, 1988:188). Very few of the cases were brought to a satisfactory conclusion. However, it should be noted that allegations were often based on incidents that had happened many years previously (7 or 8 years, and in one instance 10 years) and that it was extremely difficult to obtain witnesses, either black or white, to testify against Dutch employers or to give reliable evidence for events dating so far back in time. In a few cases sentence was given against white employers. This did nothing to enhance the settlers' views of missionaries. Indeed, in the eyes of the colonists it created the conviction that missionaries were a dangerous influence upon the Khoikhoi, encouraging them to defy their

white employers. It also confirmed the suspicion that mission stations were places of refuge for the idle and possibly also for criminals. But the Black Circuit was an important statement of human rights. "The court case in Uitenhage caused a commotion throughout the district. The Boers had to learn to think of the Khoikhoi as a free people who would be treated as equals before the law" (Enklaar, 1988:188).

Van der Kemp died before the Black Circuit court was held but his influence lay behind many of the cases brought forward. The work of encouraging the Khoikhoi to assert themselves and to claim their own dignity was continued by his erstwhile colleague, James Read.

Conflict between the colonists and the missionaries, and between the colonial government and the missionaries, led to concern on the part of the LMS directors in London. In 1812 they sent the Reverend John Campbell to the Cape to investigate allegations against their missionaries. Campbell toured the colony during 1812–1814 and was able to negotiate land for new LMS missions. These were established for Khoikhoi at Theopolis, in the eastern area of the Zuurveld; at Pacaltsdorp, with a surviving independent Khoikhoi clan; and among the Tswana people near Lattakoo, on the northern frontier of the colony. After Campbell's departure another important new venture started with the opening of a mission for the Xhosa, initiated by Reverend Joseph Williams, near the military post of Fort Beaufort. Williams died in 1818 after only two years in the mission field. However, his pioneering work was not forgotten and in due course it was resumed by other missionaries serving among the Xhosa. As with other missionary societies this was to be the area where missionary policy was forged and where the main concentration of missionary work was to take place in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Campbell had come to the Cape with the title of 'director' of LMS work. This position had been intended for Van der Kemp but his death had prevented him from taking up office.

In 1819 Campbell again visited the colony, accompanied by Dr John Philip who was to be the leading figure of the LMS at the Cape for the next thirty years. During his lifetime and afterwards Philip was to be a controversial figure in South African history, subjected to the most damning vituperation and also the most excessive praise (du Plessis, 1911:152). Described as a man "whose conspicuous lack of self-knowledge came between him and a clear perception of his own objectives" (DSAB, I:620), Philip was given to exaggerating his own role in the affairs of the colony. In this way he unwittingly fed the flames of both admiration and hatred.

Philip nevertheless stands as a symbolic figure in the first half of the nineteenth century (rather like a Boesak or a Tutu) because he took an unequivocal stand on the most controversial issue of the day, that of relations between black and white in southern Africa. Within the framework of his own capitalist and chauvinist assumptions and in the hierarchical social context of the nineteenth

century, he stood for equality of all persons before the law. In his work in southern Africa he was ably supported by his wife, Jane, and other members of his family. His wife often travelled with him on his missionary tours. She kept the account books of the LMS and did a lot of the official correspondence for her husband. Of their seven children three of his sons became ministers and served with the LMS, his eldest daughter married a minister in England and his second daughter, Eliza, married John Fairbairn, newspaper editor and a man rather like his father-in-law, a provocative crusader who fought indomitably for a free press at the Cape. Access to Fairbairn's *South African Commercial Advertiser* gave Philip a platform for the humanitarian causes he pursued. He relentlessly used the press for these causes, in his own name and pseudonymously.

John Philip was born in 1775 in Kirkcaldy, Scotland, the birthplace also of Adam Smith whose *Wealth of Nations* may have influenced Philip's strong support for capitalism. The influences of rationalism and evangelicalism in Scotland helped shape his faith and calling. From the age of 11, Philip had worked in his father's mill. Later he managed a mill in Dundee where he tried to arrange better working conditions for the mill-hands. Converted while in Dundee, Philip joined an Independent congregation. In 1799 he moved to London to train for the ministry. He served briefly in Berkshire, then for 15 years in Aberdeen. Here an earlier interest in missions was rekindled by local missionary enthusiasm. It was from Aberdeen that Philip was chosen in 1819 to accompany Campbell on the second tour of inspection of LMS missions at the Cape. As a Dissenter Philip knew both religious and civil discrimination, for Dissenters were still barred from exercising civil rights and from receiving university education in England. From his working-class context he also knew the hard grind of the labourer's life and had already been involved in educational and social improvement projects. With such a background it is not surprising that Philip should have found an arena for his energies and his crusading zeal in South Africa that would make him the best loved and the most hated man in the colony.

In 1820 the Independent congregation in Cape Town invited Philip to become its pastor and the directors of the LMS appointed him superintendent of their missions in southern Africa. He held this office until 1848 when he retired to Hankey mission station near the Gamtoos River. He died there in 1851. Philip's period as superintendent covered a 30-year span that was crucial in the history of the subcontinent. These years saw the social and demographic dislocation known as the Mfecane [this designation and the received history of the movement have been challenged by recent interpretations (Cobbing, 1991) but the fact of the dislocation remains]; the arrival in 1820 of some 4 000 British settlers, most of whom were located in the eastern frontier districts; constitutional changes in 1825 and 1834; the emancipation of slaves in 1834; the Great Trek in 1836; the British occupation of Natal and the temporary annexation of the Orange River Sovereignty; the outbreak of three wars on the eastern frontier; the

introduction and then the repudiation of the Treaty System with the tribes; and many far-reaching legislative changes in the social and economic life of the colony. Within such a varied and changing context there was bound to be much that would draw Philip into so-called political matters. There is a view that criticises the missionaries of the nineteenth century for being concerned only with 'spiritual' matters and with the 'spiritual' lives of their converts. Philip cannot be accused of this one-sidedness – nor, on close examination, can many other missionaries. On the contrary, both during his lifetime and later Philip was condemned for being a political figure. One nineteenth century writer claimed:

> In the Pondo country there were at that time several English missionaries. They were, most of them, earnest, zealous and well-meaning men, actuated by what they and their admirers regarded as high and noble motives. Unfortunately, however, their zeal was not confined to civilising and Christianising the heathen, for they were all keen politicians and their policy was the same as that of the Reverend Dr Philip – to champion the cause of the native rulers and native states against those whose motto was South Africa – a White Man's Country! (Voigt, 1899 I:179)

Similar perc ptions have been expressed by English historians, notably by Sir George Cory, the first historian of the British settlers, who described Philip as the most influential 'politician' not only at the Cape but even in England.

Philip was not only criticised by Dutch and British settlers and historians but was also unpopular with some LMS missionaries. This is not surprising for there was something inherently contradictory in the appointment of a general superintendent for LMS work. By 1819 the LMS had become the missionary society of the Independents in Britain. In an Independent church authority is vested in the congregation who exercise their authority through the congregational meeting. By its very nature Independency found a system of superintendency abhorrent, for it smacked of episcopacy and external control. Moreover, Philip was an autocratic and difficult superintendent who quickly antagonised people. In the 1840s some LMS missionaries submitted a petition to the directors in London, requesting that Philip be withdrawn and that the superintendency system be abolished. After Philip's retirement in 1848 the LMS did not appoint another superintendent but paid an agent, the Reverend William Thompson, to handle their financial affairs. Thompson succeeded Philip as minister of Union Chapel in Cape Town.

Philip's name is generally associated with Ordinance 50 at the Cape. This important ordinance gave legal equality to 'Hottentots and other free persons of colour'. Some historians have given Philip the credit for initiating and even for having this law passed in the colony. Philip himself claimed the credit and the misconception has persisted in spite of disclaimers in as early as the 1830s (Cory, 1919 II:371, n1). Ordinance 50 was passed at the Cape in July 1828 while Philip was in England. The initiative for the ordinance lay with the acting governor, Sir

Richard Bourke, who had consulted local officials but probably not Philip, who had left the Cape before Bourke took office. Ordinance 50 provided for

(a) the repeal of the Caledon Code of 1809–1819;
(b) equality before the law for all free persons of colour;
(c) the regulation of the employment of Khoikhoi, with one-year contracts, renewable annually;
(d) protection against oppression and excessive punishment;
(e) parental consent for the apprenticeship of children; and
(f) legal ownership of land by Khoikhoi.

The emancipation of slaves in 1834 brought former slaves under the legislation of Ordinance 50. The most significant and long-term effect of this legislation was the creation of a colour-blind franchise in 1854 when a representative system was introduced into the colony for the first time. Legislation in the last quarter of the nineteenth century imposed new restrictions on the granting of the vote. Nevertheless, the equal rights specified in Ordinance 50 lay behind the franchise for the Cape Province when the Union of South Africa was established in 1910. This lasted until 1936 for blacks and until 1956 for so-called coloureds.

Ordinance 50 was intended as part of a trilogy of laws, starting with Ordinance 49 which, for the first time, permitted the legal employment of blacks from outside the colony. In terms of this Ordinance persons from the tribes beyond the colony were allowed to enter the frontier districts as work-seekers and could be employed either casually or on contract for a year at a time. Drafting these regulations had begun in 1823 in response to events connected with the Mfecane. There was considerable correspondence between local officials in the frontier districts and officials in Cape Town, and between Cape Town and London in the formulation of the law (Donaldson, 1975:ch 8).

These provisions were made legal in 1828. In view of these arrangements for 'tribal foreigners' Bourke planned similar measures to improve the conditions of employment and the legal situation for the indigenous inhabitants of the colony. This led to the passing of Ordinance 50. Its terms have been much criticised, but sometimes out of context. It can only be seen as an 'improvement' in the light of conditions existing prior to the Ordinance (Marais, 1957:ch 5; Donaldson, 1975:ch 8). Bourke had intended to pass a third measure, a non-racial vagrancy act which would have completed the trilogy of laws. He was unable to enact the vagrancy law before he was superseded in office by the new governor, Sir Lowry Cole. Although Cole must have been apprised of the situation, he did not immediately introduce a vagrancy act. Under pressure from settler opinion he tried to do so later. He was prevented because the terms of Ordinance 50 had been entrenched by Order-in-Council in Britain, i.e. by the highest legislative authority, the King and his Privy Council. Any alteration to the terms of the Ordinance would similarly have to be enacted by Order-in-Council. Later

attempts to pass a vagrancy act at the Cape were persistently vetoed in London (Donaldson, 1975:ch 9).

Although Philip's role in the passing of Ordinance 50 was exaggerated, it may well have been his influence that led the Colonial Office in London to entrench the act by Order-in-Council. He was certainly consulted by officials at the Colonial Office about his views on the new legislation. In his reply he indicated the need for some security against future amendment of the measure.

There is sad irony in Philip's role in the entrenchment of Ordinance 50. In the eyes of the Dutch settlers of the frontier districts Ordinance 50 symbolised British concern to protect the blacks at the expense of the whites. This was one cause of the Great Trek in which thousands of Dutch settlers moved from the Cape Colony and established republican states for themselves in the areas north of the Orange and Vaal Rivers. This led to totally new settlement patterns and to new phases of conflict between black and white. The territories of many black tribes were invaded and in due course annexed or brought under white political control. This was ultimately to destroy the independence of most of the tribes, the very thing that Philip deplored and had been trying to prevent.

Philip's other public role in southern Africa was his involvement in the Treaty System.

Introduced in 1836, the Treaty System provided for treaties between the colonial governor and the chiefs of some Xhosa and Sotho-Tswana tribes (Galbraith, 1963:ch 5; Macmillan, 1963:chs 8–15; Cragg, 1972). Through the governor the British government recognised the authority of the chiefs, provided them with some minor gifts and in return required a pledge towards peaceful behaviour and the punishment of offenders. Like other missionaries Philip acted as a negotiator between some of the chiefs and the colonial government. In so far as the Treaty System marked yet another stage in the reduction of black autonomy and land possession, Philip (and others) may be seen as collaborators in the advance of imperial and colonial power and the destruction of the culture and independence of the local tribes. To many missionaries the Treaty System seemed a means of securing black ownership of the land and of preventing further white encroachment. The Treaty System broke down with the annexation and subsequent repudiation of the Orange River Sovereignty. Nothing was done at that time to ensure the territorial security of the land occupied by the black tribes, while this had been the cardinal feature of the Treaty System as far as Philip was concerned.

Within South African historiography Philip has been most noted for his public involvement in the two matters outlined above, but his primary task was to supervise the LMS stations in southern Africa. LMS work expanded in two directions during the first half of the nineteenth century, northwards, through the establishment of the Griqua missions at Klaarwater and Griquatown under William Anderson and James Melville respectively, and later through the work of Robert Moffat at Kuruman, or New Lattakoo, founded in 1821. This was to

become one of the most famous of the LMS stations partly because of its position on the 'road to the north' but more particularly because of the faithful and patient work of Robert Moffat. He laboured diligently at Kuruman for nine years before there were any conversions. Through all that time he did not hold a communion service because in his tradition the communion was not a rite to be celebrated alone. The horizontal element of fellowship or communion with other believers was vital. For Moffat the miraculous happened: friends at home, unaware of the circumstances, sent him a communion set which arrived a fortnight before the planned service of holy baptism and communion. Moffat's work included linguistic studies and he became famous for his translation work, notwithstanding a few early slips like the mistranslation of the phrase 'the lilies of the field', making them into 'tarantulas'! By the 1850s he had translated the entire Bible into Tswana. He left his mission at Kuruman only to attend to the publication of these translations, first in the Cape and later in England. He brought a printing press back to Kuruman which enabled this dimension of the work to expand. Robert Moffat and his wife Mary remained at Kuruman until 1870, after which they returned to England.

Kuruman was also the springboard for further missionary work on the road to the north. David Livingstone, who married Moffat's daughter Mary, was the most famous of the missionaries who served an apprenticeship under the influence of the older man. Livingstone blazed a new trail to the north and through his distinctive, quixotic career as a missionary and explorer drew many others into Africa for missionary work and for adventure. A striking individualist and one who got on better with his black companions than his white colleagues, Livingstone did not always take account of the practical difficulties in the missionary schemes he promoted. He inspired but failed to prepare adequately the ill-fated mission to the Makololo in 1857 (when seven out of a party of eleven died from tsetse fly fever) and also the tragic start of the Universities Mission to Central Africa in the same year (Chadwick, 1959).

The eastward expansion of the LMS led to the establishment of further missions in the Cape Colony and beyond its borders. The expansion of work among the Khoikhoi has already been noted, with the Caledon Institute in 1811, Pacaltsdorp near George in 1813, Theopolis near Kasouga in 1814, and in the Kat River Settlement in 1829 with families chosen from Bethelsdorp and Theopolis. From 1816, when Joseph Williams began his work among the Xhosa, another series of missions was initiated outside the colony. In due course there were four major LMS stations on the frontier under the missionaries John Brownlee at King William's Town, Frederick Gottlieb Kayser at Knapp's Hope, James Read at Kat River (with the Khoikhoi) and Richard Birt first at Umxelo near Fort Beaufort and later at Peelton near King William's Town. The villages of East Peelton which in 1991 successfully resisted incorporation into the Ciskei, had their origin in Birt's mission when he helped the Imidange relocate after they had been banished from their former lands because they had taken part in the

War of the Axe, 1846–48. In addition missionary work started at many of the smaller villages in the frontier districts, for example Somerset East, Grahamstown, Adelaide, Cradock and Port Elizabeth. Missionaries serving in these towns also ministered to the white inhabitants and through this many of the settler churches were founded alongside missionary work. In many instances the two aspects of the work later came to be separated into white and black congregations. This created a precedent for the creation of separate churches, that has persisted into the twentieth century, to the later embarrassment of many church leaders.

LMS work at the Cape was complemented by the work of the American Board of Foreign Missions. The American missionaries Lindley, Wilson and Venable were the pioneers here, arriving in 1835. Two years later they were joined by Champion, Adams and Grout. Their main work was done in Natal. Daniel Lindley worked first with Mzilikazi in the interior. Forced out of that area by the incursion of the Trekkers into Mzilikazi's territory, Lindley accompanied the Trekkers to Natal. He became their minister for some years and then later resumed missionary work among the Zulu. Lindley graphically illustrates the 'colonial melting pot' – an American Presbyterian missionary, granted permission by the (Anglican) colonial government at the Cape to minister to a Dutch Reformed Trekker Republic! During one of his long tours to minister in the republics of the interior, Lindley baptised Paul Kruger. After many disturbances in their early years Adams and Grout resumed missionary work, also in Natal. The three men of the American Board of Missions laid a solid foundation for the Congregational missions in that area.

In due course the Congregational enterprise in Natal was linked to Congregationalism in the Cape to form the Congregational Union of South Africa in 1877. The precursor to this was the Voluntary Evangelical Union, established at the Cape in 1859. From this work grew the present United Congregational Church of Southern Africa, with a predominantly black membership, reflecting its origin in the missionary work of the LMS.

Methodism

Methodism came into being in England in the eighteenth century and by 1784 had formed its own annual conference, splitting from the Church of England and establishing its own church structures. The Society was the basic unit of the new movement, and members met in class meetings. These in turn came under the control of the circuit meetings. Lay persons had a particularly important place in Methodism, and itinerant lay preachers were essential to the vast preaching programme that Wesley instituted and supervised in his lifetime. Shortly before his death Wesley identified the four essentials of Methodism as

1. preaching in the open air,
2. praying extempore,

3. forming societies,
4. accepting the assistance of lay preachers.

(Edwards, 1988, III:64)

It can be seen that many features of Methodism made it appropriate to the needs of a colonial situation where the old social patterns were in the melting pot and where distance and other local conditions called for ecclesiastical flexibility and inventiveness.

In England Methodism and other forms of Dissent (Congregationalism, Presbyterianism and the Baptists) flourished during the years of the Napoleonic wars and the industrialisation that followed. The Church of England felt threatened and one alarmist even proposed to the House of Lords that no person should be allowed to preach unless vouched for by six 'substantial and reputable' householders. He feared that sectarianism would overtake England unless 'cobblers, tailors, pig-drovers and chimney-sweepers' (the illiterate preachers) were banned from the pulpit. The move failed, but in the outcry against it Methodists made common cause with other Dissenters and Victorian Nonconformity came into being (Edwards, 1988, III:109). At the Cape this common ground of Nonconformity was to find expression in mutual support and interdenominational ministry for the first 30 years or so of the nineteenth century. But as the century advanced, denominationalism took firm root and in the latter half of the century all denominations created their own local and regional structures. With this hardening of boundaries came mutual suspicion, rivalry and exclusiveness. The twentieth century has seen many ecumenical endeavours and approaches to church unity, but no major church unifications have been achieved across the traditional denominational boundaries established in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

In England a Wesleyan Missionary Society was established in 1813 with Dr Coke as the general secretary. The rules and constitution of the Society were finalised in 1818. In the colony of the Cape of Good Hope Methodist missionary work was to be closely associated with Methodist ministry to settlers. This helped shape the multi-racial character of the Methodist Church. But, as with other English churches in the colony, the life and witness did not automatically become non-racial and it was only in the second half of the twentieth century that this development began taking place.

In the early years of the nineteenth century, Methodism began at the Cape among soldiers. The first minister who came to the colony was unable to get permission from the governor, Lord Charles Somerset, to conduct services for the Wesleyans and left in 1815. The following year the Missionary Committee in England appointed the Reverend Barnabas Shaw to the colony. Although he was also refused permission, he ignored this and proceeded to hold services. His heart was bent on doing missionary work and when he had an opportunity to go inland with the LMS missionary Reverend H. Schmelen to find a place to work

among the Namaquas, Shaw took it. On their journey they encountered a man from the Little Namaqua tribe who appealed to Shaw to come and bring the 'Great Word' to his people. Barnabas Shaw and his wife accompanied their new companion to the Kamiesberg, the summer residence of the Little Namaqua, and settled there with the people. This marked the start of the Leliefontein mission station.

The Namaqua were a Khoikhoi tribe, accustomed to a pastoral life and seasonal migration. When Shaw settled with them he started cultivating corn and vegetables. By the time he left the Namaqua in 1826, they were producing 2 000 bags of wheat annually.

Shaw also built himself a small cottage, made the furniture for it and made many of the other items that he and his wife needed, such as soap, candles and butter. The Namaqua were impressed with the agricultural and other tools that he had with him and eagerly offered to help with his labours so that they could utilise the tools. They were particularly keen to use the saws with which he cut the wood for his building (Shaw, 1970:62). Like other missionaries Shaw believed that in bringing new agricultural techniques, tools and equipment to the Namaqua people he was bringing them the means whereby they could 'raise themselves' to a more civilised standard of living. Missionaries were aware that this was changing the culture of the people and they believed this to be an important element in the overall change that acceptance of the gospel would bring. Much criticism has been levelled against the missionaries for the cultural changes that they consciously and deliberately fostered.

Shaw had learned Dutch before coming to the colony and he was able to preach to the Namaqua in Dutch, which many of them had learned through being employed by Dutch farmers. He spent ten fruitful years doing missionary work with the Namaqua and then returned to Cape Town, where he engaged in missionary work among the slaves.

Leliefontein became not only a flourishing centre of Christianity which still exists today but also the springboard for further missionary advance into the interior of southern Africa. By 1819 two new missionaries had joined Shaw and attempts were made to advance Christian work amongst the Great Namaqua tribes. Local hostilities hindered these efforts, and even led to the death of the Reverend William Threlfall in 1825. Nine years later the Reverend Edward Cook was able to move to Warmbad and initiate work in the area of the Great Namaqua.

It was also from Leliefontein that Wesleyan missionaries moved further north. In 1821 Samuel Broadbent set out for Bechuanaland. Forced by an accident to return to the colony, he moved north again in 1822, accompanied by T.L. Hodgson. The area north of the Orange River was in a state of social dislocation following the Mfecane. Although the origin of the Mfecane has been reinterpreted (Cobbing) evidence remains for the disturbed nature of the area north of the Orange River and the difficulty tribes had finding new bases for settlement.

Wesleyan missionaries worked with the Barolong people. They eventually settled at Thaba 'Nchu. Even there their hold on the land was at times precarious and was threatened by the Basuto chief, Moshweshwe. Their settlements were well established by the time of the Great Trek and one of the missionaries, Reverend James Archbell, conducted services for some of the Trekker parties, much to the chagrin of Erasmus Smit, the unordained DRC pastor who accompanied Retief's party (Smit: passim).

The Wesleyan missionaries working with the Barolong were to play an important role in helping the tribe assert their claims for land and settled boundaries during the period of the Treaty System in the 1830s and 1840s. (Galbraith, 1963:ch 5). As noted above, the system was short-lived and was repudiated when the Orange River Sovereignty was annexed in 1848. When the Orange River Sovereignty was abandoned in 1854 and the independence of the Free State Republic was recognised, nothing was done to ensure the territorial security of the Barolong and other tribes that had previously been partners (if unequal ones) in the Treaty System. In the aftermath of the Basuto wars of the 1860s the Methodists lost their lands to the Orange Free State, whose government refused to recognise their claims. Farmlands given as compensation proved hardly viable, and a general decline of Wesleyan work in the area followed. By the 1880s and 1890s it was beginning to recover, and the population drift to the Kimberley and Witwatersrand areas led to new thrusts of Wesleyan work in those areas.

Methodism in Cape Town

In 1826 Barnabas Shaw returned to Cape Town permanently. In 1819 permission had been given for Wesleyan services to be held (work which had been started by the Reverend Edward Edwards). With the removal of some of the regiments from the Cape, many Methodists had left. Edward's ministry to white settlers was therefore limited but he also opened a mission and a school for slaves and others.

From 1826–1837 Barnabas Shaw was in charge of Wesleyan work in the Cape Town area. He superintended Wesleyan work from Simonstown to Cape Town. There were numerous preaching places and missions. Work was also extended to the Hottentots Holland area, with churches at Stellenbosch and Caledon.

From 1837 Barnabas Shaw spent six years ministering in England. His concern for the South African work was still evident through his preaching for missions and also the publication of his *Memorials of South Africa*. On his return to the Cape he worked in the Stellenbosch circuit, where the most notable development was at Raithby, a rehabilitation settlement for freed slaves. Shaw died at Rosebank in 1854. He had seen the development of Wesleyanism in the Western Cape from the pioneering struggles in the time of Lord Charles Somerset to the establishment of a fully-fledged Cape circuit.

Later in the century the work in the Western Cape went through a period of retrenchment, mainly due to financial difficulties experienced by the Wesleyan Missionary Society in Britain. Some of the Namaqua stations were handed over to the Rhenish Missionary Society, and some of the Cape stations went to other denominations.

Methodism in the Eastern Cape

The Eastern Cape has long been regarded as the heartland of South African Methodism and the strength of the denomination in this area even today testifies to the firm foundations laid in the nineteenth century.

As indicated previously, when the 1820 Settlers came to the Cape the British government had guaranteed to pay the stipend of a chaplain to accompany each party of 100 families. Only the Sephton party took advantage of this offer. Most of its members came from London where they had attended the Street Chapel (Wesleyan).

The man chosen by this party to be their chaplain was the Reverend William Shaw. He had applied for the post because he saw in this a way of fulfilling his vocation to the mission field.

William Shaw was born in Glasgow in 1798. Like his brothers he had served in the militia from an early age, being a drummer boy from the age of 10. After his conversion to Methodism he left the army in 1815 and became a teacher and Methodist lay leader at Long Sutton. In 1817 he applied to become a Methodist missionary but was not accepted by the Methodist Conference.

When Shaw learned that the Sephton party required a chaplain, he applied. The Methodist Conference reluctantly agreed to his ordination, for which he had technically disqualified himself by his marriage in 1818. His wife, Ann, was to prove herself a staunch and able helpmeet.

The Sephton party travelled from England in the ship *Aurora* and arrived at Cape Town in 1820. By July they had reached their destination on the Assegai River in the Eastern Cape. They named their village Salem. William Shaw became one of the leading figures at the settlement, serving not only the Sephton party but other settler parties as well. He also ministered to the Dutch in the vicinity and to the nearby military village of Grahamstown, which became the administrative centre for the 1820 British settlers.

Shaw's appointment by the Methodist Conference in Britain entailed two areas of responsibility: he was to serve as chaplain to the settlers and he was to initiate missionary work when the opportunity arose. William Shaw was ideally suited to this demanding vocation. He was energetic and visionary, 'anti-sectarian and of a catholic spirit' (DSAB I:711). He gladly served all whom he found to be in need, from whatever denomination. Such an openhearted approach served the cause of Methodism well and many were won over to this branch of the church. But Shaw also established the solid foundations of

Methodism in the Eastern Cape and began the missionary work that was to become such an important feature of Methodism.

Ministry to the settler community

The Sephton party was located in a broad valley along the course of the Assegai River. In the centre stood a deserted farmhouse, a reminder that previous inhabitants of the area had fled on account of frontier instability and conflict. The settlers used this farmhouse as the village centre and it served for various public needs, from a lying-in hospital to a place of worship. Shaw administered Holy Communion to members of all denominations and in the early years Wesleyans, Baptists, Presbyterians and Episcopalians attended. He conducted separate services in Dutch for members of the DRC.

The 1820 settlers were located in an area covering about 1 500 square miles. Shaw was the only chaplain who had come with the settlers. He served as widely as he could and established local preaching centres at strategic places. He sought out and appointed 'local preachers' and 'class leaders'. In this way he created a network of spiritual care and preaching throughout the frontier settlement. As indicated earlier, the inherent characteristics of Methodism were highly suited to the pioneering situation of the frontier.

Within a few years several chapels had been built, including those of Salem and Grahamstown. The latter was merely a military village in 1820 but was given the status of a drostdy and became the military and administrative centre for the Eastern Cape and the frontier. For many years Grahamstown was the second largest town in the colony. It lost this status only after the discovery of diamonds and gold led to economic, social and demographic shifts not only in the interior but also in the coastal towns of the colony with their harbour and railway facilities.

In 1822 a Methodist chapel was inaugurated in Grahamstown, the first church to be provided for the growing village. Methodist and Anglican services were held there and members of other denominations were welcome to worship. Of the first 57 baptisms recorded, 53 were those of children of Dutch parents (Hewson, 1981:15).

The chapels which Shaw built at Salem and at Grahamstown in 1822 were superseded in 1832 by larger buildings, Wesley Chapel in Grahamstown and the 'Gush' Chapel in Salem. These in turn were relinquished when the white congregation moved into yet larger churches in 1850. At both Grahamstown and Salem the earlier buildings came into use as a mission and school house, in Grahamstown for the Xhosa congregation (Hewson, 1981:20–27) and in Salem for the Khoikhoi and coloured population. This policy would appear to be little different in practice from that of the DRC when its synod of 1857, 'because of the weakness of some', resolved 'that mission congregations should meet in separate buildings from those of the white congregations' (de Gruchy and Villa-Vicencio, 1983:19).

Missions in the Eastern Cape

William Shaw had taken the opportunity to come to South Africa with the 1820 settlers, but his heart and his mandate were still directed towards missionary work. As soon as the work among the settlers was on a sound footing, he turned to his other vocation. Shaw dreamed of establishing a chain of stations reaching along the tribally occupied areas beyond the colony's eastern boundary of the Fish River.

He embarked on this programme in 1823 when he founded Wesleyville mission, taking with him John Shepstone as an artisan and assistant missionary. Once again the role of the layman was important. The precedent was followed many times in the ensuing years. By 1830 a string of six mission stations marked the eastward advance of Wesleyanism. By 1842 Wesleyan missions had even been established in Natal.

Shaw's chain of stations laid the foundation for an effective evangelical thrust into the territories of the Xhosa and other tribes and in the long term was effective in making this such a strong Methodist area. At present the Methodists are, numerically speaking, the single largest church of English origin in southern Africa, if the Ciskei and Transkei Methodists are included. Only the African Independent Churches and the DRC exceed their numbers (SA Yearbook, 1989–90:643) However, in the short term the missions were to suffer many vicissitudes during the frequent frontier wars and were also subjected to frequent changes in missionary personnel. This was in keeping with Methodist practice which required that a preacher be transferred to a different centre every three years. It is arguable that this discontinuity diminished missionary influence (DSAB, I:712), but Shaw's maintenance of this Methodist practice created a church that was for black and white, with an understanding and sympathy towards all groups in South Africa and the aspirations of them all. This is in contrast to the work of the LMS, which was mission-oriented and which drew upon itself hostility and antagonism from the white settler communities.

William Shaw returned to Grahamstown in 1829, to become minister of the Wesleyan chapel there. From 1837–1856 he served as general superintendent of Wesleyan work in south-eastern Africa, a jurisdiction which included the missions north of the Orange River and, after 1842, Natal. He was succeeded in 1856 by his son-in-law, Reverend William Impey.

A number of notable developments occurred during Shaw's superintendency. One of the most important was through the work of the Reverend William Boyce, who arrived in the colony in 1830. He served consecutively at Buntingville, which he founded in 1830, Mount Coke, Wesleyville, Newtondale and Grahamstown, until 1843 when he returned to England. Boyce's chief and lasting contribution to Wesleyan and other missionary work in the Eastern Cape was the breakthrough in identifying and understanding the euphonic concord, which enabled him to publish the first grammar of the Xhosa language in 1834.

A Scottish missionary, John Bennie of Lovedale mission, had also been working on the structure of Xhosa and had reached the same understanding of the importance of the noun prefix in determining the prefixes of related adjectives and verbs. But Boyce's work was published first and gained greater recognition. The work was published in Grahamstown at the press of Louis Meurant, editor of the *Grahamstown Journal*. The Methodist Church later acquired its own printing press, enabling further development of this aspect of the work.

Like other missionaries Shaw was involved in the establishment of the Treaty System of 1836 though he later criticised both the system and the government's failure to implement it equitably. Shaw and other missionaries gave support to the Treaty System and even to British annexation which they regarded as offering a greater measure of protection than other possibilities on an unstable subcontinent, subject to demographic and political upheaval. In retrospect this view may appear to have been naive; in the immediate context of the nineteenth century it may have appeared the wisest option (Hinchliff, 1991:460).

Shaw, and through him the Methodist Church, was involved in the resettlement of tribes after the Frontier War of 1846–1848. Some 30 000 Mfengu and other tribesmen were allowed to settle in the area between the Buffalo and Fish Rivers. Another Wesleyan missionary, Ayliff, had been resident missionary with an earlier settlement of Mfengu in the colony in 1835 and served again with Mfengu settlers in the Fort Beaufort area from 1848. In 1854 Ayliff opened the Healdtown Institution which was to become the most important Methodist educational centre in the Eastern Cape, providing primary and secondary education as well as industrial training and, in due course, training for teachers and ministers.

Wesleyan ministers and missionaries were expected by their church to be loyal citizens. This allowed them to cooperate with the colonial government as, for example, in the Treaty System and the settlement of the Mfengu. It also meant that, unlike LMS missionaries, they were able to accept financial and other assistance for their missions and, in particular, for their schools. In 1854 Sir George Grey became governor of the colony. He was highly regarded by the Colonial Office because of his apparent success in dealing with the Maoris in New Zealand. He was deliberately brought to the Cape because of its frontier problems. Grey's policy was to deprive the chiefs of power and to assimilate the indigenous people into the colony as labourers. He therefore developed a programme of industrial training and obtained an annual grant of £40 000 from the Colonial Office for distribution to schools and missions. From the perspective of the missionaries these grants seemed like manna from heaven, especially as most missionary societies were chronically short of funds and could not afford to support the expensive educational projects desired by missionaries on the spot. Most denominational societies allowed and even encouraged the acceptance of government help, especially as government and missionary goals seemed very similar. Thus the Wesleyans (and others) cooperated with Grey's educational

and 'civilising' programme. Recent studies have exposed the arrogance, paternalism, deviousness and, at times, cruelty of Sir George Grey and his policies and have highlighted the connection between these policies and the tragedy of the Cattle Killing of 1856–7 (Peires, 1989). Understandably, missionaries who worked in cooperation with Grey caught something of the dishonour that has come to be associated with Grey and his policies. But missionaries need also to be seen as men with a burning zeal to spread the gospel of Christ, who became caught up in colonial situations which were not of their own making – certainly not exclusively of their making – and over which, ultimately, they had little control (Hinchliff, 1991:463). As another writer put it:

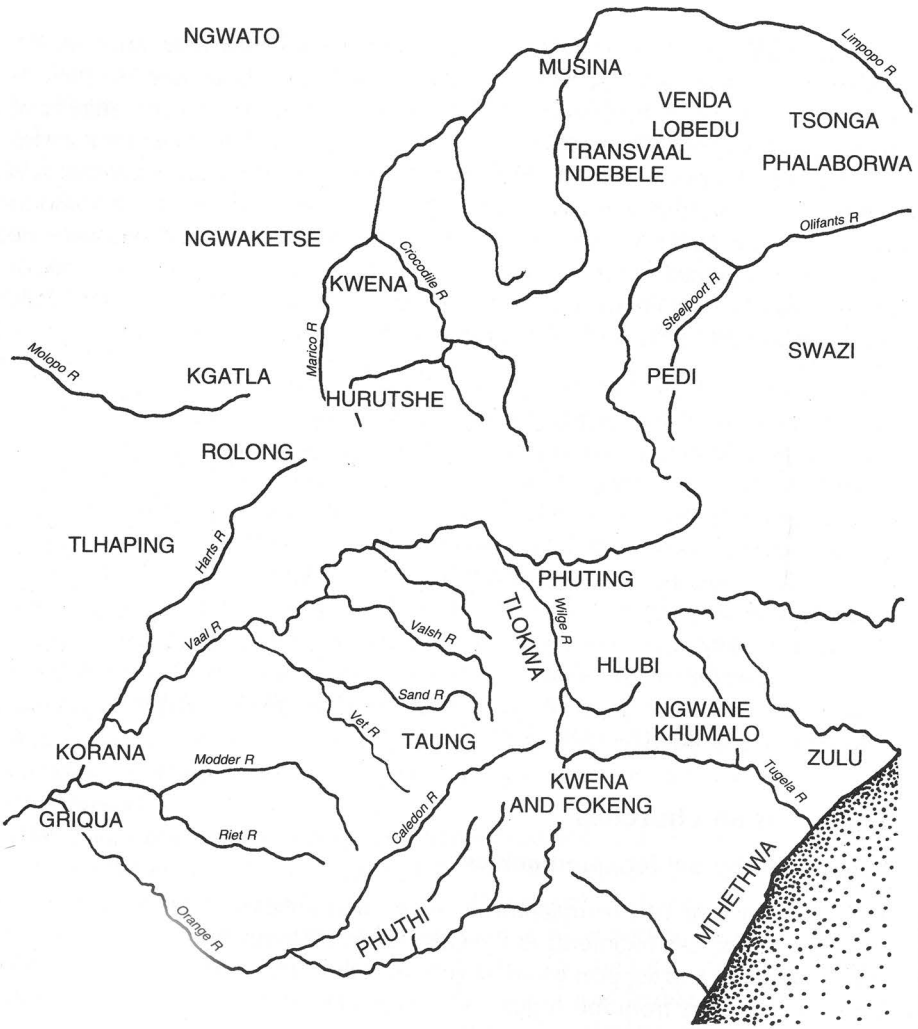
> That missions subsequently prospered throughout South Africa is due in no small measure to the steady diminution of African political and economic independence and to the gradual erosion of cultural and religious observances in black societies, under the impact of forces released by expanding white political and commercial interests. It would be facile to accuse the missionaries, imbued with humanitarian motives, of entering into a conspiracy with white expansionists, but historical circumstances did bring about an undeniable convergence of objectives and the missionaries... gave moral support to African subordination. They could not see the course of history or anticipate the extent of African repression and, faced by these historical developments, later generations of missionaries would recognise the need to reverse the tide (Kiernan, 1990:19).

The Scottish churches

Ministry to the Settler communities

The development of Presbyterianism in southern Africa owes much to the presence of Scottish regiments at the Cape from 1806 onwards and also to the encouragement and support given by visitors to the Cape from India. From 1806 a group of soldiers from the Argyll and Scottish Highlanders' Regiment met for regular Bible study and prayer and formed a Calvinist Society in Cape Town. Presbyterianism is similar in structure to the DRC and was easily accommodated at the Cape. In 1812 the Reverend George Thom, a Scottish Presbyterian, came to the Cape under the auspices of the LMS. He was diverted from the mission field to serve as minister to the Scottish soldiers and civilians at Cape Town. Thom established a Presbyterian congregation which met for services in a building in Wale Street. In 1814 the Highlanders' Regiment was recalled to Britain and the congregation was so depleted that it virtually disbanded. Thom moved to Caledon to minister in the DRC.

When Dr Philip came to Cape Town, the remaining members of the Calvinist Society worshipped with the Independents at Union Chapel. In spite of this, some Scots hankered after a Presbyterian church. In 1824 a committee was set



Indigenous communities before the establishment of the Transvaal and Orange Free State

up to try to establish Presbyterianism. Employees of the English East India Company spending time at the Cape to recuperate from the rigours of the Indian climate were strong supporters of Presbyterianism. Both financially and organisationally their contribution to the Presbyterian cause at the Cape was significant. In 1827 the foundation stone of St Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Somerset Street was laid. The church was opened in 1829, with Reverend John Adamson as the first minister. At about the same time the first Presbyterian church was built in the Eastern Cape. A party of Scottish settlers who had come with the British settlers in 1820, were located in the Baviaans Valley near the

present town of Bedford. Although not accompanied by a minister, they held services from the start. The little valley of acacia thorn-trees where they first met to worship God and give thanks for their arrival in their new home is still a place of honoured memory (Hockley, 1957:143–5). In 1828 this community built their first church at Glen Lynden. This served the Scottish farming community for many years, but was later taken over by the DRC for missionary work. In 1840 the Scottish settlers also built Glen Thorn church, near Adelaide, for the farming families in that area.

In the first half of the nineteenth century Presbyterians and Congregationalists (Independents) in many of the smaller villages of the colony united for worship and church organisation. These churches came to be known as Union churches or chapels. Later in the nineteenth century their numbers grew and as denominational structures came into being, these Union churches had to choose whether to affiliate with the Congregationalists or the Presbyterians. Sometimes a 'rival' church of the other persuasion developed. This led to dispute and even bitterness, as was the case, for instance, at Port Elizabeth where Pearson Street Congregational church was built in 1844 to be the church of the white members who had previously belonged to Union chapel for white and Khoikhoi. In the 1850s a Presbyterian church was started on the Hill, just a few blocks away from Pearson Street. For several years relations between these two congregations were acrimonious in the extreme.

The Voluntary Evangelical Union of 1859 developed into the Congregational Union of South Africa in 1877 and became a predominantly black church, although some white Independent congregations were affiliated to it. In contrast the Presbyterian Church which was formally constituted as the Presbyterian Church of South Africa (PCSA) in 1897 (changed to Southern Africa in 1959) was at that time predominantly a white church. It later developed its own missionary work. This denomination came into being in South Africa with the approval and support of the three major Presbyterian churches that had developed in Scotland by the 1840s and which were still separate in 1897, namely the Church of Scotland, the Free Church of Scotland and the United Presbyterian Church. The PCSA was formed by uniting nearly all Scottish and Presbyterian work on the subcontinent. But the Presbytery of Kaffraria, a Presbytery of the Free Church of Scotland claiming to date back to 1824 with the start of Scottish missionary work in the Eastern Cape, decided not to join the newly formed and autonomous PCSA (Shepherd, 1940:342). Instead its members chose to continue a separate and independent existence as a missionary synod of the Free Church of Scotland, with its black congregations and its black and white missionaries/ministers.

Three years later, in 1900, two of the major church divisions in Scotland, the Free Church of Scotland and the United Presbyterian Church were reunited, creating the United Free Church of Scotland. This led to an anomalous situation at the Cape, for the missions of the former United Presbyterian Church had

become part of the PCSA in 1897, whereas the missions of the former Free Church of Scotland belonged to the South African Missionary Synod of that church. In 1920 a deputation from the United Free church of Scotland visited the missions in South Africa. At a meeting held at Blythswood in October 1920, the complex situation was fully discussed. As a result a second Presbyterian church was formed in South Africa. The Bantu Presbyterian Church (now renamed the Reformed Church of Africa) was formally constituted at Lovedale in July 1923 (Shepherd, 1940:343). This move was understandable in view of the black membership of the church and the opportunity to create a self-governing and indigenous black church – an obvious answer to what was by the 1920s the widespread 'problem' of African Independent Churches. But the presence of two large Presbyterian churches in South Africa was later to become an embarrassment. In the 1950s when the churches protested against apartheid, the government replied that the Presbyterian churches followed a similar policy. This was an oversimplification but it was nevertheless a challenging indictment of denominationalism and apparent racism.

Scottish missionary work

The heady enthusiasm of 1795 which had generated the public meetings and preachings that led to the formation of the LMS affected all denominations. Churches began to establish their own missionary societies. These drew off some of the support that the LMS had been receiving. New societies also became more closely linked to denominational loyalties and objectives, so that the broad interdenominational idealism of the LMS (based on the fundamental principle) gave way to missionary programmes that highlighted denominational differences in doctrine and polity. This meant that mission was directed not only at the winning of converts but also at the establishment of churches. This may be seen very clearly in the case of the Scottish missions where denominational division that split the church in Scotland led in turn to divisions in the missionary work at the Cape.

The Glasgow Missionary Society (GMS) was founded in 1796, but its origin may be traced back to 1795 when a number of ministers in Glasgow met to discuss the challenge of mission to distant lands. On 9 February 1796 the GMS was formally constituted, "for propagating the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in heathen countries" (Shepherd, 1940:23). The intention was to work in cooperation with other missionary societies, particularly the LMS. One of the principles laid down by the GMS was that missionaries should always be sent in pairs, a younger and an older minister, and that "they should use no party names, nor unnecessarily discover to the heathen world the multiplied and mournful divisions which prevail among Christians" (Shepherd, 1940:25). This high ideal is noteworthy, especially in view of the frequent criticism now made that the Christian church brought to Africa the tragic divisions of denomination-

alism. In practice it was to prove very difficult not to develop churches along the lines of those sponsoring and supporting various missions.

As with the LMS, early enthusiasm in the GMS led to some mistakes. The first GMS missionaries were sent to Sierra Leone, which was itself a mission of a kind. The colony had been established by the Clapham Sect and other evangelicals for the repatriation of freed slaves from Britain and elsewhere. The early years of the colony were fraught with difficulties and the unpreparedness and personal instability of early missionaries added to the misfortunes of the inhabitants and the region.

Cautioned by these failures the GMS commissioned no missionaries from 1801 to 1821. The directors also decided that a sound theological education was necessary for missionaries. The first GMS missionaries were sent to South Africa in 1821, following deputation work in Scotland by the Reverend George Thom who had chosen to minister to Presbyterians in Cape Town and afterwards in the DRC church in Caledon. The GMS was keen to respond to the needs brought to their attention by Thom, but was short of funds. An experiment was initiated by sending a missionary to the Cape who would be supported by the colonial government in the same way that ministers like Shaw had been supported for ministry among the settlers. In principle such an arrangement was acceptable to the GMS because the Church of Scotland was an established church, i.e. it accepted the validity of a state connection. Such a move would have been totally unacceptable to the LMS with its firm adherence to the principle of voluntarism. A missionary paid in this way would also serve as a government agent.

In 1821 Reverend William Ritchie Thomson arrived at the Eastern Cape as a government agent and missionary. He was accompanied by a younger lay missionary, John Bennie. In November 1821 they settled at the Tyumie River in the neutral (or ceded) territory. Another young man, Reverend John Brownlee, was already working there. Brownlee was a Scot who had come to the Cape with the LMS but had resigned his connection with the Society shortly after his arrival and accepted a position as a government agent and missionary. He did not hold this position for long and soon resumed his connection with the LMS. He started a mission at a site along the Buffalo River, in the place which later became King William's Town.

Chumie became the first Scottish mission in South Africa. Variations in the spelling abounded, but Chumie was predominantly used. Later the mission came to be called Mgwali or Gwali. It closed in 1851 and was not reopened but the name, Mgwali, was used again for a new mission with the Mgwali people (see below).

Shortly after their arrival Thomson and Bennie opened a school which was attended by some 50 pupils. This early educational work may be viewed as symbolic of Scottish missions in South Africa, for the teaching institution of Lovedale that was later established became the paradigm for educational missions and the foremost of its kind in southern Africa. It retained its reputation

virtually up to its closure in the 1970s, in spite of the distresses of Bantu Education, introduced in the 1950s. It was also Lovedale that generated the eventual development of Fort Hare University, an institution that had an impact on the entire African continent. John Bennie also made an important contribution in the field of Xhosa linguistics. Like the Methodist, Boyce, he recognised the significance of the euphonic concord, which provided the key to understanding the Xhosa language.

The first baptisms took place at Chumie in 1823. At the end of that year an additional missionary, Reverend John Ross, had arrived bringing with him a printing press. This was to be vital to the Scottish missionaries and led to the publication of Christian literature. In 1824 the team of missionaries split up and a second mission was established at Incehara, renamed Lovedale in 1826 in honour of Dr Love, the general secretary of the GMS who had died the previous year. When further missionary reinforcements arrived two more missions were created, at Pirie and Burnshill respectively. At these stations black converts from the earlier missions served as catechists and teachers. In 1830 Thomson left the Xhosa mission and moved to the Kat River settlement, taking with him about 200 Khoikhoi who had been at the GMS mission (Williams, 1967:47). He ministered at Hertzog, having been appointed there by the colonial government partly because the governor, Sir Lowry Cole, feared the influence the LMS missionary, Read, would have on the Khoikhoi (Williams, 1967:113–7). Thomson was still paid by the Cape government but was no longer their agent. He became an official minister of the DRC so, in effect, was their first missionary. Thomson had experienced many problems in combining the calling of missionary and the position of government agent and had come to think that the double appointment was not feasible. It had created suspicion in the minds of the blacks and a divided loyalty for the missionary, thus hampering missionary work. He recommended to the government that they stop using missionaries as their agents but appoint personnel specifically for that purpose.

The four mission stations of the GMS suffered during the frontier war of 1834–5 and Lovedale was virtually destroyed. More painful to the missionaries was the fact that some of their converts joined in the war. After the war a new site was chosen for Lovedale, a few kilometres west of the previous station. This became the permanent location of the Lovedale mission and also the centre of Scottish missions on the eastern frontier. It was very close to the home of Colonel Lennox Stretch, who was the government commissioner for the Ngqika tribe, under the new Treaty System.

Lovedale

From the early 1830s the Scottish missionaries had been asking the GMS to establish a seminary where black teachers and catechists could be trained. In 1839 the directors agreed and in 1841 Dr William Govan arrived at Lovedale to

become the first principal of the Lovedale Seminary. Other ecclesiastical events in Scotland affected South African missionary work. From 1833 deep divisions threatened the Scottish church over the issue of voluntarism or a state church. As a result the GMS itself split and missionaries had to choose which organisation they wished to work for. Lovedale, Burnshill and Pirie (with Messrs Bennie, Ross, McDiarmid and Laing) retained the connection with the GMS, adhering to the principles of a state church. Chumie and Qhiubiri (with Messrs Chalmers and Niven) associated themselves with the newly formed Glasgow South African Missionary Society. The great disruption of 1843 led to further ecclesiastical divisions in Scotland (over the issue of patronage). The former group of missions (Lovedale, Burnshill and Pirie) came under the aegis of the Free Church of Scotland, the latter (Chumie and Qhiubiri) under the United Presbyterian Church, a voluntary church founded in 1847. This ultimately led to the split in missionary work and the formation of the Bantu Presbyterian Church. Moreover, Free Church missionaries were prepared to accept government money for their work because they had no quarrel with a state connection. This was crucial to the development of Lovedale.

William Govan had been chosen by the GMS to head the new educational institution at Lovedale partly because he himself had been a teacher before receiving his calling to the ministry. He served as principal of Lovedale for 29 years and shaped the institution in its early years. Two critical decisions were made: first, that Lovedale should be interdenominational and accept students from other missions and, second, that it should be multi-racial. At the opening there were eleven black students and nine white. It was not, however, what would nowadays be described as non-racial. Black and white were together in the classes and in the school's various societies, but they occupied separate dormitories and ate at different tables in the common dining room. From a 1990 perspective this seems very strange and patronising but in the 1840s it was in keeping with the social distinctions of the day. Retrospectively that may not seem an adequate justification but again we have to remember that the people of the nineteenth century lived in their world, not ours.

Lovedale rapidly became the most important educational centre in the Eastern Cape, to be matched only about 15 years later when the Methodist training college of Healdtown and the Anglican institution at St Matthews developed industrial and teacher-training facilities. Industrial training of various kinds – smithing, carpentry, leatherwork, bookbinding – was also promoted at Lovedale, particularly in the 1850s thanks to financial grants made available by the governor, Sir George Grey. A hospital was later established at Lovedale. Because of their acceptance of government grants and their cooperation with Grey, the Scottish missionaries, like others, have often been debunked as being mere tools in the hands of imperial authorities and as active proponents of conquest. Again, it is important to distinguish the missionaries' agenda and goals, which were never exactly identical to those of the government.

In 1846 the War of the Axe broke out and missionaries were instructed by the colonial government to leave their stations. Lovedale was taken over by military forces. Govan decided to return to Scotland and took four of his pupils with him for further education in Scotland: three sons of missionaries and Tiyo Soga, son of one of chief Ngqika's councillors.

The cost of frontier wars was always a problem to missionary societies and after the war of 1846–48 the GMS was reluctant to continue its work in the Eastern Cape and wished to withdraw the missionaries for service elsewhere in the world. But the missionaries themselves were adamant that they should resume work. Lovedale and other missions were reopened. Two years later, at the end of 1850, Umlanjeni's War broke out and once more the missions were in jeopardy. Lovedale continued as a place of refuge and the site of ongoing missionary and educational work, even though its proximity to Fort Hare meant that it was in a very vulnerable location. Many Mfengu had been relocated near Lovedale in 1848 and missionary work extended to this community as well.

In 1852 Govan again visited Scotland, taking Tiyo Soga with him. Soga completed his schooling and did a course in theological education. In December 1856 he was ordained at John Street Church, Glasgow; the first Xhosa to be ordained. He returned to South Africa in 1857 as a missionary to his own people. The question of where he would work was raised. Chumie (or Mgwali) mission had not been reopened after Umlanjeni's War of 1851–3. About 100 families from this mission had been given refuge at King William's Town during the war and had subsequently been accepted at the LMS mission of Peelton. The Scottish missionaries decided that Soga should take this former Presbyterian community and start a new mission for them. The new Mgwali was situated near Stutterheim. Soga served there for 11 years. He was a notable missionary figure in the Eastern Cape and preached in many white churches. He and his Scottish wife, Janet, were not always welcomed and were sometimes subjected to ugly and humiliating public jibes (Williams, 1978:26,32). In 1868 he moved to Tutura and began a new mission. He died there in 1872.

Soga has been hailed as an early exponent of black consciousness (Williams, 1978:ch 7), perhaps with some exaggeration. He wrote on the importance of the black heritage and history. He proclaimed the value of the black people and of Africa, but he based this claim largely on the experience of the early church in North Africa. His own experience was that of being a transitional and symbolic figure, standing between the two worlds that comprised his life. He was very much a person of the nineteenth century, a prominent figure in the newly emerging first generation elite of black educated Christians participating in the new life that was opening up to them, however slowly. He prefigures a Jabavu or a Rubusana rather than the leaders of mid twentieth century black consciousness.

Govan continued as principal of Lovedale through the developing years and took advantage of the Grey government's grants. The GMS had no qualms

about accepting these government grants for, like most missionaries of the mid nineteenth century, they subscribed to the policy of 'civilisation as a means of Christianisation'.

Govan's principalship at Lovedale ended rather sadly with a policy disagreement between him and the rising star of the GMS, Dr James Stewart. Stewart was a teacher at the school from 1867. He wanted to introduce a two-stream policy of education, while Govan insisted on high academic education for all pupils. Their differences became severe and in 1870 Govan returned to Scotland and Stewart became principal. He was a noted public figure, strongly imbued with late nineteenth century paternalism and antagonistic towards what he saw as 'native nationalism'. He feared this even in the African Independent churches. Yet Stewart was the leading influence behind the founding of Fort Hare University, an institution which was to provide education, expertise and confidence to many of those who became leaders in the African National Congress.

The mid twentieth century historian of Lovedale, Dr R.W.H. Shepherd, was himself principal of the college from 1941 to 1955. In many ways he was in the same mould as the nineteenth century missionaries and shared many of their attitudes. In his centenary history of the institution he offered some deep and perceptive comments on the nineteenth century missionary enterprise. They are worth quoting in full, for they offer a balanced and open-minded view of the missionary enterprise from one who stood between the paternalism of the early missions and the ecumenism of the late twentieth century.

> In this exaltation of things European and depression of things African the missionaries were but following the standards of their time, not only in ecclesiastical but in political circles... Interest in Bantu customs and the study of them were not prominent features of early missionary work. It is easy, from the standpoint of our age with all its absorption in the science of anthropology, to be unduly critical of this. To wish that the missionaries had appraised the valuable features of African customs is to wish that they had been far ahead of their age in still another direction... the pioneers were offering the best that they knew...
>
> The part played by the Bantu themselves in this connection must also not be under-estimated. Undoubtedly of set purpose they sought to imitate Europeans... And no doubt many of them found that for their own stability in the new life they must make the break with the old life total and complete. The removal of their dwellings to a mission station was only one of a host of ways in which they must come out from their fellow tribesmen and be separate.
>
> For missionary and tribesman alike, the day was distant when they would perceive that God was in the land before the missionaries of the Cross arrived, and that He was at work before they began. The passage of time

and wider experience was to bring the vision that it is the work of Christ to preserve all that is fine in the culture of peoples, for He came not to destroy but to fulfil (Shepherd, 1940:82).

The Roman Catholic Church

The earliest imprint of Christianity on southern Africa was in 1488 when Bartholomew Diaz, searching for a route to India, planted three large stone crosses on South African soil. In the following century Roman Catholic work was established by several Orders on both the west and the east coasts of Portuguese-occupied Africa. The settlement of the Cape by the Dutch in 1652 meant that the Roman Catholic (RC) Church was excluded from this territory, in spite of a continuing RC Church in the Netherlands and a small community at the Cape (Brain, 1975:3f).

During the brief control of the Cape by the Dutch Batavian Republic (1803–1806) the Church Ordinance of De Mist gave religious toleration to 'all religious societies which for the furtherance of virtue and good morals worshipped an Almighty Being' (Brown, 1960:6). The RC Church took advantage of this and sent three priests to the Cape and services were begun. In 1806 the British occupied the colony. In spite of the guarantee to retain existing institutions the commander, Sir David Baird, expelled the three priests. Baird himself was a Scottish Presbyterian, totally unsympathetic towards Roman Catholicism. In any case there were still legal restrictions on the open practice of Catholicism in Britain. In 1811 the instructions to the new governor, Sir John Cradock, provided for religious tolerance but in practice this made no difference to the Roman Catholics. Officially the RC hierarchy appointed a Bishop/vicar Apostolic for the Cape and Mauritius in 1818 but in reality it proved difficult to establish Roman Catholic work at the Cape. A priest, Fr. Scully, served in Cape Town for two years and even built a small church which was used until it collapsed in 1837.

Scully left in 1824 and a few years later two other priests arrived to take up the work, namely Fr. Wagenaar and Fr. Rishtow. Both received a living of £100 per annum from the colonial government, indicating the ambivalence of the government towards Roman Catholicism. Until 1829 civil disabilities were still imposed on Roman Catholics at the Cape. The colonial secretary, Christopher Bird, was forced to demit office in 1824, allegedly because of his Catholicism although the real reason may well have been a disagreement with the governor, Lord Charles Somerset. When the parliament in England passed the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829, restrictions were removed from Catholics in the colonies as well as in Britain. But at the Cape (with its predominantly Dutch population) DRC hostility towards Roman Catholics persisted throughout the nineteenth century. This hostility was later experienced in the republics founded in the northern interior. In 1856 the Constitution of the Voortrekkers specifically

excluded Roman Catholics from citizenship and in 1880 the government of the Orange Free State passed a law barring Catholics from the teaching profession and the civil service (de Gruchy, 1982:76). These legal barriers were subsequently removed for political reasons, mainly because of the Transvaal's need for a political alliance with Portuguese Mozambique.

The significant start of Roman Catholic work may be dated from 1837, when Fr. Raymond Griffith was appointed Vicar Apostolic for South Africa, a position he held until 1862. A church and school were established in Cape Town where most of the Roman Catholics lived. But Griffith's responsibility covered the entire colony and during annual visitations to all parts of his vicariate he was able to bring back into the Roman Catholic fold many who had temporarily associated with other churches more readily accessible to them. Within a few years priests had been placed at Port Elizabeth, George and Grahamstown. The vicariate was too large and Griffith's responsibilities too heavy. He sought permission to divide the vicariate and a papal bull of 1847 provided for this. In 1848 Griffith consecrated one of his priests, Fr. Aidan Devereux, as bishop of the eastern vicariate. Two years later a third vicariate was established in Natal with Bishop Allard in charge, succeeded in 1875 by Bishop Jolivet. This pattern of extension continued through the nineteenth century and Roman Catholic work developed in the Free State, the Kimberley area, Transvaal, Windhoek, Basutoland, Namaqualand and Swaziland. This brought Roman Catholic work into touch with the work established in the two Portuguese colonies of Mozambique and Angola. Divisions were made later, not for extending Catholicism but to bring about more efficient ecclesiastical organisation. In 1922 Pope Pius IX created the Apostolic Delegation to Southern Africa, encompassing the Roman Catholic work of the subcontinent. In 1951 the hierarchy of the Church of Southern Africa was created with four archbishops: at Cape Town, Durban, Pretoria and Bloemfontein. The Archbishop of Cape Town ranks before the other bishops. The South African Catholic Bishops' Conference has been an outspoken critic of apartheid from its first statement on the matter in 1952. Through its committees it has also inaugurated many projects for peace and justice.

In the Catholic pattern of growth we see the progress of an episcopal church with all the backing of the Roman Catholic hierarchy behind it. We also see a church which came to southern Africa initially to minister to white soldiers in Irish regiments, also to serve white civilians and engage in missionary work. Like the Methodist Church which has particular strengths for a colonial situation, the Roman Catholic Church has many features which were advantageous in a developing colony. The first was the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda, an instrument of the church based at Rome which was concerned with mission and church expansion. This may be regarded as the equivalent of a missionary society but with the advantages of having been in existence since the sixteenth century, and of being concerned not only with mission to non-Christians but also

with providing for priestly ministry to Roman Catholics wherever they might be in the world. Thus the development of new vicariates was done through the office of the Sacred Congregation in Rome where advice and practical help could be obtained for recruiting priests, monks and nuns for pioneering work.

A second great advantage that the Roman Catholic Church had, was the existence of its monastic orders, particularly their diversity and differing emphases and vocations. Recruitment for parish priests or for missionaries could be directed to the monastic orders and from their numbers men and women were found for the great variety of work needed in a colonial situation. There were teaching and preaching orders as well as those with a more pastoral emphasis. This was an invaluable resource to the Roman Catholic Church. Orders also meant that persons were already committed to obedience within the order or within the wider church. In addition, orders implied that salaries did not have to be found for those persons, although of course, new missions required financial support. But this too was more readily available in the Roman Catholic Church than in the newly formed denominational societies. Celibate priests were cheaper to support than married priests/ministers with families and this was another financial advantage.

A further benefit for the Roman Catholics was that their priests and missionaries usually came in a fairly large group so that they did not suffer so greatly the problems of isolation and loneliness that individual Protestant missionaries faced. Brain sums up these advantages as follows: "The advantage of allocating the territory (of Natal) to an established religious order was that it would be able to give the missionaries financial assistance, provide reinforcements of priests and brothers when necessary and inspire a feeling of security and cohesion in their members, working thousands of miles from home" (1975:26). Another, more subtle, psychological advantage lay in the long-established tradition of being a comprehensive institution where diversity was already deeply entrenched.

With such resources to draw on, the Roman Catholic bishops were able to plan and develop work within their respective vicariates. Thus in 1849 Bishop Devereux persuaded the fairly newly established Assumption Sisters in Paris to send three sisters and three postulants to Grahamstown to establish Roman Catholic education there. Their leader, Sister Marie Gertrude (Josephine Amelie de Heningsen), was a strong and forceful personality who laid solid foundations for the work of the Assumption Sisters in Grahamstown. Their convent school ran until recent years. Later a boys' school which was run by the Jesuits, was established at Grahamstown. From Natal an approach was made to the Superior of the Order of Mary Immaculate, Bishop de Mazinod, for priests. As a result Fr. Allard, OMI, was appointed Bishop and Vicar Apostolic of Natal, accompanied by a number of priests from his Order. They started work among Roman Catholics in Pietermaritzburg and Durban. In 1855 Allard planned missionary work among the Zulus, again using priests of the OMI. The mission seemed to

enjoy early success but there were many setbacks, partly due to intertribal hostilities following relocation (Brain, 1975:49–59). Far more successful was work initiated by Allard in Basutoland (Lesotho) in 1862 after an exploratory visit a few months earlier. The mission started in 1863 and marked the beginning of very important and significant work in Lesotho, making that country a strong centre of Catholicism. Sisters of the Order of the Holy Family joined the mission in 1864 to help in the catechumenate and in setting up a school. When Bishop Jolivet succeeded Allard in 1875 he inherited a well-established work in Lesotho but the Zulu mission was still struggling. It was only when the Trappists came to Natal that this work flourished.

Ricards, Bishop of the Eastern Cape from 1871–1893, brought the Trappists to South Africa. For various reasons the mission they established at Dunbrody near Port Elizabeth was not successful and in 1882 their leader, Fr. Franz Pfanner, moved the group to Natal where they founded Mariannhill. This became the most famous of the Roman Catholic missions in South Africa. The Trappist Order is contemplative rather than active and the monks of the Order had to improvise and adapt their community life for their new work. This created many difficulties with their superiors and eventually led to separation from the Cistercian Trappists and the creation of a new Order, the Religious Missionaries of Mariannhill. Their large monastery in Natal is still the centre of a vast pastoral and missionary work, including medical work. Mariannhill is famed for its manufacture of liturgical vestments.

The Roman Catholic Church has continued to grow steadily in its work in South Africa and is now, numerically, one of the largest churches, being second only to African Independent Churches (AICs) (30,1%) in its membership among the black inhabitants, with 10,2%. The Roman Catholic Church has the third largest Christian following in the country as a whole – AICs 21,2%, DRC 13,5% and RC 9,6%. It should be noted that both the AICs and the DRCs represent more than one denomination within the broad grouping. This makes the Roman Catholic position even more significant. The black membership of the RC Church comprises 80% of its total membership, indicating again the important part that missionary work played in building up the South African churches. It has been noted that few, if any, independent churches have broken away from the Catholic Church.

The Anglican Church

In spite of being the established church in England, the Anglican church was slow to institute services and ministry at the Cape. Like other denominations it began with chaplaincy work among the soldiers and extended this to civilian chaplaincies. Its real organisation and effective work date from 1848, when Bishop Robert Gray was appointed to the Cape Colony.

During the first British occupation the Anglican chaplains were allowed to hold services only for soldiers at the garrison but they sometimes ignored these

limitations, until the DRC protested. No chaplains accompanied the British forces in 1806. When a priest arrived the following year and started services for the garrison, the DRC again protested on the grounds of its former religious monopoly at the Cape. In view of the Church Ordinance of 1804 this was no longer strictly true but the DRC had the sympathy of the commander, Sir David Baird, who, with his Presbyterian background, also disliked Anglicanism. In spite of protests Anglican services were started in Cape Town, Wynberg and Simonstown – where they were held in the sail loft at the harbour.

It was only after the cession of the colony to the British in 1815 that the way was cleared for Anglican development and even then it was slow. The Reverend George Hough arrived in 1813 and served first as naval chaplain for four years, then as colonial chaplain in Cape Town, succeeding the previous incumbent, Robert Jones. Chaplains were paid by the colonial government and were, in effect, civil servants. They were appointed by the Colonial Office in London and were under the jurisdiction of the colonial governor, who held this authority in terms of his appointment as 'Ordinary', i.e. the governor virtually acted as bishop in places where there was no local bishop. It was not an automatic authority but was specified for each governor in his Letters of Appointment. Until 1827 Cape Town came under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of London and from 1827 to 1848 under the Bishop of Calcutta, whose jurisdiction extended to "all places between the Cape and the Straits of Magellan" (Hinchliff, 1963:24). It is not surprising that these bishops could do very little for the Anglicans in the remote and peripheral parts of their dioceses.

In Cape Town Anglicans were allowed to use the Groote Kerk for their services, a situation which lasted until 1834 when they built their own church. This was a generous gesture in the light of the earlier antagonism from the DRC. It is symptomatic of the way that a colonial context could break down old hostilities. Hough served as colonial chaplain until 1842 and provided practical, if somewhat pedestrian, leadership to the Anglicans for thirty years. Hinchliff says of him that he was "an old-fashioned highchurchman – high and dry – and it is difficult to see in him or in any of the civil chaplains the kind of enthusiasm which turns the world upside down" (1963:13). Yet Hough took upon himself the additional responsibility of ministering to criminals and political offenders who were, even then, kept on Robben Island. In view of his rather uninspiring leadership it is perhaps not surprising that Anglicanism made only slow progress at the Cape in the early nineteenth century. One writer commented in 1822:

> The English have no church, and the service is performed... in the Dutch Calvinist church. There are two English chaplains, one civil, the other military: both of whom read prayers and preach every Sunday morning. No church service is performed in the afternoon or evening, nor on saints-days or week-days; nor have the tolling of the bells at the churches, or the example of the Dutch predikants... been of sufficient force to urge the

> members of the English church to a full performance of their clerical duty: and the whole congregational church devotion of the English at the Cape is confined to three hours on the day of the Sabbath,... the sacramental service takes place every three months (Bird, 1823:63).

Bird's high standards and his criticism of the inadequacy of what was provided may remind us that worship in the nineteenth century made heavier demands on a congregation than it generally does nowadays. Few would now complain that the Sunday service lasted only three hours!

Wynberg was not included in Hough's area of ministry and the residents there took church matters into their own hands. They applied to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) in England for a priest. In due course the Reverend William Wright arrived under the auspices of the SPG. He came expecting to engage in missionary work to slaves, for the SPG was a missionary society, but he found himself ministering to whites rather than slaves and even then to the wealthy and socially elite because Wynberg had become "the summer resort of the fashionables of the Cape" (Bird, 1823:64). Wright complained to the SPG, but stayed in his post for several years. In 1829 he moved to Bathurst in the Eastern Cape and became civil chaplain there. While in Cape Town he did missionary work among the slaves and published a small book on the state of Cape slavery.

Wright was succeeded in Wynberg by Reverend E. Judge and during his time the Anglicans at last solved the problem of both the land and the funds needed for building a church. In September 1832 the Bishop of Calcutta was in Cape Town, en route to India. Applications for land for a church had long been in the hands of the colonial governor. The Bishop's presence enabled the church committee to put pressure on the governor. The land was transferred to the Anglicans on the morning of 3 September and in the afternoon, immediately prior to his departure from the colony, the Bishop consecrated it. The financial problem was solved in a novel way that had already been introduced at the Cape Town church, namely by selling shares to prospective members at £5 each, with no person being allowed to hold more than ten shares. When income was later received from pew rents, this would be used in part to pay interest to the shareholders. These conditions were enacted by Government Ordinance No 6 of 1833, and plans went ahead for building a church in Wynberg. The new church was opened in July 1834. A report several years later explained: "The new church was opened for public worship on 19 July 1834 and on the following day collapsed. So did the shares" (Vos, 1972:17). The misfortune was attributed to poor workmanship and even poorer materials. A second church was built and opened in 1839.

The precedent for subscribing shares for building a church had been established at St George's Church in Cape Town, provided for in Ordinance 4 of 1829, which created a joint-stock company of shareholders. Altogether eight

Ordinance churches were built at the Cape. Each Ordinance created a corporation to hold the property and give shareholders some security for their investment. This situation gave rise to problems later because, in effect, the shareholders became the ruling body of the church, a pattern rather like that of congregationalism. When Bishop Gray arrived in Cape Town in 1848 he found that some of the Ordinance churches were reluctant to give up the power that they had come to hold.

No Anglican chaplains came with any settler party in 1820, although there were two clergymen among the settlers, namely Reverend William Boardman and Reverend Francis McClelland. Both were appointed to serve as priests shortly after their arrival (Hockley, 1957:146). In 1825, Boardman became priest and schoolteacher at Bathurst. McClelland served for five years with the Irish settlers at Clanwilliam and then moved to Port Elizabeth. Several churches were built in the Eastern Cape in the 1820s and 1830s: Grahamstown 1824, Port Elizabeth 1825, Port Francis (later renamed Port Alfred) 1826, Bathurst 1834 and Sidbury 1838 (Hockley, 1957:148).

By the 1830s there was an urgent need for a bishop for the colony. The Bishop of Calcutta remarked that "the Church in this colony wants a Head. Everyone does what is right in his own eyes" (DSAB, I:37). In an episcopal church only a bishop could exercise the pastoral care and oversight necessary for full development and bring some organisation into the scattered Anglican community. Most importantly, only a bishop could ordain and confirm. From Bathurst came the complaint in 1830, "Leave us to ourselves a little longer and we will all be Methodists – or what is worse – nothing!" (Hinchliff, 1963:25). In similar vein in 1845 the priest at George complained that young people were asking to be admitted to the DRC because there was no bishop to confirm them as Anglicans. In an official report on the colony for the period 1839–40, it was stated that of 5 000 potential church members "between two and three thousand were out of reach of Christian services and many of them in a most degraded condition" (Lewis and Edwards, 1934:26).

In England the diocesan structure of the church was supported by centuries old endowments. But where was the money to come from for establishing bishoprics in the colonies? The problem was partly solved in 1841 when the Colonial Bishoprics fund was established, to be administered by a committee of English bishops. Even then progress was slow, for many colonies needed assistance. In 1845 Miss Angela Burdett-Coutts, heiress of a banking family, gave a generous gift of £36,000 for creating two new colonial sees. Cape Town was chosen to be one of the beneficiaries.

Robert Gray was appointed as the first Bishop of Cape Town. He was the son of the Bishop of Bristol and had been a priest since 1834, serving his last incumbency at Stockton-on-Tees in the diocese of Durham where he was an honorary canon of the cathedral. He arrived in 1848, at the end of the war and during the time of the annexation of the Orange River Sovereignty. His diocese

consisted of the entire subcontinent – the Cape Colony, British Kaffraria, Natal, the Orange River Sovereignty, and also St Helena. There were fourteen clergy in the diocese (including two at St Helena) when Gray arrived, "of very mixed quality and without leadership or supervision" (DSAB, I:317). In Cape Town Gray resided at Protea, formerly Boschheuvel, a property of Van Riebeeck (now Bishopscourt). In 1849 Gray started a diocesan school in the outbuildings of Protea, the forerunner of 'Bishops' at Rondebosch. In 1855 he established Zonnebloem, a college intended for the sons and daughters of tribal chiefs.

Gray decided to develop the colonial church and place it on a sound organisational and pastoral footing before turning his attention to missions. From the start he held informal 'synods' with his priests so that they could share in his vision and plans. He also visited all parts of his diocese, including St Helena in 1849. He made annual visitations of many months around South Africa. It was almost immediately clear to Gray that a diocese the size of southern Africa was unwieldy and impractical. A bishop needs contact with his priests and people. This was virtually impossible in any meaningful way where isolated villages and vast distances characterised the settlement of the land. In 1852 Gray returned to England to arrange for the division of the diocese and the appointment of two more bishops. He also engaged in fund-raising for the church in southern Africa.

Bishop Armstrong was appointed for Grahamstown and Bishop Colenso for Natal. Both were consecrated in 1853 and arrived in 1854. Colenso had made a preliminary ten-week visit to his new diocese and during that time tried to formulate a missionary policy for it.

During the two years that he held the episcopate of Grahamstown, Bishop Armstrong was able to build on work already begun by Archdeacon Merriman of Grahamstown. Merriman had been appointed by Gray for the Eastern Cape work and was an indefatigable worker, thinking nothing of tramping 40 miles a day to visit the remote villages where Anglicans had been so poorly served until then. The new bishop found that Merriman had laid a good foundation for Anglicanism. Mrs Armstrong described the Grahamstown church that had been built in 1824 as a "frightful building but in a splendid position" (Hinchliff, 1963: 44). The present Grahamstown cathedral, a different building, occupies the same site.

The division of the subcontinent into three dioceses meant that missionary work could now be given priority. Gray had visited the Moravian missions in the colony and tended to favour their policy of appointing a group of missionaries (some of whom were lay persons) with practical skills. However, he did not agree with the policy of creating a separate community which would live on the mission station. He hoped rather that missionaries could serve communities in their own villages "in which the coloured people may become possessors of the soil and aid in the maintenance of their own minister". He believed that "they are prepared to make exertions for their own advancement and the prospect of acquiring property would act as a stimulus to steady labour and sober habits"

(Hinchliff, 1963:46). In the Western Cape Gray acquired a large farm near Malmesbury and divided it into small plots which coloured families could purchase. But this was the exception rather than the rule. Most Anglican missions were not all that different from those of the Moravians. Later in the nineteenth century missionaries of many societies negotiated with the colonial government for the inhabitants of mission stations to be given freehold title to the properties they occupied which, in effect, had become small villages. So in the long run the two models of mission came together.

In the Eastern Cape Bishop Armstrong also embarked on a missionary programme. He was assisted in this by the frontier policies of the new governor, Sir George Grey, whose annual grants of £40 000 for the development of missions, schools and hospitals in the frontier regions were readily available to the Anglican stations. Armstrong established four missions: St Matthew's near King William's Town for the Mfengu, St Mark's north of Queenstown for the Gcaleka, St John's at Kabusie for the Ngqika and St Luke's near East London for the people of Chief Mhala.

Armstrong died in 1856 after just two years in his diocese. His successor, Bishop Cotterill, was appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who failed to consult Archbishop Gray of Cape Town, a slight which Gray felt keenly. This action indicated the lack of clarity about the status and constitution of the new Cape Church, a matter which Gray sought to overcome as he developed the institutional life of the church. Cotterill was an ardent evangelical and seemed determined to build up missionary work. He arrived immediately after the Cattle Killing of 1857. The existing mission stations were well placed to receive the multitudes who flocked to them in search of food and shelter. All missionaries saw the Cattle Killing as a tragedy but most also saw it as an unparalleled opportunity for the spreading of the gospel and acknowledged that the people were far more receptive to Christian teaching than they had been previously. When Bishop Cotterill died in 1871 he was succeeded by Merriman, who had continued as Archdeacon for so many years in spite of frequent invitations to accept a bishopric elsewhere (Varley and Matthew, 1953:xiii). Merriman continued the development of the Eastern Cape missions.

Bishop Colenso of Natal was to become a controversial and widely known figure in the church. His missionary views were novel in that he tried to graft the gospel into the existing society and culture, a policy which would nowadays find ready approval but which was suspect in the nineteenth century. He was also noted – and by the colonists of Natal vilified – for his support of the Hlubi chief Langalibalele and the Zulu king Cetshwayo when he believed they had been unjustly treated by the British and colonial governments (Guy, 1983:pt III). Colenso was one of the courageous fighters for justice in the nineteenth century. But his most significant impact on the church in South Africa arose through his advanced theological ideas, for which he was accused of heresy in 1864. Many long-term effects originated from the ensuing proceedings. These included the

establishment of the Lambeth conferences, the creation of the Church of England in South Africa, the definition of the constitutional rights of the Metropolitan of Cape Town and the formulation of the constitution of the Church of the Province of Southern Africa.

From the time of his appointment in 1848 Gray had been concerned with establishing a self-governing church. He believed that the colonial situation called for flexibility and that it would be wrong to create an established church at the Cape. He found the local congregations suspicious of his intentions, partly because of the independent corporations of the Ordinance churches and partly because of Gray's alleged Tractarianism. Attention focused on three issues that were regarded as 'High Church': the wearing of surplices, the introduction of a regular offering (intended ultimately to replace the pew rents as the main source of income) and prayers for the church militant.

In 1851 Gray gave notice of his intention to convoke a local synod. Some parishes and priests resisted. The division of the diocese in 1853 marked an obvious development in the organisation of the church. Gray was appointed Metropolitan but problems were later to emerge, partly because legal anomalies in the Letters of Appointment slipped through unnoticed by canon or constitutional lawyers. In 1857 Gray convoked another synod. Some clergymen protested and even boycotted the event. Difficulties over the synod became entangled with those relating to constitutional procedures in the Colenso case and other cases of insubordination. Gray nevertheless persisted not only on the path of constitutional development but also in maintaining the autonomy of the Anglican Church in the colony. He convoked a synod in 1861 at the time of Bishop McKenzie's consecration to the missionary diocese of Central Africa. In 1863 he consecrated Bishop Twells for the diocese of the Orange Free State and, in the midst of the Colenso controversy, Bishop Macrorie for Pietermaritzburg in 1869. In 1870 the first full provincial synod was held with Gray presiding as Metropolitan and a constitution was drawn up for the Church of the Province of South Africa. But alongside this a separate church developed, namely the Church of England in South Africa which claims to be the true heir of early Anglicanism at the Cape. It grew out of the constitutional wrangles that Anglicanism suffered in South Africa from the 1860s to the 1880s. It continues to exist as a separate but small denomination.

The Cattle Killing

Most missionary churches were deeply affected by the Cattle Killing of 1856–7. By mid century the Eastern Cape had seen eight frontier wars between the colonists and the Xhosa tribes. From the uneasy contact between Dutch settlers and Xhosa in the 1780s in the district of Graaff-Reinet, to the close of Umlanjeni's War in 1853 the Xhosa had suffered unremitting pressure that drove them steadily further east and out of the lands traditionally theirs. They had also

become increasingly subjected to British political control. The clearing of the Zuurveld in 1812; the creation of the neutral territory in 1819; the Treaty System in 1836 after the sixth frontier war; unfavourable modifications to the System; the annexation of British Kaffraria in 1848; also the 1848 removal of blacks from the neutral (ceded) territory and its annexation to the Cape for settlement as the district of Victoria; the abrogation of the Treaties by Sir Harry Smith in 1848 and their final repudiation in 1854; the imposition of assistant commissioners among the tribes (now reorganised into 'counties') a deliberate policy of detribalisation; the devastating war of 1851–3; the enforced 'civilising' policy of Sir George Grey from 1854 with subsidised schools, missions, hospitals, and a system of magistrates appointed to each chiefdom; the undermining of Xhosa law and customs replaced with a scale of judicial fees and fines; the erosion of the power of the chiefs – all this, and other more subtle humiliations, especially pressure to enter the colony for labour – had brought the Xhosa people to a state of total desperation. Other factors contributed to the Cattle Killing, including the influence of Christian teaching about the resurrection, which was appropriated into a grand apocalyptic vision of the resurrection of the chiefs, to rescue their people from the accumulating disasters. Peires has also shown the significance of the appalling lung sickness that affected the cattle in the frontier areas from 1854.

Following the voices heard by the young girl, Nongquase, and confirmed by her uncle, Mhlakaza, the prophecies spread that a 'new people' would arise to strengthen the Xhosa and reoccupy the land for them, provided that they killed their cattle and destroyed their crops. The vision was accepted by the Rharhabe chief, Sahrili, who called for obedience to its demands. Not all chiefs followed the call and throughout 1856 there was growing conflict between the 'believers' (*amatamba*) and the 'unbelievers' (*amagogotya*). A bitter contest of wills ensued, particularly as the Gcaleka chief Sandile was among the unbelievers. When the prophecies failed to come true in July and August 1856 and again in December, the unbelievers were blamed and further pressure was put on them to conform, even though starvation was imminent. The final day of fulfilment in February 1857 also passed with nothing but disappointment and disillusionment. Failure was finally acknowledged. Conflict between believers and unbelievers did not end immediately and 1857 saw the continuation of enmity and feuding.

The Cattle Killing was a total tragedy for the Xhosa people. Some 40 000 persons died of starvation and it has been estimated that probably another 40 000 were forced or cajoled into going into the colony as labourers. The total population in the frontier areas fell from 104 000 to 37 500. The disaster enabled Sir George Grey to extend and enforce his own policy for the frontier districts. The ruthlessness of his handling of the situation and the callous treatment of the starving tribesmen were highlighted by Peires in his book on the Cattle Killing. Peires regarded the actions of many of the assistant commissioners

and the magistrates as cavalier and ruthless, and he saw the missionaries as cooperating with Grey in his high-handed schemes.

Ironically it was the tragedy of the Cattle Killing that gave the missionaries their greatest opportunity for success at their work. Many studies have pointed out that even in the earlier part of the century it was the marginalised and the outcasts from tribal society who had been drawn to mission stations. The Cattle Killing left the Xhosa people in a worse plight than they had ever experienced before. Disillusioned and demoralised, they now had little or no hope for their future independence or survival as autonomous tribes. They had lost their land, the basis of their social and cultural cohesion. It was taken from them and made available for further white settlement. So on a massive scale the Xhosa tribes were now marginalised in what had previously been their own territory. Decimated by starvation and demoralised and humiliated by the great lie that had betrayed them, they had little with which to withstand the pressure to convert and to be assimilated into missionary society. Missionaries who had been struggling for years to find acceptance and a following – much as they deplored the tragedy that had happened – saw in it the moment that was 'ripe for the gospel'. All denominations reported increased numbers coming to the mission stations, in spite of Grey's attempt to divert as many Xhosa as possible to the colonial work force. They reported a more receptive mood on the part of the blacks. The late 1850s and the 1860s thus saw a marked upsurge in conversions to Christianity.

Conclusion

The period 1795 to *c.*1850 was a formative era in the development of the church in southern Africa. All the major denominations of the English-speaking churches were established during this time. In addition many smaller churches and missionary societies started work in southern Africa. These included the Paris Evangelical Mission and the Rhenish Missionary Society. Both societies had direct contact with Dr Philip of the LMS and sent their first missionaries to South Africa in 1829, when Philip himself was travelling back from England. The Baptist Church and the Berlin Missionary Society also initiated work during the first half century. By the middle of the nineteenth century a network of missionary stations of various societies existed across the subcontinent. Education was an important element in the work of all missionary societies and the contribution of lay teachers, including women, was significant (Donaldson, 1990).

Because missionaries were generally in the vanguard of white settlement and because many of them approved of white annexation and political control, they have been widely accused of being tools of the imperialist powers and of deliberately contributing to the subjugation of black tribes in southern Africa. That they had such a role cannot be denied, but their motives were varied and,

in the final analysis, their primary objective was to present the exclusive claims of Christianity, as understood in the nineteenth century, to those who had not yet heard or accepted the gospel.

At the same time as missionary work was developing, the number of European colonists in southern Africa increased enormously and white settlement fanned out in all directions. With military and civilian settlement came a ministry to these settlers, representing all denominations in Britain. In the second half of the nineteenth century church structures developed so that by the end of the century fully-fledged denominations had come into being. All major denominations were involved in missionary work and most of the churches that emerged in southern Africa had a multi-racial membership. In spite of black protest, leadership remained in white hands. Protest sometimes took the form of separation and the formation of independent churches. Insensitive to the frustrations of black church members and potential leaders, white church leaders were alarmed at what they regarded as insubordination and incipient nationalism. They clung to control in the churches and refused to share responsibility. Moreover, very few parishes were racially mixed. Black and white were organised in separate congregations that had little, if any, contact with each other. These patterns were perpetuated in the first half of the twentieth century. Only from the middle of the twentieth century has there been any serious attempt, on the part of most denominations, to redress the situation.

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CHAPTER 3

The boer emigrants and their church

During 1835–1840 about 15 000 people undertook an organised trek from the eastern parts of the Cape Colony to the interior. Their destination was the abutting regions in the north and north-east and their intention was never to return. These emigrants consisted of about 10 000 Cape Dutch or Afrikaner colonists as they were then already called (cf. C.V. Buchner's remark in 1837 in Muller, 1989:81) and more or less 5 000 coloured servants. While the effect of this emigration on the number of coloureds in the Colony is unknown, it decreased the white population by between 10 and 15% (Duvenage, 1981: 128–138). It therefore did not cause any dramatic change in the population numbers of the Cape Colony.

Although these people referred to themselves as 'emigrants', the words "Voortrekkers" and "Great Trek" were widely accepted after the 1870s (Du Bruyn, 1986:127). Since the number of people participating in the Trek was relatively small, the word 'great' points rather to a specific interpretation of the significance and consequences of this emigration. The Trek stimulated a national awareness among the Afrikaner and led to the founding of a number of self-governed and independent Boer Republics in the interior. It inseparably linked the so-called Boer to the future of the entire South Africa (Du Bruyn, 1986:139).

Those who evaluate the Trek in a positive manner, call it a "mighty national movement" (Van der Watt, 1977:1) which resisted British colonialism and oppression. According to them, the Trek resulted in an epic struggle in which the Afrikaners' identity, freedom and republican ideals would be formulated more clearly and their "racial policy" delineated more vividly. It, furthermore, decisively placed the interior of South Africa within the framework of those European influences already established at the Cape (Du Bruyn, 1986:127–128).

In contrast to this, critics refer to the emigration as a terrible disaster in the history of South Africa (reference in Duvenhage, 1981:20). Some call it a

shortsighted act which increased racial discrimination in South Africa and promoted separation and conflict. Black critics often call it an era of conquest or submission, resulting in the loss of freedom (Du Bruyn, 1986:127).

The church and more specifically the Cape (Dutch) Reformed Church (the Dutch titles "Gereformeerde" and "Hervormde" respectively, were used, especially since the beginning of the nineteenth century) or Dutch Reformed Church (DR Church) as it was officially called after 1842 (Scholtz, 1956:162), could not remain indifferent toward what had happened, for at the beginning of the emigration, almost all the Afrikaners who pioneered the Trek were members of a Dutch Reformed congregation.

A number of serious questions arose which had to be answered by authorities within the DRC – questions including matters such as a fundamental evaluation of the motives for the Trek, the position of emigrating DRC members as regarded church polity, and their spiritual needs. The ecclesiastical activities of Trekker members outside the Cape Colony would gradually also be related in different ways – whether informally or more formally – to the DR Church in the Colony.

The DR Church, however, was not the only religious institution involved in the emigration. At the beginning of the Trek several missionary societies – that widespread phenomenon of the eighteenth and nineteenth century – were already active in some of the regions which the emigrants would enter. The spiritual needs of the emigrants, and their relations to and conflicts with some of the blacks and coloureds among whom these missionaries worked, would bring the latter into direct contact with the Trekkers and compel them to foster relations with the emigrants. At the beginning of the emigration, the London, Wesleyan, Berlin and Paris Missionary Societies, as well as the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions were working north of the Orange River, which was the northern border of the Cape Colony at that time (Schoon, 1972:179).

Why the emigration?

The first question confronting the DR Church and its authorities, was the question of an evaluation of the motives for the emigration. The causes for the Trek, according to the emigrants, were briefly the following:

Firstly, they experienced a feeling of alienation between themselves and the British authorities at the Cape. This alienation caused many Afrikaner farmers to distrust the government. Several measures taken by the government contributed to this: the emancipation of the coloureds in the colony by, among others, Ordinances 49 and 50 of 1828 and the liberation of the slaves in 1834 (which meant social equalisation between them and the white colonists), the proclamation of English as official language and the abolition of semi-representative local governing bodies. Many colonists were profoundly aggrieved that decisions concerning their fundamental subsistence were made without consulting them.

Against the background of ethnic, religious, cultural and developmental differences (as the Trekkers perceived these) together with social class differences because of employer-employee relations, they experienced equalisation as a humiliation (Storm, 1989:16). One of the Trekkers, namely Karel Trichardt, mentioned equalisation as the main reason why his people emigrated (Preller, 1920:4). The perception that the British government favoured the coloureds and discriminated against the whites, gradually gained ground among Afrikaner colonists (Storm, 1989:16).

A niece of the Trekker leader Piet Retief diarised the religious differences as perceived by the Trekkers. According to her, the emigrants did not so much react against the liberation of the slaves as against their equalisation with the Christians, which was seen to be contrary to the laws of God and the natural difference in origin and religion – "Christenen, strijdig met de wetten van God en het natuurlijk onderschijt van afkomst en geloof" (Saamwerkers, 1939:10). She, therefore, drew a distinction between Christian and white colonist on the one hand, and heathen and coloured on the other hand. Her linking of origin and religion not only made this distinction a condition at a specific point in time in history, but also a permanent, closed system which became the basis for a racial ideology. In fact, by doing so, she implied that coloureds could not become Christians as (racial) origin determined the direction and quality of life. To some extent the same parallel was drawn by the emigrant elder Sarel Cilliers, who preached the Gospel to all except black people. He felt they were "heathens who lived a godless life in any case". On the other hand, whites by implication were God's chosen people (De Jongh, 1987:199, 279).

In the same vein, in 1860 the government of the Republic of Lydenburg wrote that the Jews did not mix with the heathens among them and that they were not allowed to attend meetings before they had accepted the Jewish faith (Muller, 1969:79). This statement also revealed the tendency among some emigrants of identifying themselves with Israel in the Old Testament. Against their Calvinistic background, which was influenced by certain Dutch writers (the so-called "old writers" or "oude schrijvers" of a movement called the "Nadere Reformatie" or "Second Reformation" – emphasising the importance of the state of man's heart – whose publications, together with the Bible, were the only reading matter for the isolated farmers in the eastern parts of the colony), the Trekkers closely identified themselves with the Old Testament realm of thought (Storm, 1989: 22). In fact, one of the proposed names for the region in which they wanted to settle was Palestine – according to a minister of the DR Church at that time, Dr W. Robertson (Dreyer, 1929:7).

In this connection, one can also mention that a vow was taken by the so-called "Wenkommando" of the Trekkers before the well-known Battle of Blood River on December 16, 1838. The Battle of Blood River became a decisive point in dethroning Dingane. What is more, against this background, and in the mind of many Afrikaners to come, Blood River developed into one of the main factors

stimulating the rise of Afrikaner nationalism. And, in identifying with these people, Afrikaans-speaking churches took it upon themselves to take a leading part in commemorating the so-called Day of the Vow. This involvement started in the latter half of the nineteenth century and has continued to date. The idea of a vow probably also originated from Dutch Calvinism, and more specifically, the "Nadere Reformatie". By reading the 'old writers' and the Old Testament in which they saw parallels for their own situation, the Trekkers strove after a theocratic theology of the baptised people: a covenant in which the entire society was regarded as being God's baptised people (Pont, 1991:271). The latter would then be obliged, under the covenant, to serve God unconditionally. Moreover, from certain examples in the Old Testament the idea emerged of the society taking a vow by which certain requests were made to God and, in turn, certain promises were also made (Pont, 1988:38–52).

A second important reason for the emigration was the unstable and deteriorating economic conditions of the prospective emigrants. These conditions were brought about by consecutive droughts, a lack of arable land on their farms, a shortage of a productive work force, and a lack of capital. The latter was caused by plundering raids on farms in the eastern parts of the colony – among others by the uncontrolled movement of the unemployed, which was brought about by the revision of the pass laws and other equalisation measures; the liberation of the slaves, whereby many farmers only received about one fifth of the value of their slaves, and the gruelling eastern border battle of 1834–1835, leading to a capital loss of about R600 000 (Van der Watt, 1977:1). All of these, together with the growing awareness of not being able to rely on proper legal protection from the British government, caused great uncertainty within the colonists about their social security in the eastern regions (Muller, 1969:72–76).

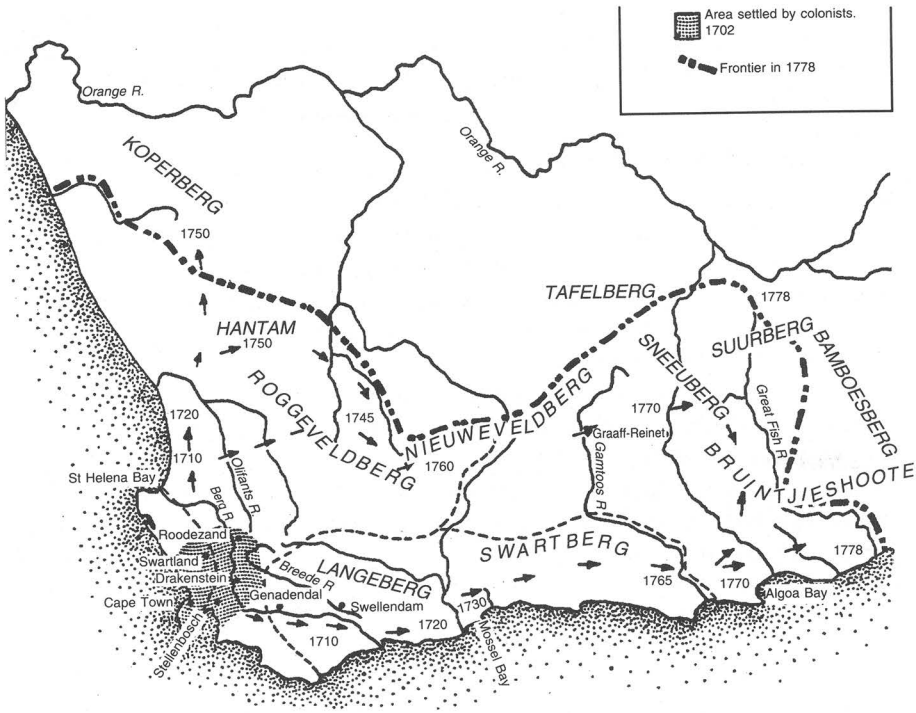
Add to this the natural wanderlust of many Afrikaners (McCarter s.a.:104) and there was ample motivation for the Great Trek.

The attitude of the Dutch Reformed Church in the Cape

It is clear that some of the emigrating members of the DRC, being typical Calvinists, found biblical justification for their conduct. With their aversion to social equalisation, some of them also reacted to the so-called lack of differentiation within the Church – as was the case when coloureds were incorporated into congregations of the DRC during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Muller, 1974:201 *et sqq.*).

This line of thought would not, however, prevail at the 1837 synod and the presbytery of Graaff-Reinet (from which the overwhelming majority of Trekkers came) during its sessions in 1838, 1839 and 1840. The point of view of the Cape synod of 1837 would have a determining effect upon the approach taken by the presbytery of Graaff-Reinet.

In order to put the decisions of this synod and the specific presbytery into perspective, it is essential to point out how the DRC handled members of



Trekboer expansion between 1702-1780

another trek which was an extension of an action which had already commenced in about 1700 from the environs of Cape Town, Stellenbosch and Drakenstein: the stock farmers' trek to the north and east. As these trek-farmers gradually moved further, the borders of the Cape Colony also shifted. In 1825, periodic treks across the Orange River began (Van der Merwe, 1937:212). These treks later became regular seasonal emigrations and some farmers even settled in the Transgariep (the region across the Orange/Gariep River). By 1834 about 1 120 trek-farmer families had already settled there. The difference between these trek-farmers and the Voortrekkers was that the former had not trekked in an organised fashion. They trekked for the sake of their cattle; most of them left behind some possessions in the colony and they regarded themselves as being politically bound to the British government and as members of DR Church congregations in the colony.

Before the Great Trek the ministers of the DR Church had no objections against the trek-farmers or emigrants in the Transgariep enjoying all ecclesiastic privileges. Although many members of the Church had temporarily settled outside the colonial borders and therefore also outside the borders of any congregation of the DR Church, they were still regarded as full members. No distinction was made between members north and south of the Orange River. The trek-farmers always returned to the congregations to have their children

baptised, to take communion, to be confirmed as church members and to be married (Van der Watt, 1977:9). This would change, due to the Trek.

The Cape synod of 1837

With the commencement of the synod in October 1837, thousands of emigrant church members or Voortrekkers had already packed and left the colony. Others were about to follow suit. The point of view held by the meeting regarding this Trek or emigration would eventually be stated in a pastoral letter, compiled by Reverend T.J. Herold of Stellenbosch and approved by a great majority on November 20, 1837.

In this letter the synod sharply criticised the Trek – the most important reasons being the fear that a religious deterioration could take place among the emigrants in the wild interior of the country, and the conviction that the Trek was an act of resistance against the British authorities. According to the synod, it was part of believers' discipleship to submit themselves to the measures of the ruling government, because this body had been appointed by God. The synod felt that it was reprehensible to expect the authorities to conform exclusively to the wishes of a group of their subjects. It was the task of the government to look after the common welfare and the future prosperity of the entire population.

It is interesting to note that the synod also drew a parallel from the Old Testament in their condemnation of the Trek. According to the meeting, the Trekkers did not have a Moses or an Aaron as their leader, nor had they received a promise or an instruction in their search for a "Canaan" as destination (Dreyer, 1929:3). The meeting, by implication, granted that there was a possible parallel between circumstances prevailing at that time and those facing Israel in the Old Testament. The synod, however, judged that Old Testament testimony weighed against the Trek.

On June 1, 1838 "Een inwoner" reacted by writing a letter to *De Zuid-Afrikaan* in which he confronted the ministers of the DR Church with the fact that they received the same remuneration during good and bad times, whereas church members suffered severely from losses due to plundering raids and the meagre compensation they received for liberated slaves. Why could these modern Moseses and Aarons not forfeit their safe existence – like their namesakes of yore – to go and preach the Gospel to the civilised (emigrant) Christians in Natal? The message indeed had to be spread to all human beings, even though it had to be done without remuneration, as had been the case with the Apostles (Dreyer, 1929:4).

It is, therefore, clear that the synod had either lost touch with the experiences and convictions of the emigrants (Storm, 1989:7, 35) or it completely opposed them in understanding the situation. What came to be an emigration with the idea of creating an own state or states outside the colony, was simply equated to resistance and revolt against the colonial authorities (Storm, 1989:35). The

Trek revealed the emigrants' deep dissatisfaction with the British authorities at the Cape. Whether emigration, no matter what the reason, could unconditionally be interpreted as resistance, is another question. Resistance surely implies some form of conduct by the subjects against the government of the region in which they live or lived, whereas the emigrants wanted to get away from that government. What is closer to the truth, is the fact that the emigrants so disagreed with the British government on important matters of policy and government measures, that they had lost all hope of a change improving circumstances (cf. letter of two leaders of the Trek, Retief and Maritz, to the governor of the Cape, dated July 27, 1837 – Pont, 1991:279). They preferred fending for themselves in an own state. In the process they would eventually not exclude British acknowledgement.

The synod, furthermore, neither showed any sign of insight nor took serious cognizance of the motives or circumstances leading to the Trek. This status quo, together with the optimism over the religious and moral consequences in the British Empire with the succession of Queen Victoria to the throne, which also took place in 1837 (Dreyer, 1929:4), appeared one-sided and pro-British. The letter lacked any pastoral concern. Reverend G.W.A. van der Lingen, one of the ministers who expressed opposition to the contents of the letter at the meeting, declared that the letter did not suit the circumstances (Dreyer, 1929:5). A letter by the Trekker leader Andries Pretorius on July 23, 1838 showed that some of the Trekkers had thought that Reverend Van der Lingen understood their aspirations and plight better than most of the other DR Church ministers. In this letter Pretorius requested that the Paarl minister and pastor find a suitable minister for the emigrants because Van der Lingen was a true Afrikaner – "een waare Afrekaan" – like the emigrants (Pretorius, Kruger and Beyers, 1937:27). In response to this statement by Pretorius, the synod would directly oppose the line of thought among Afrikaners who had become more nationally conscious.

Why did the synod take such a stance in favour of the authorities in its pastoral letter? An analysis of the constitution of the meeting shows that 22 ministers attended it: 11 Scotsmen, one German, one Dutchman and nine Afrikaners. The majority of the 19 elders were Afrikaans. In the border congregations there were seven Scottish ministers whose foreign origin estranged them from the national feeling of this group of Afrikaners [Proceedings: Extraordinary Synod of the DR Church ("Nederduitsch-Gereformeerde Kerk van Zuid-Afrika") 17.10.1837 and consecutive days: 1st session]. When the pastoral letter was accepted on November 20, 1837, the five delegates from Cape Town were absent (Proceedings: 1837:29th session). It still gave the Afrikaners a total voting power of 24, which means that the meeting was not dominated by "foreigners" (in the eyes of the Afrikaners). And yet, with its verdict, the meeting joined the prevailing public opinion of that time – especially in Cape Town. Moreover, two Scotsmen and two Afrikaans ministers cast the minority vote of four (Dreyer, 1932:3). It

was therefore probably a matter reflecting the honest intentions of the delegates (Dreyer, 1929:1) who did not follow national-ethnic lines.

One of the most important ecclesiastic implications of the pastoral letter was that the emigrants had transgressed God's fifth commandment which implies respect for the authorities. Stubborn persistence in this course of action could lead to disciplinary steps being taken.

Eventually it was the presbytery of Graaff-Reinet and its congregations which had to implement the practical aspects of this decision by the 1837 synod. Most of the emigrants had indeed come from this region (Van der Watt, 1977:15).

The presbytery of Graaff-Reinet

When the Cape synod condemned the Trek as representing resistance and rebellion to an authority established by God, it not only conformed to public opinion predominant in the Western Cape, but also to the point of view of British authorities (Dreyer, 1932:5).

By 1838 government statements against the emigration had intensified. The British governor of 1834–1837, Sir Benjamin D'Urban, still had an almost accessible and understanding attitude towards the emigrants, although he was also opposed to the Trek. In July 1837 he wrote a letter to the Colonial Secretary in London in which he mourned the loss of the type of person who had trekked as an "incalculable loss to the colony". He called the emigrants "brave, patient, industrious, orderly and religious people" (Storm, 1989:24). He furthermore pointed out that he did not know of any existing or possible future law that could prevent the Trek. In this matter he was supported by (later Sir) Andries Stockenström), lieutenant-governor of the Eastern Province since 1837, who stated that any law trying to forbid emigration would be tyrannical and oppressive (Dreyer, 1932:11).

At the beginning of 1838 this attitude changed when Sir George Napier assumed office. On April 27 he issued a public notice in which he called upon all ministers to do everything in their power to oppose "this madness of emigration" – "deze razernij van Emigratie". In July 1838 he addressed a letter via the *Government Gazette* to the emigrants in which he maintained that their exodus did not exempt them from their British citizenship and submissiveness to the laws and benches of the colony. This letter was followed by a circular to all DR Church ministers from Reverend A. Faure of Cape Town, registrar of the DR Church, in which he requested them to obey the governor's appeal (Dreyer, 1932:12).

It is therefore against the background of the decision by the synod of 1837 (a decision to which the presbytery was bound) and increased statements by the government against the Trek that the presbytery met in 1838. The matter of the status of church members outside the colony was placed on the agenda by the minister for Colesberg, Reverend Thomas Reid, who posed two questions.

In the first place he wanted to know how members should be treated who had lived outside the colony for more than a year and who then returned to claim their privileges as church members. Some of the emigrants had indeed done that [for example, S. Cilliers in March 1839 in Colesberg (De Jongh, 1987:177)]. Secondly he asked the opinion of the presbytery on how members should be treated who roamed about outside the border of the congregation because of poverty or for other reasons.

The presbytery did not want to antagonise the British authorities, but neither did they want to leave the Trekker church members to their own fate without ministerial service of some kind. They therefore decided on a proposal by Reverend A. Murray (Sen.) that every church council should handle every case with the greatest care and with Christian leniency, according to the stipulations and practices of the DR Church (Dreyer, 1932:13). Although the proposal was vague, the intention was apparently that church member privileges for the emigrants were not to be taken for granted. Not being satisfied with this answer, Reverend Reid put the same question to the presbytery in November 1839. The same answer was given (Van der Watt, 1977:16).

This caused the delegate elder for Cradock, C. Hattingh, to respond that the presbytery's attitude towards the emigrants left much to be desired. He therefore paid a private visit to the Trekkers at the beginning of 1840 (Dreyer, 1929: 34–38).

During the meeting of 1840 it became clear where the sympathy of the presbytery actually lay. On November 29 Reverend Reid requested permission to visit the Trekkers across the Orange River and at the Riet/Kaffer/and Sand River only to preach the gospel to them. The presbytery reacted positively, but set conditions: Reverend Reid's plans had to be in accordance with the laws of the country and he could only preach the gospel to the emigrants. He was therefore not allowed to administer the sacraments or confirm members. This indirect censure of the Trekker church members stemmed from the presbytery's sensitivity towards the opposition against emigration which the British government at the Cape expressed (Storm, 1989:30, 31, 33) and the conviction that the Trekkers had opposed their lawful government.

The same attitude was evident from the meeting's handling of a more or less similar request by Reverend Taylor of Cradock. Although he opposed the Trek, this Scotsman asked permission to go and preach among the emigrants for three months, to administer the sacraments to them and to fulfil other pastoral duties among them. He also pointed out that the governor had already given him permission to do so, in writing.

Once again the meeting set conditions. Because the governor had already given his permission, they decided that they could not refuse Reverend Taylor's request. In this matter they were therefore also sensitive towards the British governor. Reverend Taylor had to promise them, however, that he would not administer the sacraments or allow church members to be confirmed because of

the prevailing circumstances among the expatriates – "tegenwoordige omstandigheden . . . onder de Uitgewekenen". Later the editorial staff of the magazine *Elpis* commented that the presbytery's conduct had been motivated by the conviction that the Trekkers had revolted against the government and that holding or attending a complete ecclesiastic service could be interpreted as encouraging the emigration (Dreyer, 1932:6–10).

No evidence exists that Reverend Reid visited the emigrants after the presbytery had allowed him to do so. Reverend Taylor, on the other hand, visited them shortly after the meeting. The baptismal register of the congregation of Cradock shows that he did indeed baptise emigrant children (Van der Watt, 1977:17).

Supporters of the idea that the emigrants had planned their own independent church in their independent state from the start – they also evaluate it positively – argue that the Trekkers terminated their membership of DR Church congregations from the moment that they left the colony. Along this line of thought the ministers of the Church in the Cape would have had no authority to administer the sacraments across the borders of the colony. Being remunerated by the government, they received their authority from the state, whereas termination of citizenship also would imply termination of church membership (Storm, 1989: 30, 31).

The main problem with this view is of course that on the one hand – by implication – it takes a negative stance towards government wages for ministers, but on the other hand – again by implication – it reveals a positive attitude towards linking church membership with political borders. In principle, the Church is a religious body with its own borders which need not be aligned to political borders – like some sort of state church. It is, furthermore, debatable whether the mere fact of government wages for ministers turned the church into some kind of a government body under government authority. Did government wages, the participation of political commissionaries in the synod, the possibility of the governor's interference in controversial ecclesiastic matters and the requirement that he also had to approve elected church council members (Dreyer, 1929:74) necessarily mean that the DR Church was in fact not free at all? The presbytery of Graaff-Reinet's difference of opinion with the governor on the particulars of Reverend Taylor's proposed visit to the emigrants in 1840, was merely one example to prove the opposite. Moreover, trek farmers who had constantly stayed outside the expanding eastern borders of the colony since about 1700, were still members of DR Church congregations. Actually, in the history of the Dutch Reformed Church, this point was never at issue. Why then, would it be in the case of the emigrants? Moreover, why could new congregations outside colonial borders and founded by DR Church adherents not be brought into relation with other DR Church congregations as well? Besides, the founding of congregations outside the borders of existing congregations also did not necessarily mean that a new religious denomination had to be formed.

It is interesting to note that both the synod of 1837 and the presbytery of Graaff-Reinet nowhere indicated that the mere fact – separated from its causes and progress – of the Trekkers' absence from the colony had brought their privileges as church members into dispute.

Changes in the attitude of the Church in the Cape

By 1843 the attitude of the Church in the Cape toward the ecclesiastic status of and service to the emigrants had changed. This was mainly caused by two factors:

In the first place, Ordinance 7 of 1843 to a large extent freed the DR Church from government control. The Church could now organise its own matters without government intervention (Dreyer, 1929:74). Secondly, it was more generally realised that the British government could do nothing to prohibit the Trek and that it had, in any case, already been undertaken. An established community outside the colony had come into being (Van der Watt, 1977:49).

Ironically enough, it was the British authorities at the Cape who initiated this change in ecclesiastic strategy. During the latter part of 1843 Governor Napier decided to send the Cape Town DR Church minister, Reverend A. Faure, to the emigrants in Natal. This former Trekker Republic had just been occupied and declared a colony by the British (Van der Watt, 1977:41). Napier most certainly also had political motives, for in his letter to Faure in which he requested him to visit Natal, he stated that he had always wanted to send a minister to the emigrants "the moment he was assured by the Commissioner (Advocate H. Cloete) of their perfect submission to HM's authority and they themselves desired it" (Dreyer, 1929:40). Faure would also only act in congregations [at that stage there were five congregations outside the colony (cf. Dreyer, 1929:69, 70)] which allowed him to do so (Van der Watt, 1977:41).

Faure was not only interested in visiting loyal British subjects, as can be seen by his outspoken desire to visit the two congregations outside Natal as well, namely "Potchefspruit" and "Winburg". These visits, as well as the one to the congregation of Weenen in Natal, could not take place because the emigrants in those places suspected Faure of having pro-British political motives (Dreyer, 1929:52, 61, 62). Faure himself contributed to this suspicion by causing an uproar in Pietermaritzburg when praying for Queen Victoria (Dreyer, 1929:60). Although pro-British, Faure was definitely not convinced that ecclesiastic borders coincided with political borders or that the latter could limit the Church in its activities.

In these changing circumstances the presbytery of Graaff-Reinet decided in 1844 to send a letter of sympathy and concern to the emigrants across the Orange River. The presbytery wanted to know whether the Trekkers would prefer a visit from a minister or a permanent preacher. In case they wanted the latter, the presbytery would also give its support, but the emigrants had to

suggest ways in which he could be paid (Dreyer, 1929:76). From the Riet River M.A. Oberholster, whom republican Trekkers regarded as being loyal to the British throne (Dreyer, 1929:78), welcomed this interest. From the Modder River, the republican J.G. Mocke rejected this interest. He felt that it was too late (Dreyer, 1929:79). Thereby Mocke reflected a bitterness among some of the Trekkers because they had been on their own for six to eight years without permanent aid from any DR Church minister from the colony; because they had only had the limited visits by Taylor and Faure; and because they had been condemned since the synod of 1837.

The Church on the trek road

There are divergent opinions on the type of person who participated in the emigration. Some of those who criticise the Trekkers, use generalisations, calling them "born savages" (Dr John Philip of the London Missionary Society at that time) who trekked "in love with adventure for its own sake". The Trekkers were seen to have an aversion to churches, courts, schools and taxes (John Fairbairn of the *Commercial Advertiser*), and were seen to be aggressive, feudal and backward invaders.

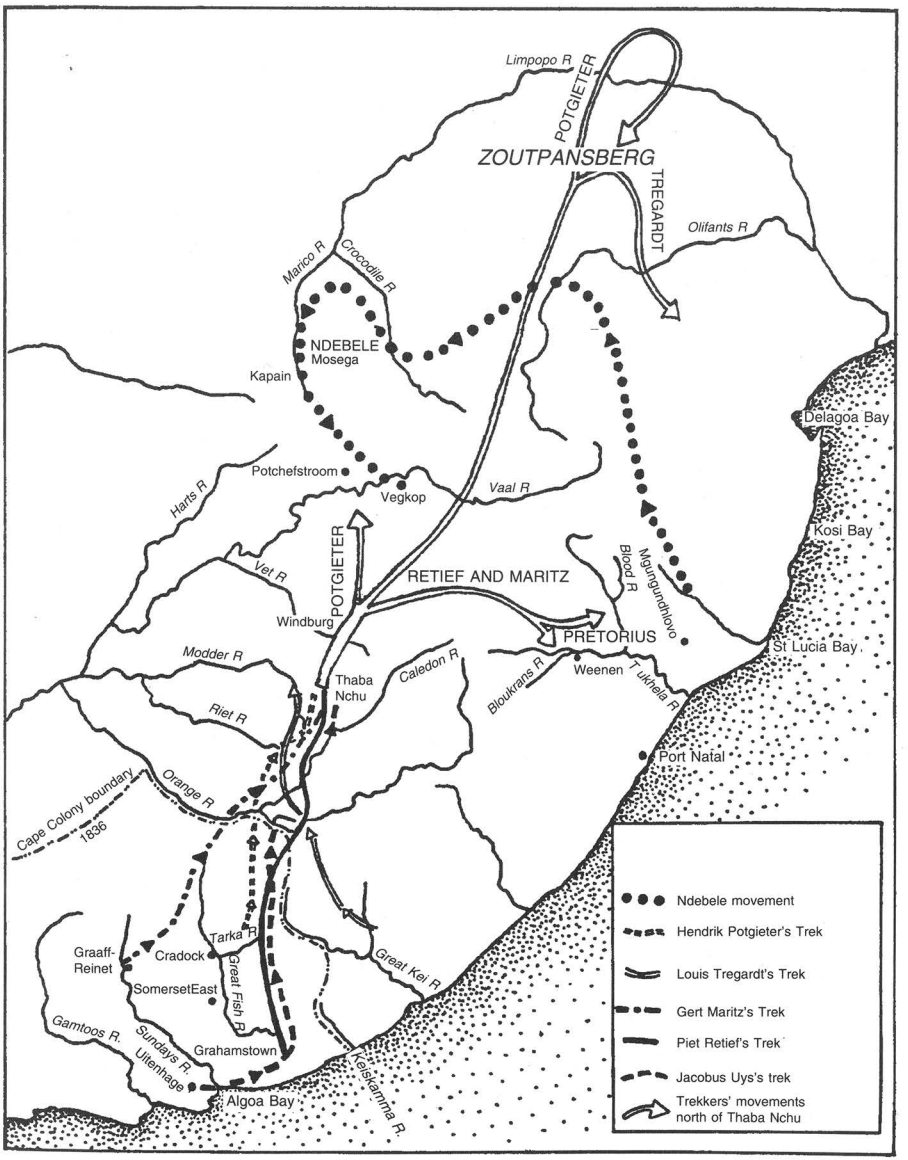
On the other hand, one also finds the biased veneration of the emigrants as a brave, undaunted and headstrong pioneering generation with a profound piety, who spread the light of Christian civilisation with their emigration (Storm, 1989:19, 20).

The Voortrekkers, as they were later called, were people with weaknesses and faults, as can be seen from many examples. There were cases of petty quarrels (cf. Potgieter and Theunissen for many examples), religious indifference and immorality, conceit (cf. De Jongh, 1987:277 *et sqq.*) and some cases of black people being subjected to conditions bordering on slavery (De Jongh, 1986: 138; Pretorius, Kruger and Beyers, 1937:102).

Yet despite their sins and faults, the perception of an attachment to God and his Word in everyday life (McCarter s.a.:105; cf. the remark by the English inhabitants of Grahamstown in the Bible presented to the Uys Trek in 1836 – Dreyer, 1932:90) and a respect for the DR Church and its ministers (cf. Dreyer, 1932:63 for a quotation of Sir Harry Smith, English governor at the Cape) were fundamental to the conduct of a constitutive group of these emigrants. Therefore, many of the Trekkers strove to continue their ecclesiastic activities, together with the usual family prayers and devotions within the laager.

Concerning the instituting of a church both on the trek road and during the emigrants' settlement in the present-day Free State, Transvaal and Natal, one of the very first problems was the fact that no acknowledged Reformed or DR Church minister accompanied the Trek.

Initially this problem was met by the appointment of Erasmus Smit, a former missionary from the London Missionary Society, as permanent minister to the



The Great Trek, 1834-1838

emigrants. Smit had married Susanna Maritz, sister of the Trek leader Gert Maritz. At the time of the departure of the Maritz Trek from Graaff-Reinet in September 1836, Smit was unemployed and, furthermore, financially indebted to his brother-in-law. These circumstances, their association with the reasons for the emigration, and the Smits' conviction that the DR Church ministers in the

colony had 'ousted' Erasmus and did not want to appoint him as a minister, caused them to join the Trek (De Jongh, 1977:110–112).

Because there was no minister officially acknowledged by the Church, Smit ordained himself on May 21, 1837 as minister for all the emigrants who sided with Trek leader Piet Retief. He performed this ceremony by reading from the induction formulary for ministers of the Cape DR Church (Spoelstra, 1915: 23–24). In his own words, Smit would act as first minister for the travelling congregation of the Reformed Church heading for Natal – "eerste leraar van de reizende gemeente der Gereformeerde Kerk naar Port Natal". On June 11, with this visible attachment to the DR Church in the colony, and proceeding from a strong Calvinistic tradition concerning the relation between church and state (cf. Dutch Creed, Article 36) Retief, as governor of the Trek, took an oath of office. He undertook, among others, to protect the interests of the Dutch Reformed Church and not to appoint any official in the Ecclesiastic and Civil Government – "Kerkelike en Burgerlike regering" – who was not a member of this church (Preller, 1920:98, 106). Furthermore, the vision of an alliance between the entire Trekker community (in all its facets) and God came to the fore in this act. This vision was also fundamental to the idea of taking the vow before the Battle of Blood River in 1838.

The so-called travelling congregation to which Smit had referred, was characteristic of a non-established congregation; there was no defined member register; Smit compiled a baptismal register in Gert Maritz's laager on March 17, 1837 (Gerdener, 1930:3) and the Wesleyan missionary at Thaba'Nchu, James Archbell, did the same on October 7, 1837 at the Uys Trek. The first church council was elected during a Trekker meeting on February 8, 1837, but it never convened; another church council was only appointed at the end of 1837, six months after Erasmus Smit's ordination; the first church council was not appointed by a constituted meeting of the congregation, but by a national assembly or civil meeting; and although Smit had already baptised children on March 17, 1837 – two months before his ordination – he administered the first communion on October 28, 1838, more than a year after his ordination. Only after the victories over the Zulus and the expulsion of their King Dingane, was the first established congregation founded in Pietermaritzburg in Natal (1839). Then Port Natal and Weenen in Natal (1840), Potchefstroom in Transvaal and Winburg in the Free State (both in 1842) were founded (Van der Watt, 1977: 38–40).

Except for Erasmus Smit, Archbell and the later elder, Sarel Cilliers, also conducted religious services in the laagers (De Jongh, 1987:99, 100; Pont, 1988:6, 19; Van der Watt, 1977:36). Before Smit's appointment a list was circulated in the laagers to canvass votes for Archbell's appointment as minister for the emigrants. This upset Smit and increased his latent distrust of the Wesleyan (Preller, 1920:75). Moreover, tension was gradually building up between Smit and Cilliers. The Smits accused both Cilliers (De Jongh, 1987:

198–201) and Archbell (De Jongh, 1977:130) of Arminianism – a trend in the church doctrine which links God's salvation of man to the so-called ability of the latter to become converted of his own accord. Smit was convinced that the Reformed maxim of 'by grace only' was undermined by both these men.

Because of his age – at that stage he was 58 – (De Jongh, 1977:5) poor health, and poor human relations, but especially because of the fact that he was not a legally ordained minister of a Reformed church, Smit never was a popular minister and he was not accepted by all the Trekkers whom he had to serve. Many of them regarded his appointment by Retief (with reference to the example of the English governor in the colony who appointed the ministers there) as temporary (De Jongh, 1977:129–133). On March 3, 1840 the Natal Voortrekker 'House of Assembly' decided that Smit had to retire (Van der Watt, 1977:39).

Smit was succeeded by Reverend Daniel Lindley, an American missionary in Natal at that stage. On March 1, 1840 the Natal Voortrekker House of Assembly appointed him conditionally as minister for the emigrants. Almost one year later, on January 16, 1841 he was appointed permanently, with Pietermaritzburg as his home town. So Lindley had the almost impossible task of serving about 20 000 people throughout Natal and the Potchefstroom-Winburg region (in 1840 this region was incorporated into Natal by a deputy board). During his time of service the number of congregations amounted to five. Lindley, however, always regarded his appointment as temporary and he resigned in June 1847 to continue his missionary work (SA Biographic Dictionary 11:412). He was temporarily succeeded by a German missionary, Reverend J.L. Döhne, and then by Reverend Dirk van Velden, before the latter settled permanently as the first minister for Winburg in 1850 (Gerdener, 1930:15; SA Biographic Dictionary 11:831).

In the meantime, however, before Van Velden's appointment as first permanent DR Church minister outside the colony, the Reverend Andrew Murray (Jun.) was ordained in Bloemfontein in 1849 – more than a decade after the conclusion of the emigration (Gerdener, 1930:78).

Why no DR Church ministers on the trek road?

One may well ask why no DR Church minister wanted to accompany the emigrants from the Cape and why the first permanent settlement of a minister across the Orange River only occurred in 1847. The Trekker community had indeed made frequent requests in this regard since 1837 (Kruger, 1957:113 *et sqq.*). In 1840 the Natal House of Assembly even called P.K. Albertyn, a minister without a congregation, who had just completed his studies in Utrecht the previous year (Dreyer, 1929:19).

The main reasons for this, which probably apply to more than one case, are the following:

In the first place, the overwhelming majority of the Cape ministers had no sympathy with the emigration and the awakening Afrikaner nationalism that accompanied it. This deduction is backed by Andries Pretorius's letter in 1838 to Reverend G.W.A. van der Lingen in which he referred to the latter as being sympathetic to the emigration, as a true Afrikaner – "Een waare Afrekaan". Those in opposition to the emigration were regarded as people without appreciation for the national aspirations behind it. A lack of national feeling was also the reason given by the true Afrikaner – "De waare Afrekaner" – from Natal in August 1840 when he pointed out the absence of Cape ministers among the Trekkers (Dreyer, 1929:21) in a letter.

Secondly, the DR Church at the Cape and its ministers were to a great extent bound to the British authorities, which influenced their attitude towards the emigration. The ministers were also remunerated by the state. The extant correspondence reveals uncertainty about whether the emigrants could afford to remunerate a minister (Dreyer, 1932:18). This uncertainty was not necessarily well founded (Dreyer, 1929:19 for the guarantee by the Natal House of Assembly to pay Albertyn's salary). As the Church gradually freed itself from the state and the British authorities, in turn, acted more sympathetically towards the spiritual welfare of the emigrants, this factor disappeared. On his visit to Natal in 1843, A. Faure expressed the hope that the emigrants would soon be provided with suitable ministers (Dreyer, 1929:52).

Another reason mentioned by some, is that there was a shortage of ministers in the DR Church at the Cape. Dreyer, for example, points out that during 1836–1841 only eight candidates from the Netherlands were appointed to Cape congregations. These congregations had previously been vacant for very long (Dreyer, 1932:15). It was because of this continuing shortage that Scottish ministers had been imported for the DR Church since the 1820s (Dreyer, 1929:10).

What makes the so-called shortage of ministers doubtful, is Storm's statement that many Afrikaans ministers who had completed their studies since 1835, had to wait long before they could be appointed permanently to a DR Church congregation (1989:32, 33; Pont, 1991:291). An example is P.K. Albertyn who received a call from the Natal Voortrekker House of Assembly in 1840. On June 7, 1839 he was admitted to the ministry in the Hague and from 1841 he temporarily assisted in the Paarl and then in 1844 in Clanwilliam. Only in 1845 could he settle permanently in Prince Albert (Dreyer, 1929:19).

An own Church on the trek road?

The notion exists that the emigrants wanted an own organisationally independent Church in their own state, free from the DR Church in the Cape. Retief would then have understood the benefit of this independence and in 1837 laid the foundation for this by instituting the Church on the trek road and having

Erasmus Smit ordained as minister. The so-called Voortrekker Church would be organisationally independent and no split with the DR Church was planned (Storm, 1989:48–51; cf. Pont, 1966:81).

It is unlikely, however, that the emigrants understood matters in this way, both initially and later with the founding of the Church on the trek road.

In the first instance, the well-known field-cornet from Graaff-Reinet, G.D. Joubert, recounted that some of the emigrants blamed him for regarding them as being 'cut off' – "afgesneden" – from the Church after their departure from the colony. Some even returned periodically to their own congregations to demand their ecclesiastic privileges (Van der Watt, 1977:21). On September 9, 1837, Piet Retief wrote in a letter to Stockenström, lieutenant-general of the Eastern Cape: "Our religious services are by no means neglected, but on the contrary earnestly and constantly conducted according to the established forms and principles of the Dutch Reformed Church" (Van der Watt, 1977:22). This clear consistency with and orientation towards the DR Church were expressed as late as 1848 in a declaration by the church councils of Potchefstroom and Magaliesburg to a deputation from the DR Church: they still regarded themselves as being without ministerial services of any kind – despite the services of Smit, Lindley and others among the emigrants – because no DR Church minister served them on a permanent basis (Storm, 1989:93).

In the second instance, the Church on the trek road was organised according to the customs and institutions of the DR Church. Thus on January 14, 1838 the second emigrant church council accepted the General Regulation of 1824 of the DR Church which, according to the meeting, was used in all 'our churches' – "onze kerken" – in the colony (Pont, 1991:289 – in 1838 in Natal Erasmus Smit, for example, used Article 2 of this regulation to prevent Sarel Cilliers from conducting his own religious services – De Jongh, 1987:129–131); in 1837 the Trekker governor acted as political commissioner on the church council with reference to a similar system in the colony (De Jongh, 1987:127); the ordinations of both Erasmus Smit and the first church council took place by means of the induction formularies of 'our Dutch Reformed Church' – "onze Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk"; and Smit conducted catechism according to the teaching methods and the creed of the same Church (Van der Watt, 1977:22).

Moreover, the emigrants tended to seek synodical unity with the DR Church in the colony. In 1846 the congregation of Pietermaritzburg requested to join the synod of the Church in the Cape. It had not automatically united synodically with the Church in the Cape after the British annexation of Natal in May 1843 (Storm, 1989:69).

By 1847 Pietermaritzburg was the only DR Church congregation in Natal, because Port Natal and Weenen ceased to exist after the great exodus of emigrants due to the British occupation (Annual, DR Churches 1976:D49). The request by Pietermaritzburg undoubtedly contributed to the formation of the

presbytery of the Transgariep by the Cape Synodical Commission in 1850, by which all congregations in the former Orange River Sovereignty (now the Orange Free state) and Natal were incorporated into the Cape synod by conviction and ecclesiastic consistency, and they attended the 1852 meeting (Gerdener, 1934:192). After a period of ecclesiastic settlement following the emigration, the Transvaal emigrants also requested to be incorporated into the Cape synod (Van der Watt, 1977:54–57). The 1852 synod granted this (DR Church in ZA, 1859:20), but the ensuing reaction from the Transvaal in 1853 led to the establishment of an own Transvaal ('organisationally independent') synod. This reaction formed the foundation of the Church, which later became known as the "Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk van Afrika" (Van der Watt, 1977: 69–73).

There is no further evidence that the Cape synod regarded the emigrants and their eventual congregations as being separate from the DR Church in the Cape Colony. The indirect censure as suggested in the pastoral letter of the 1837 synod and exercised by the presbytery of Graaff-Reinet, was practically annulled by the visit of Reverend W.A. Krige of Victoria to the Transoranje in 1846. The presbytery instructed him to do so and he also administered the baptismal sacrament. His visit was followed by three deputations of the Cape synod from 1848 to 1852. The synod authorised these deputations to found congregations – also outside British territory and even in the far Northern Transvaal, to administer the sacraments, to ordain members of the church council and to confirm young church members (Van der Watt, 1977:53–57). In fact, except for Pietermaritzburg (Natal House of Assembly), Potchefstroom and Winburg (Lindley), all congregations among the emigrants until the Cape synod of 1852 had been founded by mediation of ministers from the DR Church.

By the end of 1847 the registrar of the Cape synod answered a question put by the first deputation of the synod stating that communion might indeed be administered to the emigrants. Although they had withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the British authorities at the Cape, they did not seek discord or the overthrow of this government. The section in the formulary for the Holy Communion which clearly states that those who want to cause discord, sectarianism and mutiny in the ecclesiastic or secular governments should rather not participate in the communion, did therefore not apply in this case. Therefore, there was no question of censuring the emigrants and excluding them from the sacraments (Van der Watt, 1977:52).

Two matters are evident in these remarks made by the registrar, Reverend A. Faure:

Firstly, he noted a clear change in the point of view of the Church in the Cape since the 1837 synod. The emigration was now seen for what it really had been, namely merely an emigration for the sake of certain heart-felt reasons, without offering resistance to the British authorities at the Cape.

Secondly, it is clear that the emigrants were not regarded as being ecclesiastically independent or even part of another religious denomination. At this stage the Acts and Stipulations of the DR Church, as accepted by the 1842 synod, determined in Article 1 that someone was a member of this Church in the widest sense (Kleynhans, 1974:132; DR Church in ZA, 1859:8). In these terms they would therefore be able to remain church members even though they were not incorporated into an existing congregation, while the religious denomination, by means of presbytery or synod, also accepted responsibility for them. At this stage it is notable that both Reverend Murray (Jun.) and Reverend Neethling, the Cape deputation of 1851–1852, regarded the emigrants in the Transvaal (outside British territory) as being DR Church members (Pont, 1991:334, 335).

Now the question arises as to whether the institution of the Church on the trek road, despite the emigrants' own interpretations and those of the Church in the Cape, was not organisationally independent in accordance with church law or polity. Did the subordination of the DR Church in the colony to the colonial authorities and, on the other hand, the Trekker government's determining share in the establishment of the Church on the trek road, the absence of any DR Church minister, and the settlement of emigrants outside the geographic borders of any existing DR Church congregation and outside the colony not indeed consummate the establishment of an organisationally independent "Voortrekker Church"?

Taken from a Reformed Church perspective – and in this case this tradition is the determinant – every congregation where the gospel, sacraments and church discipline are administered, is Church in the complete sense of the word. These complete churches, operating with the same confession and system of church government, act jointly in certain matters by means of meetings like presbyteries and synods (Strauss, 1990:57 *et sqq.*). It would, therefore, be possible for an DR Church congregation to be in fellowship with another DR Church congregation, without forming part of the same structure. In fact, before 1850 the congregations outside the colony had also not been brought into structural relation with one another (Dreyer, 1932:111). The mutual acceptance of members with proof of membership (since one is a member of a specific congregation in a specific place with its church membership register according to custom, even though the Church at the Cape understood it differently at that time), the dependence on ministers, reading matter, formularies, relations by means of delegates like deputations, and the fact that the new emigrant congregations were in an ecclesiastic phase of settlement, indicate that it would be premature to call it an organisationally independent church. This conviction is backed by the principal consideration that political borders cannot necessarily determine ecclesiastic borders. The Church is not a department of the state. The Church also does not derive its existence from the state or a state law (Jonker, 1978:10, 11). The Church does not accommodate all those who are citizens of the state, but only those who are part of the Kingdom of God.

At this point the question arises: Where then do the three so-called traditional Afrikaans Churches, whose origin is often traced back to this period, come from? We are of course referring to the DR Church, the "Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk van Afrika" or "Nederduitsch Hervormde" or, simply "Hervormde Kerk" and the Reformed Church(es) of South Africa or "Gereformeerde Kerk(e) van Suid-Afrika".

Three religious denominations originate in pioneering circumstances

The existence of the three traditional Afrikaans Churches originates from the ecclesiastic pioneering circumstances among the emigrants at the time after the emigration. Some of the factors influencing the situation were a shortage of ministers and the absence of an ecclesiastic structure with meetings like presbyteries or synods. In both cases Trekker governments – instead of church meetings – often made decisions on behalf of the Churches (Pont, 1966:190, 207).

In the 1850s the pioneering circumstances were still prevalent, especially in the Transvaal. The first permanent minister, Dirk van der Hoff (still a ministerial candidate at his inception) only arrived at Potchefstroom from the Netherlands in May 1853 (Van der Watt, 1977:68). After his arrival relations between the Transvaal congregations and the DR Church in the Cape (together with the DR Church congregations in the Orange Free State and Natal which in the meantime had taken their seats at the Cape synod since 1852) took a decisive turn.

The request from the Transvaal in 1852 to join the Cape synod was made during a combined church council meeting at Potchefstroom on 22 May at which three of the four Transvaal congregations were present. This request was accompanied by another – namely that the Cape synod find a minister for the Transvaal congregations. The understanding between the meeting and Reverends Neethling and Murray, a deputation from the Cape Church visiting the Transvaal, was that this joining would by no means affect the political independence of the latter. As was the custom, the Transvaal requests were finalised when they were approved by the Transvaal House of Assembly the next day (Gerdener, 1934:247, 248). Their validity was thereby ensured, as far as the Transvaalers were concerned.

In October 1852 the Cape synod decided to grant the Transvaal's request to join the synod. In the meantime, Van der Hoff was recruited in the Netherlands for service in the Transvaal by Professor U.G. Lauts. Four days after his arrival in Cape Town and while on his way to the Transvaal, he was made eligible to receive a call by the registrar of the Cape synod (Van der Watt, 1977:67, 68). Although it was neither the synod itself nor any of its deputies who had recruited this minister for the Transvaal, the problem concerning the absence of a minister was now at least partially solved. By doing so, the Cape registrar furthermore

fulfilled a canonical function for the Transvaal congregations as he would in respect of every ministerial candidate in the DR Church religious denomination as a whole. Neither Van der Hoff nor any other institution in the Transvaal questioned his power to do so.

The majority of the Transvaal congregations, nevertheless, did not join the Cape synodical denomination.

At the so-called first (according to Van der Hoff's minutes) General Church Meeting on 8 August 1853, it was decided not to join the Cape synod. Delegates from three congregations, namely Potchefstroom, Rustenburg and Soutpansberg were present, but no one from Lydenburg attended the meeting.

Two reasons were given for this change in attitude. Firstly, the Cape synod and its deputies were blamed for not acting as mediator in providing a minister for the Transvaal congregations. Secondly, the meeting was not prepared to subject itself to the "laws" of the Cape DR Church as compiled by its synod (from minutes as in Gerdener, 1930:207, 208).

Both reasons seem peculiar, however. With respect to the recruitment of a minister, the Transvaalers who had been without a permanent DR Church minister for more than a decade and who had wanted to join the Cape synod in 1848 and again in 1852, now put this fact forward as a reason for refusing to join. A matter which had held their attention since the emigration, now within a matter of months became a reason for three Transvaal congregations to deny themselves synodical connection with the other DR Church congregations. The fact that Van der Hoff's arrival had partially solved the problem of ministers, and that joining the Cape synod could possibly facilitate the future recruitment of ministers, apparently played no 'extenuating' role.

Concerning the so-called laws of the Cape synod, it is noteworthy that the fifth Transvaal General Meeting in December 1856 used these same challenged regulations as guide or basis for compiling its own (minutes in Gerdener, 1930:219).

Nevertheless, with this action from the Transvaal a separate synodical denomination came into being. At this stage there was no mention (as yet) of a separation from the DR Church. This was clear from the letter by the Transvaal General Church Meeting to the registrar of the Cape synod in November 1853. In this letter Reverend Van der Hoff (secretary of the Church Council) and elder Wolmarans (chairman) declared on behalf of the meeting that the "Nederduitsch Gereformeerde Kerk in de Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek" regarded itself as an independent Church under own management. No split 'from the old Mother Church' was planned, however. The 'daughter' still wanted to retain 'filial' relations with the 'mother', striving to enter into unitary bonds to promote the general interests of the DR Church in South Africa (letter in Gerdener, 1930:584).

Of this intention very little came to pass. As late as September 1859, the tenth General Church Meeting decided that the Transvaal congregations had to join

the Cape synod, since the Church in the Transvaal could not succeed in managing itself (minutes in Gerdener, 1930:251). The House of Assembly disapproved of this decision, however, so that nothing came of it (Van der Watt, 1977:72). In the meantime the name of the so-called independent DR Church in the South African Republic would be given statutory stipulation by means of the acceptance of the draft constitution of this state. The man responsible for it was a certain Jacobus Stuart, a Dutchman, who noted in this document that the name "Hervormd" would be used for the Church and religion in the Transvaal. Thus, without consulting the Church concerned, one of the two interchangeable terms (the Dutch "Hervormd" or "Gereformeerd") was selected. These had formerly been used for the Church in the Cape and in 1842 this was officially limited to "Gereformeerd".

Thus the name of this religious denomination in the Transvaal, together with its separate synodical structure, in due course led to (as it gradually became known) the "Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk", developing from a separate synodical denomination into an independent Church.

The original roots of the "Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk" can therefore be traced to the first General Church Meeting in August 1853. Therefore, this meeting is known as the first general church meeting of a separate and later independent religious denomination. Or, translated freely from the minutes of this meeting in which Van der Hoff summarised the general attitude of those present: "Since the Transvaal is politically independent, it must be so ecclesiastically as well" (in Gerdener, 1930:208). Van der Hoff probably also revealed here the real reason for this meeting's decision not to join the Cape synod. It is, in any case, noteworthy that neither the discussion about the Cape church laws ("kerkwetten") nor the arguments about the fact that this synod had failed to send a minister to the Transvaalers, were included in the minutes.

The idea of an independent Church within an independent state for the first time decided the matter for the emigrants and their descendants on 8 August 1853 in official ecclesiastic decision-making and conduct – and not earlier as some church historians have maintained (cf. Pont, 1966:1; Storm, 1989: 48–51).

In the meantime, the Lydenburg congregation refused to support the decision of August 1853 and consequently became an important participant in the events leading to other congregations in the Transvaal joining the Cape synod – congregations which expressly called themselves "Nederduits Gereformeerd" (Van der Watt, 1977:73).

This history, as well as a dispute about the use of the so-called Evangelical hymns in church, would in due course lead to the formation of three religious denominations or Churches during the pioneering times in the Transvaal: the "Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk", the "Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk" and, in the last instance, the "Gereformeerde Kerk".

The dispute about the use of hymns was brought to a head on 11 January 1859 in Pretoria during the Eighth General Church Meeting when it was decided not to make the hymns optional, but a compulsory institution of the "Hervormde Kerk" (minutes in Gerdener, 1930:224). Hereafter a long history of dogmatic grievances by the so-called "Dopper" element which went along with the emigration was ignored and former concessions about everybody not being compelled to sing the hymns, were rescinded (Van der Watt, 1977:81–84).

The "Doppers" of the Transvaal at this time were descendent of a more or less distinguishable sociological and religious group of Afrikaners who lived in the north-eastern parts of the Cape Colony in the nineteenth century. These people had always been part of the DR Church, but were strictly Reformed-orthodox in the Dutch-Dordt tradition, inclined to an interpretation of the Reformed life as prescribed by the "oude schrijvers", conservative and both formal and strict in their religion. In addition, they maintained a high moral standard by allowing, for example, moderate wine consumption and condemning adultery, to the extent that no illegitimate children were born in the group (Kemp, 1982:12).

By 11 January 1859 these Reformed church members, who were concentrated in the Rustenburg district, already had a minister as partisan. He was Reverend Dirk Postma, who had arrived in the Transvaal the previous year, sent by the synod of the "Christelik-Afgeskeie Gereformeerde Kerk" in the Netherlands (Van der Watt, 1977:82). In order to serve in the "Hervormde Kerk", he also had to accept the compulsory hymns.

Postma and a number of conscientious objectors were not pleased with this compulsion. In these circumstances he could not or did not want to serve, because, as he explained later, human discretion or some ecclesiastic tradition was thus elevated above the Word of God. This boiled down, although minimally and weakly so, to 'papal' behaviour. If he accepted it, his own conscience would be violated (Spoelstra, 1963:141; Van der Vyver, 1958:251). Invigorated by Postma's presence (Van der Vyver, 1958:312) 15 conscientious objectors issued a statement in which they informed the General Meeting that its decision forced them to leave the "Hervormde Kerk" and to found a free Reformed Church. This Church had to be constructed according to the dogma, service and discipline stipulated by the National Synod of Dordrecht in 1618–1619. They also wished to use the church order of this Dutch synod as adapted to their own circumstances instead of the existing ecclesiastic 'laws' (Jooste, s.a.:56).

Thus the first step was taken towards the founding of the "Gereformeerde Kerk" in South Africa on 10 and 11 February 1859, at Rustenburg.

Undoubtedly, the matter of the compulsory hymns decided the issue for the founding of another Church in the Transvaal during the 1850s. The declaration by the 15 conscientious objectors pointed out, however, that these people not only wanted to found a "Hervormde Kerk" without hymns, but that they wanted to return to the ecclesiastic institution in the Dutch Reformed tradition of the

sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Spoelstra, 1963:140; Jooste, s.a.:56). By 1859 Postma did not regard the "Hervormde Kerk" as a false Church as defined in article 29 of the Dutch confession of faith (Van der Vyver, 1958:251). It is, therefore, a serious question, in terms of article 28 of the same confession, whether he should have joined this Church with all its alleged faults. Postma and the objectors had indeed declared their allegiance to this dogma. This critical matter was only dealt with in 1869 when the synod of the "Gereformeerde Kerk" certified the "Hervormde Kerk" a false Church (Pont, 1966:206).

At the end of the 1850s the Transvaal Republic had reached the end of its settling and pioneering phase. The existence of three reformed Churches therefore became an accomplished fact.

Emigrant, missionary and missionary society

The emigrants not only turned to the DR Church at the Cape for Reformed ministers, but also to some Dutchmen who had offered assistance in this regard. The latter tried to establish candidate P.N. Ham (1843) and Reverend A.C. Stucki (1846) in Natal, but these attempts failed (Dreyer, 1932:23–26). In the meantime, missionaries from missionary societies active outside the colony, did religious work among the Trekkers. The following cases have already been mentioned: Archbell (Wesleyan) at Thaba 'Nchu, Lindley (American Board) in Natal and Potchefstroom-Winburg, Döhne (Berlin Missionary Society) in Natal and Smit (previously from the London Missionary Society) mainly on the trek road. These caused the relations between emigrant and Trekker Church, and between missionary and missionary society to be scrutinised closely.

Nineteenth century critics of the Boer emigrants relate incidents during 1848–1852, in which the Boers acted against the well-known explorer and missionary, David Livingstone, and concluded that the former were against missionary work being done among coloured and black people (Dreyer, 1932: 60; cf. Du Plessis, 1911:249–251 for Livingstone's antipathy towards the Boers and the fact that he armed members of the Bakwena tribe, which enabled them to defeat a neighbouring tribe). According to Storm, the emigrants' aversion to the active support of missionaries from the London Missionary Society to the 'equalisation' of whites and coloureds in the colony, sometimes led to an aversion to missionary work in general. He makes the generalisation that the emigrants merely experienced missionary work as being pitiful (1989:18).

It is therefore clear that, if these statements about the emigrants hold true, they must also be related to their ecclesiastic propagation of the gospel among coloureds and black people. In other words, the emigrants' attitude towards the coloureds and black people in general and towards the missionary societies working among them, naturally had to influence their attitude towards missionary work among the latter.

There are clear indications from the emigrants' history that their intention was to treat the blacks and coloureds fairly and reasonably, without assimilating or

'equalising' them. Thus in answer to an address on his arrival in the laager of Maritz on 12 April 1837, Retief stated, among others, that the emigrants had to treat surrounding peoples fairly (Duvenage, 1987:104). On 3 December 1838 Trek leader Potgieter wrote to the Cape governor at the time that the emigrants were free and innocent of any crime, and that they did not want to harm any other nation, because all nations are free. He mentioned five coloured captains with whom the Trekkers had entered into a peace treaty. According to him, the Trekkers were moving to an unpopulated region where they would not deprive anyone of his rights. The Barolong captain, Moroka, and a Sotho equal, Sikonyela, had assisted the Trekkers against the Matebele chief, Moselekaats, of their own free will (Pretorius, Kruger and Beyers, 1937:29–31). Potgieter also headed the Potchefstroom Civil Council which declared itself independent in 1844 after the British annexation of Natal, and which at the same time forbade black slavery (Potgieter and Theunissen, 1938:132).

Field-cornet Gideon Joubert of Nu-Hantam (Colesberg), who visited the Trekkers in 1838 by order of the British government at the Cape to investigate the conditions of slaves not yet freed, reported favourably on the Trekkers (Dreyer, 1929:35). During his visit to Natal in 1840, elder Hattingh met one of the Zulu king Panda's generals who had placed himself under Boer protection and discipline. This general expressed gratitude that the Trekkers had put an end to the bloodshed between black and black (the so-called Difaqane of the early nineteenth century – Dreyer, 1929:37). There were other examples of liberated slaves who had stayed on with their employers, who had trekked with them and who had even acted as teachers in elementary education to emigrant children of pioneers (Saamwerkers, s.a.:83, 84).

For the rest it is known that the children's education at this stage was mainly intended to teach them how to read and write in order to enable them to understand the Bible, to be confirmed and to participate in farming activities. This task was mostly undertaken by the parents, though there were also a few teachers present in certain of the Trek groups (Van der Watt, 1977:62).

Proof of the emigrants' negative attitude towards the coloureds and blacks was testimony of a public and an official 'capturing' of Zulu children in Natal in 1840. These children were then employed by an emigrant, at a maximum quota of two – as can be seen from a petition by 68 emigrants to the Council of War (Pretorius, Kruger and Beyers, 1937:102–103). As punitive measures against cattle and horse thieves, the Boers sometimes abducted the culprits from their kraals or homes and compelled them to help on their farms (Schoeman, 1985: 90–91).

These examples show that the emigrants were not racialists, and yet they had a strong feeling of guardianship or paternalism – a tendency among many Westerners at that time – over blacks and coloureds. This status quo, however, would not necessarily prevent them from being positive about missionary work being done among these people.

Many cases reveal that the emigrants were not hostile to all missionaries or missionary societies: the fact is that some of the missionaries were doing valuable pastoral work among the Trekkers and that they had been requested to do so; Potgieter and others gave assistance to two American missionaries, Lindley and Wilson, in escaping from Mosega after an emigrant commando had chased Moselekaats away from there (Pretorius, Kruger and Beyers, 1937:31); Retief expressed appreciation in a letter dated 18 November 1837, to a family in the colony, for the missionaries' attitude, and more specifically Archbell's attitude towards the Trekkers (Dreyer, 1932:23); and finally the same Trek leader wrote a well-known letter to the Zulu king, Dingane, on 8 November 1837 in which he urged him to take to heart and obey God and to listen to the English missionaries with him. "As a friend I must impress on your mind this solemn truth, that all, whether white or black, who will not hear and believe God's Word, shall be unhappy . . ." (Pretorius, Kruger and Beyers, 1937:22).

The emigrants, however, definitely loathed the London Missionary Society, which was rejected outright in Article 1 of the Vet River Constitution of 1837 (Duvenage, 1987:116). Experiences like the one with Livingstone had repeatedly convinced the emigrants of these missionaries' antipathy towards the Boers and their unrealistic (in Western terms) equalisation of the coloureds and blacks with the whites. The plundering and danger created in the colony by measures insisted upon by this missionary society were thus emphasised. At one stage Potgieter remarked that he was not opposed to the English missionaries as such, but that he wanted their cooperation in order to avoid a disaster (Potgieter and Theunissen, 1937:209).

There were indeed substantial examples of individual Trekkers like Sarel Cilliers who questioned the expediency of missionary work being done among blacks (Schoeman, 1985:94). Except for their denial that the latter would be 'receptive' to the gospel, the argument that all coloureds and blacks were descendants of Cain and were therefore cursed, was also sometimes heard (Schoeman, 1985:93). In these circumstances strong preconceptions against the missionary societies were sometimes voiced in general. On the other hand, a decisive group of emigrants was neither opposed to missionary work being done among blacks and coloureds nor to the work done by any of the missionary societies.

The Trekkers, however, lacked their own systematic mission in the pioneering circumstances they found themselves in. The only thing coming close to this, was the monthly missionary prayer meeting held in the laagers, which later became an institution in the DR Church in the Transvaal.

Many emigrants included their coloured employees in their daily family prayer meeting. This, in itself, reveals a positive attitude towards missionary work and this conduct must of necessity have had beneficial results. There were also cases in which emigrants took care of coloureds or blacks and converted them.

The lack of a systematic and methodical missionary work by the emigrants within the structure of their Church can be ascribed to various factors. The Church was still in a pioneering phase and their own congregations first had to be established; there was a chronic shortage of ministers who could develop the mission; furthermore, political instability and military clashes with blacks seriously infringed on the opportunity of spreading the gospel (Van der Watt, 1977: 58–59; Schoeman, 1985:94).

Concerning the attitude of the missionaries from the various missionary societies towards the emigrants, it must already have become clear that the members of the London Missionary Society sharply criticised the emigration and the emigrants' attitude towards the coloureds and blacks. Besides his remark that the emigrants were "born savages", the superintendent of this group in South Africa, Dr Philip, also accused the Trekkers of slavery, "cruelty, social wrongs and oppression". According to him, the Trek to regions outside the colony would promote these conditions. Regarding the emigration and the emigrants' attitude towards the coloureds and blacks, both he and his colleagues had a decisive influence on the point of view of the British governors at the Cape. To say that they therefore obstinately opposed the emigration and the emigrants, is no exaggeration (Venter, 1991:30–33).

Although missionaries from the other missionary societies also complained about the emigrants' prejudiced and unfair attitude and conduct towards blacks and coloureds, their complaints were not as harsh as those voiced by the London Missionary Society. As an example, one can look at the missionaries from the Berlin Missionary Society in the Transgariep. Their attitude was revealed in differences between the Trekkers and the coloureds about grazing for their cattle. The missionaries naturally sided with those among whom they were working (Schoeman, 1985:90).

Interestingly enough, Daniel Lindley, who was an honoured and beloved minister among the Trekkers during the 1840s, also fell into this category. He continually expressed the fear that if the emigrants were to take over the regions in the interior of South Africa, it would lead to the oppression of the coloureds and blacks, which would consequently adversely affect his own missionary work. He therefore remained a supporter – he probably never proclaimed it from the rooftops – of British occupation of these regions. His American colleagues shared these sentiments. In spite of the reassurance of a Trekker deputation that he could continue with his work unhindered, he nevertheless returned to Natal at the end of 1839, after a battle between the Boers and the Zulus (SA Biographic Dictionary 11:411–413).

From the above-mentioned it is therefore clear that there were two groups of missionary critics voicing opinions about the emigrants: those whom the Trekkers avoided and regarded with mistrust as fierce opponents, and those who criticised the Trekkers, but still worked among them or maintained friendly

relations with them. It is also known that some of the emigrants attended services at certain mission stations (Schoeman, 1985:94; Pont, 1991:284).

Ecclesiastic consequences of the emigration of 1835–1840

The Great Trek of 1835–1840 led to the settlement of Afrikaners in the present-day Natal, Orange Free State and Transvaal. The Trekkers were not only members of an awakening Afrikaner nationalism, but mostly members of one or another DR Church congregation and were now outside their congregation borders, on the road to a new homeland. Although they participated in establishing new congregations, the immediate purpose was not to develop an organisationally independent denomination in an independent Voortrekker state (or states).

Church meetings in the Cape Colony, like those of the DR Church synod of 1837 and the presbytery of Graaff-Reinet initially condemned the Trek as being a resistance movement against the British authorities at the Cape. Irrespective of a specific interpretation of the communion formulary concerning discord, sectarianism and mutiny against the reigning government, these meetings undoubtedly stood under British authority and even British influence, and showed no understanding for the reasons why the emigrants had left the colony. Therefore, they initially ignored the fact that the emigrants did not want to resist the government, but sought to free themselves from a government which, according to them, no longer provided any legal protection for them and their children.

As the Church gradually grew more independent of the British government during the 1840s by Ordinance 7 of 1843, its attitude towards the emigration changed. By 1852 all the congregations in the Free State and Natal were represented at the Cape synod.

The Transvaal congregations were the exceptions. At the 1852 meeting a request from this region was indeed granted that the latter could be incorporated into the Cape synod and they were given permission to be incorporated into the presbytery of the Transgariep – together with the congregations of the Free State and Natal (DR Church in ZA, 1859:20). This incorporation would, however, never become a reality, because in 1853 the Transvaalers, with the exception of Lydenburg, decided to take an own synodical road, separate from that of the Cape synod. The main reason for this step did not seem to be ecclesiastic: they feared the political consequences which might stem from being incorporated into the Cape synod (Storm, 1989:122, 126). The establishment of the "Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk" was the result.

In 1859 a prolonged dispute about the use of Evangelical hymns (a theological dispute) led to the establishment of another church in the Transvaal: the 'Reformed Church(es) of South Africa' – "Gereformeerde Kerk(e) van Suid-Afrika".

The church on the trek road during 1835–1840, and the consequences of the emigration specifically for the DR Church – as it had more or less turned out by 1852 – were influenced by pioneer circumstances: Reformed congregations lacking Reformed ministers; congregations without incorporation into meetings like presbyteries or synods; congregations dependent on and subject to political instability in their missionary activities; congregations in which immorality and various forms of spiritual degradation also occurred; and eventually, congregations showing underlying division.

The emigrant members of these congregations were supporters of a separate denomination for Afrikaners. They were also distrusted by missionaries – in some cases with good reason – regarding their sense of fair treatment of coloured and black people: a state of affairs which existed in especially the DR Church and the "Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk" until well into the twentieth century.

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CHAPTER 4

The expansion of Christianity in the nineteenth century

South Africa in the 1860s and 1870s

By 1860, permanent white settlement and government institutions derived from British models were securely established at the Cape, and Natal had been a British colony for nearly 20 years. In contrast, a political balance of sorts existed in the interior of southern Africa. Boer republics had been formed in the Orange Free State and the Transvaal, but African kingdoms, stabilised in the aftermath of the Mfecane, were able to acquire guns and challenge further white encroachment. There was no inducement for a reluctant British imperial power to intervene and upset this equilibrium until the discovery of diamonds in 1870. The diggings created a demand for cheap labour and a market for agricultural produce, and the profit to be derived from control of land and labour provided a motive for imperial intervention which ultimately undermined the independence of the African chiefdoms. Demand for cheap labour and for land by commercial farmers had led to the defeat of the Xhosa and their virtual political and economic incorporation into the Cape by 1857: in the wake of the mining revolution, this pattern was replicated in the South African interior after 1870.

Shaped by this broader context, three major issues can be discerned in the history of Christian churches during these years. Firstly, the period is marked by the institutional consolidation of denominations in the more settled Cape, and missionary expansion into Natal and the African kingdoms and Boer republics to the north. A second significant issue is the varying response of churches and missionary organisations to the subjugation of the African chiefdoms. The third issue which characterises this period is perhaps the one which has cast the longest shadow. From the first, missionaries used African agents as evangelists, but the increasing rate of ordination of Africans after 1870 starkly revealed the gulf between Christian teaching about community and service, and missionary practice. Moreover, both missionaries and converts were forced to wrestle with the related issue of the relationship between Christian conviction and political

allegiance which confronted them in the process of the subjugation of African chiefdoms by imperial, colonial or republican forces in the nineteenth century. *Mutatis mutandis*, many of these issues still challenge South African Christians.

The expansion of Christianity at the Cape during the second half of the nineteenth century

By the second half of the nineteenth century, Christian congregations of Anglicans, Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists, Presbyterians and Roman Catholics had spread throughout the colony, so that the need for some coordinating central organisation within the various denominations had become apparent: institutional consolidation was characteristic of the 1870s and 1880s at the Cape. Particularly after 1850, there was also considerable missionary expansion at the Cape. The understanding of the relationship between the church and the state, and of the relationship between white and black people which was either implicit or explicit in both constitutional development and missionary expansion in the late nineteenth century, has had long-term repercussions for the churches.

The story of Anglican constitutional development was perhaps the most dramatic of all the denominations, being accomplished largely by means of controversy and litigation. When Robert Gray became Bishop of Cape Town in 1848, his was the only Anglican diocese in southern Africa, but by 1870, the dioceses of Natal, Grahamstown, St Helena, the Orange Free State and Central Africa had been formed, and in that year the first provincial synod of the Church of the Province of South Africa, attended by bishops, clergy and significantly by lay representatives, met and drew up the constitution and canons for the new ecclesiastical province. In terms of this constitution, each diocese was to be governed by a diocesan synod, presided over by the diocesan bishop, at which clergy and laity were represented. Bishops were no longer to be appointed by the Crown, as Gray himself had been, but were elected by an assembly of clergy and laity of their diocese.

Those who drafted the constitution of the Church of the Province of South Africa (CPSA) were resolved to remain in communion with the Church of England, but equally determined to free the South African province from judgments of secular courts which were binding on the established Church of England, in matters of faith and doctrine. This principle was enshrined in the Third Proviso of the constitution of the CPSA: until the end of the nineteenth century this proviso was challenged in both provincial synods and in court cases, but it was successfully defended, and continues to enshrine the principle of the freedom of the church from state control, in matters of faith and doctrine. Union and communion with the Church of England was also formally affirmed and expressed by episcopal meetings known as the Lambeth Conferences, which have been held from 1867 at approximately ten year intervals, attended by Anglican bishops from throughout the world.

In 1877, two significant ecclesiastical unions were formed. The first Baptists to come to South Africa were 1820 settlers, who met for worship at lay-led services until the appointment of an ordained minister, William Davies, who served the congregation at Grahamstown in 1830. Further congregations developed gradually: Port Elizabeth in 1854, Durban in 1864, Alice in 1874 and Cape Town in 1876. Another branch of Baptist work was started by the Reverend H. Gutsche, who came from Germany in 1867, and worked among German settlers in the Eastern Cape. The Baptist Union, formed in Grahamstown in 1877, encompassed only the three English-speaking congregations, at Grahamstown, Port Elizabeth and Alice. The constitution stipulated that the duties of the executive were simply to administer funds and draw up an annual report of developments in the Baptist Union. One of the objectives of the Union was "to maintain the right of all men everywhere to freedom from legal disadvantage in matters purely religious". The Union grew gradually in terms of congregations and individuals: in 1881, there was a membership of 928 and by 1894 this had risen to 2688 (Hale, 1992:83–97).

The earliest representative of the congregational pattern of government in South Africa was the London Missionary Society, whose agents began work in 1799. Local congregations were later established by the 1820 British settlers. In 1877, the Congregational Union of South Africa was formed, bringing together congregations of the LMS, which had withdrawn from the Cape in 1859, and the white congregations of settler origin.

In 1880, there was an attempt to forge closer links between Congregationalists and Baptists, with their very similar church polity. A Baptist delegation at the Congregational Union session at Grahamstown discussed the prospect of unity, and the Congregationalists, though not able to agree to a full merger, adopted a resolution providing for united congregations in areas where numbers of Baptists and Congregationalists were too small to justify the formation of separate churches. This proposal fell through, however, as it failed to gain support at the 1881 Baptist Assembly.

Methodism had undergone tremendous growth under the leadership of Reverend William Shaw, who arrived with the 1820 British settlers, but Wesleyan Methodist work in southern Africa remained under the control of the English Conference. In 1860, Shaw suggested the union of the three South African districts to form a Conference, but the Mission Committee in England, although approving in principle, was reluctant to allow the step while the South African work was financially dependent on support from England. In 1880, the representatives of the five South African districts, at their third triennial general meeting in Queenstown, drafted a constitution for the South African Conference, the first of which was held in Cape Town in 1883. Final independence from England was only achieved in 1927, and the Transvaal district did not form part of the Conference until the union of all Methodist work in South Africa was brought about in 1931.

Presbyterian unity was slower in coming: the arrival of the first Presbyterians dates back to the second British occupation of the Cape in 1806 and the first church opened its doors in 1812, while the Federal Council was established in 1892.

The second half of the nineteenth century marked tremendous growth in Roman Catholic institutions in southern Africa, although synods, conferences, or unions were remote from the nineteenth century Roman Catholic understanding of church government. Centralised in Rome, Roman Catholic work was placed under the charge of a local bishop: expansion was signified by the setting up of a prefecture or vicariate in a new area. In 1837, Bishop Griffith became Vicar Apostolic of the Good Hope; in 1847, a bishop was appointed for the Eastern Cape; and in 1850 for Natal; and this was followed by expansion into the Orange Free State, Lesotho, Transvaal, the northern Cape and Namibia.

Although these constitutional developments had implications for all members of the churches, it was a process dominated by whites, and not one into which black Christians were drawn. There were other Eurocentric developments in the life of the churches in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Theological controversy, although it had implications for the content of missionary teaching, was yet another largely European preoccupation, and one which deeply concerned both the Dutch Reformed Church and the Church of the Province of South Africa in the 1860s. The Dutch word *liberaal* was used to describe those whose commitment to dogmatic truth and ecclesiastical order was regarded as suspect. DRC ministers in Holland came into contact with these *liberale*; to whom there was strong opposition at the Cape because of their theological position. Both the DRC and the Anglicans were faced with cases which the local church condemned as heterodox, a decision which was reversed in the civil courts. So close did the experience of the two churches appear, in their defence of doctrinal purity and opposition to Erastian interference, that there was a move towards unity talks, which, however, never went beyond the preparatory stage.

The *liberale* also contributed to a long-term misunderstanding of political positions. *Liberaal* in its theological sense was translated by the English word liberal, and because of the similarity between the two words, supporters of Cape liberalism were often tarred with the brush of irreligious humanism and theological permissiveness, which in fact formed no part of their political programme (Leatt, *et al.*, 1986:60 set out this argument).

The debate about government contributions to salaries of clergy at the Cape, which was aired annually from 1854 to 1875, was an issue which affected the material interests of some white congregations belonging to several major Christian denominations at the Cape, although the Dutch Reformed Church was the chief beneficiary of the scheme.

The Batavian Commissioner-general de Mist, a product of the European Enlightenment, had held the view that it was part of the public duty of the state

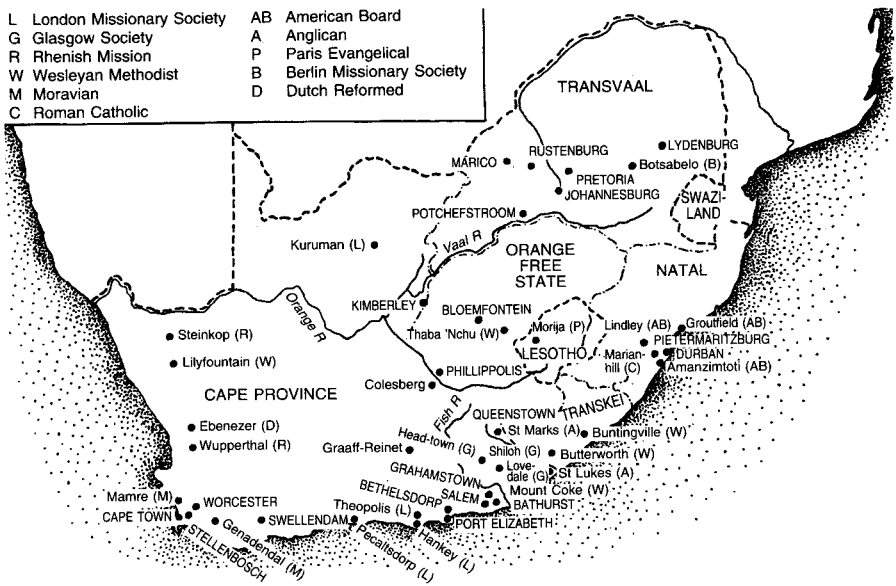
to support worship of a Supreme Being, and the Batavian administration, between 1803 and 1806, had therefore contributed to the salaries of DRC clergy, this being the dominant religious body at the Cape. Britain took over this obligation along with control of the Cape in 1806, and extended the grants to other denominations, so that, by the mid-century, not only DRC and Anglican clergy, but Roman Catholics, Methodists, Lutherans and Presbyterians received moneys from the public funds.

When the Cape was granted representative government in 1853, colonial revenue did not pay for the running of the colony: in 1854, the deficit was £25 980, while the amount spent on public worship was £16 060. Saul Solomon, a Congregationalist, when a candidate for the first parliamentary election at the Cape, made the abolition of government grants in aid of religion an item on his political agenda, and he introduced a Voluntary Bill to this effect, annually, in the Cape parliament for more than twenty years. Often, church leaders themselves supported the principle of voluntary support and the abolition of state grants. This was partly because once a clergyman received a state grant, it was virtually impossible to remove him from office, however unsatisfactory the performance of his ecclesiastical duties. In addition, there was no provision for redistribution of grants within denominations, and it was usually wealthy, established congregations which received grants and therefore saw no need for voluntary contributions towards the running of the church, while newer, poorer congregations struggled on unaided. The annual uncertainty caused by the debate on the Voluntary Bill ended in 1875 when it passed into law, a success achieved largely because of the generous provisions made for existing state-supported clergy, who continued to receive their salary from the state during their lifetime and incumbency. If an incumbent died within five years of the measure passing, his successor in office would receive the government grant for another five years.

Probably the most controversial aspect of Christian activity at the Cape, both from the point of view of contemporaries and from a modern perspective, is the work of evangelism directed towards the conversion to Christianity of black people in South Africa in the nineteenth century.

Some Christian denominations had begun this work sooner than others. By the 1870s, Wesleyan missionary work at the Cape was half a century old, and had two main lines of development: one to the northwest, and the other a chain of missions marching southeastwards, from Wesleyville to Palmerton, east of the Mzimvubu. By 1860, this work employed 132 missionaries and had gathered 5 000 converts. The Glasgow Missionary Society had established work at the Tyhumie in 1821, and Lovedale, supported by the Free Church of Scotland, opened in 1841. The Anglicans entered into the field at a later stage, and whereas other mission work tended to be directed by missionary societies, the high church attitudes which characterised South African Anglicanism meant that mission was seen as the work of the entire church, and was carried out under the

direction of a bishop. Baptist missionary work only began in 1892, with the formation of the South African Baptist Missionary Society.



Some mission stations in South Africa during the nineteenth century

To many missionaries of English origin, it appeared that the experience of the British empire was part of a divine plan for the evangelisation of the whole world, and that colonial rule was an expression of God's providence. This was particularly true of the origins of Anglican missionary work. By the 1850s the Xhosa people, in spite of defeat in six frontier wars and significant loss of their territory, were maintaining a precarious political and social independence. The policy of Sir George Grey, who became Governor of the Cape in 1854, was to impose Western political and economic institutions upon the Xhosa, and while providing European education and medical treatment, to draw most of the Xhosa deprived of their communal lands, into the colonial sphere of influence as an inferior working class. Grey offered large financial grants to the Christian churches to carry out educational work, especially industrial training, among the Xhosa. Not surprisingly, most Christian denominations eagerly accepted. The Bishop of Grahamstown saw Grey's policy as a "great and golden opportunity for missionary work, on a great and noble scale . . . presented by God's mercy to the Church" (quoted in Goedhals, 1979:12). On the basis of government grants, four main Anglican missions were established: St Matthew's, St John's, St Luke's, and St Mark's across the Kei and outside British territory. The pattern

of early Baptist missionary work was similar. The expanding British empire seemed once again to provide missionary opportunity: Baptists accepted land grants from Cecil John Rhodes – grants which had been obtained by conquest from the African people of Matabeleland – as well as financial aid from the Chartered Company. What appears to the twentieth century to be an ethical problem, was seen by members of nineteenth century society as a glorious missionary opportunity (Hale, 1992:94–97).

In the nineteenth century, missionaries often found themselves under fire from white settlers who were often very hostile to opportunities for African education and advancement, which missionary education provided (Goedhals, 1982:338–9). John Philip was the prototype of the interfering missionary, but colonial criticism was a common experience of Christian missionaries throughout the nineteenth century: it was a Baptist missionary, in as late as 1910, who deplored the fact that there were "men whose aims are as selfish as their eyes are blind, who think the native (sic) is preordained as the white man's burden carrier, the more ignorant the better" (quoted in Hale, 1992:97).

Nevertheless, when the outcome of colonial rule was territorial dispossession and political subjugation, and when missionaries were seen cooperating in colonial policy, there is some justification for arguing that missionaries were agents of imperialism. However, this is an oversimplification. There is certainly no evidence of a conspiracy between colonial authorities and the churches, and there is also evidence of conflict, for example the disagreement between Sir George Grey and the Famine Relief Committee formed by the churches in 1857, in the wake of the Cattle Killing, when the governor insisted that starving Xhosa sign labour contracts before receiving food relief, while the Christian body intended that humanitarian aid come first (Peires, 1989:241–272).

Among many ministers of religion and missionaries at the Cape in the second half of the nineteenth century, there was a strongly held belief that a high level of Christian commitment would shape social and political institutions to resemble the Christian ideal as they understood it, which was largely in Eurocentric terms.

One of the main streams in Cape politics was a tradition of liberalism which emerged from the mid nineteenth century. An examination of Cape liberalism illustrates the ambiguities and contradictions of the role of Christianity at the Cape, and the complexity of historical interpretation.

Based on a philosophical and pragmatic belief in the possibility of progress by human effort, and the importance of the limitation of government, Cape liberalism emphasised human dignity and the importance of evolutionary progress. In practice, liberal efforts contributed to the provision of education, to freedom of assembly, worship and of the press, representative government, multiparty democracy and an independent judiciary. The Cape 'colourblind' franchise was a concrete expression of liberal values: males over the age of 21, regardless of race, who owned property worth £25, or received a salary of £50 p.a., or a salary of £25 p.a. with board and lodging, were entitled to vote. Many

exponents of Cape liberalism had strong Christian and missionary links, and the Cape liberals were known collectively as "the friends of the natives". To many, black and white, liberal views on government expressed the Western and Christian ideal: they left a political legacy which extends into the twentieth century (Butler, *et al.*, 1987).

One of the results of Christian missionary activity at the Cape was the emergence of a class of educated Africans. By the 1860s there were several thousand Africans with tertiary education who, encouraged by Christian teaching on the brotherhood of man and by liberal beliefs in the value of education and effort, saw Cape colonial structures as an outlet for their aspirations and abilities. In practice, this class soon became aware of the realities of white domination, but although relegated to poorly paid positions and to the lower ranks of the civil service, they were so steeped in Christian and liberal ideals that they adhered to the idea of evolutionary change, and enthusiastically took part in Cape electoral politics, working within the system, in order to change it.

The Cape liberal tradition has, however, been severely criticised (Rich, 1984; Trapido, 1980:247–259). It has been argued that their real aim was the maintenance of white economic and political domination by the co-option of the black middle class. It has also been suggested that their humane social programmes merely made the bitter pill of emerging apartheid more palatable. Furthermore, it is suggested that liberal advocacy of evolutionary change weakened and divided African resistance at the Cape when, in the course of the nineteenth century, black access to political power and to land in the Cape was inexorably stripped away.

Many Cape liberals, such as John X. Merriman, W.P. Schreiner and James Rose Innes were committed Christians, and many Christian leaders saw liberalism as an expression of Christian values, but there was never any formal alliance between the two. In the nineteenth century, mission was never defined in terms of a search for social justice, and in spite of a hope that liberal policies would bring a Christian ethos to Cape politics, this was never a major programme for the churches, who were concerned mostly with their internal affairs.

The missionary enterprise was vast, with mission stations at the Cape concentrated particularly in British Kaffraria (annexed by Britain in 1847 and incorporated into the Cape in 1866), and stretching further eastward, between the Kei and Natal, on land which came under colonial rule in the course of the nineteenth century. Plagued continually by a shortage of cash, the missions were funded largely by donations from overseas, with some government grants for schools, while missionaries tried to emphasise the importance of self-support as long-term goal for mission congregations. Large rural mission centres usually had many out-stations around which the white missionaries itinerated, but from the 1860s, as more Africans sought work in town, African congregations of the various denominations developed in 'locations' outside small Eastern Cape

towns like Fort Beaufort, Grahamstown, Alice and Peddie. The growth of labour migrancy in the 1870s provided a new missionary challenge, but one to which the churches were very slow to respond. Probably the most famous of the Eastern Cape missions was Lovedale, where black and white pupils were provided with a classical academic education, as well as practical training in metal and woodwork, or printing and binding. The Methodists had a similar institution at Healdtown, and the Anglicans at St Matthew's, Keiskammahoek, providing, as at Lovedale, teachers for the denominational schools and also serving as seminaries for African ordinands.

A significant feature of mission work during this period was the use of the printing press, indicative of the fairly widespread level of literacy which had been achieved among African converts. In 1865, the first Xhosa version of the Bible was published by Reverend J. Appleyard of the Wesleyan Missionary Society at Mount Coke, but the most prominent mission press was soon that at Lovedale, producing Christian works, but also newspapers, which contributed to the growth of political consciousness among the African elite. From 1862, a Lovedale magazine, *Indaba*, was published; and in 1867, the press published Tiyo Soga's translation of John Bunyan's *A Pilgrim's Progress, U-Hambo Lomhambi.* A newspaper, the *Kafir Express* (sic), first appeared in 1870, becoming the *Christian Express* in 1876.

From the first, Christian missionary work in southern Africa had been carried out, formally and informally, by African agents. For example, in the 1860s, the Methodist clergyman at Ladysmith, Reverend G. Blencowe, while on a visit to the Transvaal, found David Magatha, who had been converted at Thaba 'Nchu years before, preaching at Potchefstroom. Samuel Mathabathe pioneered Methodist mission work in the northern Transvaal, and in 1885, Robert Matshaba, a Methodist who had trained as a teacher at Lovedale, began work in Mozambique: by 1893, when he was eventually ordained, he had established nine stations, started several schools, and drawn 200 adherents. The value of this work, and the faithfulness and initiative of African Christians, were to some extent recognised in the increase in the number of Africans ordained to the ministry of the various denominations in this period. The first black South African to be ordained was Tiyo Soga, who was ordained in the Presbyterian Church in 1856, and served at Mgwali from 1857 to 1868, and then at Tutura until his death in 1871 at the age of 42. The first three African ministers in the Methodist Church were ordained in 1871: the first of these was Charles Pamla. In 1871, the first black Anglican deacon, Paul Masiza, was ordained, but he died in 1873. In 1877, Peter Masiza, Paul's brother, was ordained to the priesthood and served at St Mark's mission in the Transkei.

It seems likely, in the light of subsequent events, that although those ordained had been carefully chosen and trained, white missionaries had not sufficiently considered the long-term implications for themselves, and the ongoing need to hand over further responsibility to ordained Africans. In the second half of the

nineteenth century African society experienced a loss of land, overcrowding in reserves, taxation and the dislocation caused by labour migrancy. Educated Africans were disillusioned at the discriminatory social, political and economic structures in Cape society, and this frustration was echoed in their experience of the church. Much of the Christian preaching offered by the missionaries seemed irrelevant to African experience, and although missionaries such as Henry Tempest Waters, the white Anglican missionary at St Mark's, just east of the Kei from 1855 to 1883, were often greatly loved and their ability to influence the colonial administration was regarded as useful, their paternalist regulation of their stations, including their links with the colonial regime, was resented. At St Mark's a particularly sore point was the fact that land originally given to the mission by the Gcaleka paramount Sarhili, was leased to white farmers, and not to Africans. In practice, the experience of ordination tended to emphasise the gap between white and black in the institutional church; there was no real sharing of responsibility, let alone authority. All these factors seem to have contributed to a phenomenon which caused considerable anxiety in missionary circles in the latter part of the nineteenth century. In 1884, Nehemiah Tile, ordained into the Methodist Church in 1880, seceded from the church after a dispute with his missionary superior and established the Thembu Church. Secessions were numerous, and often led by the most perceptive and able African clergy, as was the case, for example, with the secession of Pambani Mzimba, minister of Lovedale from 1875, who formed the Presbyterian Church of Africa in 1893. Missionaries were anxious to halt defections, but their emphasis was on prohibition and prevention, rather than on the painful self-examination and self-criticism which a cure required. Although the proliferation of African independent churches created further institutional division among Christians and seemed to carry with it the danger of theological syncretism, they freed African Christians from their tightrope walk between African and Western world views, and allowed for an African expression of Christianity.

By the end of the nineteenth century Christianity had clearly undergone remarkable expansion at the Cape: many, black and white, remained unconverted, but orderly and regular worship of God was held Sunday by Sunday, throughout the colony in churches, chapels, in schoolrooms, on missions, in huts, and under the sky. However, major inequalities, political, social and economic, permeated Cape society, and the Christian churches, often insensitive to signs of injustice, even played a part in perpetuating them.

The expansion of Christianity in Natal in the second half of the nineteenth century

Natal became a British colony in 1843, an event which precipitated the departure of most of the Voortrekkers, but the British administrators set about

creating a colony based on white settlement. Between 1849 and 1851, 5 000 British immigrants came to Natal, but most preferred working as traders or artisans, to the cultivation of land set aside for white occupation. By 1870, Natal had a white population of 18 000, half of it centred around Durban and Pietermaritzburg. About 800 000 hectares, or fifteen percent of Natal land was reserved for the black population of 100 000: Theophilus Shepstone, son of a Transkei missionary, was responsible for Natal Native(sic) Affairs, and for organising the removal of Natal's African people to these reserves. However, much of the land set aside for whites had been bought up by land speculators, and Africans were able to move onto this and to pay rent, thus escaping wage labour on white-owned farms. A prosperous African peasantry produced its own food and a surplus for sale, and sought wage labour only to earn a capital sum for the purchase of guns. In the reserves, local administration was entrusted to the chiefs, who administered customary law: where traditional leaders refused to cooperate or were not available, the Native Affairs authorities appointed their own candidates. To the north of colonial Natal lay the Zulu kingdom where Mpande reigned as king from 1840 to 1872. Zulu independence was recognised by the British; there were no major clashes between colony and kingdom, and Mpande's reign was a period of consolidation, recovered power and unity for the Zulu state.

Missionaries of most major denominations were at work in Natal but perhaps most characteristic of the colony were the American Board missionaries, who had twelve stations in Natal by 1850. A Catholic establishment of great significance was that at Mariannhill, opened by the Trappists in 1882, which founded daughter houses throughout Natal and beyond.

In Natal, the policy of racial segregation adopted by the colonial administration was more overt than in the Cape. The emphasis was on the maintenance of tribal identity, and Africans living under customary law were not eligible for the franchise. In terms of an Act of 1864, Africans seeking exemption from customary law had to petition the governor, while an Act of 1865 stipulated that Africans had to prove seven years' exemption from customary law, and show twelve years' residence in Natal, before they could apply for participation in colonial structures. They also needed a letter from three white voters, countersigned by a resident magistrate or a justice of the peace. The outcome of this combined test of endurance and red tape was not a rubber stamp, but was dependent on the governor's discretion, and by 1904, only 4 000 Africans were exempt from customary law, while by 1903, only two Africans in Natal had achieved the vote. However, by the turn of the century, the mission-educated Christian Africans, known along the southeastern seaboard as *kholwa*, who were working as clerks, teachers, ministers, traders and skilled artisans, had begun to establish political organisations along European lines, while African independent churches which were formed also constituted a focus for resistance of European domination.

The first response to the demands for labour in Natal was the arrival under indenture of immigrants from India, who came to Durban from 1860, under the auspices of the Natal Government or the Indian Immigration Trust Board, to work in plantations in Natal. The first group completed their indenture in 1871, and, on returning to India, instituted complaints about the treatment they had received in Natal: this resulted in the appointment of a Protector and improved medical services. In the 1870s, many indentured Indians worked on the Natal railways, and in the 1890s in the coalmines of northern Natal. Once their indenture was completed, these immigrants could stay in South Africa, or return to Natal. From the 1870s, more and more remained, and although the major concentration of Indian people continued to be in Natal, Indians dispersed throughout South Africa: for example, in the 1880s, there were 1 000 Indians in Kimberley. Free Indians, who had completed their indenture and who remained in South Africa, turned to wage earning and market gardening.

Altogether 152 184 indentured Indians came to South Africa from 1860 to 1911. They came from different areas and different castes. Only 1,4% of them were Christians. In the first six years of the indenture scheme, 295 Christians came, and from 1874 to 1911, Christians numbered 1 855, although most of these arrived in the twentieth century. A total of 2 150 Christians came to Natal under indenture: of these 901 returned to India, while 152 left Natal for other parts of South Africa. Most of the Christians who came were Roman Catholics or Syrian Christians, with some Anglicans, Lutherans and Methodists and, in the twentieth century, some Baptists.

From the 1870s, passenger Indians landed in Natal: they were British subjects who had paid their own way, and worked as hawkers, traders, teachers and interpreters. Until the 1890s, most of the passenger Indians were Muslim, although it has been established that there were 128 Christians among their number.

Christianity among indentured and passenger Indians was the fruit of missionary work in India, but the immigrant Indians were also looked upon as an important mission field by missionaries in South Africa. The Roman Catholic Father Sabon, and Reverend R. Stott of the Methodist Church established schools for Indian children. The Anglicans provided the first teacher training and an Anglican priest established a clinic which eventually grew to a hospital (Brain, 1983).

It was against the background of an accelerated demand for labour in southern Africa in the 1870s, that one of Natal's most prominent (some contemporaries would have said notorious) clergy, John William Colenso (1814–1883), began his active opposition to what he regarded as injustice in colonial policy towards the African people of Natal and Zululand (on Colenso, see particularly Guy, 1983:193–360).

Colenso was appointed Bishop of Natal in 1853, partly to minister to white colonists, but largely to pioneer missionary work in the diocese. His name,

however, is most closely associated with his innovative biblical criticism, his trial for heresy, and the ensuing schism in the Anglican church in Natal. In 1861, Colenso published his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, which raised questions about his orthodoxy in the area of sacramental theology, including baptismal regeneration. *The Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua Critically Re-examined* (published between 1862 and 1879) challenged traditional views on authorship and historical accuracy. On the basis of these works, nine charges of heresy were brought against Colenso: in 1863 he was deposed from his see by Robert Gray, Bishop of Cape Town and Metropolitan, and in 1866, Colenso was solemnly excommunicated. However, his position as Bishop of Natal and his control of ecclesiastical property was confirmed by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, a supreme court of appeal for the British empire; a secular court whose authority Robert Gray refused to recognise. In 1869, Gray consecrated William Kenneth Macrorie as Bishop of Pietermaritzburg, and more than twenty years of ecclesiastical schism in Natal followed. After the death of Colenso in 1883 and Macrorie in 1891, the Archbishop of Canterbury consecrated a bishop for Natal, A.H. Baynes, who was recognised by both Anglican groups, and the schism was formally healed in 1911, when the Bishop of Natal gained control of the property formerly owned by the Colenso churches.

The Colenso controversy was obviously detrimental to practical missionary work, both because of division over the content of the Christian message and because of the example of disunity, but Colenso had a pioneering influence in two important ways: in 1854, at a time when missionaries expected a polygamist, upon baptism, to relinquish all his wives except the first, Colenso called for polygamous families to remain intact after baptism, a policy eventually adopted by the Anglican church in southern Africa in 1980. Colenso also used *Nkulunkulu* as the Zulu name for God in his translations of the Bible and prayer, at a time when fellow missionaries favoured *Thixo*. Colenso preferred *Nkulunkulu* as it represented indigenous Zulu religious belief, and by the turn of the century, that had become the accepted Zulu divine name.

Condemned as a heretic in his own time, Colenso's search for political and social justice, which he regarded as part of his Christian missionary work, was another way in which his thinking was in advance of attitudes of his day. The first case which engaged Colenso's energy was the case of Langalibalele and the Hlubi. By 1870, there was considerable tension between whites and blacks in Natal: European settlers resented African access to land and the economic independence which went with it, as well as the fact that the diamond fields provided lucrative alternative employment for Natal Africans, and the means to buy guns. In 1872, Natal magistrates were instructed to enforce the registration of firearms belonging to Africans in their jurisdiction, and this was rigidly applied by the magistrate to Langalibalele and the Hlubi. A chief of independent mind, whose people had been allowed to settle in the foothills of the Drakensberg in

the late 1840s, Langalibalele did not respond enthusiastically to the registration regulations, and was ordered to explain his reluctance to Shepstone in Pietermaritzburg, but fearing European treachery, he did not go.

The colonial authorities bungled their response, and in a display of unbridled force, Hlubi locations were looted, their livestock destroyed, unarmed people were brutally pursued by troops, women were raped, the aged abandoned, and two hundred Hlubi were killed. The troops involved were granted indemnity. Colenso was appalled. He was even more horrified by the travesty of justice which characterised Langalibalele's trial and by the sentence of life-long banishment. The bishop's tireless efforts eventually led to an appeal being allowed, and when this failed, he pursued the case in England. Eventually there was an investigation, and the governor of Natal was withdrawn from his post while Langalibalele was allowed to leave Robben Island, but not to return to Natal, nor was Hlubi land restored. This was a very minor victory for justice: the British administration was reluctant to alienate white settlers, but Colenso's campaign on behalf of Langalibalele had gained him many enemies among the Europeans in the colony. Another great battle, on behalf of the independent Zulu kingdom and the king Cetshwayo, lay ahead of him.

By the late 1870s, plans for a confederation of South Africa under British control were well advanced. Part of the scheme involved the destruction of the Zulu state, opening the land for white settlement and providing labour for the diamond fields. Colenso realised that the colonial authorities had deliberately created a picture of Zulu aggression in order to justify an attack on the independent African chiefdom, and that Cetshwayo had tried to negotiate and keep peace. The official account suggested that the British victory at Ulundi had liberated the Zulu from brutal tyranny. Colenso, working with the assistance of his daughters, mustered massive evidence, and printed material which illustrated the injustice of the British invasion, and he devoted the rest of his life to restoring Cetshwayo to his kingdom. Colenso had little insight into the political and economic factors which shaped the events in Natal and Zululand, but his bravery and humanity in the face of official and settler hostility was immense. He was one of the few white missionaries in southern Africa in the nineteenth century who were able to see the colonial system from the point of view of the colonised.

The expansion of Christianity in the Orange Free State in the second half of the nineteenth century

In the 1850s, the major groups settled in the area of the Orange Free State and Lesotho were the Voortrekkers in the new republic, and the independent Sotho state under Moshweshwe, together with the ubiquitous traders and Christian missionaries, while Britain was intent on withdrawing from southern Africa.

The first missionaries among the Sotho were employees of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society, an organisation founded in 1822, supported by members of Protestant churches in France and Switzerland, and controlled by a committee which met in Paris. In 1829, the P.E.M.S. decided to concentrate on work in South Africa, and although they had no specific sense of direction when they arrived, the field among the Sotho opened up, and they were welcomed by Moshweshwe and founded their first station at Morija. The Sotho chief found them useful as channels of information and explanation and gave them considerable encouragement, and although P.E.M.S. missionaries believed in the superiority of European culture, they shared Moshweshwe's ideal of establishing an independent African kingdom. From 1848, because of division within his kingdom provoked by missionary activity, Moshweshwe withdrew his active support. The work of the missionaries continued unimpeded in spite of this, so that by 1871, the P.E.M.S. claimed 3 261 adult church members, and the missionaries continued to act as advisers to the Sotho king. In 1860, competition for land between the Sotho and Free State boers was precipitated by the fact that both groups were primarily pastoral farmers, and the P.E.M.S. had a key role in advising the king in the events which led up to the British annexation of 1870.

A theme of missionary history in the nineteenth century, and one which is very unattractive from an ecumenical point of view, is that of rivalry within a missionary area between representatives of different Christian groups. This appeared in a particularly unfortunate form in Moshweshwe's kingdom, as the king lay dying.

In 1862, a Roman Catholic mission, started by Bishop Allard, was continued among the Sotho by Father Joseph Gerard, O.M.I. The mission was welcomed by Moshweshwe, particularly as the missionaries assured him that the mission would not effect a division of political loyalties. The first Sotho Catholics were baptised in 1865, the year which also marked the arrival of religious sisters to teach needlework and Christian doctrine to Sotho women. Fr. Gerard visited remote villages all over the kingdom, and worked to develop a distinctive Sotho Catholic culture. The P.E.M.S. regarded the newcomers as interferers, while the Catholics looked upon the European Protestants as heretics: the debate was at its least edifying when the two Christian groups vied for the advantage which baptism of the dying Sotho king would bring in the form of converts to their own denomination, but in the end Moshweshwe died without receiving the sacrament of Christian initiation. Catholicism in his kingdom continued to expand: in 1866, 38 catechumens were baptised; in 1871, there were 230; in 1875, 500; and in 1900 the number reached 5 000. This expansion took place against a changing pattern of relationships, accelerated in the area by the discovery of diamonds, which precipitated an increase in the value of land and an intensified demand for labour.

The expansion of Christianity in the Transvaal in the 1860s and 1870s

Christian missionary activity in the Transvaal in this period was not performed on a large scale, but accounts of the work of the Berlin Missionary Society among the Pedi suggest the extent to which Christian endeavour was implicated in the struggles for land and labour, which dominated the period. The choices the missionaries made were formed by their own background and their intentions were no doubt sincere. Nevertheless, historians are not only concerned with motivations but also with the results of choices made. The history of the Berlin mission clearly exposes the missionaries to the charge that they were agents of forces seeking the subjugation and dispossession of indigenous peoples. At the same time, the advantage of hindsight never confers moral superiority.

The boers who trekked north of the Vaal were those most determined to find independence from British control. Having defeated the Ndebele at Mosega in 1837, they claimed the Highveld by conquest, but most African people who had already settled there, remained on their land. Trekker republics were established at Lydenburg, Soutpansberg and Potchefstroom, and in terms of the 1852 Sand River Convention, Britain recognised their independence and agreed to trade with them in arms and ammunition. Britain stipulated that Africans in the Transvaal were not to be enslaved, but this humanitarian commitment was half-hearted and motivated chiefly by British desire to reduce economic and political commitments in southern Africa. After 1852, there were attempts to unify the Transvaal republics, but the collective title of Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR) which they assumed after 1860 reflected aspiration rather than reality. Rivalry between Trekker leaders provoked intermittent civil war until 1864, when M.W. Pretorius became president of the ZAR, and leader of a scattered population of European hunters and pastoral farmers. The African population of the Transvaal had no political rights and was precluded from ownership of land, guns and horses. Five labour tenant families were permitted to settle on each white farm, but other Africans were restricted to locations and were taxed, to force them into wage labour. Pressure also came from slave raiders operating from Delagoa Bay in the 1850s and 1860s.

African people in the Transvaal sought refuge from these differing degrees of forced labour in independent African polities which provided a counter to Boer exactions. The relative equality of strength between the two societies, although characterised by sporadic skirmishing rather than perpetual peace, is indicated by the fact that the Venda of the northern Transvaal were able to clear the land between the Olifants and Limpopo of white inhabitants in 1867. Another successful source of resistance was that offered by the Pedi to the east. (The following account draws heavily on Delius, 1983:108–123, 158–178.)

In the 1820s, the Transvaal Pedi were overshadowed by the Ndebele, but in the 1830s and 1840s, the chief Sekwati, by means of diplomatic marriages and

judicious allocation of cattle to buyers, was able to consolidate a loose confederation of chiefdoms into the Pedi kingdom. From the 1840s the Pedi began their long history of labour migrancy, travelling through the Transvaal by night in large groups to seek work in the Cape, and using their wages to buy the guns which ensured parity in any conflict with the boers.

Even before the advent of European missionaries, significant numbers of Pedi had been exposed to Christianity, through contact with the Transvaal boers or during migrant work in the Cape. Jacob Mantladi, who worked in Uitenhage and then Port Elizabeth, was deeply impressed by Christian teaching, continued with Christian practice when he returned to the Transvaal, and there converted Martinus Sewushane to the new faith. The latter was to become one of the leaders in the Christian community among the Pedi.

In the 1850s, Sekwati, partly influenced by the role of the P.E.M.S. among the Sotho, showed an interest in acquiring missionaries of his own. However, the P.E.M.S. did not have resources and an appeal to the landdrost of Lydenburg also failed. Eventually, in 1861, Alexander Merensky and Albert Nachtigal of the Berlin Missionary Society arrived in the Transvaal and settled at Khalatlolu among the Pedi.

Founded in 1824 in Berlin, the Berlin Mission Society (B.M.S.) ethos combined Lutheran piety with Prussian nationalist fervour. The first five missionaries arrived in southern Africa in 1834 and established the first station among the Koranna in the Orange Free State. By 1850, they had stations in the Cape and Natal.

At first, the work of conversion was carried out more effectively by African converts than by the European missionaries, although both evangelists and converts accepted the oversight and authority of Merensky and Nachtigal. Conversion usually owed as much to upheavals in the Transvaal and within Pedi society as to religious conviction; when Sekwati died in 1861, soon after the establishment of the Berlin mission, many former subordinates and their wives, anticipating a reduction in status under the new regime, opted for conversion to Christianity and refuge with the missionaries. Numerical gains aroused the suspicion of the new Pedi leader, Sekhukhune, especially when the missionaries gave refuge to a rival for the paramountcy, and when Martinus Sewushane was banned from preaching in March 1862, Sekhukhune's motive was political rather than religious. At the same time, there was an ambivalence about Sekhukhune's attitude: the missionaries were useful as political informants and scribes, and in 1863, when his position had been consolidated, he allowed the establishment of another B.M.S. station, that at Phatametsane, under Nachtigal.

The Berlin missionaries do not seem to have appreciated the tensions facing Sekhukhune, nor did they reveal any sensitivity to the ambiguity of their own position. It is also clear that they never felt the sense of loyalty to the Pedi which the P.E.M.S. missionaries offered Moshweshwe. They were aware that in 1852, the republicans at Potchefstroom had expelled LMS missionaries from the

Transvaal, and they seem to have regarded the boer authorities as the prime object of their allegiance, scrupulously observing ZAR regulations governing missionary conduct. In 1863, Merensky accepted appointment as ZAR representative among the Pedi, a step which undermined his own position, but also raised questions about the loyalties of all Christians in Pedi society. In 1864, in gratitude for Western medical skills at a time of disease, Sekukhune allowed the B.M.S. to establish a third station, Ratau. However, there were increasing signs that he regarded both missionaries and Pedi Christians as a fifth column in his kingdom, and after a *pitso* (raid) in June 1864, grain, guns and cattle belonging to Christians were confiscated, and they were prohibited from chopping wood or working the land. Merensky's appeal for moderation of this policy fell on deaf ears, and concluding that there was no hope of converting Sekhukhune and that mission work within an independent African polity presented insurmountable obstacles, he led the Pedi Christians out of the Pedi state. In 1866, Sekhukhune ordered the closing of the B.M.S. stations, thus ending the first stage of the Berlin missionary enterprise in the eastern Transvaal.

The Berlin missionaries now directed their efforts towards developing Christian communities on land under ZAR authority. Nachtigal opened a station near Lydenburg which had nearly 100 inhabitants, mostly Pedi, by 1870. In 1865, Merensky purchased a farm near Middelburg, and this became the nucleus of the mission called Botshabelo (place of refuge): subsequently Merensky bought up the unoccupied surrounding farms, so that in his day, the size of the mission exceeded 11 000 hectares. In some respects, Merensky found this context congenial: Botshabelo was within the area claimed by the ZAR and therefore subject to its laws, and the land was owned by the missionary society. Nevertheless, it was a situation containing within itself the seeds of considerable tension. As landlord, Merensky was responsible for supervising tenants and maintaining the temporal interests of the society, but he was also a missionary with spiritual charge of the Christian community which inhabited Botshabelo. Day-to-day administration was entrusted to two Christians of royal lineage, Ramapodu and Johannes Dinkwanyane, sons of Sekwati, who were responsible for the allocation of land and the settlement of disputes, although fines were paid into missionary coffers. Merensky was assisted in his religious duties by the experienced Jacob Mantladi and Martinus Sewushane. By 1866, the population of Botshabelo was 460, rising to 1 108 by 1872. In addition to the church there were schools, houses, stores and a mill, with carpenters, wagon-builders and wheelwrights at work on the mission. Inhabitants owned 700 head of cattle as well as herds of sheep and goats, and by the 1870s, they were responding to market opportunity and selling grain to the Transvaal goldfields. However, tensions inherent in Merensky's attitude to secular ZAR authority, and in his position as landlord and missionary, began to build up at Botshabelo, with Johannes Dinkwanyane offering a serious challenge to Merensky's control of the station.

There were several specific causes of conflict. Botshabelo tenants were expected to provide unpaid labour for one day per month, to construct and repair mission buildings and to cultivate the missionary's fields. They were also expected to contribute their tithe to the mission. The parallels with medieval serfdom are unmistakable, and Pedi Christians regarded them as considerable burdens at a time of high wages and high prices for agricultural products.

Secondly, Merensky's determination that ZAR requirements in regard to taxation and labour should be met was greatly resented, not only because forced labour was poorly paid and could be dangerous, but because ZAR claims to land were tenuous and the state's ability to exert authority so feeble that many other groups ignored these exactions.

Enforced abandonment of traditional customs was another point of conflict, particularly as returning Pedi migrants often reported that neither dues nor discipline was so severe on other Christian missions.

Dinkwanyane, who was personally in conflict with Merensky over the extent of a chieftain's authority on the mission, acted as spokesperson for the dissenters. It was not clear to Dinkwanyane that Christian commitment required settlement on mission land, especially as occupation seemed to necessitate the payment of tribute to a secular power, hostile to the interests of the Pedi. Late in 1873, Dinkwanyane and 335 followers left Botshabelo to settle on land close to labour and produce markets. There was no question of abandoning Christianity, but they sought freedom from the institutional straitjacket of the mission. They were initially allowed to settle on ZAR land, but when the government attempted to recruit a labour force and followed Pedi refusal with the confiscation of their guns, Dinkwanyane and his followers moved northwards to Mafolofolo: here, under the protection of Sekhukhune, any boer demands for tax or labour could be met with invocation of the threat of Pedi power. The Mafolofolo people remained faithful to their Christian profession and asked the B.M.S. to send them a missionary, but the society regarded them as rebels against the state, cut off from the church, and unable to receive religious recognition or assistance. It is probable that there was another consideration: Dinkwanyane had already attracted Christians from Botshabelo and Lydenburg, and also Pedi Christians who had not left the paramountcy with Nachtigal or Merensky in 1866. Any form of religious recognition from the mission authorities could further augment his following.

By 1876, Mafolofolo faced not only alienation from European missionaries. Dinkwanyane banned white farmers from carrying guns or grazing their cattle near Mafalofolo and his followers made it clear by a show of arms that they would not pay ZAR taxes, with the result that relations with farmers and local officials also deteriorated.

The alliance with the Pedi initially provided a bastion against these forces, but it also meant that the Mafolofolo community was linked with the coming battle for control of southern Africa.

In 1872, gold was discovered in Lydenburg, and this led to a demand for labour and land, as the mines provided a local market for agricultural produce. As the boer demand for labour intensified, many Africans fled to the Pedi for protection. At the same time, the Pedi openly settled on land claimed by the boers: at this stage the Pedi exercised real domination of the eastern Transvaal. However, prospectors were able to exert pressure on republican officials by refusing to prospect for minerals until the Pedi threat was removed. The boers also feared a Pedi-Zulu alliance, and unable to meet the challenge alone, they entered into an alliance with the Swazi. War broke out in 1876 and Dinkwanyane was killed, but the outcome was inconclusive. In 1877, Britain annexed the Transvaal, and in 1879, as part of a wider strategy to control the mineral wealth of southern Africa, the independent Pedi polity was defeated by superior British arms. In the Transvaal, unlike the Cape, blacks had no access to political power, and no mission-educated elite had emerged to articulate black aspirations and grievances.

Conclusion

By the end of the nineteenth century, the major Christian churches in southern Africa had a well-established institutional life, and mission work among black people of the subcontinent was extensive.

These are clearly important achievements. Day-to-day running of ecclesiastical institutions had been formalised, and the gospel had been preached to the people of Africa, who in turn were actively engaged in evangelical work themselves. The Christian missionary enterprise had significant by-products in the form of orthographies for African languages, education for black children, and the beginning of the black press.

There were also, however, disadvantages, and these have cast a long shadow. The missionaries who came from Europe tended to accept alliance with the state as represented by Europeans uncritically. Eurocentricism also made them unwilling to treat African converts as fully mature Christians, capable of leading the church. Among missionaries there was a lack of concern for the consequences of colonial rule and Western capitalism, which ultimately deprived Africans of their land and compelled them to seek work, usually in lowly paid jobs.

Because the church always has to function within a particular historical context, there is the danger of compromising the gospel to use the apparent advantages offered by that context. The history of the church in southern Africa in the nineteenth century is a reminder of the paramountcy of loyalty to gospel values, but also of the necessity of critical reflection on the historical context in which the church has its being.

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Gold and the change brought about by its discovery

Although gold had been mined since the 1870s, particularly in the eastern Transvaal, it was only on a small scale and in 1885 contributed a mere 0,03% to total world production. After the discovery of the exceptionally rich gold deposits on the Witwatersrand in 1886, the ZAR developed into the single biggest gold producer in the world, with a contribution of 27,5% in 1898. From a financial point of view, for the Transvaal government this find came at an opportune moment. Whereas the republic had eked out a precarious existence prior to 1886, the future now seemed bright. State revenue grew from approximately £200 000 in 1885–1886 to £1,5 million three years later. In addition, the importance of gold in the international monetary system had increased rapidly by the end of the nineteenth century and had placed the ZAR in an even stronger position. Naturally the surrounding states and colonies also stood to gain economically from the discovery of gold, and the Cape railways and harbours in particular benefited from it. At the same time the Cape Colony relinquished its position as the leading economic state in South Africa and the centre of gravity shifted to the Transvaal. This change meant that a British colony had been surpassed in the economic sphere by a Boer republic and this would contribute to the bitter political struggle which unfolded during the last decade of the nineteenth century.

The Transvaal goldmines were the richest in the world, but also the most difficult to work. The extensive gold-bearing reef lay hundreds of metres deep and the gold content of the ore was exceptionally low. It soon became apparent that individual diggers were not equal to the task of mining it and that the wealth could only be recovered by means of deep-shaft working and by capital-intensive companies hiring the necessary technical skills. Wealthy businessmen like Cecil John Rhodes and Barney Barnato, who had already made a fortune on the diamond fields, now made their way to the Witwatersrand where they poured considerable sums of money into the goldmining industry. At the same time overseas capital, primarily from Britain and America but also to a lesser extent from Germany and France, was invested in the goldmines. The independent digger had a short-lived existence on the Rand; the Gold Law of 1886 not only gave the state political control of the goldfields, but also, from the viewpoint of the capitalist, simplified the process of amalgamation both legally and administratively. The amalgamation of smaller mining groups was a common occurrence and by 1895 the scene was dominated by a limited number of large monopolistic companies. These companies were: the Wernher-Beit-Eckstein

Group, Consolidated Goldfields, the Barnato Group, the JB Robinson Group, the S. Neumann Group, the Albu Group, the A. Goerz Group, the Anglo-French Group, and the Lewis-Marks Group. Of these, Rhodes's Consolidated Goldfields group was the most important.

The nature of the Witwatersrand goldmines, and particularly the low grade of the ore, meant that the cost structure had to be meticulously planned, and owing to the fixed gold price the industry could only be profitable if production costs could be reduced to a minimum. One important way of economising was to keep labour costs as low as possible. The establishment of a cheap, servile labour force was consequently a priority for the mining magnates. To a large extent the foundation for the struggle between capital and labour in South Africa was laid on the Witwatersrand, in conjunction with the labour situation on the diamond fields of Griqualand West. From the mines the demand for labour also spread to other sectors of the economy. Roads and railway lines had to be built, harbours in the coastal colonies had to be enlarged and new buildings had to be erected. The establishment of new markets in the goldfields led to increased agricultural production and an increased demand for farm labour. In addition an increasing number of manufacturing industries, related to the mining industry, required labour.

To the black communities in southern Africa these developments meant a considerable disruption of their existing socio-economic structure. Numerous independent black peasant farmers were compelled to become migrant labourers, which in the long run prejudiced the self-sufficiency and political power of these communities.

The social consequences of industrialisation which followed the discovery of gold also left their mark on the white farming population. Many of them were not fully able to escape the consequences of the new capitalistic order, with its radical transformation of social patterns. Certain impoverished Afrikaners eventually found themselves in Johannesburg, the city of gold, where they formed part of the lower white working class. As the historian C. van Onselen indicated, some of the men turned to the manufacture of bricks, they did all kinds of transportation work, and it was not long before girls from poverty-stricken Afrikaner homes were caught up in the extensive network of prostitution on the Witwatersrand.

To the Kruger government the changes which accompanied the discovery of gold were obviously not an unmixed blessing. From Britain, America, Australia and eastern Europe as well as the Cape Colony and Natal, skilled mine workers, businessmen and professional persons flocked to the Rand. The precise number of Uitlanders (foreigners), as these persons were called, is not known since a census

of all the republic's inhabitants had not been taken. Nevertheless, a strong possibility existed that the male Uitlanders would soon exceed the male Afrikaner population of the Transvaal. Between the Uitlanders from Britain in particular and the rural boer population there were distinct cultural and political differences. In time these differences would lead to friction that would increase in intensity as Britain displayed a growing interest in the Transvaal.

Both the issue of the franchise for Uitlanders and the administration of the Transvaal aroused a great deal of criticism. The republican machinery of state was primarily geared to meeting the needs of a pastoral-agricultural community and after the discovery of gold the necessary manpower and skill to administer a rapidly growing industrial community effectively, was lacking. In addition specific weaknesses in the administration – primarily nepotism through which *zoonen des lands* (sons of the land) sometimes obtained positions for which they were ill-equipped, as well as the corruptibility of certain officials – further aggravated the situation. To the mining magnates it was unacceptable that a rich, developing industry should, according to their judgment, be hampered by inefficient administration. What upset them particularly was that the prices and quality of essential goods for the mining industry were adversely affected by the government's system of concessions, which was in reality a series of state-controlled monopolies. For example, the water supply of Johannesburg, the manufacture and distribution of liquor and dynamite, as well as the construction of railway lines, were all in monopolistic hands. This situation meant *inter alia* that the mining magnates, owing to the lack of competition, were committed to paying fixed prices for goods of a specific quality and that the mining industry could not bargain for items on the open market.

Kruger, on the other hand, regarded the concession system as an important means of strengthening the position of the government. His strategy was to acquire capitalistic allies as a counterbalance to the power of the hostile mining magnates in Johannesburg, allies who were dependent for their welfare on the concession system and on whom the ZAR could therefore rely.

The uitlanders' leaders voiced their dissatisfaction with the Transvaal Government. This assumed greater proportions in the 1890s and in as early as 1892 it found expression in the Transvaal National Union (TNU). On behalf of this organisation advocate Charles Leonard, one of the uitlander leaders, published an extensive series of grievances in 1895 which placed the Kruger government in an extremely negative light. Although the grievances were mostly of an economic nature, political and cultural considerations also played a part as demonstration of the 'total' suppression which the Uitlanders, according to the TNU,

had to endure. It is an open question how representative the TNU really was. There were profound differences in the uitlander community between the capitalists on the one hand and the working classes on the other, and even the interests of the capitalist group did not always coincide.

The important point, however, is that the uitlander leaders were able to place the Kruger government under pressure through organisations such as the TNU, and eventually their grievances were expanded into a central political issue between the ZAR and Great Britain. The discovery of gold, therefore, not only brought about a reorientation of the internal political and socio-economic order, but in the 1890s it would also bring relations with Great Britain to a breaking point.

Ultimately the discovery of the goldfields led to dramatic capital growth in South Africa. But the gleam of gold and material wealth should not blind us to the less attractive aspect of the discovery: the capitalist class which developed the richest goldfields in the world, was also responsible for the growth of a large, oppressed labour force.

Not surprisingly, the Transvaal was restructured along modern efficient capitalist lines after the Boer republics had been defeated in 1902. The British victory in a long-drawn-out and bitter war meant that the republics not only became part of the British empire but also became more fully integrated into the world economy.

Fond hopes that a postwar British dispensation would herald a better deal for the country's approximately 5 million black people were dashed, as it became clear that the British government was not prepared to depart from existing arrangements which discriminated against black people on all levels of society. As a result, fledgling local black political organisations mushroomed all over the country, and with the subsequent formal and official exclusion of black people from the politics of the country with unification in 1910, the need for a unified black political organisation became apparent.

Such an organisation, first known as the South African Native National Congress and later as the African National Congress, came into existence under the guidance of *petit bourgeois* elements in Bloemfontein in 1912.

SOCIO-POLITICAL EVENTS		ECCLESIASTICAL EVENTS
	1799	Establishment of S.A. Missionary Society
Batavian regime at the Cape	1803–1806	
	1804	Introduction of the Church order of De Mist
Second British occupation of the Cape	1806	Methodist Church services introduced by Sergeant Kendrick
	1812	Formation of first Presbyterian congregation at the Cape
Arrival of the British Settlers	1820	
Major migratory movements like Difaqane, Mfecane and Great Trek	1820–1840	
	1824	First synod of the Dutch Reformed Church at the Cape
	1834	First Berlin Missionary Society missionaries arrive
	1837	Arrival of Raymond Griffith, first Roman Catholic bishop
	1847	Robert Gray, first Anglican bishop arrives
Bloemfontein Convention	1848	
Sand River Convention	1852	
	1853	Colenso becomes bishop of Natal
		Establishment of Nederduitsch Hervormde Church
	1859	Establishment of Gereformeerde Church
Arrival of Indians in Natal	1860	
	1862	Andrew Murray becomes prominent Dutch Reformed leader
	1865	First Xhosa translation of the Bible
		Trial of Bishop Colenso
Discovery of diamonds and gold	1867–1886	

CHAPTER 5

Christianity, imperialism and colonial warfare

The South African War: 1899–1902

The South African War of 1899–1902 and the events leading up to it have always fascinated historians. It was a major colonial war in which British imperialism and Afrikaner republicanism were pitted against each other, but it was also a civil war which disrupted the lives of Uitlanders, Boers and Africans alike. Moreover, it was a turning point in the development of South Africa under the guiding forces of capitalism and industrialisation.

Historians have increasingly come to see the war in terms of the complex social make-up of South Africa at the turn of the century. The discovery of minerals in the 1870s and 1880s had mainly changed the nature of the interior of the country. British involvement in political and economic affairs extended farther and farther into the Afrikaner sphere of influence. The Boers had been remarkably successful in regaining their independence after the Anglo-Boer War of 1880–81 and had won the support of Continental powers in their struggle against British imperialism. African communities were by no means unaffected by the competing interests of the Boers and the British, and historians now realise that any notion of the South African War as only a "white man's war" is completely inaccurate and a distortion of historical reality. Africans were caught up in the war in many ways: they fought on both sides, even though this was vehemently denied by the white protagonists, and they were further dispossessed of their land and were dislocated by the ravages of conflict. Many found themselves in concentration camps.

Recent research (Nasson, 1991) on the war portrays a situation of civil war in the countryside between boer commandos and settlements of Africans and "Coloureds", who prided themselves on being British citizens and were afraid of being executed as British collaborators by boer soldiers, or being relegated to the position of a servile labour force under republican rule. Another historian of the war (Smith, 1993) has drawn attention to the experience of Africans under boer

rule in the Transvaal on the eve of the conflict. He points out that since the Transvaal Republic was itself a colonial society, land and livestock had been expropriated from the African population by boer farmers, which had therefore reduced Africans to the level of labour-tenants.

African communities were weak and often divided, but it had taken British arms to defeat the Pedi and the Zulu in the 1870s, and the twenty years leading up to the South African War had been characterised by recurrent wars as boer commandos tried to suppress African uprisings. The Venda had only eventually been conquered and incorporated into Kruger's Republic in 1898. The boer government realised therefore that it had to guard against civil unrest and potential rebellion by Africans within its borders in 1899. In many outlying areas of the Transvaal, Boer-African relations were strained and the effective power of boer landlords was very weak.

War broke out in October 1899 and as it dragged on, relations between Africans and Boers deteriorated further. This was especially true of the Kgatla, Pedi, Ndebele and Zulu areas. Historians have given us a fairly detailed picture of the Kgatla region. We know, for instance, that the Kgatla were encouraged, armed and assisted by the British to join in the war against the Boers. The Kgatla provided intelligence, engaged in widespread cattle raiding, occupied boer land or destroyed boer farms during the guerilla phase of the war (Krikler, 1993). One African chief, Gopane Sebogodi, led a group of about 2 000 armed followers to seize large herds of cattle from the Marico Boers. The Kgatla also occupied large tracts of boer farmland in the Pilanesberg area as a result of a tenants' revolt in the western Transvaal during the war (Warwick, 1983:45–46).

Even more serious was the threat the Pedi posed throughout the South African War. In 1899 boer leaders feared an internal Pedi rebellion and commando units were deployed to guard against any such disruption. Between 1899 and 1902 the Pedi almost doubled the area under their control and the boer commandos were engaged in a war against Africans rather than the British.

Within this general social landscape the churches and missionaries took sides. The discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand had led to a massive influx of foreigners who were either skilled or unskilled artisans loyal mainly to themselves, but also to the British empire when it served their interests. These Uitlanders were mainly Anglicans or Nonconformists (predominantly Wesleyan Methodists) in their religious affiliation. Their commitment was probably more to the pursuit of wealth than to the upholding of Christian values. The *Southern Cross*, a church newspaper, summed up the atmosphere in Johannesburg as "the quintessence of 19th century life, with all the pinchbeck glare and glitter of its follies and fashionable vices, all its business, push and hurry and bustle, and all its arrogance of success" (15 March 1896:27).

Not far away, the Transvaal Republic was ruled by an oligarchy under the leadership of President Paul Kruger. The Pretoria state was built upon the exclusivity of the *Volkswet* which declared that there was "no equality in church

and state". This meant that African communities in the region and the Uitlanders had no right to participate in its political structures. Only Afrikaner males who were members of the Dutch Reformed Church were allowed to exercise the vote. The influence of other churches was curtailed in the Transvaal for fear of undermining the fabric of Afrikaner Calvinism. Kruger's *Volksraad* reforms of 1890 did little to appease the Uitlanders who claimed political rights to match their growing economic status.

Africans were drawn into this polarised scene as they sought work on the mines. The Randlords, or mine owners, became more and more dependent on this influx of unskilled labour for deep-level mining. African subsistence farmers were attracted to Johannesburg and its surrounding gold reefs since they suffered crippling land taxes. Charles van Onselen, a well-known social historian, has traced the fortunes of these migrant workers in his books, *New Babylon* and *New Nineveh* (1982). The cohesion of African cultural and political life was eroded in the mine compounds as labourers carved out a new social existence. In these circumstances mission churches and a stream of independent African churches sought adherents.

Against the backdrop of mining capitalism, Afrikaner political control and the urbanisation of Africans, churches played out their role. English-speaking churches were imbued with imperialism which had found expression in the Crimean War, the Indian Mutiny, the Bulgarian Agitation and the Anglo-Zulu War of the second half of the nineteenth century. Christianity had also been shaped by paramilitary organisations such as the Salvation Army and the Boys' Brigade which preached religious militancy. The pulpit still held some sway at the end of the 1800s and clerical opinion was quite influential. John Hobson, the anti-war activist, claimed that British clergy played an important part in promoting the imperialist cause. He was scathing in his attack on South African churches for failing to speak out against British expansionism because of the control exercised over them by the Randlords.

Anglican endorsement of the war

Anglicans in South Africa, like those in England, generally supported Joseph Chamberlain's aggressive foreign policy towards the Boers. Only a few raised their voices against the methods used during the South African War of 1899–1902. It should be remembered that the Church of the Province was a colonial church in which the laity had an equal voice with the clergy regarding its management. The pronouncements of the clergy, therefore, must to some degree have accorded with those of the rank and file members.

Anglican clergy in the Transvaal, whether they had supported the Jameson Raid of 1896 or not, were almost unanimous that boer rule should be ended in 1899. In the Cape, on the other hand, Canon Wirgman of Port Elizabeth regarded the Uitlander question as a convenient excuse to force a longstanding issue with the

Boers. Margaret Blunden, a historian of Anglicanism in South Africa, argues that it was the colonial clergy rather than missionaries who deliberately brought their views to bear on the public in 1899 (Warwick, 1980:281).

The missionary point of view was clearly stated by Bishop Bransby Key of St. John's Kaffraria in the eastern Cape, who argued that war had been brought about by the differences between the British and Boers over the governance of Africans. Key took a paternalistic line and preached that Africans were the "white man's burden", an attitude not held by the Boers. For Key the conflict with Kruger was a "holy war" on behalf of Africans: "Are these natives of South Africa to be looked upon as beasts of burden or human beings?" (Warwick, 1980: 282). Key went as far as recommending that Africans be allowed to fight with the British troops. The sharp contrast drawn between British and boer policies towards Africans was, of course, useful for propagating the imperialist cause among Anglicans and other churchgoers. An important point to make is that hardly any Anglican clergymen in South Africa or England publicly identified with the pro-Boer claim that the English colonial community agreed with Afrikaner policy towards Africans.

The claim that a British victory would ensure "justice" for Africans was repeated over and over again in sermons, articles in church newspapers and on political platforms. The Dutch Reformed churches were accused of war mongering and being the bitterest enemies of British power. The Anglicans were concerned that DRC ministers would preach Protestant solidarity in order to attract support from English Nonconformists. The DRC canvassed Christians at pro-Boer meetings in England and 414 Afrikaner ministers signed a petition defending republican policy. The petition was sent to the Congregational Union in 1900.

Chaplains played a prominent part in maintaining the morale of British troops who swelled the pews of civilian Anglican churches during the war and brought enormous prosperity to many parishes in the areas controlled by the British. Military chaplains gave a religious sanction to the war, which helped to promote its "righteousness" among the soldiers.

Little attention was paid to the prospects of Africans once the war was over. Anglicans, like other British colonists, focused mainly on the benefits a British victory would have for mission work. The Reverend John Bovill of Mozambique – far removed from the scene of the war – published his *Natives under the Flag* in 1900. He proposed the scrapping of the pass system, the replacement of the mine compounds with African reserves, African freehold and property rights and a plan for assisted voluntary education under a post-war British administration (Warwick, 1980:288).

Anglican clergy in Pretoria were less concerned about the future and chose to emphasise boer cruelty towards Africans, in order to undermine Afrikaner republican rule. They seemed more committed to the demise of boer hegemony than to protecting the interests of Africans. It is clear that in this way Anglicans

provided important moral endorsement of the British cause against Kruger's Republic.

Quakerism and the pacifist imperative

In theory at least, the Society of Friends was bound to support the peace movement; pacifism is an article of their faith. It is significant, however, that only a minority of Quakers became actively involved in pacifist organisations during the late nineteenth century. Quakerism was the conscience of imperialism and therefore the counterpoint of Anglicanism, which demonstrated an umbilical relationship between church and empire. Certainly the dissent of the Society of Friends, despite its small following, was perhaps the strongest religious element in the anti-war movement at the turn of the twentieth century.

In August 1900 there were only about fifty Friends living in the Cape and Natal, constituting more than half the number of Quakers in the whole of Africa. During the war Quaker growth was small in real terms, with membership increasing to about 90 by 1903, which included Friends in Bechuanaland, Swaziland and Mashonaland. They belonged mainly to the middle class and most lived in the Cape (Cuthbertson, 1986:75).

Anti-war Quakers had to contend with the vociferous imperialism of other Nonconformists who were roundly condemned by what John Morley, outspoken critic of the Anglo-Boer conflict, called "the glorification of war by men whose profession is peace, the glorification of all the advantages that come from the moral discipline of war from the lips of men who have no intention of undertaking any of that moral discipline" (*Manchester Guardian*, 1 June 1900). This meant that pacifism struggled to be heard amids the imperialist clamour. Nevertheless, much of the impetus behind resistance to the war was explicitly religious in nature and origin. In this way there was a convergence of Quaker and Christian socialist philosophy in Britain at the turn of the century.

Arthur Guy Enock, a Quaker consulting engineer working in South Africa in 1899, approached Kruger early in October to persuade the Transvaal government to continue negotiations with Britain. He apparently had the support of other colonial Friends. Enock tried to keep alive hopes of peace by actively engaging key boer leaders, including Kruger, F.W. Reitz, the Secretary of State, Jan Smuts, State Attorney, and Piet Grobler in a discussion of peace proposals.

This effort, supported by British Friends and watched by the British government, represented the only significant action by Quakers to avert the war. Enock's eventual failure seems to have stifled Quaker opposition to the Anglo-Boer conflict. It was only with the British defeats in December 1899 that some enthusiasm for war relief emerged among British Friends.

James Butler of Cradock became an important figure in Quaker circles once martial law was declared in the Cape Colony and news of the hardships of civilians in the Afrikaner Republics began to reach the Quaker press towards the

end of 1900. Butler's influence with Joshua Rowntree, who brought a mission to South Africa in December 1900, focused attention on the conditions of civilians. Rowntree's alleged pro-Boerism detracted from this mission, and the role of the Quakers in exposing the "methods of barbarism" employed by the British authorities was eclipsed by the dramatic disclosures of Emily Hobhouse in 1902.

Hobhouse visited the concentration camps in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony. Her findings were publicised through Quaker sponsorship. Quaker women became heavily involved in providing relief for victims of the war, particularly through their membership of the Friends' South African Relief Committee. Georgina King Lewis challenged Hobhouse's indictment of British military culpability in concentration camp atrocities, arguing that the lack of hygiene among Boers and the measles epidemics were responsible for the high mortality rate (Harris, 1925:44–52).

Such conflicting reports led to confusion in Quaker ranks, thus highlighting the divisiveness of the South African War. Articles from James Butler's *Midland News* were often reproduced in British newspapers and regular correspondence between Rowntree and Butler mirrored the societies each represented, depicting the stresses and strains caused by the war. Butler increasingly called for a conciliatory policy towards the Boers after 1901, but was quite pessimistic about the future of South Africa on the eve of peace in 1902. He therefore put his weight behind post-war Quaker relief which reached a climax in August 1902 when Lawrence Richardson and W.H.F. Alexander visited South Africa.

They set out to determine the plight of the Boers in the former republics, to assess the extent of loss suffered by British refugees, and to review the unsettled border districts where raiding still persisted (Davey, 1977). Butler proved useful in helping the Quaker commissioners make their assessment of conditions in the Cape.

On the issue of African rights, Quakers reflected the general indifference of most British and South African Christians. They favoured improved labour conditions since Africans formed the backbone of the mining economy. To the Quaker, no less than to other Nonconformists, the African was "a child, weak in power to enforce his rights, and must look to friends for help in obtaining even-handed justice" (quoted in Cuthbertson, 1986:91).

Any impetus the anti-war Quakers received came from South Africa, whether it was Enock's personal attempt to avert war or Emily Hobhouse's appeals for aid. Rowntree's visit resulted in fruitful contacts with Butler and M.K. Gandhi, the pioneer of passive resistance in South Africa, who was impressed by Quaker relief after the Anglo-Boer War. Rowntree also made an indelible impression on John Tengo Jabavu, founding editor of *Imvo Zabantsundu,* who continued to propagate anti-imperialist views. Quaker views were disseminated to a wider audience than their small membership because they had ample financial resources. Their main contribution, however, was in providing relief-aid.

Anti-war Nonconformity

The anti-war movement hardly existed in South Africa and British denominations made little attempt to protest against the war in 1899. Nonconformist attitudes to the conflict were almost as predictable as those of the Anglicans. This accounts for South African Nonconformist incredulity at free church involvement in the pro-Boer movement in Britain.

Nonconformist identification with the British war effort is shown clearly by the number of ministers who became military chaplains. Uitlander congregations were eager for strong condemnation of the boer government from the pulpit. Since Nonconformists were generally associated with mission activity, they justified the war in terms of its benefit to evangelisation. British supremacy, it was believed, would also end the power of the Dutch Reformed churches.

It was against this solidly imperialist sentiment that a few Nonconformist ministers dared to declare their opposition to the war. Their objections were drowned by the pro-war resolutions submitted to Alfred Milner, the British High Commissioner, by about forty free churches early in 1900 (South African Vigilance Committee, *The South African Churches Declare for Annexation*, Vigilance Paper no.1, 1900). Anti-war preachers had to challenge the assumptions that the Boers had attempted to undermine British supremacy, that Uitlanders and Africans had suffered under boer oppression, that the annexation of the boer republics was the only course open to ensure the "extension of civilisation" under British rule.

Among the most prominent supporters of the small peace party at the Cape was a Unitarian minister, Ramsden Balmforth. His views were uncompromisingly stated in the press. His influence extended far beyond the size of his Unitarian congregation. He was a founder member of the conciliation movement which came into being early in 1900. It campaigned against the annexation of the republics and found favour among Cape Afrikaners. Balmforth's ideas were published in the *South African News*, which entertained pro-Boer opinion. This newspaper launched fierce offensives against the Church of the Province and its archbishop, W. West Jones, and missionaries with imperialist tendencies were vigorously criticised. But it focused attention on Balmforth and other anti-war clerics such as Andrew Murray (jun.) of the Dutch Reformed Church, and F.C. Kolbe, a leading Roman Catholic.

Another minister who voiced his outrage at the "scorched earth" tactics of British generals, was the Reverend Dewdney Drew of the Congregational Church in Cape Town. He condemned martial law and concentration camps, accusing British troops of "terrorism". On the other hand, he praised the courageous resistance of the boer soldiers and took up the cause of boer women and children. He visited some of the concentration camps and exposed the excesses of British troops. For him, the only solution to the conflict was to

recognise boer independence along the lines of Home Rule for Northern Ireland (Cuthbertson, 1986:136).

Among Presbyterian ministers in South Africa, only John T. Lloyd spoke out strongly against the war. During the 1890s he had been profoundly influenced by Olive Schreiner, whose writings shaped much of his preaching. His theology was unorthodox and by 1902 he had become an avowed free thinker. During the South African War he was the only practising Presbyterian minister in the Transvaal, since James Gray of Pretoria had been forced to leave his charge. Lloyd's views were often identical to those of Olive Schreiner, and he laid blame for the war at Chamberlain's door. This earned him considerable opposition from his Presbyterian colleagues in other parts of South Africa.

The torrent of criticism seems to have forced Lloyd to reconsider his anti-war stance, and early in 1900 he changed his mind quite unexpectedly. Justifying his new-found imperialism in March 1900, he explained that he had read a pamphlet in which a secret plan to overthrow British supremacy in the Transvaal was disclosed. He declared that he had been mistaken about boer ambitions (*Grahamstown Journal,* 9 April 1900; 17 September 1901). Perhaps Lloyd bowed to overwhelming Uitlander pressure and felt compelled to recant his anti-imperialism.

The Nonconformist conscience in South Africa therefore hardly served the anti-war movement at all. The tide favoured the imperialists, most ardently represented by the Wesleyan Methodists.

Wesleyan imperialism

Wesleyan Methodists were committed to foreign mission work, more so than most evangelical Christians. Moreover, they were frequently unable to distinguish between the claims of empire and capitalism, and the entanglements of its bastard, militarism. The English church historian, Clyde Binfield, argues that the imperialism of free churches had an inherent tension between "inherited evangelical responsibility" and "commercial opportunity", which predisposed it to the dictates of Uitlanders and Randlords (1977:216–217).

Consequently, George Weavind, Wesleyan superintendent minister of the Transvaal, became very unpopular when he suggested that the war had been caused by "greed of gold" on the part of the British capitalists. He became isolated within the Methodist missionary community as he blamed Milner for the war and as he forged closer ties with Afrikaners in the Transvaal and visited boer commandos in the field (Whiteside, 1906:454–456; Veysie, 1969:150). Weavind's anti-imperialist views were silenced by the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society and censored by the *Methodist Times* in Britain. A campaign was also instituted by fellow ministers in South Africa to force his dismissal. The intolerance towards Weavind's pro-Boerism shows clearly how commanding the imperialist lobby within Wesleyanism was.

Robert Appleby, Methodist minister at Mayfair in Johannesburg, however, was much more representative of Wesleyan opinion. He claimed that the ill-treatment of Africans, the tax and liquor laws of the Transvaal, the prohibition of African marriages, the exploitation of African labour, the lack of African land-ownership rights and poor access to education were good reasons for wishing to oust the "illiberal oligarchy" in Pretoria (*Christian World,* 16 November 1899). More common justification for the conflict was that British power was at stake. George Eva, who had left the Transvaal for Durban, bluntly called for an all-out military push to rout the Afrikaners and hoist the Union Jack over the entire South Africa.

Only a few Wesleyan missionaries who had worked among Africans in the Transvaal before the war were concerned about the dislocation of these communities. George Lowe, who had moved to Natal, was particularly anxious about African ministers under boer authority. William Eacott, however, had no such worries since he could only see Wesleyanism expanding even more after a British victory. Ministers like Eacott rejected the anti-war tendencies among some Nonconformists completely and accused them of being "more afraid of Rome than aware that the Devil exists in Pretoria" (quoted in Cuthbertson, 1986:162).

Most Methodist missionaries saw no contradiction between Christianity and imperialism, which in their view was merely an extension of evangelicalism. Therefore, they regarded the mining interests as allies of missionary expansion on the Witwatersrand. Lowe looked forward to the cessation of hostilities and the recommencement of mining activities since "natives will flock to the labour market, and probably before very long our returns will be as high as ever..." (quoted in Cuthbertson, 1986:162).

Another Wesleyan minister, William Meara, who was stationed at Barberton in 1899, kept a journal in which he recorded his impressions of conditions in the Transvaal on the eve of war. He observed that the Boers had been preparing for war against the British under the aegis of Dutch and other Continental support. His polemic was unrestrained in accusing Kruger of inventing the theory of an Uitlander conspiracy. Meara's evangelicalism also determined his outlook to some extent. He was imbued with the spirit of John Wesley's theology. Like other Methodists, he was committed to evangelisation, philanthropy and humanitarianism, which made him sympathetic to the plight of refugees. He became involved in the Transvaal Relief Committee which assisted former Uitlanders who had fled to the Cape and Natal.

The journals of Meara and the diaries of William Pescod, a missionary at Kimberley in the northern Cape, show that colonial Methodism was as imperialistic as British Wesleyanism, led by influential preachers such as Hugh Price Hughes, a champion of empire. Pescod played an important part in the administration of charity relief during the siege of Kimberley. His attitude towards British supremacy was uncritical: De Beers and Cecil John Rhodes

epitomised righteousness against the corruption of the boer government and the duplicity of the Bond ministry at the Cape. Hughes revelled in news of early British victories in Natal, but his optimistic tone changed as the Boers laid siege to Kimberley.

After Kimberley had been relieved, Pescod's keenness for war returned and he advocated the complete destruction of the Transvaal and Orange Free State. The guerilla phase of the Anglo-Boer conflict dampened some of the Methodist imperialism because of its debilitating effects on uitlander refugees. The presence of British soldiers in the Cape and Natal brought real benefits to a growing denomination. In fact, in the public mind Wesleyanism became closely associated with the British war effort. As congregations grew, so the influence of Methodist ministers increased.

That the Wesleyan missionaries were aware of the repercussions the war would have on the religious life of Africans is clear from their letters to the general secretary of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society in London. They were also awake to the growing political consciousness among many Africans. In fact, George Lowe left the Wesleyan mission in Johannesburg because of its opposition to colonial authority. Ethiopianism captured the hearts and minds of the missionised African community which rejected an imperialist Christianity.

Many missionaries, like Lowe, opposed the rise of independent churches and he therefore also alienated himself from Africans who called for his resignation. He could not come to terms with the advancing politicisation of the African elite, although he did concede that the church was the only agency which allowed the voice of the disenfranchised to be heard. Lowe's experience was felt by other missionaries around South Africa. Peter Hargreaves, who had ministered in Pondoland, declared that Wesleyan missions were suffering defections to "separatist" churches on an unprecedented scale. Ethiopianism began to dominate missionary thinking. The dispossession and dislocation of Africans caused by the war, gave impetus to the movement and provided ideal incubation for a developing political consciousness.

Many former Transvaal Methodist missionaries became army chaplains during the South African War. They therefore became part of the military machine and injected a militarism into their Christian imperialism. They used military imagery to spur on the "soldiers of Christ" in the "Lord's battle" against the Boers. They preached that "Jehovah is a man of war" and that God was the "God of armies".

Of course, it has to be admitted that determining conclusively the opinions of ordinary Methodists on the war issue, is impossible. The sources are not complete or representative enough. One has to believe the grand missionary claims that the vast majority of South African Wesleyans accepted the imperialist creed. Certainly the *Methodist Churchman* did not publicise anti-war views, but propagated strong nationalistic sentiments.

Ordinary Wesleyan members must also have been party to the resolutions passed at the Methodist Conference each year. The synod of the Cape of Good Hope district declared its unanimous support for British arms and the "unquestioned supremacy" of the empire in 1900. All the lay delegates supported the resolution. Similar resolutions were passed by African Methodist synods. Some, like the Clarkebury synod, placed their full confidence in Milner and claimed to speak on behalf of 35 000 Christians. The Queenstown synod spoke for 52 000 members and expressed loyalty to Queen Victoria. Methodism's unanimity was publicly stated by various office bearers of the church throughout 1900. At the Pietermaritzburg conference in April 1900 a denominational resolution was passed in favour of the war, which claimed the backing of 100 000 members (*South African Churches Declare for Annexation,* pp.23–26).

The conference of 1901 was singularly non-committal about its attitude to the concentration camps, despite Hugh Morgan's accounts of the suffering experienced in African refugee camps. He was astounded that many Africans had endured personal injury and oppression. Recent research has shown that conditions in these camps were often worse than in Boer concentration camps (Warwick, 1983:145–162). What seemed to worry most Wesleyans in 1901 was the impact the war would have on their urban mission stations.

Among the delegates to the Methodist conferences of 1900 and 1901 was Jabavu, who served on the Committee of Management of the Healdtown Institution. African Christians had been encouraged to support a British victory by the many pronouncements which had raised their political expectations of a better deal after the war. Jabavu was, however, not convinced that the imperial-capitalist alliance, led by Milner and Rhodes, held any positive prospects for Africans. He gradually became alienated from the Methodist Church, precisely because of its unswerving belief in the virtues of the empire.

Presbyterian influences at Lovedale

By the end of the nineteenth century Lovedale represented the confluence of the streams of imperialist missionary and emergent African middle class thought. Dr James Stewart, who became moderator of the Free Church of Scotland in 1899, was an ardent proponent of British policy in South Africa. Stewart's views obtained wide publicity in the British press and he took every opportunity to assault the boer cause and to castigate republicanism, despite the fact that he counted Cape Afrikaners among his close friends.

Stewart was outspoken on the question of the South African War as a crusade on behalf of Africans. Some of his statements may lead to the erroneous conclusion that he was a champion of equality for Africans in all spheres. But he did at least put forward some specific proposals for a future African franchise. In this sense, he was more like the progressive former LMS missionary, John S. Moffat, who regarded voting rights for Africans as an urgent issue in 1900.

Stewart's attitudes were no doubt influenced by Lovedale, and the involvement of Lovedale Africans in the war.

There were six students at the front during the war and some of them wrote letters to Stewart, recounting their experiences. In February 1901 William Mpamba of the United Free Church of Scotland Mission at Zoutpansberg was imprisoned in Pietersburg by the Boers, allegedly for spying. Stewart used the Lovedale mouthpiece, *The Christian Express*, to appeal for Mpamba's release (Cuthbertson, 1982:77).

To some degree Stewart's sway at Lovedale was challenged by other missionaries during the war, particularly Brownlee Ross and David Stormont, who began to espouse an anti-war stance. They were concerned about injustice to Cape Afrikaners and feared that people in Britain were being "gulled by a gang of capitalists" into an unnecessary conflict. Ross was in close touch with DRC ministers who also influenced his attitude towards the Cape Dutch community.

The Lovedale African elite saw the war as an opportunity to fight against missionary hegemony. Ethiopianism spread extremely fast and missionaries like Stewart lost the support of mission-educated Africans. In March 1899, before the outbreak of war, about 1 000 members of the Lovedale church seceded from the Free Church of Scotland to form an independent congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Africa. The split was initiated by the Reverend P.J. Mzimba, who withdrew from the presbytery of Kaffraria. In some ways the Ethiopian movement constituted an African "nonconformist conscience" since it challenged the missionary establishment and tried to bring Christianity under the control of African chiefs. Ironically, it was precisely because Protestant missions like Lovedale had allowed a measure of African participation in church matters that Ethiopianism was able to advance under capable leadership.

The rise of African Independent Churches during the South African War caused a crisis in the religious life of mission stations and Lovedale was no exception. White missionaries often seemed more concerned about this religious challenge than the war itself. Rejection of colonial Christianity also seemed to coincide with African political disenchantment with British rule. Africans had, after all, supported the British war effort in the hope of making some political gains, but these hopes were, however, dashed in 1902. Ethiopianism therefore provided an outlet for their frustrated ambitions, and ensured that independent churches grew even more rapidly after the war.

London Missionary Society attitudes towards the South African War

The formative influence of early London Missionary Society (LMS) missionaries in South Africa provided a firm ideological base from which later Congregational ministers were to tackle religious and political issues. The LMS was also a

conspicuous agency for change because its missionaries not only attempted to convert Africans to Christianity, but often took their side in the struggle for justice, political rights and land. At best they represented the "conscience of the settlers" and occasionally were the protectors of African interests (De Gruchy, 1979:13). They were also part of the settler thrust which brought the overwhelming invasion of Christianity, commerce and "civilisation" into African communities.

That the LMS upheld the British cause in the South African War is hardly surprising, but it put a further seal of approval on the general Nonconformist sanction of aggression against the Boer Republics. Because of its size and influence the LMS was able to mobilise Nonconformity for British imperialism. Added to this was the high calibre of LMS missionaries; they had generally enjoyed a better education than their Wesleyan counterparts.

On the question of war in 1899, LMS missionaries were disconcerted by the prominence given to anti-war opinion in British church newspapers such as *The Christian World* and *The British Weekly*. David Mudie, stationed at Barkly West, complained to Ralph Wardlaw Thompson, the Secretary for Foreign Missions, that the pro-Boers had a distorted view of boer designs. The rift between missionary opinion and that of the LMS authorities in London widened during 1900, as Thompson showed signs of conciliation towards the Boers.

Missionaries were quick to point out that their work was severely jeopardised by boer rule. J. Tom Brown of Kuruman, for instance, gave a detailed account of how the Boers had made it impossible for him to remain on his mission station for fear of attack. Tension also mounted when Boers began commandeering African livestock. Whereas reports such as Brown's would merely have confirmed the fierce imperialism of Wesleyans in Britain, in some Congregational circles it had the effect of presenting an alternative view of the war, since anti-imperialist tendencies were given considerable coverage.

John Moffat, son of the controversial pioneering missionary, Robert Moffat, was one of the most distinguished LMS missionaries of the late nineteenth century. He became an official of the British government in South Africa, but retained his links with the LMS during the South African War of 1899–1902. He maintained a lively and provocative correspondence with the LMS directorate in London and was much quoted by the British and colonial press. He was a vigorous opponent of mining and merchant capital from the time of the Jameson Raid in 1896, and he believed that Jameson and the Randlords had betrayed the credibility of the imperial mission in South Africa.

Moffat was wary of the incitement to war caused by jingoism and also warned against interference by the British government in the affairs of the Transvaal during 1897 when he visited Johannesburg. He noted that smaller companies were buckling under pressure of taxation levied on them by the Kruger administration. He feared that tension was also mounting because many Boers who had suffered impoverishment in the wake of the rinderpest were flocking to

the Rand to shelter under state assistance, derived from uitlander taxation. He was no more optimistic about political conditions at the Cape. In April 1898 he expressed a lack of confidence in the Cape government under the leadership of Sir Gordon Sprigg.

During the first half of 1899 Moffat felt uneasy about the war mongering strategy of the Progressive Party at the Cape. Progressives, who represented imperialist interests, opposed the Bond ministry in its attempts to reconcile the Afrikaner and English settler populations. Despite this, he joined the majority of colonial missionaries in support of the British when war eventually broke out towards the end of 1899. Moffat also argued that the conflict was unavoidable. Part of the general perception of superiority held by imperialists was a more specific religious superiority, associated with Protestant theology girded by missionary conquest. Consistent with this religious arrogance, therefore, some LMS missionaries suggested that it was a measure of the weakness of the Dutch Reformed churches that they had not been able to divert the Kruger government from war. The irony is that they had, of course, been equally powerless in directing British policy. It seems that imperialism pressed too heavily on colonial missionary ideology for it to advocate an anti-war creed, and Afrikaner nationalism strongly ruled the thinking of Dutch Reformed ministers.

Of all the missionary societies operating in South Africa, the LMS did most to generate the myth that the South African War was being fought on behalf of Africans. Moffat was a champion of African interests, even though these were seen in terms of the preservation of British supremacy. Congregationalists in South Africa brought the issue of African political and economic rights to the notice of the Nonconformist press. It is also true that defending African interests was often simply a pretext for pursuing imperialist goals.

LMS agents were angered by Boer mistreatment of Africans during the war and many thought that a Boer victory would make conditions unbearable for these communities. Missionaries also feared that they would themselves suffer as "friends of the natives". The LMS was mainly associated with the African elite and included some influential African missionaries in its ranks. Walter B. Rubusana was one of the leading Congregationalists in the Cape. He and A.K. Soga, son of the veteran African preacher and politician, Tiyo Soga, were the driving force behind *Izwi Labantu* ("Voice of the People"), the African political movement based in East London (Odendaal, 1984:15). Rubusana's voice was raised on behalf of the LMS as well as African opinion during the war, which meant that the views of the LMS were bound to reflect, to some extent, the interests of its African followers on the missions. This also accounts for the greater emphasis on African rights as an issue in LMS thinking during the war.

Of course, the pro-imperialist attitude of the LMS was supported by Rubusana's *Izwi*, which received financial backing from Rhodes. Rubusana also had close ties with the Aborigines Protection Society (APS) in England. The APS supported the founding of the South African Native Vigilance Association, an

extension of the South African Native Congress (SANC) which had been formed in 1898, and which was widely publicised in the pages of *Izwi*. The SANC had met in King William's Town in May 1900 and passed resolutions pledging loyalty to the British Crown. The LMS link with the SANC through Rubusana proved important because it fostered a tradition of consultation between colonial missionaries and organisations and African interest groups. Rubusana also hoped that the LMS would have some leverage in determining the future of Africans after the war. He was, however, to share the disillusionment of the African elite as it began to realise how powerless Nonconformist agencies were in modifying British segregationist policy.

Catholicism: sceptic of imperialism?

During the 1880s and 1890s Roman Catholics tended to view South African politics from a religious perspective. They were generally more interested in the battle for Catholic education than in growing Afrikaner nationalism, despite the fact that the Boers were the staunchest opponents of Catholic theology. F.C. Kolbe, one of the leading Cape Catholic educationists and journalists of the late nineteenth century, was one of the few Catholic clergy to enter the political debate openly. He continually drew on his knowledge of Irish politics to compare the Transvaal Republic and Northern Ireland, always decrying British imperialist policy.

Kolbe condemned the jingo press at the Cape but at the same time remained an admirer of Rhodes, whose vision of a united South Africa appealed to him. He expressed these opinions in the *South African Catholic Magazine*, of which he was editor. In its pages he also castigated Chamberlain for pushing Milner into war with the Boers. He blamed the British for their unbridled greed of diamonds and gold, which embarrassed most of his co-religionists, who did not wish to antagonise the colonial government. Kolbe did not enjoy much support within his own church and especially not from his superiors (Boner, 1980:173–221).

Early in 1900 Kolbe joined the South African Conciliation Committee and earned considerable acceptance among Afrikaners who shared his political rather than his religious outlook. At the end of April 1900, after he had been subjected to severe criticism from imperialist quarters both within and without the Catholic church, about fifty of his friends and admirers rallied to his defence on the grounds that he had fought for peace. This, however, did little to quell accusations of pro-Boerism from fellow clergy, especially when they read his articles in the Irish press. They also disapproved of Kolbe's friendship with Michael Davitt, founder of the National Land League in Ireland and well-known Fenian, and were annoyed when he offered his journalistic services to the anti-war *South African News* in 1901 (Davey, 1978:130–144).

Kolbe's views on imperialism at the turn of the century were more cogently stated than those of any other contemporary Catholic priest. In general,

Catholicism preferred a less politically bold stance to the vehement criticism of Kolbe expressed by its adherents in the imperialist press and in letters to Cape newspapers. Kolbe was, however, extremely influential in the pro-Boer movement, even though he never openly championed Kruger's government. The Catholic voice was most clearly heard through him even though he did not speak for his co-religionists.

Dutch Reformed churches and opposition to imperialism

Historians of the Dutch Reformed churches in South Africa have argued that the true opponents of imperialism were not the small pockets of dissident Nonconformists, but the Afrikaner churches. They have sometimes exaggerated the consensus among English-speaking churches in their support for the South African War, for instance. To suggest that "it was left to the Ned. Geref. Kerk in the Cape and the Boer Republics to be the real religious opponents of the war", is an over-simplification (J.W. Hofmeyr, *et al.*, 1991:151). Afrikaner nationalists were against British imperialism and its threat to their independence. In this sense they were anti-war because for them it symbolised theexcesses of a bloated imperialism based on capitalist expansion. But, on the other hand, they were ready to defend their sovereignty by taking up arms. In that sense, therefore, they favoured war against the British.

There can be no doubt that imperialism made dramatic inroads into the life of Afrikanerdom after the 1880s. The Anglo-Boer War of 1880–81 had been a bitter struggle for political independence. But it was the war of 1899–1902 which had the most devastating effect on Afrikaner society. The economy of the Afrikaner republics was disrupted, families were separated as the boer commandos left women and children behind to keep an essentially pre-industrial, agrarian economy going. The "scorched earth" tactics of the British army also left tracts of boer land desolate and the concentration camps became the notorious symbol of Kitchener's campaigns.

In such circumstances the Afrikaner churches also suffered, as ministers signed up as commando chaplains. Church buildings were also destroyed in the war and many communities were reduced to poor whiteism. J.W. Kok estimated that of a total membership of 73 000, about 11 000 had died or fled during the three years of the conflict. The financial implications of this for the church were, of course, dramatic.

It has also been pointed out that the war also had a negative influence on missionary endeavour in the Orange Free State and Transvaal. DRC missionaries were often placed under surveillance or "house arrest", as in the case of Stephanus Hofmeyr in Zoutpansberg, at the end of 1901. Pieter Stofberg left his mission station at Mochudi and fled to Bulawayo. In the Waterberg, the Reverend J. Murray was prohibited from serving his mission congregation (Crafford, 1982:143–148).

Some DRC historians have argued that the South African war also resulted in a dramatic deterioration in relations between Boers and Africans. It is suggested that this was the result of British propaganda, especially on the part of Wesleyan and LMS missionaries (Crafford, 1982:144). This to some extent misses the point that Africans were torn between two military forces. Consequently, some were loyal to the Boers while others supported the British. The more important point is that the war was divisive on many fronts and the DRC was particularly hard hit.

As had been the case during the various wars between the Boer Republics and African chiefdoms and in the Anglo-Boer War of 1880–81, DRC ministers became chaplains on commando. About eighty per cent of the boer population belonged to the Nederduitsche Gereformeerde Kerk in the Orange Free State and the Nederduitsche Hervormde or Gereformeerde Kerk in the Transvaal. But members of the other Dutch Reformed churches were also served by ministers at the front, whose role was particularly important after March 1900 as commandos were increasingly dispersed. Ministers such as H.S. Bosman (Pretoria), P.B.J. Stofberg (Mochudi), C.J. Snyman (Ventersburg) and G.W.B. van der Lingen (Kroonstad) were significant in keeping up the morale of Boer soldiers as they suffered serious military setbacks.

Some ministers in the Orange Free State signed the oath of neutrality and were allowed to move to the Cape on parole. They were followed by many of their DRC colleagues in the Transvaal between May and September 1900, as British troops marched northwards. During the guerilla phase of the South African War, DRC chaplains were often on commando for long periods and some became prisoners of war (Pretorius, 1991:171–202).

One of the most notable boer chaplains was J.D. Kestell (Harrismith) who criss-crossed the entire Free State during the guerilla war, sometimes in the company of President M.T. Steyn and General C.R.de Wet (Kestell, 1903). The tasks of chaplains on commando were onerous since they had to encourage and preach, console the injured and bury the dead. They contributed enormously to the staying power of many commandos during the protracted fighting. The spiritual dimension of commando life was extremely important and should not be underestimated in any assessment of the boer struggle against the British.

Religion was also important in the concentration camps where theDRC played a crucial role. Sixty-one ministers served the thousands of boer prisoners of war and Afrikaner women and children who had to endure the hardships and suffering of the camps. Historians have pointed to the increased interest in religion which occurred under such severe conditions.

The consequences of the South African War for the DRC were far-reaching. Its influence increased enormously as the alliance between Christianity and nationalism, evident in the nineteenth century, began to take root and grow. The forging of Afrikaner identity in the heat of battle and accompanied by a strong neo-Calvinism, strengthened the relationship between church and state which

was to be a hallmark of South African history after 1910. The Christian imperialism of English-speaking churches during and immediately after the South African War was matched by the religious nationalism of the DRC.

Ethiopianism and African Independent Churches: the legacy of war

Ethiopianism had its origins in the eastern Cape when Nehemiah Tile broke away from the Wesleyan Methodist Church in 1884 and formed the Thembu National Church. It also emerged in Marabastad (Pretoria) and moved southward and westward during the 1890s. Ethiopianism represented a reaction against the missionary establishment and attempted to bring religion under the control of African political chiefs. The African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, which began in 1897 under its founder, Marcus Gabashane and his son, Abel, was attractive to African leaders who could utilise increased support from independent churches to enhance their bargaining power with the colonial authorities. Chiefs felt the need to have churches and missionaries support them politically, and the Ethiopian Church was able to provide clergy more readily than orthodox missionary institutions, owing to the rapid defection of African ministers and the speedy ordination of others. E.A. Ayandele, the Nigerian church historian, has compared Ethiopianism to a "whipped up negro radicalism" which used the vehicle of Christianity to further the cause of African nationalism (1966:178). The church provided one of the only avenues for African political expression.

Ironically, it was precisely because missions in South Africa had allowed a measure of African participation in church organisation that Ethiopianism was able to advance under capable and experienced leadership. Since ecclesiastical government often made room for lay involvement, mission churches also became "the centre of social, spiritual and political aspirations of educated Africans and literate converts" (Ayandele, 1966:199).

For many Africans, missionaries symbolised imperialist oppression. African pioneers in the Ethiopian movement, such as Mangena Mokone and Jacobus Xaba, for example, were clear in their views about colonial preachers:

> The missionaries represent the interest of countries which have committed great sins against us. They have forced upon us an education and customs which do not suit our needs. They violate our sacred customs. . .they desire our goods and secretly grasp for political tyranny (quoted in Cuthbertson, 1991:59–60).

Xaba, who was a product of Edendale and Healdtown Wesleyan mission stations, also attacked those missionaries who had tried to represent Ethiopianism as a subversive movement that lacked educated leadership. While preaching in Heilbron in about 1893, he was suspended from the Wesleyan

ministry, apparently for insubordination. He refused to leave his pulpit and also failed to report his suspension to the republican authorities in the Orange Free State. This eventually led to his arrest. After his release, he linked up with Mangena Mokone in the Ethiopian Church and became its most effective evangelist until his death in 1904 (Campbell, 1993:8).

Africans were generally doubtful about the success European missionaries often claimed for themselves; missionaries had few converts and experienced fierce resistance to their Western gospel. This was one of the main reasons why they insisted that converts move to mission stations, so that they could practise their new faith in isolation from African beliefs and culture. Such removal from "traditional" communities to mission stations highlights how significant missionaries were as a source of social disruption and dislocation. This segregation and its accompanying alienation underpinned the establishment of what has been called the "missionary state". Little wonder then that Ethiopianism should have received such overwhelming acceptance among African Christians.

Missionaries certainly contributed to the heightened tension between the colonial churches and the growing African Independent Churches during the South African War by concentrating all their energies on white congregations and neglecting the welfare of African Christians. The dislocation of African communities as a result of the conflict also meant that religious leadership devolved to African preachers. Links with white churches were extremely tenuous, if not lost altogether. Therefore, the ground was fertile for Ethiopianism to take root. Even where contact had been maintained, mission work among Africans was undertaken almost exclusively by African priests or ministers. They were poorly paid, which further exacerbated dissatisfaction. Rivalries among them had the effect of undermining the authority of missionaries even further. Thomas Pakenham, writing about the effects of the war on the countryside, argues that the only institution to emerge from the ravages of conflict stronger than it had been at the outset was the AME Church. It took advantage of the huge concentration of Africans on the Highveld, and of the very high levels of bitterness and disillusionment, to win thousands of new adherents.

Refugee camps also represented an important recruiting ground for African Independent Curches during the war. AME ministers were successful in ministering in many camps. Samuel Mabote, an ordinee of Bishop Turner, had permission to hold services in three of the largest refugee camps in the Orange Free State. Nicholas Makone spent most of the war at the Heilbron camp holding services, dispensing the sacraments and burying the dead. John Kubedi proved to be a nuisance to the British authorities at the Virginia and Holtfontein camps. In this way thousands of dispossessed Africans were exposed to AME "separatism" at a time of considerable stress.

This is not to argue, however, that there were no positive reasons for Africans joining Ethiopian churches. Indeed, they had more to gain than just their freedom from white ecclesiastical domination. Socio-political issues underpinned

the emergence of a strong Ethiopianism by the end of the South African War in 1902. The church was an important agent in the politicisation of Africans; it provided the ideal environment for shaping a new African religious culture. Outside the church there were fewer opportunities to develop an African political consciousness. Christianity also proved a powerful force in eroding divisions between people of mixed origin "Coloureds" and Africans who merged into a new community of the church. Therefore, a strong and united resistance movement against missionaries was possible through the Ethiopian movement and the AME Church in particular.

Another reason for the rapid growth of African Independent Churches was that any African congregation wishing to join, could do so without changing its creed or ritual. Each congregation enjoyed a certain autonomy as well. Although these characteristics favoured the expansion of Ethiopianism, this looseness in organisation meant a lack of strong and intellectually capable central authority and therefore a lack of cohesion. Its future would depend on the training of new leaders, which would be difficult to achieve without considerable financial resources.

As the protracted conflict dragged on and Africans were dispersed from various mission stations, the oversight of congregations by whites became more difficult. Consequently, indigenous forms of Christianity developed. This resulted in a religious split among African Christians as well. Those who enjoyed the benefits of protection on mission stations were bound to toe the religious line dictated by missionaries. Furthermore, they were afraid that any anti-English feelings would lead to the war turning on African communities themselves. For fear of recrimination, therefore, they were forced to condemn Ethiopian secessions from the colonial churches.

At the end of the war the credibility of missionaries was brought into question even more than before because it was clear that African interests were not paramount in the shaping of the new post-war society. Ethiopianism experienced a further boost which, in turn, fostered increased political activity among Africans in 1902, leading to the growth of the South African National Native Congress, forerunner of the African National Congress. Africans had successfully challenged Western cultural chauvinism and created aggressive, self-reliant organisations with distinct African characteristics, thus exhibiting a selective adaptation to European religion and culture.

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CHAPTER 6

Christianity in the years before union

Churches, African clergy and theological training

For black South Africans conversion and ecclesiastical affiliation formed an important bridge from traditional small-scale to large-scale society. Africans still tolerated social subordination, partly because the emerging society was still unfamiliar and partly because it was believed to be a short, temporary phase until Africans became more educated. By the end of the nineteenth century and during the first decade of the twentieth century, those Africans who attempted to rise socially began to resent the social and political constraints on their full and free participation in the 'new' society. For instance, before the Registration Act of 1887 (one of the legal instruments to control the African franchise) there had been between 8 000 and 11 000 African voters in the Cape. By 1909 there were only 6633 Africans among the 142 367 Cape voters (Mills, 1975:13–14). In spite of the promise of full participation in large-scale society, 'educated' Africans found that promise to be quite false, even if they were Christian or educated.

During this period Africans began to assert control and leadership in the missionary churches and associations (such as the Native Educational Association and the Native Vigilance Association) which had hitherto been led by white people; or they seceded to form their own associations, the most significant being the founding of their own Independent churches.

During the 1870s and 1880s the first generation of African clergy zealously pursued the acquisition of Western education and culture. They were then more inclined to abandon many of the traditional cultural customs though even then *lobola* (the giving of cattle as a price for a bride) and *ukwaluka* (the circumcision of young males) were still widely practised. From about 1890 to 1910 African clergy began to re-examine their attitudes to traditional customs. The abandonment of many customs now seemed quite unnecessary. Socially and politically frustrated they turned instead to establishing their own churches rather than reaffirming their traditional religions; instead of returning to chieftainships they

affirmed nationalism; instead of capitulating in the face of racial discrimination they tried even harder to gain higher qualifications and some even went abroad to study. The Native College Scheme gained wide support and resulted in the founding of Fort Hare College.

Up to this period, which saw the first Africans going abroad for academic and professional training, the ministry presented one of the best opportunities for those who sought leadership positions to advance socially. Churches set up their own theological schools where aspirant clergy received education in theology and the humanities, modelled along the lines of European and British seminaries.

The Methodist Church in the Cape Colony accepted 150 Africans as probationary priests between 1866 and 1910, and more than 125 of these probationers were eventually ordained (Mills, 1975:30). In the Anglican Church, about half that number were ordained in the Cape and the Transkei. The Anglican Church first ordained a black South African, Paul Masiza, to the diaconate in 1870 and seven years later, ordained Peter Msiza as its first black priest. For a while, as the Methodist Church had done with regard to evangelists, the Anglican Dioceses of St John's in the Transkei appointed senior black men who had served the church well, to the duties of readers and catechists. The Baptists ordained their first black pastor, William W. Stofile, in 1901. Stofile left the Baptist Church soon after to join Mzimba in the Presbyterian Church of Africa and by 1907 became one of its leaders. In spite of some opposition in its Cape synod, the Dutch Reformed Church in the Cape ordained its first African minister, James Jolobe, in 1900. Jolobe though was made *zendeling* (missionary) and did not share the same ecclesiastical status as a *predikant* (minister). Jolobe had received his theological training at Lovedale. In 1905 he left the Dutch Reformed Church to join the Presbyterian Church of South Africa and worked in Indwe until 1911. (The Dutch Reformed Church and Presbyterian Church of South Africa at the time still cooperated in some regions.) The Dutch Reformed Church developed its mission to Africans in the Cape only after the First World War and after it had already founded mission stations north of the Limpopo.

The other Reformed churches fared a little better than the Dutch Reformed Church at extending their work among the local people. The United Presbyterian and the Free Church of Scotland ordained 22 men between 1856 and 1910. The Presbyterians and Congregationalists ordained fewer Africans than the Methodists or Anglicans, chiefly because of their more limited finances, higher educational requirements of candidates for the ministry and their decentralised form of church government.

The Methodist Church was the most successful in raising funds locally for their members. Parishioners bought 'tickets' before being admitted to monthly communion. These finances raised from their white members made the Methodist mission the least dependent on foreign assistance. Also, having more African clergy than the other churches, local African congregations were more

stable and better motivated to be self-sufficient financially. Methodists had a centralised fund from which mortgages could be raised to help local congregations build churches. A centralised pension fund gave African clergy greater financial security.

The Anglican Church, though less successful than the Methodists in raising local funds, also had a centralised administration and were assisted by mission societies such as the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) and the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (SPCK). In some cases, African clergymen supplemented their income by teaching in church schools.

The polity of the Congregational and Presbyterian Churches gave greater autonomy to local congregations and disallowed central control of funds or of clergy. They thus did not have the means of levelling off the financial resources of rich and poor congregations or the means that the Methodists had of allowing the richer congrations to assist the poorer ones. In the case of the Congregationalists, the London Missionary Society had been steadily reducing its financial subsidy during the second half of the nineteenth century. In any case, by the end of the nineteenth century they had only a few white congregations in South Africa. The Presbyterians still received the salaries of their white missionaries and other grants from Scotland but the salaries of the African clergy and the funds for building schools had to be raised locally.

Besides the differing polities, another factor that contributed to the disparities in the number of African clergy ordained by the Reformed Churches, Methodists and Anglicans, was the higher entrance qualification that the former required. The Presbyterian and Congregationalist theological training was more stringent. Lovedale, where their African ministers trained, had a 3 year full-time course. In the 1870s Lovedale offered the theological courses presented in Scotland, with Greek, Latin and Hebrew as subjects. After 1883 the Lovedale theology programme was modified, but it still remained the most demanding programme of any of the South African denominations.

The Anglicans, too, at first required all their local clergy, black and white, to have the same training as their clergy in England, although Latin and Greek were not required here. Their theological training was similar to the Lovedale programme but Anglicans usually required less full-time study. It allowed for more part-time study, enabling candidates for the ministry to be involved in parish duties as well. In the dioceses of Natal and St John less educated members, who had served the church well, were admitted to the diaconate.

Until 1890, the Methodists accepted candidates with lower qualifications and usually sent these candidates to Healdtown or, later, to Lessyton for one year's study. Methodists and Anglicans with their hierarchical church order could easily appoint African clergy with lower educational qualifications and still provide for their supervision by a white, or later, better qualified African clergyman. The autonomy of congregations in the Reformed tradition did not easily allow for this

kind of supervision of their clergy. Reformed ministers were supposed to be capable of taking full charge of the affairs of their congregation.

The ambiguities of the African clergy in changing times

Since the African clergy were among the best educated in their communities and assumed leadership by virtue of their status, they were bound to represent (in some cases) a rival authority to the traditional chiefs. Even when they paid respect to their chiefs, they represented a new order. They were often treated with suspicion by both the traditional leaders and white missionaries. The former saw them as a threat to their own positions, while the latter suspected them of undermining their authority or even leading local sentiment against white missionaries.

During the second half of the nineteenth century fewer mission stations were founded, as colonial governments preferred to have administration of local African congregations pass into African hands. Existing mission stations were gradually changed into African locations.

For chiefs the mission stations, usually on the fringes of their territory, served as a buffer between them and hostile neighbouring tribes and a check against white colonial encroachment. Having a white missionary in their territory often had prestige value for lesser chiefs or for ambitious chiefs of sub-clans. A white missionary was sometimes the guarantee that government protection would be accessible in times of crisis.

African clergy or missionaries did not have the same value as white missionaries had for traditional chiefs. In addition, there was the inter-tribal conflict which naturally affected African clergy since they were identified with one of the two sides. Two examples from this period help to illustrate the ambiguity of the situation African clergy found themselves in.

Chief Mgudlwa and Reverend Sihlali

Mgudlwa, who in the early 1880s was establishing his authority over the Jamba, a subclan of the Thembu, had first approached the Congregationalists for a white missionary. His request denied, he then approached the Presbyterians (Mills, 1975:213). Then in 1882 he sought the help of James Reed (jun.) of the London Missionary Society and in return for a white missionary he promised a house, church and a contribution to his salary. The Congregational officials and Reed failed to get a white missionary for the Thembu chief and, instead, appointed Reverend S.P. Sihlali in 1886.

Sihlali had been the first African to pass the Cape University Matriculation examination. But he was a Mfengu, not a Thembu, a factor that did not count in his favour with the Thembu chief. Also, he was not white and Reed and CUSA had not handled his appointment correctly. For instance, the chief had not been

properly informed nor had Sihlali been properly introduced to the chief. Both the Thembus and many whites regarded Sihlali as being the second best appointee. Nevertheless, Chief Mgudlwa supported the African missionary in spite of the discontent among his people.

In spite of the gradual polarisation in the church between the Mfengu and Thembu, the looming split was averted until 1908 because of Sihlali's leadership ability and character and the support he received from the chief. That support ceased after September 1908, when Thembu nationalists caused a rift between Sihlali and the chief over their insistence that Thembu teachers be appointed at two Thembu schools, even if they were not adequately qualified. The Education Department consequently withdrew the school's grants. Sihlali had these grants restored only after proposing the appointment of two qualified Mfengu teachers. The Thembu then withdrew their children from the school, only to have the grants withdrawn again in 1910 because of an insufficient number of pupils at the school.

After the chief had sided with the Thembu cause, the division of the church along Thembu-Mfengu lines was unavoidable. The Thembus, who made up one tenth of the congregation, objected to the all-Mfengu leadership of the church. The chief himself was a Christian and member of the church, but the majority of his supporters and advisers were not.

After the school controversy and the schism, the strife continued, this time over which group had the right to the stone church building. The land had been given by Mgudlwa who had also assisted in raising some of the building funds locally. A substantial part of the funds had been raised by Sihlali in Britain in 1888 when he travelled there as the South African Congregational representative to the annual assembly of the Congregational Union of England and Wales. Sihlali, believing that the church belonged to the out-stations as well, elicited their financial help to pay off the building debt which in 1909 totalled £140. Since these out-stations were mainly Mfengu, the Thembus objected to what they understood to be yet another attempt at Mfengu control. Sihlali, with the chief now an antagonist, remained at the centre of the controversy that was not to be resolved for another 40 years. Sihlali's remarkable achievements were only really assessed after his death in 1919 when it was recorded that his congregation had (under his care) spread to cover over 100 square miles. Fourteen church buildings and out-stations and thirteen schools with 23 teachers had been established under his leadership (Mills, 1975:217).

Chief Mabandla and Elijah Makiwane

Another example of the ambiguity experienced by African clergy *vis-à-vis* traditional leadership is the case of Elijah Mkwane of the Free Church of Scotland (synod of Kaffraria) and Chief George Mabandla, who succeeded Jamangile as chief over the Hlubi, Dlambulo and Xesibe at the turn of the

century. Mabandla remained at the centre of the struggle between two Mfengu tribal factions until his death in 1910, after apparently going mad. In 1901 when the rivalry between the two groups became bitter, some seceded and joined Peter Mazimba's Presbyterian Church of Africa while others remained with the Free Church Mission. Makwane believed that the trouble was due to the chief's attempt to control church affairs and that the secession was the result of him getting his way. Mabandla too joined Mazimba and became embroiled in the Wee Free controversy. The Wee Frees were the small group that had refused to be part of the union of the Free Church of Scotland and the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland in 1900. This controversy was only to influence the South African Presbyterians after the arrival in Natal of the Wee Free missionary, Reverend Alexander Dewar in 1905. Many African Presbyterians in the Cape sided with the Wee Frees since they too had not been happy with the union, especially since the synod of Kaffraria (which had been an integral part of the Free Church of Scotland) was now only an associate body of the United Free Church. Furthermore, Mazimba who had not had the benefit of government support since his secession from the Kaffrarian synod in 1898, tried to gain ecclesiastical status with the Wee Frees. For the rest of his life the chief was to remain an antagonist of Makwane's. It is not clear what the reasons for this rivalry were. It could have been a combination of factors: factionalism, a personality clash and the secessionist reaffirmation of traditional leadership that led to the founding of so many of the African Independent Churches. What this case clearly illustrates is the implications which either the support or the antagonism of the chiefs would have for churches under African leadership.

Mission and the beginnings of the black struggle

The missionaries in the nineteenth century, especially those who shared liberal views, were among the leading humanitarians in the country. These missionaries were often the only spokespeople against the social and political injustices the disenfranchised black people suffered. They were the defenders of the "underdog", even if not all of them were protagonists of universal franchise or even of racial integration for that matter.

By the first decade of this century even well-meaning and benevolent white clergy still believed that Providence had bestowed on the white population in southern Africa the responsibility to be the guardians of the welfare of their black compatriots. For example, the editorial of *The Methodist Churchman* of 9 March 1907 in complimenting General Botha on having just made a speech seeking the reconciliation of English and Dutch, added: "It is only by keeping our eyes wide open to the best traits in the characters of the two peoples, who, in the order of Providence have been permitted to inherit this sunny land, that the breach which has so long separated us will be healed . . . As a united people we can be a power for good in this subcontinent. Divided, we shall accomplish little for ourselves,

and less for its dusky sons, in whose interests, quite as much as in our own, we are permitted to be here."

In the Cape, the only province where a liberal political tradition of any importance existed, the lobby for universal franchise was especially strong during the elections of 1898 and 1904. The call for "equal rights for all civilised men" was primarily intended for the British government, which wanted the Cape franchise to remain even after the unification of the provinces. Events such as the 1906 unrest in Cape Town and the upheaval in Natal in that same year, and in South West Africa two years earlier, drew the attention of whites to what could happen if Africans were not granted direct political representation.

By the 1910s many of the Cape liberals found themselves in the anomalous position that the franchise could not be withdrawn, yet they found it difficult to imagine Africans sitting in parliament, sharing equal status with them. This ambivalence in the Cape at the turn of the century is quite understandable, for it was only ten years since the first working class candidate (albeit of the same race) had managed to be elected to the British parliament (Trapido, 1980:257), hence the hesitance of educationists and missionaries to hand authority to African teachers and clergy.

Yet there were other Christian missionaries who adopted quite a different attitude to the local people. They clearly perceived the folly of white paternalism and the urgency of African social and economic emancipation. Because they dared act out their beliefs contrary to the 'social script' written by the dominant white community (church, state and the marketplace alike) they suffered rejection and hardship at the hands of their own race. Henriette Emily Colenso is a representative example of this type of Christian missionary.

Henriette Colenso and her mission in Natal

She was the eldest child of the well-known and equally controversial Bishop of Natal, John Colenso. Her solidarity with the Zulus in Natal earned her their trust and she had an influence among them which no other white person in South Africa at the time exercised. She took over from her father, who died in 1883, as supporter of the struggle of the African population in Natal and Zululand. She was 79 years old when in 1907 she helped defend Dinizulu against the Natal colonial government. Much of her time was also spent in the struggle to preserve the autonomy and continued existence of the Church of England in Natal.

As a woman she could not assume leadership of the Church of England in Natal herself. Nevertheless, behind the scenes, she lobbied for a successor to her father and took charge of the Church of England's mission station. Henriette failed in her attempt to maintain the autonomy of the Church of England in Natal. In February 1910, with the passing of the Church Properties Act (Act IX of 1910), about 20 000 acres belonging to the Church of England (property which she was helping to administer), had to be handed over to the Church of

the Province of South Africa. For her efforts, she incurred the antipathy of both the government of Natal and the Church of the Province, for they considered her a dangerous agitator of the local people. Consequently, in 1910 she and her sister were moved from their mission station in Bishopstowe to Pietermaritzburg and given a government annuity of £150. Bishop Barnes, the Anglican bishop of Natal at the time, felt that her friendship with and influence over the local Zulu residents at Bishopstowe would hinder the reunification of the Anglican Church in Natal.

Among white South Africans at the turn of the century, there were two predominant attitudes on how to deal with black South Africans on a political level. In the Cape, liberals advocated an integrationist policy. The other, more widespread view, was the well-used "divide and rule" policy (Marks, 1970:400). Henriette Colenso advocated neither. In the context of her work in Natal, she affirmed the need to maintain the cultural integrity of the Zulu people alongside allowing freehold tenure and the franchise to those who wanted it. For instance, she rigorously defended the rights and status of the local chiefs and arranged for the defense of Cetshwayo and Dinizulu when they were tried for treason, and for lesser chiefs such as Langalibalele in 1874 and Tilonko during the uprisings of 1906. Her solidarity with the African people and their traditional leadership earned her the kind of trust enjoyed by few white people in South African history. In the aftermath of the crushed Zulu resistance in 1906, it was to Henriette that Bambata's second in command, Cakijana, went for refuge. She not only accompanied him to the police but provided for his legal aid (Marks, 1963:407).

When Dinizulu, to whom she had been an adviser, was on trial for treason, she secured for his legal defense the services of Harry Escombe and W.P. Schreiner, among the best advocates available in South Africa. She paid for Dinizulu's defense from her rapidly dwindling finances, to ensure that he was tried fairly.

Her appreciation for the cultural continuity of traditional Zulu life meant that she held views quite different from those of many other white missionaries at the time. For instance, she did not consider polygamy or *lobola* to be entirely unacceptable if understood within the framework of Zulu socio-cultural tradition. Also, unlike her fellow missionaries, she did not class all African independent churches as "Ethiopian" or interpret "Ethiopian" to imply African political resistance, as was the custom at the time.

Several African leaders sought her guidance and friendship. Among them were several well-known leaders who were to be associated with the founding of the SANNC in 1912, including John Dube, Dr Pixley Seme, Sol T. Plaatje and Saul Masane. Another who sought her council was Martin Lutuli, the uncle of Albert Lutuli, a prominent figure at the American Board Mission at Groutville. In 1908, he was made chief of the Groutville Reserve. The early policies of the SANNC, the body that was to become the African National Congress, which

strove to be multiracial, tolerant and non-violent, may be attributed in part at least to her influence among these early leaders of the African struggle in South Africa. She, in fact, at the time grasped the importance the founding of the SANNC in 1912 would have in the future. She wrote: "... I want to be sure that you realise how much more important a fact than even the Lands Act is the existence of the Congress. Before the Abantu were dumb, now they have found their voice and John Dube has largely helped in finding it" (Marks, 1963:410).

Christian mission and the Kolwe: The case of Natal and Zululand

In 1850 there were 11 missionary bodies in South Africa. By 1904 the number had grown to 30. About 20 of these societies undertook mission in Natal. By the turn of the century, there were about 40 000 communicants and 100 000 'adherents' to Christianity among the black population in Natal. About 175 000 acres had been set aside for these mission societies and the vast majority of these African Christians lived on the mission reserves, in communities of 'Kolwe' (believers) led by traditional chiefs. The Kolwe were mainly peasant farmers, although as the century progressed the numbers who were employed in the towns, albeit in mainly lowly jobs, steadily increased.

The main sphere of missionary service, by the turn of the century, was in education. In 1901 there were 196 government-aided schools in Natal with a total of 11 031 pupils (Marks, 1970:55). These schools were mainly small 'bush' schools run by the mission stations, headed by a white missionary and under the control of government inspectors. There were then already glaring discrepancies in the funds allocated per pupil. In 1906 the government subsidy per head of population for whites was 17s 4d; for 'coloured' 5s 9d; Indians 1s 1d and Africans 2d. The Christian missions mainly contributed towards making up for the shortfall from their own funds.

Also, the disparate financing of education reflected the general view among white settlers in Natal that education interfered with the "African's role to provide labour" for the farms and industries in Natal. Missionary sponsorship of education was heavily criticised for stirring up discontent and rebellion. Mission, it was believed, promoted the idea of equality between white and black, which assisted neither the economy of Natal nor the welfare of the black labourers who (said the critics of mission) at least had food as long as they worked for the white farmers. Therefore, the plan of the Roman Catholic Church mission by the Trappists at Marianhill, to set up an industrial school to give vocational training to Africans was better received by the white society. Racial feelings ran high. Fear of black rivalry in the marketplace came to the fore, and even social mixing was frowned upon. Hence, for example, although Natal had conditional franchise, in practice very few Africans were granted the vote.

In spite of the breakdown of the Zulu monarchy after the Anglo-Zulu War, Zululand still remained largely in the hands of the traditional leader and Christian

mission did not have much success. In fact, it was only in the 1890s that missions of any importance took root in Zululand, when the Anglicans and Swedish, Norwegian and Lutheran Societies arrived. The Methodist Church, the largest church with a strong missionary focus, only started its mission in Zululand in 1903.

The Natal government did not encourage mission. In 1895 it introduced legislation to control the use of mission reserves. This legislation was not applied, however, only because of the protest of the American Zulu Mission, which owned a large share of these lands. But in September 1903, the Missions Reserves Act (Act 44) introduced new controls. It enabled the Natal Native Trust to take over the administration of the mission reserves and a tax of £3 was levied on every inhabitant of the reserves.

Both the inhabitants of the mission reserves and the mission stations, which received about half of this tax to manage the reserves, considered the tax too high. The tax also created tension between the missionaries and those paying it. The tax itself was intended to be a means of controlling the social mobility and political aspirations of the Kolwe. In the words of the minister of Native Affairs in 1903, Act 44 would "check and if possible stop a movement in this colony amongst natives which was growing very quickly ... of throwing off white control and achieving ... independence and self-government, presumably in the first instance in a matter of Church control but no doubt ultimately also policy" (Marks, 1970:78). By giving the missions half of the proceeds of the tax, the government of Natal made them co-beneficiaries and therefore co-responsible for their policy of control.

Act 44 of 1903 led to further curbs. Six African places of worship were dismantled by the authorities because these congregations with their own black 'ministers' were not under the control of a resident white missionary. There were about 20 Natal Africans studying in the USA in 1906. Curbs were placed on the black American ministers who were in Natal and who were seen as instigators of local black political agitation. African preachers of the American Zulu Mission, who openly criticised socio-political injustices against local black people, were not granted marriage officers' licenses. The reason given for refusing the African Congregational Church official recognition was that it was not recognised as part of the official church and was classed as "Ethiopian".

Natal had conditional franchise but, to qualify an African had to be resident in Natal for 12 years and had to show proof of owning property and having a "civilised way of life". Ultimately the franchise was left to the discretion of the governor. By 1910 only six Africans had been granted the franchise.

Many of the missionaries complained and protested against these controls, with little success. The interdenominational Natal Missionary Society sent several deputations to the government and at its conference in 1905 complained that the new controls impeded their mission work and education programmes. The government, nonetheless, appears to have had widespread support among the

white settlers who persisted in their belief even after South African War that education made the local black people 'lazy'.

The Kolwe were in a difficult and ambiguous situation. In spite of having converted to Christianity and many having met the conditions for exemption from the "Native Law" (Law 28 of 1865), they were not granted the exemption. By 1904 barely 2 000 had managed to gain this exemption.. The vast majority remained under the jurisdiction of traditional chiefs who were not Christians. They also came under traditional law which had repercussions for their marital status and the inheritance of their children. On the other hand, the few who were exempted from traditional law encountered numerous discriminatory laws simply because they were black.

The disturbances of 1906 further exacerbated the position of the Kolwe. The rebellion was in fact led by the chiefs but the participation of African Christians and "Ethiopians" was greatly exaggerated as it had been, for instance, in John Buchan's *Prester John*, published in 1910. Only 5% of the rebel prisoners captured by July 1907 were Christians. Among these, seven were preachers from the Independent churches, not from the mission churches (Marks, 1970:214). Among those who joined Bambata in the Nkandla forest were Moses Mbele, who had formed his own church called *Ibandla lika Mosi* after leaving the Dutch Reformed Church mission with about 100 followers in the 1890s. Almost all of the adherents at the Nazareth Mission station of the Lutheran Hermannsburg mission under Reverend Dedeland joined the rebels as well (Marks, 1970:329). A fair number from the Wesleyan mission, accompanied by two of their preachers, also rebelled (Marks, 1970:330). Nevertheless, the vast majority did not join the rebellion. The Kolwe were as divided in their attitude towards the rebellion as Africans in Natal generally were. It is as farfetched to brand them as a group of political agitators as it would be to assume that the Bambata rebellion represented the uprising of all Zulus against the Natal government.

The main achievement of mission education was the sense of independence it gave its black converts. This new-found independence manifested mainly in two ways: Africans formed their own political organisations and established their own churches. This secessionist tendency was partly the result of an emerging indigenous leadership hitherto suppressed within the established churches, and partly a backlash to the extension of white rule, the defeat of the Zulu nation, the South African War that simply ignored their presence in the country and the influence of people like Joseph Booth. Booth, a missionary in Central Africa, had visited Natal in August 1896 and had proposed the formation of an African Christian Union to win back 'Africa for the Africans'. Although such a scheme found very little support in Natal, it certainly inspired local leaders.

The best known independent church from this period is that which was founded by M.M. Makone, who had seceded from the Methodist Church. J.M. Dwane, who had served as a minister in the Methodist Church for 13 years, left to join Makone after a dispute with the white leadership of the church over the

measure of autonomy over his own work. A natural leader, he had initiated the establishment of an educational institution and raised money for it but in terms of the Methodist constitution was required to pay this money into the central fund. While centralisation had obvious financial benefits for the church and its mission, it left no room for individual initiatives of this kind. When strong individual leadership emerged along the lines not unfamiliar to traditional African society, the centralised constitution of the church tended to inhibit rather than promote individual initiative.

Dwane was sent to the USA to affiliate the Ethiopian Church with the African Methodist Episcopal Church, but he then sought to have his church accepted as an order of the Anglican Church. The Bishop of Grahamstown duly established the Order of Ethiopia, which proved to be a most ingenuous way of containing African independence within the church. Dwane was made the first Provincial in 1908 and four African clergy were also ordained. By 1910, 1 400 had been confirmed and the Order had 5 000 members in the Cape. The African Methodist Church recorded about 6 000 members in 1903 with about 200 workers (ordained and unordained).

Several other African Independent Churches were established in the first decade of this century. By 1906, those who had left the Free Church of Scotland and the Wesleyan Methodists joined Ngidi Mbiyane's church which had been founded when a group seceded from the American Zulu Mission in the 1880s. By 1906 Simungu Bafazini Shibe, who had left the American Zulu Mission in 1896, had established churches in Table Mountain, Amanzimtoti, Umsinga, Dannhauser and Utrecht. P.J. Mzimba's "Presbyterian Church of Africa" by Mzimba's own estimate, had about 20 000 adherents and 6 500 communicants by 1903 (Du Plessis, 1965:458).

During 1903 and 1904 the South African Native Affairs Commission was convened to investigate, *inter alia*, the widespread concern about 'Ethiopianism' and the reasons for the growing lobby to suppress the movement. It concluded that these independent churches were the result of "a desire for ecclesiastical self-support and self-control". While the Commission did not consider ecclesiastical independence "unassociated with mischievous political propaganda" harmful, it cautioned that "the aspiration after religious independence in (a subject race) ... might be fraught with the seeds of racial mistrust and discontent".

Besides the need for religious independence, mission education also helped produce a new class of black South Africans with definite political aspirations. In 1899 Martin Lutuli, Saul Msane and Josiah Gumede met with Henriette Colenso to discuss the founding of an African political organisation. Almost all the leaders of the Natal Native Congress (NNC), which first met in July 1900, and of the "Iliso le-Sizwe Esimnyama", which was founded in 1908, were members of missionary societies. These included Stephen Mini, Saul Msane and Mark Radeba of the Methodist Mission; B. Cele and S. Nyongwane of the United Free

Church of Scotland Mission and Martin Lutuli, P.J. Gumede and John Dube of the American Zulu Mission. The NNC aimed to create a platform to air the grievances of the black population of Natal, on the pattern of Gandhi's Natal Indian Congress, founded in 1894. Its founders sponsored *Ipepa lo Hlanga*, a paper edited by the local Methodist preacher, Mark Radeba, and published by Chief Isaac Mkize and James Mjozi. This paper was soon closed down because it carried 'inflammatory letters'. It was replaced by John Dube's Zulu and English paper, *Ilanga lase Natal*. Dube used this newspaper to draw attention to the socio-economic plight of Africans. Since he was exempt from 'Native Law', it was difficult for the government to deal harshly with him.

John Dube: Christian statesman

John Dube, the second son of James Dube, was pastor of the American Zulu Mission at Inanda until 1908 when he resigned from the pastorate, but not from the mission. He had been in conflict with the white missionaries of the mission ever since he returned from his fund-raising tour of the USA in 1905. He was accused of being an 'Ethiopian' (i.e. a political agitator) and was considered by most of the white population of Natal to be a 'trouble-maker'. He was kept under police surveillance after he returned from his second trip to the USA. During the South African war he was detained because he had expressed the view that Africans should rule. Dube and the other pioneers of the black struggle for political rights were almost all associated with the church. The mission not only gave them their only opportunity at the time to acquire an education, but the Christianity which the government confessed allegiance to, was also that which steeled African leaders to oppose that government and its oppression. Described as the South African Booker T. Washington (Hunt-Davies, 1975), he believed that the way to change the sorry state of black South Africans was through education, the adoption of Christian values, working through whites sympathetic with the black struggle and through Western-type political organisations (Marks, 1975:180). Dube first made contact with Washington in March 1897 and by 1910 Dube's work had been endorsed by Washington. In accepting his election to the presidency of the SANNC in 1912, he wrote: "I take for my motto . . . *Festina lente*: Hasten slowly; and for my patron saint I select that great and edifying man, Booker Washington" (Hunt-Davies, 1975:497).

Dube was not the only African leader to have had an appreciation for Washington's programme of spiritual and social upliftment of black people. So did John Tengo Jabavu, editor of the Eastern Province Xhosa-English paper *Imvo Zabantsundu*, his son D.D.T. Jabavu who spent time at Tuskegee in 1913 to study this college's approach to education for his work at Fort Hare, and Reverend P.J. Mzimba who had kept up a correspondence with Washington. Those in the SANNC who were also influenced by Washington were Pixley ka

Izaka Seme, who visited Tuskegee in 1906 and who convened the inaugural meeting of the SANNC and Sol T. Plaatje, its first secretary.

In August 1901 Dube founded the Ohlange Institute to put into practice what he had observed at Washington's institute at Tuskegee. Dube's wife was given the task of promoting the work of the school. Dube held a remarkably progressive view for his time, namely, that it was impossible to "raise Zulu men to any very high standard unless we show them that they are not superior to the woman" (Hunt-Davies, 1975:506).

His school was entirely in the hands of Zulus themselves and funded by them with the assistance of overseas supporters. It did not have to depend on the local churches or mission for its administration. Dube made trips to the USA in 1904/1905, 1910 and in 1926/1927 to raise funds. It was in his educational work and not primarily politically that Dube was most influenced by Washington. Nevertheless, although Washington may have inspired the founding of Ohlange, the American Zulu Mission in which he was raised must have played a role as well. Even before he went on his visit to Tuskegee, printing, shoe-making, blacksmithing, bee-keeping, bricklaying, bookkeeping, bookbinding and cartography were being taught at the Educational Institute of the American Zulu Mission at Amanzimtoti in Natal (Marks, 1975:168).

There were at least three main emphases in Dube's work. Firstly, he was an educator and much of his energy went into making the Ohlange Institute viable. Secondly, he was a political leader and was among those who protested against the 1913 Native's Land Act. He accompanied the delegation to London in 1914 to protest to the British government. Thirdly, he sought peaceful coexistence between black and white South Africans, taking part in the Smuts Native Conferences (only for a few years before he left because it had no real power), the Joint Council Movement in the 1920s and church conferences. In 1926 he was part of the South African delegation to the international missionary conference at Le Zoute in Belgium.

Because of his gradualist approach to political change and his rejection of violence to effect change, Dube has been criticised for not going far enough or for not confronting the government more agressively (Roux, 1964:100, 288). However, Dube must be assessed in the context of the first two decades of this century and the "Afrophobic" climate that existed at the time. In that context, his incessant appeal for equal rights and justice, his attempt to unify the black voice and his criticism of the white mission boards was nothing less than revolutionary. Otherwise he would not have elicited from the governor of Natal in 1906 the response that he was "a pronounced Ethiopian who ought to be watched" (Marks, 1975:164–165).

In 1917 Dube was not re-elected to the presidency of the congress. For most of the rest of his career he led the Natal branch of Congress. From 1936 until he

died he represented Natal on the Native Representative Council and was succeeded by Chief Albert Lutuli.

The general missionary councils

As with the international ecumenical movement in this century, it was the missionaries who paved the way for inter-church contact in South Africa as well. In 1860 an interdenominational meeting of some 400 delegates from the different churches was convened by the Dutch Reformed Church at Worcester. This meeting resulted in several inter-church gatherings in other centres in South Africa. In Natal, the American Board Mission (ABM) convened a conference in 1881 to discuss the problems that missionary societies were experiencing. This meeting led to the founding of the Natal Missionary Conference.

In 1902, soon after the South African War, two ABM missionaries, J.B. Bridgeman from Durban and H.D. Goodenough from Johannesburg, were given the task to liaise with other missionaries in South Africa and encourage cooperation among them. Their efforts led to the establishment of the General Missionary Conference.

The first of eight meetings of the General Missionary Conference (GMC) took place on 13 July 1904, six years before the decisive international General Missionary Conference at Edinburgh (1910) which was to lead to the founding of the International Missionary Council in 1921. Eighty delegates from 21 missionary societies attended the first GMC meeting in Johannesburg. James Stewart of the United Free Church of Scotland at Lovedale was elected its first president. At this inaugural meeting the GMC defined its five aims as: promoting cooperation among missionary societies; encouraging the evangelisation of the local people; enlightening public opinion about Christian mission; influencing legislation in the interest of disenfranchised black South Africans and encouraging African Christian communities to be self-supporting and self-propagating.

The majority of the societies represented at the first meeting were from overseas. Ministers from the Dutch Reformed Church were also present. Membership was open to all 'Protestant European' missionaries and superintendents even if they had already retired, officials of all mission boards who worked south of the Zambezi and Kunene Rivers and African ministers sent by their churches and societies 'represented by European missionaries'.

Seven other meetings of the GMC were held in 1906, 1909, 1912, 1921, 1925, 1928 and 1932. These meetings offered opportunities for missionaries and the societies to have at least some contact with one another but outside these meetings very little was achieved. The noble resolutions of the conference failed to achieve any significant practical effects. However, what the GMC did achieve was to prepare the way for the establishment of the Christian Council of South Africa and eventually the South African Council of Churches.

The Christian Zion Church in South Africa

The rise of a new group of African independent churches and the birth of Pentecostalism in South Africa were both to be influenced by the founding of the Zion Church.

In the early 1890s Petrus L. le Roux decided that he would be a missionary to the Zulus after his studies were completed. In 1893 he was ordained *eerwaarde* at Wakkerstroom in the eastern Transvaal.

During his studies at Wellington, Le Roux came under the influence of his teacher Andrew Murray. Murray influenced his decision to be a missionary and he took part in Le Roux's ordination in 1893. He also influenced Le Roux's interest in holiness theology and served as his confidante and adviser during the controversies that led to Le Roux's eventual resignation from the Dutch Reformed Church.

Le Roux's mission in Wakkerstroom rapidly achieved results. Within seven years he had 2 000 members. He ascribed these successes to the "good, earnest native preachers" who came to his church from other denominations such as the Methodists and Anglicans. Le Roux had three full-time evangelists, 46 *abashumayeli* (lay preachers) and several "home visitors" (De Wet, 1989).

Among the leading African Christians that Le Roux worked with was David Nkonyhane, a Swazi who pioneered his own Christian congregation. Nkonyhane had assisted the congregation to pay for the erection of its church building without any white or outside help. He later formed the Christian Catholic Apostolic Holy Spirit Church in Zion while his brother, Stephen, pioneered the mission to Swaziland (Oosthuizen, 1987:22).

Another African church pioneer associated with Le Roux's work was Muneli Ngobese, an evangelist, who established his own farm community and erected a church (that seated 200) with no help other than that provided by his flock.

Le Roux's interest in divine healing, which began under Murray's influence, was deepened by his friendship with a Swiss pietist, Johannes Büchler, who had gathered together a congregation in Johannesburg in 1895. Büchler resigned from the ministry of the Congregational Union of South Africa and established a 'divine healing home'. By 1897, when Büchler sought affiliation with the Catholic Church in Zion, he had already added 25 new baptised members to his congregation.

The Christian Catholic Apostolic Church had been founded a year earlier by John Alexander Dowie (1847–1907) in Zion City, Illinois, just north of Chicago. Dowie, an immigrant to the US from Australia had formerly been a member of the Congregational Church. He left that church to found an independent church in Melbourne in 1883 where he emphasised divine healing. His church in Zion, which began with about 500 members, was to continue placing emphasis on healing and holy living. His healing campaigns attracted wide attention in the US and his church paper *Leaves of healing* which he started on 31 August 1874,

carried news of his church and its message beyond Illinois. A Dutch version circulated in Holland and South Africa.

In 1897 Büchler, Le Roux's friend, began writing to Dowie and eventually affiliated his congregation with the Zion Church. He then held several healing services in white homes in Jeppestown, Johannesburg. Büchler was soon made the overseer of the interests of the Christian Catholic Church of Zion in South Africa. In 1897 Büchler began a mission to Africans and a year later *Leaves of healing* reported that he "was extending the work among Boers in the Orange Free State and the Cape Colony". Büchler emphasised the Zion Church's teaching of divine healing and holy living, which included eschewing liquor and cigarettes.. After meeting Büchler, Le Roux and his wife also decided not to use medicines again.

After visiting Zion City at Dowie's invitation, and observing what he described as "the sycophantic cult encouraged by Dowie" (Sundkler, 1976(b):144) Büchler left the Zion Church. He changed the name of his church to "Apostolic Faith Mission" to avoid any association with Dowie's church.

Le Roux, on the other hand, remained attracted to Dowie's interpretation of holiness and especially its emphasis on divine healing. In October 1901 the DRC mission board 'tried' Le Roux on four of his teachings: his repudiation of doctors and medicines, the eating of meat, the use of tobacco and infant baptism. Le Roux reluctantly left the Dutch Reformed Church in March 1903. He and his wife continued as missionaries of the Zion Church in Wakkerstroom for the next five years, in spite of opposition from some local Afrikaners.

Daniel Bryant, with Nicholas B. Rideout and their families arrived in South African on 22 April 1904, having been commissioned by Dowie as overseer of Zion congregations in South Africa. By 1904 there were already Zion congregations in Uitenhage, Volksrust, Durban, Johannesburg and an associated church in the Free State, headed by Edgar Mahon. Le Roux met with Bryant in Durban. Subsequently, during a baptismal service in the Snake River at Wakkerstroom, Le Roux and his wife were re-baptised by threefold immersion. He was appointed an 'elder' and his wife an 'evangelist' in the Zion Church of South Africa. Four hundred Africans from his former DRC mission followed him to the Zion Church.

Bryant's impressions of these African Christians are interesting. In a report published in the *Leaves of healing* he describes them as "well educated and endowed with exceptional intellectual power" and compares that with the impression that other missionaries had of the local population ". . . impudence, laziness and beggary . . ." The Zion Church required its members to tithe and their local black congregations were almost entirely self-supporting and self-propagating whereas, in Bryant's view, the missionaries of the established churches came to their churches 'with gifts.' Zion made "steady, honest labourers who live to pay their tithes" while the latter "made beggars" (Oosthuizen, 1987:18). These impressions provide glimpses of how the early

Pentecostals must have viewed themselves against other Christians of the time.

By 1905 the Zion Church had about 5 000 members, the majority of whom were African. Bryant by then concentrated his efforts on white people (both English and Afrikaners) in Johannesburg and Pretoria. The *Leaves of healing* gained a circulation in both British and boer camps and among boer soldiers in exile in Ceylon. Le Roux and Edgar Mahon headed the mission to Africans. Mahon had since moved from Harrismith to found a church settlement at Kalkoenkrantz and undertook evangelistic 'tent services' as part of his preaching to Africans in the Free State (Mahon, 1986).

In the meantime, Dowie's church in Zion City underwent great upheaval. Dowie claimed to be Elijah the Restorer. By the end of his life he was thought to be quite deluded and many within his church rejected him.

'Zion' gets its pentecost

The arrival of four Pentecostal missionaries in South Africa on 15 May 1908 led to the Zion church receiving the Pentecostal message of "baptism in the Holy Spirit subsequent to baptism with water and evidenced by the 'speaking in tongues' (glossolalia) after the experience of the first Christians on the day of Pentecost".

The four missionaries were John G. Lake (1870–1935), Thomas Hezmelhalch, a Miss Sackett and A. Lehman. Lake and Hezmelhalch were preachers in holiness churches and had at one time also been associated with Dowie's church in Zion City. They received the 'Pentecostal experience' i.e. baptism by the Holy Spirit with glossolalia, and left Dowie's church, sold their businesses and became missionaries to Africa. Lehman had been to South Africa before and knew a little Zulu. Lake knew Bryant for it was Bryant who had invited him to the country. They did not meet, because for at the same time that Lake was travelling to South Africa, Bryant was returning to the US.

Lake began holding services among Africans in Doornfontein in Johannesburg. These healing services attracted large numbers and within a short while about 1 000 people attended each night of the 'healing campaign' services (Du Plessis, 1938:2–4). Among the attendants were several white persons, many of whom were from the Zion Church and the established churches. Many Afrikaners from the Dutch Reformed Church also attended. The initial intention of these Pentecostal missionaries was not to form another church, but to begin a religious 'revival' in the established churches. However, having grown in size, this Doornfontein congregation took over the 600-seater Zion tabernacle in Bree Street, Johannesburg, which had been rented from the Presbyterian church and was to become the headquarters of the Apostolic Faith Mission. Zion's deficiency, they judged, was that it did not preach 'Pentecost' (Lindsay, 1952:35). It was a multiracial church where English, Afrikaners, Zulus and Sotho worshipped together. Reports of the work in this period mention several healings

and conversions of "hooligans and drunkards". The church mainly reached out to the poor and socially uprooted whites, a large number of whom were Afrikaners, flocking to the city after the devastation of the South African War. Africans in Johannesburg by this stage had already been urbanised for several years. Büchler stood aloof from this Pentecostal church but Le Roux left Zion and joined Lake's Pentecostal Church.

There was great confusion after Le Roux left his African Zion congregation in Wakkerstroom. Many of his members went with him but several seceded to form their own African-led Zion churches. Much of the crisis experienced by African Zionists was directly or indirectly connected with Le Roux's departure (Sundkler, 1976(b):53). One direct result of Le Roux's departure was the development of a new type of African independent church along the lines of the slightly older Ethiopian type of independent churches, the latter being mainly secessions from the mission churches of the established churches. Those who followed Le Roux into the Pentecostal Church remained the Zion branch of the Church (Sundkler, 1976:54). Over the years Africans came to secede from this church as well to form their own churches. Hence with the African Zionist family of independent churches, there are those who have a lineage linked to the Zion congregation in Wakkerstroom and those who may be traced to the Zion Church of Pentecost. Alongside other African cultural features the former display 'holiness theology' features plus all or some of the Zion Churches' emphases on healing and abstinence from alcohol, tobacco and the eating of meat. The latter, over and above these features, display distinctly Pentecostal features.

The Apostolic Faith Mission (NB)

On 2 March 1909, five elders, Hezmalhalch, Lake, Lehman, Van der Wall and Elliot, were appointed to the executive committee of the mission. All were in full-time service without remuneration. On May 27 that same year the following people were elected to the executive committee to represent the AFM in South Africa: president: Tom Hezmalhalch; vice-president: John G. Lake; treasurer: H.M. Turney; secretary: J.H.L. Schumann and members: Lehman, Van der Wall and Eliott (De Wet, 1989:82).

In 1910 this church was registered with the government as the "Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa" (Hollenweger, 1972:120). At a meeting held in Johannesburg on 4 October 1912, a draft constitution for the new church was tabled and on 2 August that same year it was adopted. Besides elders and missionaries, the additional offices of pastor, evangelists and deacons were created.

This church was nonracial at the beginning but as it developed it concentrated on the white section of the population even though it had been predominantly black when it was founded. After a while Lehman, who came with Lake, held separate services for blacks because "of a language difficulty".

Elias Letwaba (b ±1870) was an outstanding black evangelist in the AFM at this time. He grew up in a Christian home and decided on the ministry at the age of 14. He trained in the Lutheran Berlin mission and served the Bapedi for 19 years. He lived with Lake in his home for a while and travelled with Lake and Hezmelhalch to Bloemfontein in February 1909, where he received his "Pentecostal experience". He joined the AFM and by 1913 was heading a thriving mission. He and D.S. Mokwena were the AFM's first African marriage officers' licensees in 1921. In 1930 he founded the Patmos Bible School without financial assistance from a white church.

The 'new gospel' did not break down the wall of racial separation or dilute anti-black feelings in South Africa. Lake appears to have favoured segregated congregations (Lindsay, 1952:22). In 1908 this church decided that "the baptism of Natives shall in future take place after the baptism of white people". A year later it decided that there would be different baptisms for white, coloured and black members. The black church was given a white superintendent and white and black branches were required to have financial autonomy. White superintendency of the African branch was also a governmental prerequisite.

In 1911 Hezmelhalch and Lake clashed over the latter's "domineering ways" (Sundkler, 1976(b):54; Lindsay VIII) and left the AFM. In 1913 Lake left South Africa permanently.

Le Roux was elected president from 1915 until his death in 1943 and from the beginning of this appointment concentrated on the white section of the AFM but retained supervision of the African mission at Wakkerstroom. However, this mission was left very much on its own. Some of his best Zulu co-workers "left him or felt he had left them" (Sundkler, 1976(b):55). Daniel Nkoyane, Elijah Mahlangu and others founded their own churches.

The Full Gospel Church (NB)

What was to become the Full Gospel Church in Southern Africa, in its early years evolved around two Pentecostal preachers, A.H. Cooper and George Bowie.

Cooper visited the Cape as a sailor in 1901 and decided to stay. He fought in the South African War. He was converted during Gypsy Smith's meetings in the Market Square in Cape Town and joined a Presbyterian church for a while. He received his 'Pentecostal' experience in 1907. He had been receiving the *Apostolic Papers*, a newspaper from Azusa Street, and was thus acquainted with the Pentecostal message even before Lake's arrival in South Africa. Cooper also stressed divine healing. He joined Lake and the AFM in 1908 and worked with Le Roux for about a year. He took a leading role in this new church and was elected to its first Council in that year. The following year tensions emerged between Cooper and the other leaders of the AFM and he was not re-elected to the seven member council. He left the AFM to establish a mission in the Middelburg district. Here he worked with R.M. Turney, one of the pioneers of

the Assemblies of God in South Africa. Turney handed over to Cooper the care of the congregation he had founded a little earlier in Pretoria (Mullan, 1979).

George Bowie, who received his 'Pentecostal experience' in J.H. Boddy's church in Homestead in the USA, joined an independent Pentecostal group, the Bethel Pentecostal Mission. At the end of 1909 he left for South Africa as a missionary and with another immigrant Pentecostal missionary, Eleazer Jenkins, founded the "Pentecostal Mission" here in April, 1910 (Du Plessis, 1979:15). Jenkins had been influenced by the Welsh revival in 1904 and received "the baptism of the Holy Spirit" shortly after. Jenkins arrived in South Africa on 20 July 1905 and joined Bowie. In 1910 Bowie and Jenkins invited Cooper to join the "Pentecostal Mission", thus uniting the missions (*South and Central African Pentecostal Herald*, Jan 1913, 13, 32). Later, in 1916, the Pretoria congregation under Cooper seceded from the Pentecostal Mission and called itself the Full Gospel Church (Du Plessis, 1979:30). In October 1920 the groups reunited under the name Full Gospel Church.

The Assemblies of God in South Africa

This church came into being when several autonomous congregations and missions amalgamated. The earliest of these congregations was founded by Charles William Chawner of the Canadian Pentecostal Mission Society, who arrived in South Africa in March 1907. He was an itinerant missionary at De Aar, Ladysmith, Wenen and in Zululand. He spent two years at Vryheid, preaching also at Morgenson in the southeastern Transvaal and for brief periods in Johannesburg and Pretoria.

In 1908 a missionary couple, R.M. Turney and his wife, arrived to conduct a Pentecostal mission in South Africa. Turney had been a Baptist minister in the USA and became a Pentecostal in 1906. The Turneys started a mission station in the Middelburg district and were joined by Hannah A. James who began mission work among the Pedi people.

When the Assemblies of God was formed in the USA in 1914, the Turneys applied for and received from that body their ministerial status (Hollenweger, 1972:221). Soon after, they registered their mission in South Africa under the name "Assemblies of God". Other Pentecostal missionaries joined them. These included J.H. Law, A. Richards and her son John, who later became a pastor in this church, and J.H. Bennet from the Assemblies of God in England. Throughout this stage of its history the church worked almost entirely among black South Africans and its mission was greatly assisted by the black evangelists themselves.

While from 1914 this mission was affiliated to the Assemblies of God in the USA, in 1925 it became an independent district and in 1932 became autonomous. Several other independent white congregations and missions then joined this church. Among the first congregations to affiliate after the separation from

the Assemblies of God in the USA was W.F. Mullan's congregation in 1936; the Emmanuel Mission, which was started by C.A. Chawner (son of C.W. Chawner) and H.C. Phillips joined in 1937. This later amalgamation brought leaders of the Emmanuel Mission such as H.C. Phillips, Nicholas Bhengu and Alfred Gumede into fellowship with the Pentecostal missionaries of the Assemblies of God. Nicholas Bhengu was to become a pioneer in the Assemblies of God and eventually headed a large church among black South Africans, with congregations mainly in the Eastern Province and Natal. In 1980 his church formed the single largest congregation within the Assemblies of God family of churches (Dubb, 1976).

From 1936 onwards, the number of white congregations steadily increased and the church had to deal with the question of race, as this affected who would lead the church. It, as the other Pentecostal churches had done, decided on the racial separation of the churches. White and African sections functioned independently of each other (Hollenweger, 1972:122).

The three oldest Pentecostal churches in South Africa, namely the AFM, the Full Gospel Church and the Assemblies of God, all began as independent missions, at first mainly to black South Africans, and steadily grew into fully-fledged denominations. With this development their initial revivalist nature, which lasted well into the second decade of this century, was somewhat muted. However, it was refuelled again by new congregations joining, by new leaders emerging, visiting revivalist preachers mainly from the USA and most often, by small groups seceding and reaffirming their original stance on holiness, divine healing and Spirit-baptism. A characteristic of all these early Pentecostal missions was the leading role black evangelists played in their development. The adoption of apartheid policies within these church organisations often meant that the full contribution of these black pioneers was not recognised. Also, under white supervision these black evangelists had little room to assume leadership and many of them later left to found their own churches. The numerous African Indigenous churches with 'Apostolic' or 'Pentecostal' in their names had their roots in the churches that these black pioneers established after leaving the white-led Pentecostal denominations.

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As a cultural and political phenomenon, a specifically ethnic and narrowly defined Afrikaner nationalism undoubtedly left its mark on twentieth century South African history. This is practically the only non-controversial statement that can be made in connection with Afrikaner nationalism. There are divergent interpretations concerning the origins of Afrikaner nationalism, the nature and contents thereof, the way in which it was fabricated, as well as the precise correlation between Afrikaner nationalism and socio-economic development.

Much of the historical writing in Afrikaans, dealing with Afrikaner nationalism, presents it as an unproblematic concept. Afrikaner nationalism is naturalised to the extent that it is seen, in a mechanical fashion, as the automatic outcome of South African history. The weakness in this approach is that the material which had to be studied is accepted uncritically as a natural given. The result is a tautological argument with very little explanatory value: "Afrikaners are nationalistic because they are Afrikaners."

Liberal, mainly English-speaking historians, were more critical towards Afrikaner nationalism, but ironically their basic point of departure did not differ much from that of their Afrikaner counterparts. With Afrikaner historians they shared in analytical terms the unproblematic acceptance of the concept of "volk" as well as idealistic notions of the growth of nationalism. The only substantial difference is that whereas some English-speaking historians generally denounced nationalism, often in value-laden terms, Afrikaner historians viewed it as a positive phenomenon.

More recent studies tend to pay greater attention to the material basis of Afrikaner nationalism, and it is also seen as the cultural and political product of intense ideological labour. The precise mix of material, cultural and political factors remains a matter of debate.

In line with such an approach, Afrikaner nationalism is seen, in general terms, as a broad social and political response to the uneven development of capitalism in South Africa, which meant that certain groups, including a substantial number of Afrikaners, were left behind. It was within a context of increasing urbanisation and secondary industrialisation during the period between the two world wars, as well as the continuing British imperial influence in South Africa, that Afrikaner nationalism made headway. Important ideological building blocks in this process were the following: the promotion of a common language, the emphasis on what was perceived to be a common past, and the unity of a common sense of religion.

Prominent in the construction and direction in which Afrikaner nationalism was pushed, was the Afrikaner middle class – for example, ministers of religion, teachers, academics, journalists, farmers and certain elements in the civil service. Leading middle class Afrikaners in the 1930s and 1940s belonged to a secret organisation called the Broederbond, which ceaselessly endeavoured to promote the exclusive interests of 'true' Afrikaners on behalf of the 'volk'. Uniting rural people and urban people, rich and poor, political idealists and pragmatists under the banner of Afrikaner nationalism called for sustained ideological labour on several levels over a number of years. The depression of the early 1930s forced a considerable number of Afrikaners off the land and into the cities. Many of them lacked the necessary skills to assert themselves in the new and competitive urban milieu. The urban economy, therefore, relegated them to relatively lowly positions. For example, in 1939 almost 40 percent of urbanised male Afrikaners found themselves in the following occupations: manual labourer, mine worker, railway worker, and bricklayer. According to the report of the Carnegie commission of enquiry into white poverty in 1932, almost 200 000 to 300 000 could be classified as being "very poor".

Poverty was not restricted to the urban areas. It was also particularly acute in the northern Cape with its nomadic trek-boers, in the Bushveld area of the Transvaal, in the Karoo and Little Karoo with its struggling peasant farmers and bywoners, and in the southern Cape where former independent woodcutters were fighting a rearguard action against rapacious wood merchants.

Impoverished Afrikaners had to be rescued for the 'volk'. In the Broederbond as well as in other circles, a strategy combining ethnic mobilisation with the promotion of 'volkskapitalisme' (capitalism in the interest of the 'volk') was seen as a possible solution to the problem. Through group identification and cooperation it was hoped that the position of Afrikaners could be improved.

Identification with the group had to be complete and had to be carried out on all levels of society. A complex network of Afrikaner organisations was established during the 1930s and existing organisations were strengthened. Across the board, from financial institutions like Sanlam or Volkskas, through to youth movements like the Voortrekkers, organisations which bore an Afrikaner imprint came into existence. Important in this respect was an umbrella organisation like the Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurverenigings (FAK), which saw to it that all Afrikaner cultural forms took a decidedly nationalistic turn. In retrospect, the material and cultural foundations of Afrikaner nationalism were being laid systematically.

In a strongly patriarchal Afrikaner society, it was often men who took the lead in nationalistic and cultural projects. The role of women can, however, easily be underestimated. The notion of the self-sacrificing 'volksmoeder' was an integral element in the nationalist ethos. It was the 'volksmoeder' who had to transmit the appropriate aspirations and ideals to the young and who had to provide a home environment in which Afrikaner ideals could be cherished. In addition, her influence was not to be restricted to the household only; she was also expected to play an active supporting role in the promotion of wider nationalist politics. Although not all Afrikaner women followed the script that had been written for them, the notion of a 'volksmoeder' was nevertheless seen as a role model worthy of emulation by young Afrikaner girls. As a result the continued incorporation of women into a male-dominated nationalism was assured. The 'volksmoeder' ideal meant that women could only gain social recognition as participants in the lives of their husbands and children; plotting their own course outside the prescribed framework was distinctly frowned upon. The powerful hold of the 'volksmoeder' ideal is evident from the fact that it resonated even among working-class women who had joined socialistically inclined trade unions under non-Afrikaner leadership, such as the Garment Workers' Union under Solly Sachs. Working-class women adopted the symbols and rhetoric of the 'volksmoeder' and then proceeded to redefine it for themselves. It was only then, they felt, that they could claim legitimacy as full members of society.

An important field for Afrikaner cultural entrepreneurs was that of trade unionism. Afrikaner workers had to be organised within a nationalist context and had to be weaned from the existing trade unions dominated by English speakers. True Broederbond Afrikaner unions like the *Spoorbond* and the *Afrikaner Bond van Mynwerkers* were established to look after the specific interest of Afrikaans-speaking whites on the railways and in the goldmines. The *Spoorbond* was relatively successful, but the *Afrikaner Bond van Mynwerkers* met with considerable opposition from the already established Mine Workers' Union. The Mine Workers' Union had come to an agreement with the mine owners that the Afrikaner union would not be recognised and that only members of the predominantly English-speaking union would be employed. Thus, Afrikaans speakers were compelled to work as 'reformers' within the framework of the often corrupt Mine Workers' Union. This gave rise to considerable tension, to such an extent that the secretary of the Union, Charlie Harris, was shot by an outraged Afrikaner in 1939. Establishing an organised Afrikaner influence on the mines was more difficult than had originally been anticipated.

A distinct feature of the way in which Afrikaner nationalism was constructed, was the emphasis being placed on history. The past that presented itself was that of Slagtersnek, the Great Trek, and the Day of the Covenant, the Anglo-Boer War, the concentration camps during the war and the Rebellion of 1914. These events were cast in near religious terms with Afrikaners depicted as God-chosen people, destined to bring 'civilisation' and 'Christianity' to the southern tip of Africa.

Of particular significance in moulding an Afrikaner identity during the 1930s, were the centenary celebrations of the Great Trek in 1938. The Great Trek, which assumed pride of place in Afrikaner history, was commemorated by nine ox-wagons, slowly making their way from Cape Town to the north. It turned out to be unprecedented cultural and political theatre: fervent crowds dressed in period Voortrekker garb welcomed the procession as it approached the towns and cities. Streets were renamed after Voortrekker heroes; men and women were moved to tears by the spectacle; young people were married alongside the vehicles; couples christened their babies in the shade of wagons (many infants were given rather outlandish names, such as "Eufesia" and "Kakebeenwania"). Although this 'Second Trek' had been carefully orchestrated by Afrikaner cultural entrepreneurs, even they were amazed by the tumultuous response to the event.

This symbolic trek paralleled the economic trek of Afrikanerdom from a debilitating depression which had reduced large numbers to the ranks of poor whites. For many former platteland Afrikaners who now found themselves in an urban environment, the centenary trek, symbolically rooted in an ideal and heroic rustic past, gave powerful expression to longings for a better, more prosperous future and to a nostalgia for a fast-eroding rural social order. At the heart of the 1938 celebrations lay the perception that Afrikaners were strangers in their own land, victims of British-rooted capitalism and an alien political culture, and that the solution lay in unified economic, political and cultural action. And, indeed, as fractured as Afrikanerdom may have been in class term, the 1938 celebrations served as a powerful binding agent and represented a truly unique moment of cross-class ethnic mobilisation. In the celebrations and in the evocation of the heroic struggles of their forebears, Afrikaners saw themselves mirrored in history and drew aspirations from it for survival and for the future.

Afrikaner nationalism manifested in various and at times contradictory forms. Organisations like the Ossewa-Brandwag, an extrastatutory movement, competed in some respects with the National Party for Afrikaner support. However, events like South Africa's participation on behalf of Britain in the Second World War, and the inept way in which

the ruling United Party handled post-war problems, all contributed to the promotion of the general cause of Afrikanerdom. In 1948, after intense organisation and all-round endeavour on different levels, the National Party achieved its parliamentary victory as the 'true' standard-bearer of Afrikaner nationalism.

CHAPTER 7

Christianity during a period of 'national consolidation'

The attempt to uncover the history of the Church, one specific social institution in one of the peripheral colonies of the waning British empire during the period from Union to apartheid, seems at first a little marginal. Prior to the Union of South Africa in 1910, great and turbulent events had brought the territory directly into British metropolitan public view, while from 1948 onwards the eyes of the world increasingly turned towards South Africa with hostility and rejection, in the face of the damaging policies of official apartheid. In between these two periods, from 1910 to 1948, two world wars ensured that the colonies, including South Africa, remained on the periphery of mainstream Western history – something adjunct, in the perspective of the imperial centres of power, to those who 'really made history'.

For the South African churches, one might almost echo Hastings's comment on the history of the English churches during the 1930s (Hastings, 1986:302): "The churches, as churches, had all a remarkably dull history..." Yet within South Africa itself, the period from Union to apartheid – almost the entire first half of the century – is decisive for any interpretation of this country's most recent history. Without a doubt Christianity played a not inconsiderable role in forming the character of the new nation, if not in the form of specific denominational interventions or policies, then at least in the powerful influence of many individuals, both black and white, who consciously understood themselves to be acting out of, and in the interests of, a Christian faith.

This was in fact a period during which certain developments within the Church at large in South Africa were to shape its character and destiny for the rest of the century. Because this was also internationally the time in which the global Church set out on an ecumenical pilgrimage, we must consider this as another process with profound implications for the Church in South Africa in the latter half of the century.

Whatever else we take into account in examining the history of the South African Church during the period, we must note certain fundamental trajectories

in the political economy of the country without which any understanding of the Church would be barren. Industrialisation, segregation, and two world wars are the backdrop to the Church's internal life; they are also the stage upon which the Church played out its story in public. And not infrequently, those who built the scenery and constructed the stage were themselves intimately connected to the life of the Church. As de Gruchy (1986:37) notes, for example, "throughout the period 1910–1948, the majority of the upper crust of English South Africans who held positions of power and responsibility in the country belonged to the Church of the Province", and as Worsnip (1991) makes clear in a recent study, the notion of the "church established", even though not supported in Union law, remained practically evident in the attitudes and relationships favoured by the CPSA.

While it is true that the South African state came into being at the beginning of this period, and that its institutions and policies all reached some maturity by its end, to speak of this as a period of 'national consolidation' is in fact misleading. The verdict of historians generally, with minor exceptions, reinforces the conviction expressed by many black South Africans at the time of Union, that the construction of the new state was fundamentally flawed at its inception. The nature of this flaw is the systematic exclusion, or in the case of the Cape franchise a progressive eradication, of the rights of black South Africans to be regarded as, and treated as, citizens of the land of their birth.

From this point of view, what was consolidated from 1910 onwards was white supremacy in political and economic life, and only now, some eighty years later, have possibilities finally emerged for the beginnings of the making of a truly national state and society. How one interprets Christianity in South Africa is not incidental to this basic reality (see Prozesky, 1991; this collection contains several essays which explore this point). For this reason, in order to place a more detailed discussion of the Church in South Africa from Union to apartheid into the broader social framework, it is important to consider the question of the development of doctrines of segregation, about which consensus among white South Africans was general, and against which many particular church movements or groupings may be measured.

On segregation

Dubow (1989) offers strong evidence to suggest that the organising ideology of white supremacy in the interwar years was segregation, and he shows that it was a broad-based ideology able to legitimise a system of white domination and exploitation sufficiently to gain the effective consent of those it excluded from power. It had as much to do with racism, in this sense, as it did with the specific dynamics of capitalist development in South Africa.

Moreover, the ideology of segregation succeeded as well as it did precisely because it was flexible enough to be adopted by most of the major power

groups, even where they disagreed strongly on its style and implementation. White supremacy was as much at stake as anything else, even if it was understood by many to be a paternalistic rather than a malicious form of supremacy. This is what explains the extraordinary unity among many church folk when it came to movements and people who threatened the assumed superior position of whites in general, as has adequately been demonstrated elsewhere in relation to the Anglican and Methodist churches in the first 20 years of Union (Cochrane, 1987).

As Dubow puts it (1989:1), intimately linked to the context of industrialisation and the growing threat of a potentially militant African proletariat:

> . . .the adoption of segregation as a national political programme represented an attempt to systematize relations of authority and domination in a heterogeneous society which had only recently been conquered and unified into a single state. Segregation denotes a complex amalgam of political, ideological and administrative strategies designed to maintain and entrench white supremacy at every level.

Segregation was a programme for national consolidation given systematic flesh only after the first sustained outbreaks of urban black protest immediately after World War I, even though its specific dynamics had several sources in previous policy experiments or proposals (most notably, the Lagden Commission on Native Affairs, 1903–5). In practice, Dubow demonstrates that this programme of segregation, in relation to which apartheid was only a later and more virulent form, aimed at establishing limited land rights for Africans in exchange for the sacrifice of any claims to common citizenship, and at placing Africans under white 'trusteeship' to guide their autonomous development.

1912 was the year in which General Hertzog split with General Botha to form the National Party on the basis of a manifest which called, among others, for white supremacy on the basis of Christian trusteeship. But here there was no fundamental difference between Boer or Brit, miner of farmer, manufacturer or property owner. Here the leaders of almost all churches could find common ground, even if among their denominations there were those who stood against the dominant consensus. Most believed that national consolidation of the relationship between Boer and Brit was the key to the future, and even if some were worried about sidelining blacks, especially in the urban areas, they did not find it difficult to see this concern as something best left to the future.

The ideological terms of segregation moved in the realm between limited, controlled assimilation of blacks into white society on the one hand, and subordination or even repression of blacks under white tutelage and rule on the other. By the end of the period under study, liberals had begun to react to the forces which gave birth to apartheid largely because these forces represented repression and subordination, an unacceptable model of segregation, and not because they represented segregation as such.

The underlying acceptance of a limited form of segregation among liberals, Dubow notes, meant that "however brief the liberal flirtation with segregation was, its consequences were long-lasting, for liberal intellectuals played a major role in defining the parameters of segregationist discourse". In so doing, they laid the ground for its hegemonic character by offering security to virtually all white constituencies (including labour) while attracting many Africans with the promise of more land, the development of rural areas and the restoration of traditional authority (1989:9). The rise in the 1920s of Africanist sentiments, which proclaimed the separateness of Africans in Africa, seemed only to lend further credibility to the segregationist view.

The trend towards a segregationist view of South Africa's future is also visible in the churches of the time. So it was that in the 1920s a new generation of liberal Christian welfare workers, several affiliated to the American Board Mission, took up the particular concerns a growing number of whites had about the negative effects – as they saw it – of the rapid urban influx of blacks under the impact of industrialisation. Under the influence of eugenic theories and Social Darwinism, they believed that the mixing of the races was both socially explosive and racially suspect, and that this would lead to the degeneration of both European and African peoples, as well as general social instability. What had to be avoided, therefore, was the mixing of the races, for the sake of all.

A popular book by one of these liberal Christians, Ray Phillips's *The Bantu are Coming*, expresses these concerns most clearly (Dubow, 1989:72). This fitted well with the views of General Smuts too, who in his 1929 Oxford Lectures stressed the need to preserve, firstly, the integrity of the "native social system" and secondly, the capacities of traditional tribal discipline without which the country would face chaos and "universal Bolshevism". Hertzog also shared these views, though in an increasingly virulent form which later was to lead him into conflict with the views of liberal Christians, as his segregation policies gradually turned from the protection of "distinct civilisations" in their encounter with each other, to the repression of blacks.

This conflict came to a head with the promulgation of the so-called Hertzog Native Bills in 1936. Leading the fight against these bills were the liberal progressives of the Cape, who stood for some form of universal franchise, albeit on the basis of a meritocracy. Here upwardly mobile black Christians like Tengo Jabavu played an important role in mediating what were understood to be black aspirations in general, though in fact they could be more accurately described as the aspirations of a particular select group of blacks whose education would allow them access into a meritocracy. These black voices also stressed the 'primitive', barbarous character of black African societies over and against 'civilisation' as such, and in this way gave strength to the belief in some form of partial segregation on the basis of caste and class (rather than colour). The archives of the Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian (Church of Scotland), Congregational and other churches contain many documents exhibiting the essential

acceptance of such perspectives in their views on the nature and destiny of South Africa, even as they sometimes attacked the more hard-line, repressive forms of segregation proposed by others such as the National Party.

The basic consensus on segregation, as the guarantee of white domination in the face of a threatening "sea of black people", may well have been strengthened by the emergence of countermovements such as Kadalie's Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU), whose demands – they, and the ANC, were the only African organisation to reject the Hertzog Bills completely – appeared to virtually all white-led churches, Afrikaner, English, Roman Catholic and some Lutheran, as far harsher and much more dangerous to whites than the assimilationist approach characterised by Jabavu and his ilk. Similarly, with the influence of Marcus Garvey upon many blacks, the emergence of millenarian movements, and the growth of independent African Christianity, all during this period, one observes a popular consciousness among whites and some blacks which "was both a manifestation of the reassertion of traditionalist values and an attempt to defend communal resources, as well as a response to a segregationist state" (Dubow, 1989:152).

What Dubow finds is a broad-based consensus on the fact of white domination, even where there were serious differences on the policies by which such domination could be guaranteed. In this sense, the period represents the consolidation of a nation essentially understood to be a white nation, as already constitutionally enshrined in the accommodation between Boer and Brit which Union in 1910 represents. The ideology which excluded blacks from participation in the making of the new South African nation was also evident in widespread talk after the Anglo-Boer War and throughout the first two decades of "race conflict" in the country: what was meant was the tension between Afrikaner and Briton, and only in the 1920s, when white supremacy appeared to be guaranteed, did the term begin to refer to the enduring tensions between black and white.

To summarise, the period from Union to apartheid may be understood as the time of high segregation, a philosophy felt to be an honourable interpretation of the supposed distinctive and separate characteristics of different races, by which the integrity of each is saved and the allegedly disastrous consequences upon each of indiscriminate mixing is avoided.

The Church at large

This, then, is the backdrop to the major developments in the life and witness of the Church in the first half of the century. Seen in the large view, we may discern five great movements in the Church during this period. In what follows, each will be discussed in turn, while the final section deals with additional aspects of Church life, of importance for a more complete picture of the period.

Firstly, the missionary bodies which dominated the scene from the time of white settlement until Union rapidly reconstructed themselves into established,

locally rooted churches. Strassberger (1974) offers what is still a very useful account of the denominations which make up the warp and woof of the fabric of Christian ecclesiastical life in South Africa, while Gerdener (1958) is still the classic text on the consolidation of missions in the rise of local churches in the first half of the century.

Secondly, the black African experience of religious conquest and domination which had led to the founding of the first independent churches through the Ethiopian movement (Kamphausen, 1976), now gathered momentum at an astonishing pace.

Thirdly, the English-speaking churches, influenced directly by political developments in Europe and in Britain in particular, allied themselves increasingly with the great liberal causes and philosophies of the day.

Fourthly, the Afrikaner Reformed churches, initially in the forefront of ecumenical and social concerns, ended by retreating more and more into their own confines, out of which legitimacy for a separatist ideology was slowly established.

Fifthly, a growing sense of the global relationship of individual churches, perhaps influenced by the development of monopolistic capital in its international search to find new resources and markets, as well as by political shifts which led to the establishment of the League of Nations, gave rise to the ecumenical movement.

From missions to congregations: the establishment of local churches

The first Dutch Reformed congregation was established in Cape Town in as early as 1665, though the first synod met only in 1824, and for a long time the DRC remained under the control of the mother church in Amsterdam. Its Transvaal Republic sister church assumed independence in 1853 as the Hervormde Kerk, later becoming the church most determined to define itself as a specifically white church, while in 1859 a further schism occurred, leading to the founding of the Gereformeerde Kerk. The third, minor schism came much later with the founding of the Nuwe Protestantse Kerk in Afrika under D.J. de Vos in 1944. These churches together made up the Afrikaner family of Reformed churches which were to have such an impact on the struggle for white supremacy under Afrikaner political authority.

The mission work of these bodies often extended beyond the borders of what became South Africa, but the earliest by far in the field was the DRC, whose work by 1910 had reached countries as far afield as Nigeria and the Sudan. Latest on the scene was the Hervormde Kerk, which appointed a black missionary, Reverend Mlaba, for the first time in 1923, though on the strict understanding that any congregations formed out of this work were to be completely segregated. It was the DRC, however, which really succeeded in

effectively establishing churches among black Africans, coloureds and Indians within the new Union of South Africa. Out of these missions arose three 'daughter' churches, organised on the basis of a by then well-established policy of separation, later known respectively as the DRC in Africa, the DRC Mission Church and the Indian Reformed Church. The centralised body to coordinate these efforts, among others, was the Federal Council or *Raad der Kerken*, formed in 1907.

Other churches moved their perspective and organisational basis away from an emphasis on itinerant missionary evangelisation dependent upon an essentially foreign parent body, to a perspective governed by the institution of self-supporting, locally based denominations established in society, if not with the state. This process was extended over a substantial period of time, and was highly differentiated in its stages and style from one denomination to another.

Thus, by the time the twentieth century had reached its halfway mark, the Provincial Missionary Conference had been replaced as the key body of the Church of the Province of South Africa (Anglican) by a formal network of almost a dozen dioceses. Though the CPSA at no time formally proposed a policy of segregation, the way in which its missions were developed produced an informal structure of black 'mission' churches and white 'parishes', though this had begun to change by the 1950s. The Methodist Church, whose missionary work had been self-supporting since 1916 (Strassberger, 1974:35), the Wesleyan Methodist Church, and the Primitive Methodist Church began negotiations to form one united Methodist Church as early as 1910, and after the appointment of several committees and many disruptions in the process, unity was finally achieved in 1931. Like the CPSA, the Methodist Church strongly proclaimed the link between the Bible and ordinary life in society at large, thus supporting a strong concern for witness to the social order of the day as part of the task of giving testimony to the all-embracing life of God. It too became independent of the mother church in Britain, though never wholly severing those links.

Both the Methodist Church and the CPSA were early supporters and often strong proponents of the ecumenical movement, a position reflected in their active presence in most of the joint councils and conferences of the period. The same may be said for the Presbyterian and Congregational churches, but not for the more evangelistically oriented churches such as the Baptist congregations. The ecumenical atmosphere which these churches promoted in one way or another was already present in 1910, just before the Union of South Africa was inaugurated, when the Congregational, the Presbyterian and (for a brief period) the Baptist churches met to consider a union between themselves. These discussions continued, though the Baptist church quickly dropped out of them, until 1927 when the Wesleyan, and later the Methodist churches, joined in. Many resolutions and multiple formal meetings may be traced throughout the period, and in 1934, 1938, 1941 and 1942 each of the various churches appeared to be on the verge of making the final decision, both in their joint

deliberations and in their individual capacities. But it was not to be. Even now, after 80 years of negotiations for union among English-speaking denominations, there is little to show of any great significance outside of their joint participation in some theological education and in national and regional church councils. In regard to the former, the Methodist and Presbyterian churches, and the Congregational Union, established a university level training programme for its clergy at Rhodes University in 1947.

The first Presbyterian congregation was established out of the Calvinist Society meeting in Cape Town in 1812, but no systematic denominational presence emerged out of this beginning until 1900 when the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa finally brought the many disparate Presbyterian bodies together, while in 1910 there were still 28 major Scottish mission stations and 529 outstations (Strassberger, 1974:44). The link with the Bantu Presbyterian Church which had formed in the Eastern Cape in 1923 remained tenuous, however, negotiations for full unity beginning in 1934, with follow-up meetings the following year, again in 1937, and throughout the period into the 1950s – still without success. The same situation prevailed with the Tsonga Presbyterian Church, another regional body, originating out of the Swiss Presbyterian mission to the northern Transvaal. In both cases of failed unification, fears on the part of the black Presbyterian churches regarding white domination appear to have played a substantial role.

Two mission bodies whose influence on southern African Christianity was enormous later formed the basis for the establishment of the Congregational Church of Southern Africa. These were the renowned London Missionary Society (LMS), made famous by people like Van der Kemp, Robert Moffat, James Read and John Philip, and the later American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in South Africa (ABM), linked to people such as Adams, Grout and Champion. The Congregational Union of South Africa, based on the LMS work, was already established in the Cape Province in 1877, and the Bantu Congregational Church in Natal developed out of the work of the ABM, while the LMS continued in the northwestern territories, and the three main strands of congregationalism remained in close contact with each other throughout the first half of this century, but with full union coming only in the late sixties.

Besides settlers of Dutch and British origin, a high percentage of Germans also made up the early white population of the southern African region, most of them being affiliated with the Lutheran Church. With many Lutheran missions operating in southern Africa, including the Rhenish Mission Society, the Norwegian Mission Society, the Hermannsburg Mission, the Finnish Mission, the Church of Sweden Mission, and later the Berlin and Hannoverian Missions, it is not surprising that the Lutheran church at large, unlike the other denominations thus far discussed, found it far more difficult to move from a foreign-based missionary foundation to the establishment of a denomination rooted in South Africa.

Indeed, though a small white Lutheran denomination had existed for many decades already, they gathered into regionally based synods only at the end of the nineteenth century or early in the twentieth. And it was only in 1912 that some unity among the Berlin, Norwegian and Swedish missions in Natal was achieved through the Co-operating Lutheran Mission, a body joined in 1928 by the American Lutheran Mission and in 1938 by the Hermannsburg Mission. Further consolidation of the various Lutheran branches had to wait until the latter part of this century.

In 1910 the Roman Catholic Church, never mission-oriented in the sense of the churches discussed above, was still relatively small, though various orders had established work from what is now Namibia to Natal, and as far north as Zambia (Strassberger, 1974:78). But it grew rapidly as the years progressed, and by the middle of the century numbered about one million members, the great majority being black. A major factor in the new growth and vitality of the church was the decision by the Pope to create the Apostolic Delegation to southern Africa in 1922, thus providing the basis for a regionally rooted branch of the church which until then had been directly governed from Rome under the authority of the *Congregation de Propaganda Fide*. Within 15 years thereafter, the number of brothers and nuns doubled from 2 000 to 4 000, while the number of priests grew from 300 to 700.

Among other churches that were newly established at the time of the Union, or in the period thereafter, two that bear commentary are the pentecostalist Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM), inspired by the 1906 Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles and transported to South Africa in 1908, and the Baptist group of churches. The former grew rapidly once established, drawing many members from the DRC, but also losing some to African independent churches (Pastor P.L. le Roux perhaps being the most famous as an original inspirer of a Zionist-Apostolic movement), while always retaining a nonracial position. The latter group emerged by mid-century as a body of four separate and to some extent racially based denominations, the earliest of which was the predominantly white Baptist Union, the others being the African United National Baptist Church, the Alliance of the Reformed Baptists of Canada, and the Free Baptist Mission. They too grew, but like the AFM, they showed no interest in ecumenical relations.

The emphasis in the above discussion has been on the shift from missions as traditionally understood to the establishment of independent local denominations, a shift begun in many cases in the nineteenth century, but only really consolidated during the first decades of full-fledged statehood in the region after the formation of the Union of South Africa. But this should not obscure the fact that mission activity continued alongside the founding of geographically fixed congregations and parishes. Much of the mission work in the first half of the century turned towards diaconic concerns, building upon work already well established in many parts of the country. The result was an increasingly important network of schools, clinics, hospitals, colleges and training centres

whose work produced much of value, despite the powerful criticisms one may bring against Christianity and its ideological role in relation to ongoing white power and privilege, or at the very least, against its functional dependency upon white South Africa (Cochrane, 1987).

By and large, South African church history, at least in its written form, has focused on the churches and missions mentioned above, that is, on those denominations and confessions which have the respectability of having European or American origins. While some literature exists on what is now the largest body of Christians in the country, gathered in the so-called African independent churches, the history and significance of these churches, peripheral to the power centres of South Africa, has been predominantly downplayed, ignored, or relegated to the margins of the mainly white-dominated churches of the centre. For this reason they will be discussed first, before considering English-speaking and Afrikaner churches in greater detail.

African indigenous movements

The first briefly successful, secessionist black Christian group broke away from the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society in 1872 in what is now Lesotho (Hinchliff, 1968:90), but the real beginnings of the African indigenous church movement are generally regarded as lying with Nehemiah Tile and his Tembu National Church, founded in 1884. The growth of indigenous African churches appears to have been slow initially, so that in the second decade of the twentieth century one could count more or less 30 such churches, while by 1950 it was a thousand or more, with a roughly estimated gross membership of several million.

As they grew, so they became an increasingly significant social force, pushing the state to reformulate policies, often reflecting an ambiguous attitude to these churches, to deal with their existence. Legislation for the registration of these churches was eventually introduced, offering some benefits to those churches which registered, without seeking to control their growth. Mainline churches often regarded the movement as potentially threatening, especially in its first "Ethiopian" stages (Kamphausen, 1976). Involvement of indigenous black Christian leaders in certain events such as the Bambata Rebellion, the uprising of Wellington Buthelezi in the Eastern Cape, and the Israelite movement – famous for their martyrdom in the Bulhoek massacre near Queenstown in 1920 – also served to fuel their existing suspicions and prejudices.

Once it became clear that indigenous churches were prone to splintering and unlikely to find a common, organised platform from which to propagate their concerns, they were not only looked at with greater tolerance but effectively sidelined and ignored. Despite some attempts in recent years to alter the nature of this relationship between the indigenous and the mainline churches, the picture remains much the same. In part, the widespread interpretation of the

African independent churches as an essentially syncretistic religious phenomenon made it easier to ignore them, theologically as well as practically. This is already evident in the writings of one of the most prolific of the early commentators on these churches, Reverend Allen Lea, who believed that "the Separatist, generally speaking, is a Church member in disrepute, and the secessionist body a refuge for those running away from discipline" (Vilakazi, 1986:2).

The debate about the authenticity of indigenous churches, from the point of view of the orthodoxies of the Western tradition, began very early on and has never been resolved. As is still the case, indigenous churches in particular were treated as being somewhere between theologically acceptable, and essentially pagan with Christian overtones. But more than anything, their theology or orthodoxy was a question mostly put to the side, either in the hope that the matter would go away (as it does, in the sense of having virtually no impact on mainline Christianity), or because it was not seen to be of any significance and could safely be ignored.

Another interesting aspect of many indigenous churches concerns the role of women. They have played a prominent role, especially as healers, which is seldom seen in the mission or settler churches. Hinchliff in his 1968 work had already recognised their powerful contribution to the life of these churches, attributing to them the possibility of becoming *ecclesiolae* from which even clergy were excluded, an allusion which reminds one strongly of the rise of the base ecclesiastical communities in Latin America and their contribution to the transformation of the 'Third World' church.

Some beginnings, some developments

One of the best known of the early Ethiopian churches arose when James Matawane Dwane broke with the African Methodist Episcopal Church and sought contact with the Church of the Province (Anglican). The result was the formation of the "Order of Ethiopia" in 1900 as part of the Church of the Province.

The Order grew throughout the first half of the twentieth century, but still remained relatively small and largely limited to the Xhosa, while the relationship with the Anglicans proved to be uneasy. The European clergy felt threatened by Dwane's strive towards equality which led to an attempt to dissolve the Order, and was prevented only by the moderating influence of Bishop Cameron. Dwane's strong vision of an 'African National Church' ultimately failed. But the mainstream of the Ethiopian movement continued in the channels of the A.M.E. Church and others that sprang up during and after the Boer War.

During this early period, many of the Ethiopian leaders went to study in the USA. Eventually the need for a study centre closer to home was recognised, and evidence suggests that as a result it was Ethiopian influence that led to the

founding of Fort Hare College in 1916, an institution destined in later years to have a major impact on black nationalist leadership.

The growing challenge from black Christians for independence soon motivated Scottish missions under the control of the United Free Church of Scotland to constitute a separate Bantu Presbyterian Church with membership consisting of the black converts from their string of mission stations spread through the Eastern Cape, Transkei, Natal, and the Transvaal. The formation of this church is seen by Hinchliff (1968:96) as probably representing the only way at the time to deal with tensions about the indigenous churches, but in the light of recent scholarship on the plausibility of the current ideology of segregation, it may also be understood to be an expression of segregationist convictions and a concomitant stress on preserving African traditions.

Details on many other individual churches have been well documented in classic studies of the African indigenous churches, which include Sundkler's updated edition of his ground-breaking study on *Bantu Prophets in South Africa* (1961), Kamphausen's analysis of what he calls the "Ethiopian movement" (1979), Verryn's first full study of the Ethiopian Order (1971), Oosthuizen's analysis of these churches as a post-Christian phenomenon (1968), and more recently, James Kiernan's various essays, and Glenda Kruss's investigation of Zionist-Apostolic churches (1985). Significantly, the first two substantial studies of the indigenous churches which come from within their own ranks are very new, that of Bishop Makhubu (1988), and another now in the process of production by a group under the leadership of Bishop Ngada of the African Spiritual Churches Institute. Kamphausen's work is of particular interest as it lays the foundation for an interpretation of Black theology which depends not only upon American influences (James Cone, in particular), but also upon some of the thinking of the churches of the Ethiopian movement.

On the interpretation of indigenous churches

Kiernan (1990:9) suggests that Bengt Sundkler's first typology of the African independent churches, which divided them into two major categories of Zionist and Ethiopian churches (with a third minor category of 'messianic' churches), is still analytically relevant, though requiring modification. He proposes that the typology is best understood as the difference between a 'Word' or 'Book' religion, and a 'Spirit' religion – a "complementary opposition" – with churches varying along a continuum between the two. "Book stands opposed to Spirit in terms of the demands it makes for literacy, education and achieved status and it is therefore associated with socio-economic advancement." He suggests that 'Book religion' tends to a more normative system of relationships and hierarchies, less flexibility, a stronger sense of orthodoxy, and discrimination against women. In contrast, 'Spirit religion' favours women in leading roles, and is in general more innovating and less discriminating.

West (1974), from a different but congruent perspective, believes that the Ethiopian churches remain closely patterned on the Protestant churches from which most broke away (e.g. Presbyterian Church of Africa, Zulu Congregational Church, Bantu Methodist Church, etc.), while the 'Zionist' churches tend towards pentecostalism and healing practices. He chooses to refer to this distinction as one between churches of the law and churches of the spirit. He offers a typology which locates churches in relation to the active presence or absence of the Holy Spirit on the one hand, and the question of whether or not the church is under black control on the other. Thus he proposes that Zionist churches are those under black control with an active presence of the Spirit, while Ethiopian churches are those under black control with an absence of Spiritual practices (similarly, churches not under black control with an active Spiritual presence he calls 'Pentecostal missions', and those without active Spiritual presence 'most other missions'). Crude as the typology is, it helps to locate the broad differences between African independent (or indigenous) churches and white-controlled churches.

Yet any such typology provides no more than a classification of a phenomenon. What is still required is a broader explanatory scheme by which the phenomenon of African independent churches may be understood. In this case, the perspective from which such an explanatory scheme is constructed will influence interpretation, and thus any adequate historical grasp of these churches. It is not surprising, therefore, that those who come from these churches have recently challenged the dominant interpretations popularised in the 1960s and 1970s by Sundkler, Oosthuizen and others (ICT 1985). But even academic scholars who stand outside the independent churches, as students of them, have shifted their interpretations of the indigenous churches, as Kiernan clearly points out (1990:77):

> There is a noticeable shift away from explanations deriving from racial division and segregation and a tendency to provide an interpretation in terms of urban experience. To be more precise, the urban explanation has displaced, rather than replaced, the racial explanation, which now becomes an unspoken premise, not exactly ignored but muted and relegated to the level of the implicit. Consequently, religious independency is now viewed less as a negative reaction (a form of protest or withdrawal) on the part of the powerless to intolerable deprivations and more as a positive and potentially rewarding response to the demands of an urban environment.

While Kiernan's review of the literature supports this position, he makes no reference to two important works which would challenge his conclusion. Kamphausen (1976), perhaps the definitive study of the Ethiopian movement, strongly argues that this movement is indeed located in reaction to colonial conquest, while Kruss (1985) pursues the historical, material conditions of the rise of Zionist churches, concluding that they often reflect some form of

resistance to oppression. Kruss's conclusions reflect, and contribute to, Kamphausen's earlier conclusion that Ethiopianism is a manifestation of (a) the consciousness that arose among black Christians regarding their oppression and dehumanisation, and (b) their determination, based on the Christian faith, to overcome this situation.

Pato (1990) provides further support for Kamphausen and Kruss in his study of Zionist practices in the Eastern Cape, though his argument is differentiated enough to recognise that these churches "reflect a process in which the Zionists negotiate and renegotiate their human identity and power to live in a disrupted and estranged environment", thus demonstrating "not only that their culture is not static, but that their socio-cultural context provides them with the resources to build a place to stand and act in a situation of conflict and change". While all these studies come long after the flowering of the independent church movements, they can be assumed to have reasonable explanatory power for the earlier period as well.

In this respect, Kruss's study is particularly helpful. She identifies three different periods in which independent churches historically took different forms, corresponding with South African social history (1985:74). Each form may be understood as the "most fitting form" of religion for that period, and each represents one branch of a currently operative typology of indigenous churches, namely the Ethiopian movement, the Zionist movement, and its subcategory, the Zionist-Apostolic churches.

The Ethiopian movement

The Ethiopian movement arose at the turn of the century, and was most influential amongst the emerging African elite and wealthy peasant farmers. The dominant contradiction between the relations of African pre-capitalist social formations, and the social relations of capital – in mercantile form, but increasingly being transformed following the discovery of gold and diamonds – created the conditions out of which they arose. Kruss, like Kamphausen before her, concludes that the Ethiopian movement is a religious and cultural protest against the process of subordination.

The Ethiopian leadership were drawn from the mission-educated, emerging black petty bourgeoisie, and were largely professionals – ministers, teachers and clerks. In the Cape, perhaps encouraged by the existence there of a limited franchise for Africans, they adopted a liberal assimilationist ideology. They had come to expect equality of blacks and whites under the standards of 'Christianity and civilisation'. The experience on the Rand, however, was of incorporation into capitalist social relations on an unequal basis regardless of 'Christianity and civilisation'. This gave impetus to the formation of Ethiopian churches there whose leadership often successfully articulated their beliefs, values and interests, around an interpretation of Ps. 68:31, and by appeal to an early form of African

nationalism, best captured in the promotion of "Africanness" as opposed to "Europeanness" (Kruss, 1985:95).

Zionism

The initial force behind the Zionist movement was an apocalyptic church in the United States, the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church in Zion, founded in 1896 by John Alexander Dowie, who established his headquarters, "Zion City", near Chicago. He taught the centrality of divine healing, triune immersion and that the second coming of the Lord was "near at hand". Members strictly observed the church's taboos which expressed a strongly moralistic Christianity: no pork, no alcohol, no tobacco. A powerful emphasis on personal morality remains a central aspect of the life of most Zionist churches in South Africa, and Kiernan goes as far as to suggest that this feature of Zionism may in many instances well be an important bedrock in the building of a new South Africa (Kiernan, 1991).

Dowie became known in South Africa through his monthly publication, *Leaves of Healing*, and in 1904 his personal missionary to South Africa, Daniel Bryant, baptised the first Zionist South Africans by "triune immersion" in Johannesburg and at Wakkerstroom. It was also at Wakkerstroom that Bryant ordained P.L. le Roux as elder and his wife as evangelist, a family destined to play an important role in the emergence of the Zionist movement.

Le Roux had in fact been sent by the Dutch Reformed Church as a missionary to look after a 'coloured' and a 'native' congregation, and he was keenly interested in the healing ministry (influenced by his teacher, Andrew Murray). But increasingly he became troubled by the practice of infant baptism, feeling that this could cause a loss of spiritual power. He resigned from the DRC in 1903 to join the Zion Church, and three-quarters of his congregation followed him. After some turmoil within his church, Le Roux's former co-workers Daniel Nkonyane, Elijah Mahlangu and some others established their own churches. Out of this first group of African Zionist leaders a whole series of Zionist churches eventually emerged during roughly the first three decades of the century. Among the Zionist churches, Kruss distinguishes between Zion City churches and Zionist-Apostolic churches.

Initially Zion City churches tended to reflect a European pentecostalism, but gradually they became more and more African. They are also characterised by a strong black nationalism, couched in religious terms as the suggestion that "the white churches have gone wrong", while their churches reveal the true biblical message. This message is often cast in fundamentalist terms, mainly focusing on symbolism of the Old Testament.

Many of the founders and leaders were of similar background to the Ethiopians, often descendants of the former ruling class (chiefs, etc.), and frequently closely linked with traditional royalty. Shembe, for example, gave his daughter to a traditional king as one of his queens, while involvement of some

Zionist churches with the Swazi royal family is well documented. Similarly, a bond with the ruling class can also be seen in Moria, seat of Lekganyane's Zion City and the Zion Christian Church, largest of them all.

Kruss's thesis is that the emergence of the Zion City churches reflects a religious response by a peasant class to the threat of proletarianisation as the forces of industrialisation in manufacturing and agriculture began to bite into the traditional patterns of social order. She argues that "in pre-capitalist social formations, the prosperity of the community was reflected in the prosperity of the chief; in these Zion City churches it is reflected in the prosperity of the messianic leader"; thus these churches tend to recreate "ideologically a form of tributary mode of production, in which the leader provides for all, materially and spiritually" (1985:138).

By contrast, Kruss assembles evidence to suggest that Zionist-Apostolic churches, or 'Churches of the Spirit', arose as a religious-cultural response of a resurgent black working class, for which reason they flourished later, particularly in the period following the Second World War, when the contradictions within the political economy were severe and the black working class found itself capable of mounting major industrial actions, as is most evident in the mine workers' strikes which began in 1946.

Zionist-Apostolic churches

Most authors describe the Zionist-Apostolic churches as a blend of the old (African traditional religion) and the new (Christianity), being particularly attractive to Africans coming from traditional rural, small-scale societies which are trying to adapt to a modern, Western, urban context. The primary explanatory theory in most current research is summed up in the concept of acculturation or syncretism. With Kiernan, Kruss argues that the concept of acculturation is an inadequate explanation.

The most distinctive feature of the Zionist-Apostolic churches was, and is, that their members are drawn almost exclusively from the black working class, a fact claimed by Zionist-Apostolic groups themselves (ICT 1985) and supported by researchers such as West (1974). Moreover, as indicated above, the growth of the movement corresponds with the growth of the black working class in the forties, particularly after the abolition of the qualified Cape franchise in 1936. Up until then, "the majority of Africans had access to some means of subsistence in the reserves and only a very small working class existed, primarily on the Rand. Zionist-Apostolic churches increased in number and membership over the next decades as the alienating effect of working class life broadened and intensified" (Kruss, 1985:168). A relaxation of influx control by the state allowed an almost uninhibited flow of African families into the cities on the Rand throughout the 1930s and early forties, a development coinciding with the increasing impoverishment of the reserves, which pushed many rurally based Africans into the urban areas, where they joined the unskilled labour corps.

These Zionist-Apostolic churches displayed, in contrast to the Ethiopian churches, a substantial capacity for religious innovation, including distinctive worship services, and the use of ritual objects like uniforms and staves. Doctrinally they placed an almost absolute focus upon healing through the power of the Holy Spirit, including exorcism of demons. In contrast to the Zion City churches, they met in small "bands", led by one among them from the black working class. They separated themselves from the wider African community by refusing the use of traditional medicines and by condemning *utshwala* and gambling. Illness appears often to be the motivating force for those who join a Zionist-Apostolic church which, among other things, leads Kruss to conclude that Zionist-Apostolic churches are a response to, and simultaneously a form of protest against, the alienation of the black working class.

This is a conclusion supported by Theletele (1979:151), who believes that these churches are "in many ways both pre-revolutionary and actively revolutionary at the same time..." His point is that whatever their role may be in reproducing a form of religion which is conservative and apolitical, their impact on the fabric of the society creates a change "that provides the dispossessed people with a sense of hope and vision for the future". They play a creative role in the struggle for survival and finding a sense of meaning in life in an alienating environment, but in so far as this is inherently a rejection of the conditions of this environment, they also represent a form of religio-cultural resistance in the struggle of the black working class. Resilience, rather than mere acculturation, is revealed in the rise of these churches. For this reason, Kruss and others refer to African indigenous churches rather than 'independent churches', believing that the term 'independent' implicitly acknowledges the mainline churches as the invisible norm of the ruling class religion, whereas the term 'indigenous' stresses the cultural originality. The most general terms in the vernacular for these churches, as used by their members, translate more interestingly as "churches of the people" (ICT 1985).

Millenarianism and the Bulhoek massacre

Though the great majority of indigenous churches have not espoused any millenarian doctrines, certain small millenarian groups did a lot to shape early prejudicial attitudes to the indigenous churches on the part of the white-dominated, mainline churches. The millenarian movements of independent church history in South Africa represent an extreme form of protest against colonisation and conquest, perhaps leading earlier scholars to an over-emphasis in interpreting the indigenous churches in general as religious expressions of protest (under the particular influence of Lanternari's seminal study of *Religions of the Oppressed*, 1963). Yet incipient elements of protest are indeed widely present in many independent church groupings. Thus it is worth pausing briefly to look at the phenomenon of millenarian movements in South Africa.

One should expect from the literature of the sociology of millenarianism (for example, Lanternari and Burridge, 1971 and Cohn, 1970) that conditions of colonial conquest, coupled with the deterioration of traditional bases of economic activity in many parts of South Africa (Bundy, 1988), would produce millenarian movements here too. At least two noteworthy examples are to be found in the 1920s, namely the Israelites of Enoch Mgijima who were massacred at Bulhoek, and Washington Buthelezi's campaign.

The Bulhoek massacre perhaps best illustrates the ambiguities surrounding the millenarian elements of the African indigenous churches, ambiguities to be seen both within these churches themselves, and among those who observed them. The event itself occurred in 1921, but its origins lie in the movement begun by Enoch Mgijima (Edgar, 1988). Inspired by a vision of God in 1907, Mgijima set out on a mission to educate his people and to reintegrate old traditions about God into Christianity. But his vision was also apocalyptic, filled with warnings about the end of the world and a final judgement, beliefs which were to be consolidated with the appearance of Halley's comet in 1910, and confirmed by the outbreak of World War One.

Originally a Wesleyan evangelist, Mgijima joined the Afro-American-inspired "Church of God and Saints of Christ", becoming one of its bishops in 1913. This gave him the organisational base for his prophetic visions. Most of his early converts came from mission churches. Increasingly violent visions of conflict between black and white eventually worried the American church sufficiently to excommunicate Mgijima, who then took his faction with him as the "Israelites".

In 1919 Mgijima had a vision which led to the calling of his disciples from across the territory to Ntabelanga, his ancestral home, to await the coming of the Lord. What attracted people to such a movement? Edgar argues that the matrix for the millenarian movement in the Transkei included the increasing impoverishment of the people, especially when the ravages of high inflation after the First World War took effect. Together with harsher tax legislation, Transkeians also suffered a series of natural disasters, including a cattle fever epidemic in 1912, the 1918 influenza epidemic, severe drought in 1919, and the frustration of impotent African politics. Mgijima, among others, offered hope of a dramatic change in this situation and inclusion among God's chosen ones.

A major gathering was planned for Ntabelanga. Mgijima agreed that his people would remain there only temporarily for the Israelite Passover period in April, 1920, but various organisational problems led to repeated delays in the celebration until, after several months, it seemed clear that the Israelites were going to lay claim to land they considered historically theirs. The authorities began to pressure the Israelites to leave, but they firmly insisted on waiting for the end of the world which they believed was imminent. Eventually it was decided to use force to expel them, and about 100 policemen were brought to the area. Some strange misunderstandings about activities occurring in the Israelite settlement led the police to fear an attack. Their withdrawal reinforced

a feeling among the Israelites that they could withstand anything with God's blessing, and at the same time, whites felt this was producing a potentially dangerous sense of rebellious independence beyond the Israelite constituency itself.

The situation began to acquire a symbolic significance beyond the objective circumstances, and through a variety of other attempts to resolve the confrontation, the attitudes of the authorities hardened to the point where it was finally decided to attack the Israelites, this time with the largest police force yet assembled in the country. On May 24, 1921, the police moved in force upon the settlement, while the Israelites prepared to defend themselves against the impending attack. The details of what followed are disputed, but by the time it was all over, almost 200 Israelites were dead, with many wounded and arrested.

What may we observe in all that led to this tragic conflict? Edgar notes that black political and trade union groups, including the ANC and the ICU, gave tremendous support to the Israelites in their struggle, citing harsh government controls and policies as contributory factors in the emergence of this kind of conflict. Land use and possession also played a major role in the symbolic significance of the Israelite resistance, and many black leaders believed that the inability of white rulers to tolerate challenges to their authority was another contributory factor to the massacre. Some, like D.D.T. Jabavu, felt that the movement was an indication of the negative aspects of insufficient education or an untrained intellect, while even the judge at the subsequent trial of Mgijima echoed a widespread conviction among whites, namely that the whole affair was a representation of politics under the guise of religion.

In these various assessments of Mgijima's millenarian movement, albeit in response to an unusual expression of Christianity, we find the whole gamut of responses to the link between religion and political existence which characterises much of South African church history in so far as it involves the relationship between church and state. The lessons of the Bulhoek massacre do not merely lie in the past. They also demonstrate that church history, like secular history, is as much a question of interpretation and perspective as it is a matter of facts.

In contrast to the Israelite movement, the work of Washington Buthelezi was at once less dramatic in impact and more eschatologically definite. After the imposition of the Taxation Act of 1927, Buthelezi gathered a mass following among those blacks who were angry about this additional burden, on top of the many already part of their recent history. His movement, inspired by the Afro-American evangelist Marcus Garvey, took as its central slogan the phrase *amamelika ayeza* – the Americans are coming. Americans were expected to come in aeroplanes to conquer South African whites, to end taxation and cattle-dipping, and thereafter to establish a black government for a free Africa with African factory owners and traders.

As part of this apocalyptic vision, black Africans were encouraged to join "African churches", while Buthelezi's followers were incorporated into the secret

organisation, the *amafela ndawayone* (those who die together). In addition, approximately fifty independent schools were set up by the movement. Its ideological perspective is clearly captured in one particular Wellingtonite hymn (Kruss, 1985:144):

Africa is the land of our fathers
The foreigners are claiming it
They will never have it
Because it is ours
  The Lord unites us
We the African nation
That we may be one with Africa
Lord accompany our friends from America
Give them enough strength
That with your grace we may see each other

As already noted, this kind of political eschatology was inevitably unwelcome in white circles, and eventually it was decided that Wellington Buthelezi had to be deported. But his subordinate leaders continued their resistance well into the thirties, their actions including forms of symbolic protest such as painting houses black and pig-killing. Among other lesser-known movements in this period, one example is found in the account of an imprisoned follower of the prophetess Nonteta: "We used to dream in the hope that the Americans were coming to release us. It was just a rumour, but what you hear as rumour you always dream about. ... As oppressed people we always had hope we would be released" (Kruss, 1985:145).

Kruss, following on the interpretive tradition which understands the indigenous churches as reactions to conquest and colonisation, sums up the significance of the millenarian mood, of the Transkei and Eastern Cape in particular, as one which articulated a desire for the liberation of peasants who were "being dragged into a capitalising and racially oppressive world at an accelerating pace" (Kruss, 1985:145). Her study places these churches firmly within their historical material context, providing something of a neo-Marxist interpretation of their existence, thus once again raising the question of how one should interpret the indigenous church movements in South Africa.

The liberal alliance: English-speaking churches

With the sealing of the Union between Boer and Brit in 1910, attention turned from the question of finding a framework for coexistence on the subcontinent to the matter of consolidating the political and economic foundations of the new state. English-speaking white South Africans now had a fair task ahead of them if they were to juggle their way through the new political landscape that South Africa presented. They would have to reconcile their interests with the now

prominent role of Afrikaners in Union politics; they would need to build up their already considerable economic power; and they would have to maintain some sort of control over blacks to meet labour needs and accommodate ingrained social habits bred of colonialism. How these sometimes contradictory processes were pursued may be seen in the records of 'their' churches as well.

As ties with the British metropolitan centres of power diminished, so too the desire to contribute to a stable nationhood increased. While denominational conferences, synods and assemblies continued to give special formal greetings and prayers to the British Governor-general as well as the South African premier, usually stressing their loyalty to the reigning monarch, they also turned their attention first and foremost to the new nation to demonstrate their commitment to being South African. Still, what happened in Britain, always 'home' for many, remained an important factor in shaping their outlook.

Given the rise of liberal politics in Britain itself, it is not surprising then that many English-speaking whites saw their specific task in constructing a new nation as the defence of the liberal values and virtues of the British empire, in the face of what was perceived as outdated feudalistic ideas of Afrikaners on the one hand, and primitive, heathen practices on the part of blacks on the other. But this task was often undertaken with confused aims, for the fact of massive cultural and social alienation between settlers and immigrants on the one hand and blacks on the other, coupled with the European's sense of superiority, meant that English-speaking whites joined with their Afrikaner countrymen and women in the task of constructing a nation which would inevitably disadvantage black South Africans.

As has been shown elsewhere (Cochrane, 1987) the notion that white rule or white supremacy was a necessary measure for the protection of 'Christian civilisation' (a term with multiple meanings) remained strongly present in the records of at least the Anglican and Methodist churches, and probably many others as well. And as with the Afrikaner churches (at least into the early 1930s), it was widely believed that the supposedly natural supremacy of whites implied the paternal responsibility for 'guiding the natives' into human adulthood which it was assumed would be many decades, if not some centuries, in coming. Three references from the 1920s serve to illustrate the dominant ideology well, and are worth quoting. The first comes from the final charge of the Methodist Conference of 1920 to the members of the church at large (Minutes of Conference, 1920:120):

> Our Native people have found a blessed freedom in the Gospel which they prize very much. There is a consequent feeling after liberty in other concerns of life which is but natural, yet needs careful and prayerful guidance. Development is inevitable but wisdom counsels that we make haste slowly... We are all one in Christ.

In May of 1923, the well-respected monthly journal of the Anglican Diocese of Pretoria, *The Kingdom*, published an article by G. Callaway, a leading church figure at the time. The mixture of paternalism and liberal concern for fairness, mixed with some (referred?) guilt, is quite evident.

> I was talking the other day to a Native man whom I have known for thirty years, one of the very best of men. I was trying to apologize for the attitude of certain Europeans which was particularly trying. My Native friend said to me, 'Father, you white people have got something which is very good in your home life. I quite see that you have to guard that good thing and not to let people like ourselves come too near it.' There was real discernment in the words, but far more striking than discernment, was the wonderful humility of the words.

The same Callaway, writing in a pamphlet published in Oxford in 1926, expressed the essence of the paternalist ethic which so characterised much of the English-speaking community and its churches in the first part of the century, and which so easily fed into a 'natural' philosophy of the right to rule and the need for some form of segregation, albeit with the eventual possibility for 'upward mobility' built into it:

> We ought to be able to say that during this long minority of the Native child we have not forgotten to think for him as for our own child, and to plan for him and his future needs.

The notion of trusteeship served to express this role. In the meantime, however, those individual blacks who showed sufficient 'promise' would gradually be allowed to acquire the privileges of citizenship, provided they were also willing to accept its responsibilities (which meant, among others, accepting the basic terms laid down for the construction of South African nationhood at Union).

After the First World War, liberal influence in the churches was expressed most forcefully through members of the Joint Councils of Europeans and Natives and its later umbrella organisation, the South African Institute for Race Relations (set up in 1929). These councils, set up after the visit of two American Christians to South Africa in 1921, with 26 of them established across the country by the 1930s, were primarily concerned with social welfare, but they also sought to bring educated whites and blacks together in order to influence government policy from a centrist position. As Elphick (1987) has shown, this movement may be understood as part of a broad, post-World War I, international Christian missionary network of people and bodies who represented the particular brand of British paternalistic liberalism characteristic of the time.

The direct link to the churches is best illustrated in the series of European-Bantu conferences, convened by the Dutch Reformed Church but strongly shaped by Joint Council members, during the 1920s and 1930s. Here 'Native Policy' and segregation were major topics at various conferences. But as time

went by the divisions grew greater on these matters between strongly segregationist Afrikaners, partially segregationist conservative liberals and the more radical, universal franchise-oriented Cape liberals. These options within the South African political spectrum of the time were reflected in resolutions and public statements of the churches as well, and they laid the basis for the later divisions within and between Christian bodies which were already strong in the forties, but were to become a feature from the 1960s onwards.

In contrast to the Afrikaner Reformed churches, perhaps one of the strongest pressures on the English-speaking churches to question the dominant consensus on segregation and white supremacy came from within their own ranks, through a new generation of black Christians educated in the mission schools of these churches. Though very few of them were able to break through into the leading positions of power and influence in the various church hierarchies (Paton, 1973:46, for example, notes that as late as 1934 only one black priest had reached the rank of canon), many held important positions in new black political movements, including D.D.T. Jabavu, James Calata, Selby Msimang, John Dube, Reverend Z. Mahabane, Dr A.B. Xuma, Z.K. Matthews, Dr James Moroka, Albert Lutuli, and many others. A powerful influence on many of these people, notably Calata, was the African Ministers' Federation which worked in close cooperation with the ANC and stressed the link between Christianity and social and political life.

Many black Christians had also learned how to cultivate the friendship of more liberal whites to the advantage of themselves and their constituencies. But at the same time, the moderating influence of precisely these same friendships came increasingly under fire, no more so after 1946 than from the militant young leaders of the ANC Youth League. Two particularly strong individual influences on the African nationalist movement during the thirties and early forties were Tengo Jabavu and Dr A.B. Xuma, both of them strongly committed churchmen, whose promotion of Christian ethics and values as the key to fighting for black rights is evident everywhere in their writings and speeches (Walshe, 1971:116–117).

Though this position was not hegemonic within the African nationalist movement, and more militant or Marxist tendencies were present throughout, the educated black Christian elite appears to have dominated the style and direction of the ANC at least during this period. Among others, they saw their faith as offering possibilities for social cohesion which would transcend tribalism and promote interracial harmony, even as they were critical of many white Christians and churches for failing to live up to their own proclaimed standards. Indeed, the idea of a great, unified African Church was widely discussed among ANC leaders from the late twenties on, with strong support from important quarters.

Reverend James Calata, for example, president of the ANC and Secretary-general from 1936–1949, believed that the Church would make it possible to "build up the Bantu into a Christian Nation", while Reverend Z. Mahabane,

another president of the ANC, saw the solution as dependent on the evangelisation of Africans (Walshe, 1971:159). Max Yergan, founder of the Bantu Christian Association and organiser of several student conferences, exercised influence of a similar kind over younger generations of students at Fort Hare, whom he taught to accept the social implications of the Bible. As Walshe puts it: "Christian ethics had therefore but one clear social implication in the minds of politically conscious Africans. The Churches were expected to be in the vanguard of public opinion, leading society away from racial discrimination to a colour-blind equality of opportunity" (1971:160).

But as time went by, criticism of this kind of strategy, and skepticism of the capacities of the churches to break free from the white shackles, meant that the idea lapsed. By the end of the period the mood concerning the contribution of Christianity to the black nationalist struggle for freedom and a common society in which justice was adequately and equitably expressed to all in it, had changed. "The general feeling amongst African politicians was . . . one of disillusionment. Christianity had been a formative influence in arousing African political consciousness, but the process of urbanization, resentment aroused by the stream of discriminatory legislation and the apparent hypocrisy of the great majority of white Christians had taken their toll" (Walshe, 1971:162).

What becomes obvious when one studies the influential Christian literature of the period, alongside the resolutions and papers of church assemblies, is that the English-speaking churches by and large operated with the liberal philosophical and political tradition of contemporary Britain as their presupposition in defining Christian ethics and practice in the new South Africa. The black educated Christian elite inevitably worked with the same assumptions, and fed them into their policies and organisation strategies in secular bodies or movements.

The mood changed briefly, with some impact in limited quarters, only in the middle forties when Christians in Britain began to take note of social developments, there to find new significance in the socialist views and values of the rising Labour Party. Quite congruently, South African voices are now discerned raising questions about labour value, oppression and unjust economic exploitation, while the phrases associated with socialism are seen to scatter the pages of Church magazines and Christian debates. A particular catalyst of this upsurge in more radical approaches to the problems of South African society and of a nation built for whites was the famous Malvern Conference on Church and Nation in Britain.

Inspired by the vision of the Malvern Conference, the Diocese of Johannesburg, under Bishop Clayton, set up a "Commission on Church and Nation" in 1941. The theological foundation of the Commission, strongly shaped by Clayton, and through him by Gore of England (always the moderate over and against William Temple), lay a strong emphasis on the social existence of the human being:

> It is not enough to say that if we change the individual we will of necessity change the social order. That is a half truth. For the social order is not entirely made up of individuals now living. It is made up of inherited attitudes which have come down from generation to generation through customs, laws, institutions, and these exist in large measure independently of individuals now living (Records of the Commission on the Church and the Nation, Diocese of Johannesburg, 1941).

The job of the commission was to investigate the relationship of the Church's mission to education, industry, economics, social welfare, 'Native' affairs, 'coloured' people, racial discrimination, religious disunity and, lastly, the state. Inevitably, hardly any black South Africans were to be found on the committees of the Commission, but its reports make for interesting reading, nevertheless, especially when read with contemporary eyes.

One example, that of the Church and Industry Committee, suffices to show the tenor of the work done by the Commission. It recommended that the Church understand the significance of redemption in so far as it impacted upon this life as a demand to pursue the "good life", which in economic terms it argued, included recognition of the "Brotherhood of Man" (sic), the divine vocation of all work, a restriction of the profit motive, adequate opportunities for all in education and training, respect for a day of rest in the week and for "reasonable leisure", and a "recognition that a concentration of ownership and/or control of the principal industrial resources of a community in the hands of the few is contrary to God's plan" (Records, 1943).

Even at a stage, therefore, when criticism of Christianity among African leaders had deepened to the point of bitterness and alienation, some leaders such as Dr Xuma continued to argue for Christianity as the foundation of human decency and democracy, a view also reflected in the major policy document of the ANC, *African Claims* (Walshe, 1971:341). The fundamental shift away from a black version of liberal Christianity came only with the ascendancy of the powerful leaders of the ANC Youth League, a shift which takes us beyond the period of our concern here.

These perspectives on the English-speaking churches in the first few decades of Union do not tell us much about how each of them dealt with specific events, or about the detailed particularities of their denominational histories. However, the material available on most of the major denominations fills in this picture, and it would be beyond the scope of this book to attempt to cover it all. What has been established here, nevertheless, is the basic pattern of thought and practice of the English-speaking, or Anglo-Saxon origin churches in relation to the South African context. This serves to make clearer the kinds of tensions most of these churches had with their fellow white Afrikaner churches on the one hand, and the indigenous black churches on the other.

From participation to isolation: Afrikaner Reformed churches

The Afrikaner Reformed churches are best known around the world for the support given by many of their leaders and theologians to apartheid, and the subsequent charge of heresy against them. In the popular mind, these churches are the ideological source of apartheid, the arch culprits in the promotion and maintenance of a rigid segregationist culture. There is some truth to this claim, and also a lot of nonsense.

Much of what we know today as apartheid may be laid at the door of British and English-speaking South Africans. Equally, many key members and leaders of British origin churches also provided important underpinnings to the doctrines and policies which laid the foundations of apartheid, once one understands that these foundations were put in place long before the Afrikaner-based National Party came to power.

On the other hand, the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC, or Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk), whose Cape synod was first formed in 1824, did take the position very early on that churches formed among indigenous groups of non-Afrikaners by missionaries should be served separately in respect of the Eucharist, thus setting in motion an attitude to the emerging black mission congregations which easily later moved from pragmatic policies to principled ecclesiology. Kinghorn (1990) calls this the era of non-doctrinal segregation, beginning really only after 1857 and lasting until 1927. During this period segregation of congregations was understood to be nothing more than a pragmatic solution to troublesome cultural, language and behavioral differences.

Only in 1881 did this lead to the institution of the racially defined Dutch Reformed Mission Church (Sendingkerk), but even then the factual, theological unity of the Church was accepted. As is well known, this move was seen to be one of "weakness", rather than something that could, in principle, be justified. But in the 1930s this changed. Prominent DRC theologians began to justify segregation both within the church and without on a theological basis.

Providence, not weakness, in the form of the embodiment of the proleptic will of God in favour of the separation of the races as part of the restoration of the order of creation, was now argued to be the basis of the original decisions to separate. Here is a powerful example of a hermeneutic at work which reinterprets an inherited tradition in ways which meet contemporary convictions, irrespective of the original intentions lying behind that tradition.

As late as 1926, the general mission committee of the DRC upheld the idea that segregation might be applied, provided it was in a cooperative spirit with blacks, that it was fairly applied to all, and that it in no way impaired the dignity of blacks. But in the eight years thereafter a radical reorientation of DRC mission policy was carried out which Kinghorn calls "the conception of an ideological theology" (1990:60).

Already in the adoption of a new mission policy by the Federal Council of the DRC in 1935 we may see the shift from any idea of building one South African nation to the idea of multiple nations with their own rights. The views of the Afrikaner and English-speaking churches on the required trajectory of nation-building were now clearly moving apart, propelled in the case of the Afrikaner churches by the influence of racially defined nationalism spawned in Germany, Spain and Portugal, and materially influenced by the experiences of white poverty among Afrikaners, as documented by the Carnegie Commission.

Reverend P.J.S. de Klerk in 1939 said that "mixed marriages between higher civilized Christianized nations and lower nations militate against the Word of God". By 1942 this kind of theological ethic was already put forward by delegations of the DRC to the then Prime Minister, Smuts, to press for legislation on mixed marriages, separate suburbs, separate education and separate industries, while Smuts responded by rejecting the proposals, not in principle, but as the improper way towards achieving the goals of segregation. By 1948, at the Transvaal synod of the DRC, the theology of the division of humanity in races and nations as a deed of God had been given official, scripturally argued form in the report entitled *Racial and National Apartheid in the Bible*, a document set to become the foundation of the later, more sophisticated defenses of the new style segregation which apartheid represents (Kinghorn, 1990:62–74).

The same tendencies are observed in the development of a separatist understanding of the task of mission and its related structural embodiments. The nineteenth century missionary thrust included the Afrikaner Reformed churches, and by the turn of the century the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) in particular was well established in both the Afrikaner republics and the two British colonies. The enabling act of the new Union Parliament in 1911 included a provision for the complete organic union of the regional DRC churches, but the unified DRC was not consummated until much later, in 1962.

Separate missions were to continue for some time, but a distrust of the indigenous church movement, the emerging consensus among whites on the ideology of segregation, and a fear of secessions by African ministers led the DRC to institute a formal separation of its "daughter" churches, a separation which had been an informal arrangement of "convenience" since the late nineteenth century. The first to produce an official statement which argued that the conversion of blacks must be followed by the institution of a separate church for them, was the Cape DRC synod meeting in 1932, a policy decision since then the basis of all DRC work in South Africa (Hinchliff, 1968:100–101).

Arguably, it is the 'Du Plessis affair' which made it possible for Afrikaner scholars and theologians to find biblical evidence for their social claims in the construction of theories on apartheid. Johannes du Plessis, 1920s editor of *Die Kerkbode*, found himself at the centre of a storm of controversy concerning, among others, his acceptance and use of the new tools for the interpretation of scripture which began to dominate European theology in his day, especially

through the influence of Bultmann, Barth and Brunner. The climax which shook the DRC to its foundations came with his removal from the post of professor in New Testament and Missiology in 1930.

The impact of the new consciousness of the problems with the interpretation of Christian scripture, a hermeneutic revolution, was such as to bring to light the interpreter's own world and presuppositions in the task of exegesis, and to show that doctrinal theology, if it is to be biblical, must take scripture as an internal norm, and critical scholarly investigation of scripture as a necessary control over its conclusions. Another way of making the point, probably seen clearly by those who attacked Du Plessis, is that theological conclusions, if they are to be sustained within the Christian community, will have to find within their own sources the guiding presuppositions which may control illegitimate interpretations. External presuppositions for the interpretation of scripture and the formulation of doctrine were brought into question.

Within the context of the DRC, Du Plessis's introduction of these questions undermined any biblicist and fundamentalist uses of scripture, or any interpretations which use philosophical constructs alien to the New Testament. The formal claim to proclaim the Word of God cannot be assumed to be self-evident, but must be shown to be soundly based in a controlled use of its sources. But in the DRC the position which slowly assumed a powerful controlling role leaned heavily on the external concepts of social Darwinism and eugenics to argue for segregation as a scriptural principle, as opposed to a practical weakness occasioned by a radically plural society. The beginnings of the theological justifications of apartheid, developed extensively in the forties, thus depended upon the uncritical introduction into scriptural interpretation of extrabiblical values which were taken to be normative. The grounds for heresy had been laid.

What made it difficult to prevent such a situation is the action taken against Du Plessis. As Kinghorn (1986:55–56) describes it, in ruling against Du Plessis, the Cape synod effectively rejected both the problem and a consciousness of any problem. Thereafter, one discerns a climate in which no further meaningful and critical investigation of disputable assumptions is possible, and for many years any attempt to introduce the important hermeneutical questions into the biblical foundations for Afrikaner apartheid theology was more or less ruled out on the grounds that to raise questions of this nature was to tamper with the written Word of God. Of course, the protection of problematic doctrines against the questions raised by human reason by appealing to some supposedly privileged irrational access to the Word of God is not confined to the DRC, though the potentially severe implications of the refusal to take reason into account are amply demonstrated by the DRC's theological justification of an abhorrent system.

One of the other attacks on Du Plessis, of some significance to later developments, concerns his support for the theological school of Utrecht against that of the Free University of Amsterdam, represented by Kuyper and Bavinck.

For Du Plessis, the shift in the twenties in South Africa to the latter school of neo-Calvinist thought, much more narrowly and strongly confessional in nature, was a betrayal of the lessons of the Enlightenment for theology, and would lead to a false hermeneutical understanding of revelation and reason. In effect, the sidelining of Du Plessis's concerns in the DRC served to cut its mainstream theological reflections from precisely those currents which began to shape many of the English-speaking churches, a division only now being bridged among a younger generation of biblical scholars and theologians. This too, goes some way to explaining the decisions of the DRC to separate itself first from the Christian Council of South Africa, and later from the Cottesloe Conference in 1960 and the ecumenical movement as a whole.

The attack on humanism, liberalism and modernism represented by those who followed the Amsterdam line is most evident in the famous, ground-setting, three-volume publication of the early thirties: *Koers in die Krisis* ("Direction in the Crisis"), edited by F.J.M. Potgieter, H.G. Stoker and J.D. Vorster. Essentially a neo-Kuyperian defense of segregation as a theological principle on the basis of a separation of spheres, these volumes selectively and somewhat eclectically adopted Kuyper's majestic universal vision of the lordship of Christ over the world to suit a narrow xenophobic view of white, and particularly white Afrikaner, South Africa (Kinghorn, 1986:58–62). Herein too lies the evolution of policies such as the strange notion of Christian National Education and similar abominations which have produced so much pain for so many and brought so much discredit to Christian witness in South Africa by being forced on all who inhabit the country.

Coupled with a romantic view of nationalism and patriotic pride as espoused by German idealists such as Fichte, a stream of thought which found strong and enthusiastic acceptance among many leading Afrikaner thinkers, writers and politicians in the nineteen thirties and forties, it is not surprising that white supremacy and a virulent form of segregation joined with racial pride and honour to shape Afrikaner history through the period and into the era of apartheid. Equally, given the strong moral fervour and religious depth of feeling of most Afrikaners as evidenced in the practical pietism and puritan vision (De Klerk, 1975), it should not be a surprise to find these self-same currents in the Afrikaner churches, their pronouncements, and their theology.

Indeed, as with Israel of old, it is impossible to separate the secular and religious dimensions of this all-embracing, theologically sustained, ideological vision. It is for this reason that ordinary Christians and many clerics consciously sought to express their faith both in the Church and in Afrikaner cultural and political organisations which emerged in this period, among them, the 'Reddingsdaadbond', the 'Broederbond' (founded in the middle of the second decade), the FAK ('Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniginge'), the ATKV ('Afrikaanse Taal- en Kultuurvereniging'), and of course the National Party itself.

Kinghorn suggests that one only understands the history of the Afrikaner churches' support for apartheid when one recognises the manner in which the notion of a *corpus Christianum* was linked in the 1930s, in particular, to current racial theories of national socialism on the one hand, eugenics on the other. The *corpus Christianum* concept includes the idea that the totality of life is in some sense impregnated with divine service, including politics, over which Christ rules. Spiritual and secular spheres are different, but only as two sides of the same coin. The life of the individual is played out between the poles of spirit and flesh, church and state, mind and body, eternity and the temporal, the power of the Word and the power of the sword.

From this position emerges Christendom, and in the case of South Africa, Christendom is linked to the cultural platform of its European colonial missions, because of the conviction that this culture itself is not only ruled by Christ, but is in some sense, of Christ. Thus the belief that native South Africans, by virtue of being pagan or heathen were necessarily culturally inferior or 'lost', gave strength to a strongly segregationist position in the social ordering of the new territories, as well as the conviction that whites were in essence destined to rule over others. In the *corpus Christianum*, the spiritual superiority of Europe is here translated into a secular social ordering of people. It is not surprising, in South Africa, that this took the form of racial differentiation, explicitly on the basis of culture, but also implicitly on the basis of skin colour.

At the same time, Christendom is the carrier of the message of Christ and his lordship, and the necessary implication of missions is the 'raising up' of indigenous people to both the spiritual and cultural heights of Europeans. Trusteeship, the term used by others in South Africa in the first half of this century, thus fitted naturally with Afrikaner church missions, especially those of the DRC, as is demonstrated in the well-known study of the history of missions by Gerdener (1958). But trusteeship, or mission, clearly implied that indigenous Africans could indeed escape their alleged condition of inferiority and thus their social isolation from the dominant white groups, an inherent contradiction to the more rigid forms of segregation which Afrikaner churches were also beginning to adopt.

The cultural chauvinism which Kinghorn finds in the South African Calvinist churches of the Afrikaner is, he believes, born out of the view of the *corpus Christianum* as expressed in the language of segregation (1986a:50). Segregation becomes the creation of God himself. This was not the invention of the Afrikaner churches, but their common cultural inheritance from modern Europe. The question that must be asked is why, and how, this heritage became absolute in the case of the Afrikaner churches, allowing them by and large to provide the theological justification for apartheid when it became a political reality.

Kinghorn, following others, locates the period from 1925 to 1935 as critical to this process, driven by socio-economic and political changes of an almost revolutionary impact. The depression years, culminating in the 1929 collapse of

stock markets, contributed strongly to a process already under way among Afrikaners who were used to living off the land. Poverty and the dynamics of industrialisation pushed thousands of people off the land and into the cities, giving rise to the so-called "poor white" phenomenon investigated by the first Carnegie Commission of Inquiry, whose findings suggested that by 1931 almost one-third of Afrikaners were in a state of absolute (as opposed to relative) poverty.

At the same time, segregation policies, land policies and mine-recruitment policies meant that a growing army of black workers and work-seekers was streaming to the cities, competing directly for jobs with poor whites, who were mostly Afrikaners. The "swart gevaar" ('black danger') became an ideal platform for political struggle, but it also reinforced powerful racist tendencies, especially as blacks provided cheaper labour to the factories and the mines than whites, both because they had no recognised political base from which to organise themselves in the institutions of government, and because their families did not or could not accompany them.

Into the breach stepped the Afrikaner churches, who were well placed to fight on behalf of their white members, to assist in caring for them pastorally, and to provide a variety of social and welfare services to them. It was during this period, therefore, that the pastoral activities of the DRC, for example, expanded dramatically to include material assistance to poor whites and to campaign for political policies which would protect them and Afrikaner culture and tradition as such. Meiring (1975), for example, lists several ways in which the Afrikaner churches served their people in their search for identity, in education, and in the delivery of social services, all of which was understood to be natural for a church regarded *ipso facto* as "indigenous".

But theologians and preachers also found ideological grist for their mills in this context. In the 1930s many bodies within the Afrikaner churches began to speak out strongly against any mixing of the races, meaning black and white, and to seek legal prohibitions on mixing. What was understood as a cultural differentiation in the segregationist mode, now appeared as a biologically defined, racial difference, by virtue of which segregation was seen as natural and God-willed. In this philosophical shift lie the roots of a theology to support apartheid. In the DRC, this shift is seen most clearly in its mission policies of the early 1930s (Kinghorn, 1986b).

By the end of the first half of the twentieth century, the Afrikaner Reformed churches had reached a point where their links to the larger ecumenical community and the most vital biblical and theological currents of the time had been all but severed, despite the attempts of a few to prevent this. From a point at the beginning of the second decade of a limited, but important, initiation of interconfessional and cross-denominational conferences and bridges to others, the Afrikaner Reformed churches arrived at the end of the forties at a place of increasingly bitter isolation.

The one and the many: from denomination to ecumenism

The single most important event in the origins of the modern ecumenical movement is generally regarded as being the 1910 Edinburgh Conference on evangelisation. It signalled the beginning of a period of fervent searching for an ecumenical church among evangelicals and Protestants in Europe and North America, culminating in 1948 with the formal establishment of the World Council of Churches. The intervening period coincides almost exactly with the stages of South African church history which are depicted in this book.

One may well ask, therefore, what impact these international developments had on the domestic ecclesiastical scene. And indeed, the answer must be cautious, because what drove missions and denominations in South Africa into cooperation with one another was at once more practically than theologically defined, and much less guided by doctrine than by the exigencies of missionary endeavour in a culturally complex country with a history of conquest and colonisation. In fact, when a council for churches was established, one of its clauses forbade doctrinal debate for fear of destroying an alliance which was more pragmatic than ecclesiological.

The beginnings of ecumenical cooperation in South Africa are usually traced to the formation in 1904, six years before the Edinburgh Conference, of the rather unstructured body known as the General Missionary Conference (GMC). Its aim was not unity, however, but to make possible some sort of mutual support network between the various missions in the country. Representation at its meetings, held only once every three years, was purely on an individual basis (Thomas, 1979; Strassberger, 1974:134). Moreover, evidence suggests that South African denominations as such were not terribly committed to the GMC, or in a broader sense, to anything ecumenical, and indeed, in many quarters ecumenism was a concept regarded with hostility.

The GMC itself, though its records contain numerous important and pointed resolutions and discussions about the problems of South Africa and the role of the Church within the country, had little effect on the regular life of the churches, and it seems that many regarded it as a kind of club, a debating society, more than a visible expression of a genuinely ecumenical Church. Thus Thomas's verdict (1979:2) that "ecumenism as such had very little impact on South Africa over the next thirty years" after the inauguration of the GMC seems justified. The eighth and last General Missionary Conference was held in 1932, because two years later the visit of John Mott, 'father' of the world ecumenical movement and himself a renowned missionary, was to prod the GMC into new directions. Together with others, the GMC set out to establish a larger, more comprehensive organisation which might knit together those churches which had so long been in one form of contact or another with one another anyway.

Thus was born the Christian Council of South Africa (CCSA), formally instituted in 1936 with a membership of 29 churches and organisations

representing the major Protestant traditions in the country, including the DRC of Transvaal which provided both the first president and the first general secretary of the Council. The clause which forbade discussion of doctrinal matters, already mentioned above, appears in Thomas's view to have been a necessary limitation on the scope of the CCSA in order to keep many key churches in it. As evidence, for example, he quotes Archbishop Derbyshire of the CPSA who in 1944 vehemently opposed any idea of a united church: "If the Council were to conceive of its function as either sponsoring a scheme of reunion or trying to become a Pan-Protestant-Vatican in South Africa, I should have to sever my connection with it" (Thomas, 1979:3).

Clearly, therefore, the ecumenical movement in South Africa was something rather different from that which was taking Europe by storm. If one looks at the external world of the time, one discovers that the global ecumenical movement pressed strongly ahead during the interwar years, largely because it was "faced with the fearful challenges of the time, the need to provide a Christian leadership which somehow answered the taunts of Fascism and Nazism and which might in some way assist Christians in Europe to withstand the totalitarian assault" (Hastings, 1986:303).

Within this milieu, the Oxford Conference of Life and Work, held in 1937 and organised by J.H. Oldham, another stalwart of the ecumenical movement, focused on the theme "Church, Community, State" in a way that proved to be decisive for ecumenical movement. It was here that the resolution to establish the World Council of Churches was framed, but it was also of major significance for Europe at the time as its most mature ecclesiastical approach to social and political problems of the interwar years. Without a doubt these events impacted on South Africa, so that one finds much new debate about the social responsibility of the churches, and the meaning of the gospel in the modern world, in the archives of the CPSA and the Methodist Church, as well as in the pages of the *South African Outlook*, a journal originating in the Scottish mission at Lovedale.

The ecumenical movement grew with the League of Nations which had been founded after World War I with a major contribution from General Jan Smuts. Its ethos was not, as some might expect, that of classical liberal theology in its affirmation of culture and reason; rather the movement was near-Barthian, in the sense of being guided by the metaphor of "the Church over against the world" (Hastings, 1986:305), concerned with the world of sin, of modern ideologies, and of secular tyrannies. Inevitably, this more universal – yet also less culturally specific – vision of the Church went against the grain of either those who prized their cultural and national heritage, or those who valued their confessional distinctiveness above ecumenism. Tensions therefore arose within the broader Church (and have remained a major problem for the ecumenical movement ever since), not least in South Africa where the universal vision was in any case undeveloped.

The CCSA began its work in the same year in which the limited African franchise of the Cape Province was finally removed, this being the culmination of the segregation policies of Hertzog. Given international ecumenical developments, it might be assumed that the CCSA was a major event in the ecumenical life of the Church in South Africa. In this sense it was, that it concretely established an ecumenical movement in the country, an "association of Churches and Missionary Societies of South Africa for the extension of the kingdom of God" (Hinchliff, 1968:103). But in another sense it was not, in so far as it remained largely ineffectual and unprepared for its later tasks until the 1960s (de Gruchy, 1986:115).

One reason for this was the primary focus of the CCSA on missionary cooperation, and another was a constitutional clause which forbade discussion on Faith and Order issues. As already indicated, the first concern naturally extended the core intention of the first ecumenical body in South Africa, the General Missionary Conference, of which the CCSA was the organic heir. Again, the second concern arose out of the potential danger to any cooperation if Faith and Order issues were raised, as demonstrated by the Anglican archbishop's threat of complete withdrawal if such issues were introduced.

But perhaps more significantly, a much broader purpose may be discerned in the very desire to have a Christian Council. This purpose, as argued by Thomas (1979), must be located in the political struggle of South African liberals to counter doctrines of racial superiority and segregationism – precisely those forces which later gave victory to the representatives of apartheid. To that end, the CCSA organised its first major conference on church and society matters in 1942, "Christian Reconciliation in South Africa", and to drive the point home, it took place at the black university of Fort Hare in Alice. The "racial problem", as most were fond of calling white domination over blacks, moved into the foreground while strictly missionary concerns retreated from centre stage. Another major conference which built on the first was held at Rosettenville in 1949, on the theme of "The Christian Citizen in a Multiracial Country". Thus the pattern which has continued in the South African Council of Churches was set.

It is worth noting that the CCSA linked with the International Missionary Council (IMC), John Mott's organisation, and not the WCC, at least until 1961 when the IMC amalgamated with the WCC. This would be one reason, of course, why the formation of the WCC had no great impact in South Africa. The distinction was later important enough to raise questions about whether two ecumenical bodies were going to emerge in South Africa (though this in the end did not occur) and what relation the CCSA might have to any regional representative of the WCC. But at the same time, one must acknowledge that the thinking of the CCSA once the Second World War had begun drew deeply upon the underlying currents within the ecumenical movement as a whole.

What of the DRC? When the Transvaal regional synod withdrew its membership of the CCSA in 1940 because of increasing unhappiness about South

Africa's entry into the Second World War on the one hand, and because of growing tensions in their understanding of the form of segregation which should be applied in South Africa on the other, the tenuous thread of unity across the language divide among whites at least, seemed to disappear for the foreseeable future (as it proved to be). But the DRC did not thereby forego contact with the wider church outside South Africa, nor indeed with another expression of the ecumenical spirit in the world of the Reformed churches.

Thus it was that South African Reformed churches made up almost one half of the membership of the international Reformed Ecumenical Synod, launched in 1946 at Grand Rapids in the USA, in which scripture read from a Trinitarian perspective and regarded as the infallible and eternal Word of God was seen as authoritative for both dogma and ethics. This ecumenical body has been the only one capable of exerting significant pressure on the Afrikaner churches since the DRC decided to leave the Christian Council of South Africa in the early forties. Indeed, this is the body which was later to declare apartheid a heresy while under the presidentship of Dr Allan Boesak of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church.

An extended discussion of the relationship between the DRC and the CCSA is carried out by Strassberger (1974:157–167). The abandoning of the CCSA by the Transvaal church, besides being a matter of principles and politics in the South African context, was also probably precipitated by the formation of another ecumenical body, the Federal Mission Council (FMC), which bound the Afrikaner Reformed churches together and for a while sought the membership of Lutheran churches as well.

The recommendation for the establishment of what was envisaged as a possible counter-ecumenical organisation for non-English speaking white South Africans (the DRC having experienced the CCSA as quintessentially "English" in milieu) came from the *Raad der Kerken* or Federal Council of Dutch Reformed Churches in South Africa, itself formed only in 1907. The *Raad* spoke on behalf of seven Afrikaner churches at that time, and its voice was influential in the Transvaal church, whose representatives in the CCSA had voiced their grievances several times. The matter was clearly serious, as is evidenced by the unease of the CPSA at the relative neglect of the DRC member in the CCSA, an unease taken to the point of a brief withdrawal of the CPSA from the CCSA when the DRC church resigned its membership.

When it was finally brought into being in 1942, the FMC aimed at coordinating missionary efforts in a systematic fashion, including the planning of mission policy and strategy, as a consultative and advisory body to the member churches (14 members in all; Strassberger, 1974). Mission in South Africa at this time could not, of course, be separated from the question of policy and practice in respect of black South Africans. And while the FMC churches and the CCSA churches continued on occasion to meet in joint conferences, their differences

on this point were sufficient to make any more substantial link very difficult indeed.

The FMC quite explicitly accepted a rigid doctrine of separation (as they later accepted apartheid) on the basis of an Afrikaner interpretation of scripture which has since been wholly eroded, as expressed for example in the 1947 Report of the *Raad* on scriptural support for apartheid. The fundamental inability of the FMC and the CCSA to amalgamate or to find any relationship at all is best summarised by Strassberger (1974:188), who comments:

> The different attitudes to the indigenous people of the country, initially the objects of the mission endeavour of the member churches of the FMC and the CCSA, and the resultant approaches to government as well as the laws of the country, played a major role in keeping these churches apart...

What had become clear in ecumenical relationships and practices in the period before apartheid, remained the pattern for the South African Church at large for the next forty years.

Other aspects of church life and experience

Given the plurality of cultures which make up twentieth century South Africa, we may expect to find some movements which tend to be strongly based within one ethnic community. Perhaps the two most well-known and successful of these are the Bethesda church rooted in the Indian community, and the Shembe National Church with a Zulu base – both, interestingly, located primarily in the province of Natal.

The Bethesda movement

The definitive study of the Bethesda movement is that of Oosthuizen (1975). The name 'Bethesda', provided in a vision to Pastor J.F. Rowlands in 1931, was given by him to his missionary movement among the Natal Indians, a movement by then aligned with the Full Gospel Church. Though its greatest initial growth was in the greater Durban area, the roots of this spectacular church lie in Pietermaritzburg, where its work was initiated in 1925 by John Alexander Rowlands, father of 'J.F.', under the seed name of *The United Pentecostal Mission of Natal*. J.F. Rowlands took over the mission in 1928, and right from the beginning he emphasised the Indian context.

Small initially, the major breakthrough in the growth of the Bethesda church came with a three-week "Revival and Healing Campaign" in 1931, in Pietermaritzburg. A large hall was packed to capacity throughout, while the campaign itself did not stop at the end of this event but continued, astonishingly, for several decades thereafter. In the first three weeks of the campaign over one thousand new converts were baptised in the Umzinduzi River. It was not plain sailing, as

many local ministers of other churches reacted strongly and negatively to the campaign and its goals. But it set the ball rolling, and the work in Durban began a month later. It was here that "Bethesdaland" was established: a complex set of diaconic institutions which make up the central infrastructure of the Bethesda movement. In later decades the mission work of the Bethesda congregations spread as far as India itself, as well as to Sri Lanka and Nepal.

Interestingly, it was never Rowlands's intention to start a new church. Very early on, therefore, he set out determinedly to affiliate his missionary movement to the Full Gospel Church of God, a relationship formalised in 1931. Soon after, the first full Bethesda Church Council was elected in 1933 under the leadership of J.F. Rowlands. From the outset, he made it clear that the Bethesda Church, following on the significance of the pool of New Testament tradition, was to be "a place of spiritual refreshing and healing". Herein lay the core of the theological foundations of the movement, as far as J.F. was concerned (Oosthuizen, 1975:28):

> There are two main pillars around which Bethesda's fellowship revolves, namely, Fundamental Christian Doctrine and International Worship . . . the Holy Bible to be the inspired Word of God, which came to us not by the will of man but as holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. . . . the backbone of Bethesda's ministry is the Cross of Calvary, not preached with the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and the Power. . .

As might be expected, Bethesda's moral principles in the area of personal and secular life were very constrained and conservative, with a special concern for 'modernisms' such as smoking, 'bioscope', dancing, and so on, as well as the more traditional concerns of pietism such as 'illicit' sexual encounters, alcohol and gambling. In fact, J.F. Rowlands's own words perhaps best summarise the religious ethos of the kind of pentecostalism represented by Bethesda. Bethesda Temple, he said, "stands solid between the two great forces of *Formalism* on the one hand and *Fanaticism* on the other!" (Oosthuizen, 1975:192).

A monthly journal, broadcasting, musical productions and other activities became part of the work of Bethesda, some of it in native Indian languages. And in 1944, the first Bethesda missionaries were appointed. In the nineteen fifties several more temples were opened and the work continued to grow, and by 1975 seventy-seven temples of the Assemblies of Bethesda had been established. Of course, reactions to what was seen as illegitimate proselytisation by other Indians, especially Hindus, also grew as the movement grew, though Rowlands appears always to have tried to inculcate respect for other religious traditions.

But commentators such as Oosthuizen are quite clear that converts to Bethesda were mainly Hindus who felt marginalised. The historical grounds for the development of a movement such as Bethesda among working class or

marginalised Indians are instructive, and not confined to this branch of pentecostalism at all. Oosthuizen isolates several factors which contributed both to the willingness of Indians to convert to Christianity, at least in the form offered by Bethesda, and to the phenomenal success it had as a movement once it had taken root.

On the one hand, the forces of secularisation played an important role in the attraction of Bethesda, particularly as the industrial urban centres both attracted labour and demanded of them altered patterns of behaviour. Poorer sectors of the community found themselves in danger of increased marginalisation in an alienating environment for which they did not have the resources to succeed, even as success became the measure of the capacity to live reasonably well in this environment. Thus the attraction of the option for social mobility provided by a Pentecostal Christianity, when compared with the more rigid Hindu values which reinforce immobility and rigidity within one lifetime. In the Westernisation of the Indian community in South Africa, this has allowed members of Bethesda to climb the social and economic ladder.

This, however, is not the whole picture. Oosthuizen suggests that we must see in the rise of this spectacular movement among South African Indians an expression of the need for some solid religious foundation capable of overcoming the anomie associated with cultural alienation in a Westernised, industrialising political economy. In a judgement which may well be applied to many other religious phenomena in South Africa (1975:209), he notes:

> The Church here is a functioning unit which provides for its community social support, direction in life, healing when needed, and above all, freedom from guilt-consciousness and this is abundant where the old ways are neglected. It gives ethical direction where the old ethical norms are questioned or thrown overboard.

Bethesda emphasised a familial solidarity of Indians with each other and with others, probably an appealing message in the face of growing practices and patterns of segregation. That segregation, experienced as an oppressive, restrictive practice was an important element in the ability of Bethesda to meet the needs of less affluent Indians, is clear from Oosthuizen's study. Particular laws, such as the removal of Indians from the municipal franchise in Natal in 1924, for example, only served to underline the lack of control over their lives that those who were not white had to suffer.

It is in this context that Oosthuizen lists among those factors which led, directly or indirectly, to the phenomenal success of the Bethesda movement among the working class, curtailed leadership roles in society, land restrictions, industrial legislative controls over labour, a widespread experience of economic inactivity in times of inflation or retrenchment or unemployment (pentecostals came mainly from factories and service industries), and low levels of formal education. In addition, the fabric of family and community life was under severe pressure

with the breaking of the traditional web of Indian society and the dislocation of the *kutum* or extended family, while discrimination in established churches, coupled with the absorption of English as *lingua franca* (as opposed, especially, to Tamil and Teluga native tongues), pushed many to find an alternative to their fractured Indian traditions. Bethesda offered the option of meeting many of the needs generated by this context, and in place of the disrupted traditions brought from India, Bethesda could substitute a workable, religion-based code of conduct capable of cohering the family in a new form of community.

Beyond this, an additional benefit for members of Bethesda was a strong emphasis on the priesthood of all believers, accompanied in practice by a conscious effort to link all members to some area of active service. Besides providing opportunities for leadership which were most often denied Indians in white dominated South Africa, this encouraged a sense of worth among them in the face of racial denigration.

That this was not just a coincidental concern may be seen by the participation of Rowlands and other Bethesda people in supporting, under the auspices of the Natal Indian Congress, fasts for the freedom of Gandhi in India, as well as Rowlands's own stand on nonracialism (to the extent that his life was threatened by South African Nazis in 1938). Later, when apartheid laws were promulgated (such as the Group Areas Act), Bethesda leaders were again to be found among those protesting these actions on the basis that they were completely contrary to the New Testament and to the spirit of Jesus Christ, and although such concerns were never central to the ministry of Bethesda in any way, they were always present.

Shembe National Church

Deliberately nationalistic in style and membership, Isaiah Shembe's Church of Nazareth was built upon many foundations of Zulu culture at a time when this culture was under threat and, in many respects, already breaking down (Vilakazi, 1986:30–35). But he added to these foundations aspects of the rising industrial culture of the cities, or more accurately, elements of what some have called the Protestant work ethic, all of which made it easier for Zulus who joined his church to retain valued traditions while incorporating necessary patterns of behaviour in a changing political economy.

As is characteristic of much African thinking about the Trinitarian doctrines of the European churches, Shembe could not reconcile the idea of Christ, whom he accepted as the Son of God, having equivalent status to God the Father, a notion contrary to the entire cultural relationship between elders and their offspring. One may see here an echo perhaps of the kind of problem early Christians faced in trying to define their claims about Christ, God and the Holy Spirit, a problem which took centuries to solve, and even then left many loose ends for history to play with. Shembe himself found the Johannine designation

of the "comforter" or paraclete as the chronological successor in the world to the risen Christ applicable to himself, as did his followers. It is on this basis that Shembe has been (perhaps inaccurately) referred to as the African Messiah, but the evidence provided by many white interpreters of his works that he sought in his theology to supplant Christ is vigorously disputed by Vilakazi (particularly against Oosthuizen), who shows most of the supposed evidence to be academically imprecise and theologically severely biased (1986:133).

But in this sense at least, that he had been called to lead Zulus out of the bondage of white rule in obedience to a covenant with God, Shembe acquired a significance among his followers which has messianic overtones. Moreover he was believed to perform miracles, both practical and visionary, through healing and prophecy, which led people to call him holy, *Uyingcwele!* ("You are holy!"), whenever they saw him in person.

In 1906 Shembe himself was baptised and ordained into the African Baptist Church near Durban, but a strong belief in the importance of a Saturday sabbath finally led to a break from the Baptists in 1911 and the founding of his own church. He soon extended his missionary work into many parts of Natal and Zululand, while his rapidly growing band of followers made it necessary to begin to think in terms of not only building a church, but also a village to house everybody. Thus the headquarters of the Shembe Church of the Nazarites was founded at Ekuphakameni in 1914 or 1916 (sources differ in their dates), where sufficient land was acquired to house most of his followers. Here people travelled from all over the country, seeking comfort, healing (including exorcism) and prophecy.

Shembe's appeal, which continues in his family who have led the church since his death in 1935, was primarily to the African peasantry, tribesmen who nurtured Zulu culture rather than "city dwellers and sophisticated mission Africans", who did not join his church. Thus Vilakazi notes (1986:45): "No chief or contemporary political leader among the Zulus has had as much influence on the illiterate Zulus as Shembe had. He appealed to the tribesmen, and they formed, for some time, one hundred percent of the church. Ekuphakameni, which is geographically in the centre of a very progressive community and surrounded on all sides by missions, is like a museum of old African customs and practices."

After his death, in accordance with an elaborate will left by Shembe, his son Johannes Galilee was appointed head of the Shembe church with seven chosen members to act as a council governing everything concerning the movement, including both doctrine (with the help of a lesser committee) and property. The careful, wise construction of power and relationships in the Church proposed in Shembe's will was acclaimed by all those who gathered in 1935 to hear it read, an occasion Vilakazi believes was the moment of Shembe's canonisation (1986:51).

Both the strong central role of a chief-like figure of major stature, and the firm affirmation of the cultural values of a particular ethnic group (the Church is "deliberately and unapologetically Zulu"), are characteristic of the Nazarene Church, but these traditional foci are linked with a deep sense of the inspired, fundamentalistically understood nature of the Bible as revelation. In this way, the Shembe church represents an accommodation with the new world of industrial life without discarding the sociological cement of the old world of a specific people and their cultural tradition – a solution to the conflict of cultures and economies which has served enough people well for long enough to warrant a more careful study of the positive value of the African indigenous churches, and the way they make it possible for transitions which otherwise, and in other quarters, have demonstrated enormous destructive potential.

Roman Catholicism

Only in 1922 was the first apostolic delegate to the Roman Catholic Church in South Africa appointed, but with that appointment came a change in style from a rather passive attitude towards expansion and establishment to an energetic church-planting plan. By the end of the forties four archbishops and a number of other bishops had already been consecrated, while the growth in the number. of adherents was rapid and several training institutions for clergy and students of religion were established.

More than any other church of Western origin, the Roman Catholic Church actively encouraged the ordination of African clergy and bishops. Its growth may also be attributed to the much richer symbolic life of Roman Catholic worship and liturgical apparatus, an emphasis on the dramatic and ritual elements in the communication of the Christian tradition which resonates much more with the equally rich symbolic cultures of black Africans than does the intellectualised linguistic emphasis on the Word in the Protestant churches.

The South African Church and the Second World War

In studying the writings of the war period in the church newspapers *Die Kerkbode* (DRC) and Roman Catholic *The Southern Cross*, Denis (1992) notes that authors and editors in both newspapers interpreted the war as a spiritual struggle at heart. It was an apocalyptic battle between the good forces of civilisation, self understood to be founded on Christianity, and the evil forces of paganism, a belief *Die Kerkbode* continued to stress somewhat longer than did the Catholic newspaper.

The core of their concern was that the Church itself was "besieged by enemies", whose worst expression was to be found in communism, and whose time was signalled by the August 1939 pact between Stalin and Hitler. The editor of *The Southern Cross*, John Colgan, went so far as to see the basic origin

of this climactic war to be in the Protestant Reformation because it had enshrined the irreligious principle that religion is the individual's affair, a failure of major proportions whose historical consequences were now becoming clear.

What is most interesting in Denis's study of the two newspapers, however, are the polarities – or conflict of loyalties – and the ideologies they represent within South Africa. While *The Southern Cross*, though favouring the allied cause, tended to take a neutral stance on the question of the war (perhaps inevitably because this was the Pope's stance), *Die Kerkbode*'s articles reflected a range of positions from active involvement in Smuts's war effort to support for Nazi Germany. By contrast, the Anglican Church, as one would expect, supported England throughout.

Evidence suggests that the conflicting loyalties present within South African society were widely debated in these church newspapers and others, and that the debate occurred with some considerable knowledge of the persecution of the Church in Germany itself (many reports were carried of such persecutions). Numerous attempts were made on the part of *The Southern Cross* at least to explain, if not defend, the Pope's apparent neutrality. On the side of *Die Kerkbode*, however, neutrality was less of an issue. Tensions were not absent, though, for the majority of its readers and contributors stood behind Hertzog and D.F. Malan in their rejection of Smuts's war support for the Allies, while a few went further in praise of the ideology of National Socialism.

The emphasis in many Christian circles in South Africa, since the mid-sixties, on the Confessing Church of Germany, is one which Denis shows was clearly not present in key church quarters, if any, during the war itself or in the years immediately following. Rather he discovers a widespread concern for the moral fibre of individuals, and in particular, the religious tenor of the age, accompanying a widespread conviction that times of stress such as the Second World War demonstrate the essential root of sin in the world and the concomitant need for spiritual repentance. Other matters, it was felt, could not be adequately judged.

Thus the dominant view of most South African churches regarding the relationship between Church and State, essentially one of cooperation as far as possible and gentle persuasion or prickly prodding when necessary, is demonstrated in this particular study of two church newspapers. The stronger prophetic voice to which many have grown accustomed in recent years is not characteristic of the churches, if it ever was or ever will be, a point made with some force in Worsnip's (1991) analysis of Archbishop Carter and his more radical counterparts such as Michael Scott and Trevor Huddleston in the CPSA.

Conclusion

In the early 1930s the ANC had reached a point of considerable political weakness, failing on several occasions to hold even its annual conferences. This was partly because of the relative ineffectiveness of anything undertaken up to

that point, but partly it reflected the impotence of its policy of targeting a small African middle class with moderate and deferential patterns of activity.

Johns and Hunt Davis suggest that three developments were fundamental to the transformation of the ANC between 1938 and 1948. They were the conditions for mass mobilisation associated with the Second World War and a new phase of rapid urbanisation of black Africans, the skilled and energetic presidency of Dr Xuma, and the emergence of a new, younger generation of more militant political thinkers and activists, many of them linked to working class realities (1991:17–19).

It was in the context of forties outlooks and circumstances that some members of churches too, besides those who were members of the ANC, began to question segregation and white supremacy. The Anglican Michael Scott is perhaps the preeminent figure here. The Christian Council undoubtedly also responded to growing black pressure as it tackled social ethics, especially after the departure of the Dutch Reformed Church from its ranks.

The end of this period also heralded the beginning of formal apartheid. The shift from 'trusteeship' to radical segregation policies which the year 1948 signalled, may be seen as a shift from the option of *laissez-faire* segregationism to a system of the systematic rationalisation of white supremacy. From the point of view of white politics this was perhaps the key political event since the Union itself.

But from an African perspective, it may be said that 1948 was, in a wholly different sense, also a key turning point, though less sharp and distinctive, in so far as it represented the culmination of major changes of direction and emphasis in black politics which had begun earlier in the decade. As Johns and Hunt Davis (1991:15) put it: "African political leaders were more than ever before questioning and rejecting the paternalistic ideology of white trusteeship, with its notion of a possible assimilation of Africans into 'white' civilization in the distant future. Thus they were already challenging the legitimacy of white supremacy before the electoral triumph of the National Party and its apartheid ideology."

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SOCIO-POLITICAL EVENTS		ECCLESIASTICAL EVENTS
	1875	Voluntary bill accepted by Cape Parliament
	1877	Congregational Union of S.A. formed
		Baptist Union of S.A. formed
First Boer War	1880–1881	
	1881	Establishment of Dutch Reformed Mission Church
	1882	Marianhill founded by Trappists
	1882	Tile forms the Thembu Church, one of the first African Independent Churches
	1885	Dutch Reformed and Nederduitsch Hervormde Churches unite
Second Boer War	1899–1902	
	1908	First Pentecostal Church established
Union of South Africa	1910	
Founding of ANC	1912	Fourth general missionary conference
First World War	1814–1918	
	1925	Sixth general missionary conference
	1936	Christian Council of South Africa established
	1939	Formation of Federal Mission Council of Dutch Reformed Church
Second World War	1939–1945	
	1940	Dutch Reformed Church and Church of the Province of South Africa leave Christian Council of S.A.

Segregation and apartheid

Despite being in circulation for more than 40 years and despite the worldwide notoriety it has acquired, the concept *apartheid* can easily be oversimplified or imperfectly understood. It is associated with the advent of the National Party to power in 1948, but it is wrong to assume that the newly elected government proceeded to implement a detailed apartheid blueprint in a mechanistic fashion. Apartheid was adapted consistently over time to suit prevailing circumstances. Hardline nationalist ideologues might ultimately have given it shape and direction, but their ideas and policies developed piecemeal and not according to an overall master plan. The core of apartheid thinking – the notion of white supremacy – might have remained constant, but its implementation through policy was not a static process.

Furthermore, apartheid was not a completely new concept. It drew upon the earlier policy of segregation, which was also predicated to some extent upon the idea of white supremacy, and elaborated upon some of the segregationist policies. However, despite certain continuities, apartheid differed quantitively and qualitatively from segregation. What were these differences?

In the first place, apartheid was based on a Christian National ideology which, through a narrow-minded reading of the Bible, tried to justify racial separation in terms of the 'calling' and 'mission' of Afrikanerdom. There was no equivalent for this in the segregationist era; segregation being a somewhat more flexible policy, not linked to rarefied religious ideas.

Secondly, apartheid was being implemented at a time when the whole world order was moving away from race as the organising principle determining life chances. Segregation, by way of contrast, was more broadly comparable to the colonial policies being followed by the British in the rest of Africa, and also to the policies being pursued in the American south in particular. There was a marked difference between the historical contexts in which the two policies were implemented.

A third difference is located in the way in which the policies were administered. The Native Affairs Department of the earlier segregationist period, although not necessarily popular amongst African people, was relatively more benign than its successor, the Bantu Affairs Department. The latter played a far more direct political role and, in addition, was characterised by its authoritarian rigidity and unremitting control over the daily lives of African people.

A fourth difference is the battery of laws passed to buttress apartheid. Whereas segregation was, to some extent, a *laissez-faire* policy, apartheid was not. In fact, apartheid laws legalised racism. One bedrock

apartheid law passed in 1950 was the *Population Registration Act*, which legally defined a person's position in society according to the colour of his skin. Many of the other apartheid measures emanated from this act. Some of the other important acts passed were the *Mixed Marriages Act* (1949), *the Group Areas Act* (1950), the *Separate Amenities Act* (1953), *the Bantu Education Act* (1953), the *Immorality Act* (1957) and the *Political Interference Act* (1968). Many of these, as well as other acts and regulations were passed under the guise of "separate but equal", but more often than not facilities and provisions for whites were far superior to those of other groups. Apartheid meant, in effect, the hierarchical ordering of the entire South African society, and systematic political, economic and social discrimination against blacks. It was a philosophy which left few lives in South Africa untouched.

Afrikaners and the rationale of apartheid

What were the underlying reasons for the Afrikaner government's implementation of apartheid?

For many Afrikaners, the advent of the National Party to power in 1948 meant the celebration of a time-honoured and long-cherished ideal of being able to reshape South Africa in their own image. Flushed with victory at the polls, they considered it imperative to maintain the upper hand over other contesting groups in the country.

Apartheid offered the Afrikaner political elite a method for overcoming their most basic political challenge of how to maintain in perpetuity the domination of a white minority over a vast black majority. The perception of this problem was particularly acute after World War II, with the steady decolonisation of the rest of Africa. Carving out pieces of 'homelands' was a strategy to stave off this challenge. It could enable the government to argue that Africans were already independent and that, therefore, they had no legitimate claims to participate in the governing of 'white' South Africa. The misleading analogy was often made that just as Turkish *gast arbeiter* had no rights in Germany, in the same way blacks in 'white' South Africa were only "temporary sojourners" and not entitled to any rights.

'Separateness' was elevated to a supreme level and acquired qualities of inherent goodness within Afrikaner nationalist political culture. To many Afrikaners, apartheid was not meant to be an oppressive policy. If only its basic premises were accepted, it was designed to ensure "peace amongst the races". Even the forced removals of thousands of people in the implementation of apartheid were justified with the argument that it was for the common good.

Built into this was a degree of paternalism: Afrikaners decided and decreed what was acceptable and just for Africans. Thinking of themselves as an insular off-shoot from western Europe and priding themselves on being a separate and superior "white tribe", they took it upon themselves to dictate to others. And if others did not see it in that light, they had to be persuaded and cajoled into believing that ultimately it was in their interest to do so.

Moreover, apartheid was an attempt to protect and maintain what was considered Afrikaner culture and identity. Fears were expressed that in a melting-pot environment, Afrikaner culture would wilt. Any form of integration therefore had to be resisted.

Another important aim of apartheid was to promote the interests of whites in general and Afrikaners in particular. This found expression in job reservation legislation, which worked to the benefit of the white worker and the detriment of his black counterpart. In this sense, apartheid was a social welfare policy on behalf of the poorer sections of Afrikanerdom.

A central figure in the development of apartheid was H.F. Verwoerd. More than any other politician, he gave Afrikaners confidence in the development of apartheid. Many Afrikaners accorded him the stature of religious and political leader rolled into one. Verwoerd zealously pursued the apartheid ideal, brooked little opposition and was convinced that apartheid would succeed. His commitment to all aspects of apartheid was total.

Although the apartheid policy was all pervasive, its application changed over time. As a matter of fact, the adaptability of apartheid was one of its main characteristics. Between 1950 and 1980 apartheid went through different permutations. During the fifties the main struts and building blocks of apartheid were put into place through various laws and regulations. The sixties was a period of large-scale social engineering with the rapid development of the homeland policy and the suppression of black resistance movements. In the seventies, and particularly after the 1976 Soweto riots, apartheid increasingly came under threat. The policy had to be adapted because it could no longer guarantee domestic security without violence, and international pressure for change had also started to build. Apartheid now became more pragmatic and some "petty apartheid" measures were dropped, while it also became increasingly clear to nationalist planners that political accommodation for the thousands of urbanised Africans had to be found. A major crisis for apartheid had begun and was to last throughout the eighties.

Apartheid and capitalism

Although Afrikaners were largely responsible for the implementation and refinement of apartheid, it is reductionist and one-sided to analyse apartheid only in terms of the Afrikaner's drive for power. It is equally simple too to argue that apartheid had nothing to do with capitalism and that, in fact, the two were diametrically opposed. The situation was more complex, and the question of whose interest was being served by apartheid, is one of the more controversial issues broached in the literature.

It is argued that apartheid policies which provided a cheap labour force, favoured the needs of capitalists. At least until 1970, when the gold price rose, the mining industry benefitted from a ready supply of cheap labour which could be employed at low wages. Although individual mining capitalists might have had their reservations about apartheid, structurally it served their economic needs. Without cheap black labour, it would have been infinitely more difficult to work the mines profitably. The industry formed the backbone of the South African economy, but it could only do so through black poverty and the concentration of financial power in the hands of a small establishment. The three pillars of grand apartheid – homelands (formerly the reserves), influx control and migrant labour – were crucial to the development of capitalism and an industry like gold-mining. Relatively low costs and responsibility were incurred because of policies which ensured a cheap flow of labourers without any family dependents, and the existence of homelands where the redundant and discarded could be taken care of and controlled.

At the same time capitalist growth, particularly during the sixties and early seventies, made it possible for the state to acquire new and sophisticated technology. The state became more efficient and the application of apartheid measures more severe. Had it not been for capitalist expansion, it is questionable whether the state would have been able to embark on the ambitious and costly homelands scheme and the considerable expansion of the defence and police force. The sixties also provided local and international capitalists with an ideal environment in which to operate – a docile labour force because trade unions were suppressed, relatively low taxes, and opportunities to expand. During this period South Africa had one of the highest growth rates in the world.

However, apartheid did not necessarily serve the interests of all industries. Neither should acquiescence in apartheid be confused with support for apartheid. It is important to be more specific. In industries, other than mining, where economic growth was more dependent on

skilled labour and the development of a larger domestic market, low wages and apartheid restrictions on skills and labour mobility were more problematic. Apartheid contributed to the uncompetitiveness of much of the South African manufacturing industry, for instance, and manufacturers were quick to point this out to the state. But opposition to apartheid labour policies did not mean that businessmen rejected all aspects of apartheid. They did not oppose residential and educational apartheid and took white political supremacy for granted.

It should be clear by now that apartheid, and support for apartheid, cannot be restricted to one or two analytical categories. Historically, apartheid in all its many manifestations was the outcome of the complex interaction between racism, ethnicity, certain capitalist interests, ideology, and a need for security. In addition, it has to be taken into account that the relative weight of the different factors changed over time, which makes it even more difficult to analyse the specific contents and linkages of apartheid with any precision.

Demise of apartheid

During the eighties it became increasingly obvious that approximately five million whites could not stay in ultimate control over a population of close to 37 million black people. A range of factors gave rise to the systematic dismantling of apartheid structures and the unbanning of important political organisations: economic sanctions against the country; changes in the international order and declining Soviet influence with the end of the Cold War; nationwide and ongoing internal insurrections in South Africa; the armed struggle conducted by exiled political organisations and a generational shift within the ruling National Party as the younger, more pragmatic F.W. de Klerk replaced the older, more autocratic P.W. Botha as president. In the nineties South Africa started to move into a new era, but the legacy of years of apartheid rule and of segregation before that was still to cast a shadow for a considerable period of time.

CHAPTER 8

Christianity in South Africa since 1948

The year 1948 brought a watershed in the history of South Africa. In April that year the National Party was voted into power when it won the election from the United Party led by Field Marshal J.C. Smuts. This was the first general election after the Second World War (1939–1945). For United Party supporters it was a shocking defeat, while for the Nationalists it was a dream come true. The African point of view of the changes that were to be made, was expressed in the words of chief Albert Lutuli of the African National Congress on 11 July 1954: "We should be grateful to the National Party Government for unambiguously making it plain that in the interest of perpetuating white domination they will stop at nothing in their determination to realise their goal of keeping non-whites in a state of perpetual servitude" (Karis and Carter, 1977).

Segregation was not new to South Africa, neither were laws that entrenched white privilege. The Constitution of the Union of South Africa in 1910, while uniting the four provinces under a central government, ignored the voices of black leaders such as Reverend John Dube and J. Tengo Jabavu and little was done to establish the political and land rights of the African people as these rights legally entrenched colour discrimination (Jabavu, 1928:83). The Land Act of 1913 denied Africans the right to choose where they wished to live and marked the permanent division of South Africa into areas allocated for white or black ownership. Jabavu described this law when saying that "the secret but unmentioned purpose of the 1913 Lands Act is to confine the black man within such circumscribed limits that he should never be territorially independent, but be compelled by intolerable congestion to go out of his habitat and seek labour with whites and thus constitute a never-drying reservoir of cheap unskilled labour, especially for the farmers" (1982:11). For white society this was a time when the new government had to address the problem of merging the predominantly Afrikaans farming community and the English, with their extensive commercial interests, into one nation. African migrant labour was necessary to achieve this aim. Further laws would entrench the policy of segregation which

had first been propounded by General Hertzog, when he was elected prime minister in 1924. Among these laws was the Urban Areas Act of 1923 which made provision for segregated urban locations for Africans. The Land Act of 1936 made squatting on white farms illegal, although more land was allocated for African occupation. In 1937 the Native Laws Amendment Act prohibited Africans from buying land in urban areas. Black churches had to apply to the government for recognition and show that they had sufficient support before they were allowed to build churches in urban areas. The 1946 population census was the first to show an African majority in the urban areas. This affected the many African Independent Church groups that were being formed, especially in the cities. From 1948 new laws built on existing legislation ensured that the regulations were adhered to. "Petty apartheid" also became part of South African life. This happened in spite of the fact that the Fagan Commission in 1948 declared that the idea of "total segregation is utterly impracticable". What made post-1948 apartheid different was the way in which the policy of segregation permeated every area of South African life, to the extent that even park benches were designated for either whites or blacks. In an era when the rest of the world was loosening the shackles of colonialism, the government in South Africa was taking away the few political rights that had been afforded black races. An example of this is the removal of the rights of Cape coloured voters in 1956. This was to lead to South Africa's increasing alienation from the rest of the world. As each new law was promulgated, churches in South Africa reacted, as did churches in the rest of the world: some groups supported the legislation, while others rejected what was happening.

Apartheid measures passed during the years 1949–1952 included:

- 1949 – South African Citizenship Bill.
- 1949 – Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act. All future marriages between whites and members of other race groups were prohibited.
- 1950 – Population Registration Act. Every person was registered according to race. Where there was doubt, the matter was decided by officials in Pretoria. The churches would later be called on to help many people whose lives were disrupted by this law.
- 1950 – The Group Areas Act. This provided for the proclamation of segregated areas in which only members of a certain race group were allowed to live and conduct business. It led to the gradual separation of races, making it difficult for members of a denomination to meet members of the same denomination who belonged to a different race group.
- 1950 – The Suppression of Communism Act. More and more the rejection of apartheid legislation came to be seen as Communist and therefore anti-Christian.
- 1951 – The abolition of the Native Representative Council. While this body existed, members of the Council (like Mrs Margaret Ballinger and Dr Gordon

Mears) were able to contest repressive legislation. However, this body was made up of whites representing blacks and it had no black members. In 1951, in line with this policy, the Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk published Article 3 of their Canon Law, proclaiming the NHK a "whites only" church.

- 1951 – Beginning of the constitutional struggle to remove coloured voters from the common role.
- 1952 – Abolition of Passes and Coordination of Documents Act. This provided for the issuing of reference books to all Africans. These had to be carried at all times and were important in the implementation of influx control. The implementation of this law was one of the factors leading to the defiance campaign.

The Dutch Reformed Church and separate development

In 1935 the Dutch Reformed Church published a missionary document based on the "three-selves" policy of the missiologists Venn and Anderson. This policy encouraged "young" or mission churches to be self-supporting, self-governing and self-expanding. Later this was to form the basis for a biblical justification of the policy of separate development. Two of the clauses supporting this policy state that:

1. It is not sufficient to organise the congregation from heathendom into a church. That church must develop ultimately to achieve independence.
   ...
2. It must not be forgotten, however, that evangelisation does not presuppose denationalisation. Christianity must not deprive the native of his language and culture, but must eventually permeate and purify his entire nationalism. For this reason racial customs which do not militate directly against Christian principles should not be condemned, but rather be preserved and ennobled by the influence of Christianity. This difficult question demands much wisdom and tact.

Under the heading "Social" the document stated that: "The traditional fear of the Afrikaner of equality of treatment between black and white has its origin in his antipathy to the idea of racial fusion". As regards economic stipulations the document declared: "The native and coloured must be assisted to develop into self-respecting Christian nations. By self-help and especially by the practice of self-control, own initiative and perseverance, they must develop their own solidarity as far as possible, apart from the Europeans" (Hofmeyr, 1991:185,187). The acceptance of this policy can be recognised in the words of Mr Grobler, the retired Minister of Native Affairs, spoken at Pretoria University on 12 December 1936: "There can be no middle course in native policy. You must either have equality and assimilation on the one hand, or on the other the golden rule of Calvinism and of the old republics – no equality in church or state. Indecision can

only lead us to an abyss" (Karis and Carter, 1979:134). This policy laid the foundation for the Dutch Reformed Church's post-1948 stance on race relations in South Africa.

In May 1918 a group calling themselves "Jong Suid-Afrika" changed their name to the "Afrikaner Broederbond". The Broederbond was started as a quasi-cultural organisation aimed at propagating the Afrikaans language but it soon became a growing force in public life, working for political power for the Afrikaner nation. In 1944 the General Secretary of the Broederbond declared that "the Broederbond is born from a deep conviction that the Afrikaner nation has been placed in this country by God's hand". In 1946 the Dutch Reformed synod, after an investigation in which a large number of Broeders took part, found that the Bond and membership of it was not in conflict with the Scriptures and loyalty to Christian principles (Serfontein, 1982:206).

During July 1947 a "Volkskongres" took place in Johannesburg. The proceedings of this congress were published in a booklet entitled *Kerk en stad*. An open letter sent out by the Federal Council in 1943 to all members of the Dutch Reformed Church was once again brought to the attention of South Africans. It laid down the guidelines for the policy of the white Dutch Reformed Church towards the other racial groups in the post-1948 era.

1. The Congress regards it as the ideal solution of the racial problems of South Africa that eventually the whites and non-whites be separated from each other, territorially, economically and politically; but expresses the viewpoint that in the light of the practical problems such a scheme would cause, it will be endeavoured in the meantime to approach this solution as far as possible.
2. . . . whites and non-whites should be enlightened about the significance of our racial problems, and especially about the aim that is being pursued by a policy of racial apartheid.
3. Congress expresses its conviction that the Church must take the lead to draft a definite racial policy for her people(volk) (Serfontein, 1982: 268).

These policies were to find final expression in the 1951 Dutch Reformed synod's "Rapport oor die Skriftuurlike gronde van rasse-apartheid" (Report on the Scriptural basis for racial apartheid).

Some 'white' voices against apartheid

Among white South Africans were a number of people who felt that the policy of separate development as it was being promulgated by the government was unjust and wrong. It is important to remember that they were in the minority and most white South Africans either supported apartheid or were apathetic to what was happening in the political arena.

Alan Stewart Paton (1903–1988) was born in Pietermaritzburg in 1903. He attended Pietermaritzburg College where he also taught after graduating from Natal University College with a B.Sc. in Mathematics and Physics and a Diploma in Education. He taught from 1924 to 1935 when he was appointed principal of the Diepkloof Reformatory for Africans, near Johannesburg. In 1948, during a trip to Britain, America and the Continent, he wrote *Cry, the beloved country*. In 1948 he also attended the first session of the newly constituted World Council of Churches. Paton decided to leave Diepkloof and concentrate on his writing. His work is an expression of his commitment to his Christian ideals. *Cry, the beloved country* awoke the world to the living conditions of non-whites in South Africa.

In 1953 he joined the Liberal Party. He then became the leader of this party and a leader in the fight against apartheid, helping to formulate the thinking of English-speaking liberals in particular. In 1954 he was once again a South African delegate to the meetings of the World Council of Churches – this time at Evanston, Illinois, USA. Other works by him include *The South African tragedy: the life and times of Jan Hofmeyr* (1965), a biography on Archbishop Geoffrey Clayton of Cape Town and two volumes of autobiography, *Towards the mountain* and *Journey's end* in which he describes his struggle against apartheid both as an Anglican Christian and a human being. His became the voice of the liberals to the outside world as in his writing he reflected the suffering of those whose lives were adversely affected by the increasing oppression caused by apartheid legislature. He appealed to the consciences of white South Africans to face the problems of this suffering. When he died in 1988 at his home near Durban, *The Times* wrote: "His view of this century became bleaker: he could foresee only a bloodbath. But his Christian faith sustained him, and, although criticised by radical elements, he enjoyed widespread respect as a saintly man who was by no means unworldly."

After obtaining BA and MA degrees at the South African College, Barend Bartholomeus Keet (1885–1974) studied at the Theological School at Stellenbosch from 1906–1909. He became closely involved in the cultural struggle of the Afrikaner. After studying in the United States and Holland and ministering to congregations in Paarl and Graaff-Reinet, he was appointed professor at Stellenbosch University by the Cape synod of 1919. He held this appointment until his retirement in 1959.

Keet is remembered for his book *Na honderd jaar: de regeringsvorm van de Nederduitsch Gereformeerde Kerk aan de gereformeerde beginselen getoetst* (written in 1925) in which he expressed concern over the dissenting canonical direction in the church. In 1955 he again expressed concern when he wrote *Whither South Africa?* In this book he criticised the existing racial structure and said that the racial issue would not be solved by choosing between integration and separation, but by a gradual move towards "amalgamation". He also questioned the viability of the policy of separate development or apartheid. Professor Keet was closely involved in the activities of the Students' Christian

Association of which he was chairman from 1921 to 1949 (Verhoef, 1987:402). An evangelical theologian, Keet was an early critic of separate development and influenced the thinking of other theologians like Professor Ben Marais.

Ben Marais is a church historian and ordained minister of the Dutch Reformed Church. He was born in the Suurberg, in the Steynsburg district of the Karoo some eighty years ago. After attending school in Middelburg in the Cape Province, he studied at Stellenbosch University, obtaining first an MA and then graduating as an ordained minister in the Dutch Reformed Church. He then studied further at Princeton and Yale Universities in the USA. He taught at the University of Pretoria from 1954 to 1974 and at the University of South Africa from 1975 to 1988.

Marais provided a prophetic voice against the policy of segregation. In 1940 he warned the synod of the Dutch Reformed Church not to accept apartheid as being scripturally justifiable. This was at a time when there was criticism from the rest of the world against the policy of segregation. In 1944 he again spoke out at a synod when he objected to a paragraph in the report of the Synodical Commission that read: "... aangesien die Skrif apartheid leer en die voogdyskap van die blanke oor die naturel" (... because Scripture teaches apartheid and the guardianship of whites over blacks). This, he said, was ideology, not biblical teaching. In 1948 he rejected a report by Professor E.P. Groenewald which affirmed that racial segregation was grounded in Scripture. His rejection was seconded by a member of the moderature and synod did not adopt the report. During the 1950s he continued to reject the entrenchment of apartheid. This did not endear him to the more conservative members. At the 1955 synod, when a report on the Freemasons was tabled and their secrecy criticised, Marais proposed that no one belonging to a secret society like the Broederbond should hold office in the Church, as the Church is itself a brotherhood. This proposal was rejected.

Marais has had a lifelong interest in the ecumenical movement. In 1948 he attended the first sessions of the World Council of Churches as one of the South African delegates. At the 1954 Council meeting at Evanston he, with Benjamin Mays of North America, presented the report on "Church and race". One of the members of the committee on "Church and race" was Alan Paton.

The publications for which Marais is best known, are *Kleurkrisis in die Weste* (Colour: the unsolved problem in the West) published in 1953 and *Two faces of Africa* which appeared in 1964. These books, which criticised the policy of separate development, appeared at a time when apartheid was strongly defended by both the government and the Dutch Reformed Church and at least twenty-five years before most people came to see the need for change.

1948: an ecumenical watershed

In 1948 the World Council of Churches was inaugurated in Amsterdam. It comprised the churches that had made up membership of the Commission of

Life and Work and the Movement of Faith and Order. The International Missionary Council would only become part of the organisation in 1961. (The WCC includes Anglican, Reformed, Orthodox, Lutheran, Baptist, Congregational, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches, the Old Catholic Church, the Coptic and Syrian churches and a few Quaker, Pentecostal and Moravian Brethren churches. The Roman Catholic Church has held observer status since 1961.)

Most South African churches joined the World Council of Churches in 1948. These included the Anglicans, the Presbyterians, the Methodists and the Dutch Reformed Churches of the Cape and Transvaal, as well as the Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk van Afrika. Delegates who were sent to the conferences in Amsterdam in 1948 and again in 1954 at Evanston, included Ben Marais of the Dutch Reformed Church and Alan Paton of the Anglican Church.

The main ecumenical platform in South Africa at this time was the Christian Council of South Africa which had been formed in 1936. In 1949 this body met at Rosettenville, near Johannesburg to discuss "The Christian in a multiracial society". This was the first ecumenical conference since the National Party had come to power and the ideological character of apartheid was beginning to show itself. Its affirmations characterised the position of some of the English-speaking churches at that time.

> We affirm that the fundamental truths we shall neglect at our peril include:
> 1. God has created all men in his image. Consequently, beyond all differences remains the essential unity.
> 2. Individuals who have progressed from a primitive social structure to one more advanced, should share in the responsibilities and rights of their new status.
> 3. The real need of South Africa is not "apartheid" but "eendrag" (unity through teamwork).
> 4. Citizenship involves participation in responsible government. The franchise should be accorded to all capable of exercising it.
> 5. Every child should have the opportunity of receiving the best education that the community can give, and for which the child has the capacity.
> 6. Every man has the right to work in that sphere in which he can make the best use of his abilities for the common good (De Gruchy, 1979: 53–56).

While these affirmations may appear paternalistic, they were nevertheless an attempt to address the problems of increasing limitation of the rights of non-white South Africans. During the 1950s the Christian Council reacted to the apartheid legislation that was passed. In October 1954 a circular was sent to heads of churches and superintendents of missions to investigate their attitude towards the Bantu Education Act. The Committee believed that the Act would violate certain principles of education. In 1968 the Christian Council of South

Africa distributed its "Message to the people of South Africa" and in 1969 the name was changed to the South African Council of Churches and a new constitution was formulated, based on that of the World Council of Churches.

The South African Council of Churches

In the constitution, amended on 6 August 1969, the objectives of the South African Council of Churches were described thus:

2. Objectives

The principal objectives of the Council shall be:

a. To foster that unity which is both God's Will and his gift to the Church, by discussions, conferences, ecumenical studies, joint endeavour and in such other ways as may from time to time seem expedient;
b. To coordinate the work and witness of churches and missionary societies and other Christian organisations and institutions in South Africa in order more effectively to carry out the Church's mission in the world;
c. To undertake on behalf of churches and missionary societies such joint action and service as may be possible and to encourage joint action and service among member churches;
d. To do all such things and to encourage all such things as may best be calculated to reduce in scope the divisive factors, whether doctrinal or otherwise, presently existing among Christian churches.

3. Membership

i. Membership of the council shall be available to:

a. All churches which are able to subscribe to the following doctrinal basis: "A fellowship of Churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfil their common calling to the glory of one God; Father, Son and Holy Ghost".
b. Missionary societies and other Christian organisations whose policies, constitutions and doctrinal standards have been approved by the National Executive. (Hofmeyr, 1991:251,253).

The South African Council of Churches is the largest ecumenical platform in South Africa even though the Afrikaans churches are not members (except for the Dutch Reformed Mission Church and the Reformed Church in Africa). The SACC involves itself in issues like social development, education and ecumenical contacts. A number of bursaries are made available to students who are unable to afford study fees. Suffering caused by apartheid legislation is also addressed and recently (1993) the present general secretary, Reverend Frank Chikane, participated in peace-making programmes in areas where violence has broken out. Poverty is another concern of the SACC, which helps those in dire need.

In 1974 the SACC issued a statement on conscientious objection in which they "prayed for the government and people of our land and urgently call on

them to make rapid strides towards radical and peaceful change in our society" (Hofmeyr, 1991:265). From 1978 to 1985 Bishop Mpilo Desmond Tutu was General Secretary of the SACC. He worked especially among those who were suffering under apartheid legislation, visiting communities which were being uprooted and attending funerals of those who had been killed during protest marches. During this time the South African government appointed the Eloff Commission to investigate the activities of the SACC. When called before the commission, Tutu articulated the SACC's perception of the task of the church in the following words:

> The aim of the church is to bring about social justice. Justice must be done to the poor and oppressed and if the present system does not serve this purpose, the public conscience must be roused to demand another. If the church does not exert itself for justice in society, and together with the help she can offer, also is not prepared to serve as the champion for the cause of the poor, others will do it. The poor have the right to say: I do not ask for your charity, but I ask to be given an opportunity to live a life of human dignity (Tlhagale, 1990:9).

On 24 February 1984 the Presidium of the SACC published a resolution on the Eloff Report. They rejected the manner in which the chairman of the Commission had used the word "revolutionary" in relation to the work of the SACC and stated that:

> It is intolerable that the church be denied the right to determine and interpret its Gospel mandate in terms of challenges in its environment. The Presidium reminds the State that the commission has no theological competence to determine how the church should be the church (SACC Archives, 1984).

Most of the English-speaking churches are members of the SACC, while it has also increasingly become an ecumenical platform for black churches. The SACC continues to address both the social and the political issues in this country.

The church unity commission

During the 1970s talks were held about unity between different English-speaking churches, among others between the Presbyterian and the Congregational churches, and this led to the amalgamation of some individual churches. The talks between the Bantu Presbyterian Church, the Church of the Province of South Africa, the Methodist Church of South Africa, the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa, the Tsonga Presbyterian Church and the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa were more fruitful. In 1978 the first draft of the proposed covenant was published. The churches proclaimed the following:

We covenant before God and before one another:

1. To accept baptism as administered in any of the Covenanting Churches, as initiation into membership of the Church.
2. To accept as communicant members, without further sacramental rite, persons who have been baptised, have made profession of faith and have been recognised as communicant members of any of the Covenanting Churches.
3. To recognise the ordained ministers in each Covenanting church as true ministers of the Word and Sacraments, as having the commission of Christ and the authority and approval of each of the Covenanting Churches.
4. To conduct all future ordinations in such a manner that those ordained will possess the authority and approval of each of the Covenanting Churches.
5. To meet in Council, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, so that the Covenanting Churches in each place may act together in worship, witness and service.
6. To seek to realise within the Church a fellowship in Christ that transcends the divisions of tradition, nation, culture, class and colour.
7. To work together for the spread of the gospel, for justice and peace and for the spiritual and material well-being and freedom of all people (Hofmeyr, 1991:275).

One of the impediments to unity has been the acceptance of apostolic accession. Another has been the ordination of women into the ministry. For many years the Congregational Church was the only church among the Covenanting Churches to have an ordained woman minister. Later the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches began to ordain women. In 1992 the Church of the Province of South Africa agreed to ordain women.

One of the results of the ordination of women in the Anglican Church has been the transference of some Anglicans who opposed the decision to the Roman Catholic Church. Archbishop Hurley of the Catholic Church felt: "It is very sad that the Anglican Church is divided over this question. I don't welcome the idea that Anglicans, disturbed by the emergence of women priests, would now like to join the Catholic Church" (Sunday Times, 1993:4).

Black leadership in the church

Black leadership in the established Christian denominations

On the political front "the prospect of reconciling economic integration and political desegregation remained a source of division and controversy within the Nationalist ranks throughout the 1950s" (Posel, 1991:62). With each political move there was a response by some of the churches, although often this was

muted and it was left to a few individuals like Alan Paton, chief Albert Lutuli and Archbishop Joost de Blank to question the moral rectitude of the legislation.

One of the African voices raised at this time was that of Z.K. Matthews. From 1936 to 1950 he was professor of African Studies at the University College of Fort Hare. From 1941 he was a member of the Native Representative Council until it was abolished in 1951, as well as being a member of the African National Congress. Men like Matthews, chief Albert Lutuli and Reverend James Calata were natural leaders whose social and political involvement was part and parcel of their Christian commitment. Reverend James Calata, an Anglican priest, was secretary-general of the African National Congress from 1936–1949 and at the same time was president of the African Minister's Association (Hastings, 1979:28).

Albert Lutuli (1898–1967) was born in 1898 near Bulawayo, in Zimbabwe where his father was a Seventh Day Adventist evangelist. Albert's father died when he was an infant and from 1908 he lived with his uncle, Martin Lutuli, at the traditional family home on the Umvoti Mission Reserve near Groutville, in Natal. Groutville was one of the mission stations which had been founded by the American Board missionaries who arrived in South Africa in 1835. Lutuli trained at the Teachers' Training College at Edendale, near Pietermaritzburg. Later he taught at a small primary school in the Natal uplands. At this time he became seriously interested in religion, was confirmed in the Congregational Church and became a lay preacher. Lutuli's use of the language of the Bible and his Christian faith were to remain evident for the rest of his life and were to affect his political philosophy.

Lutuli became active on the Natives' Representative Council in 1948 and in 1951 he was appointed president of the African National Congress in Natal. He was banned for the first time in 1953 but continued his support for those who opposed apartheid. During 1959 he was restricted to Groutville. In 1961 Lutuli was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his role in the struggle of the African people for equality. He died on 21 July 1967.

Another South African to win the Nobel Peace Prize was Archbishop Mpilo Desmond Tutu. He was born in 1931 at Klerksdorp in the Transvaal. He attended school in Johannesburg and after obtaining a teacher's diploma from the Pretoria Bantu College in 1953 and a BA from the University of South Africa in 1958, he taught for a while. In 1960, just at the time of the Sharpeville massacre and the Cottesloe Consultation, he obtained his Licentiate in Theology at St Peter's Theological College, Rosettenville, Johannesburg and was ordained a deacon. In 1961 he was ordained a priest. After a short spell in England where he obtained an M.Th. from London University, he returned to South Africa. He worked as a lecturer in theology at the Federal Seminary at Alice until 1969 and at the Universities of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland until 1975, when he was made the Anglican Dean of Johannesburg. He became Bishop of Lesotho in 1976 and general secretary of the South African Council of Churches in 1978. In 1984 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his work as a peacemaker

among all racial groups in South Africa. In 1986 Tutu became Archbishop of Cape Town and is still working for justice and peace among the many peoples in South Africa.

In 1964 the Methodist Church elected its first black President of Conference, Reverend Seth Mokotini. The United Congregational Church has also had a number of noteworthy black leaders, such as Reverend John Thorne.

The African Independent Churches

By the years 1948–1961 many of the early founders of the African Independent Churches were coming to the end of their lives and the churches were facing the challenge of continuing under new leadership. Many of the members of the Zionist or spiritist-type churches had never been members of any church before and their membership brought them the opportunity to worship God according to their own culture as well as the participation in a concerned community which understood the problems they faced daily.

In 1925 Engenas Lekganyane (c 1880–1948) founded the Zion Christian Church with its headquarters situated at Moriah, in the northern Transvaal. Later that year, when he applied for government recognition, he claimed 926 adherents in fifteen congregations. This church has become one of the biggest indigenous churches in Africa. Lekganyane died in 1948 and left two sons, Joseph and Edward. There was a dispute as to which of the two should be the new leader. Ever since, the Zion Christian Church has been divided. Joseph's supporters wear a badge depicting a dove and are called 'the people of healing'. The sign Edward's followers wear, is a silver star on a green and black ribbon.

Another church leader who died during this period was James Limba, a messianic-type leader who became sole head of the Limba Church or Church of Christ, in 1927. When he died in 1963 the church had more than 120 000 members.

Isaiah Shembe of the AmaNazaretha community near Durban was another messianic leader of this era. When he died in 1935, according to his directions he was succeeded by his second son, Johannes Galilee Shembe (Shembe II), (1904–1976) who had a BA degree from Fort Hare University and taught at Adams College in Natal before succeeding his father. As far as religious rituals were concerned, he adhered to the traditions initiated by his father and soon had a reputation as a healer. When Shembe II died in 1976 there was a dispute about the appointment of a titular head for the AmaNazaretha. The contenders were Amos Shembe, the brother, and Londa Shembe, son of Shembe II. This led to two opposing factions arising within the movement. In 1980 a schism occurred among the AmaNazaretha when Amos moved away and set up his headquarters 10 km from Ephakameni, the headquarters founded by Isaiah Shembe.

In 1965 the African Independent Churches' Association was started in Queenstown by the Christian Institute and in 1966 the African Independent

Churches' Ecumenical Movement was formed, but this attempt to unite the groups was not successful. During the period 1964 to 1967 the Christian Institute initiated training courses for Independent Church leaders. The African Independent Church movement has become the fastest growing church group in South Africa. Membership grew from 761 000 or 9,6% of the total African population in 1946 to 2 313 365 or 21,2% of the total African population in 1960. Today the movement has more members than any other black church grouping.

In 1980 a group of Independent Church leaders approached the Institute for Contextual Theology for help with training pastors. The African Spiritual Churches Association was formed with Archbishop Ngada as president. In 1982 the Association had 53 member churches throughout the country. One of the tasks of the Association is to assemble the oral history of the different churches from senior members of the groups like Archbishop Mhlophe of the Christian National Apostolic Church in Zion and Dr Lydia August, daughter of Christina Nku, the prophetess of St John's Apostolic Church.

The evangelistic fervour of the fifties and beyond

During the fifties parachurch organisations like the Student's Christian Association, Scripture Union, the Young Men's Christian Association and the Young Women's Christian Association were strong and well supported. Youth for Christ began holding large evangelical rallies. Attendance at these rallies was multiracial, until 1957 when the law preventing mixed worship was introduced and it became more difficult for all races to worship together.

The South African branch of the Students' Christian Association was formed in 1896. It was an interdenominational, interracial association which from 1902 to 1965 served students of all races and was affiliated to the World Student Christian Federation. By the 1950s some of the Dutch Reformed students had formed a denominational association (Kerk Jeugvereniging), although others remained within the SCA. In 1951 the SCA was divided into four racial sections, although interracial conferences were held (Strassberger, 1974:101). In 1961 the SCA work in the schools amalgamated with the Schools and Varsities Christian Union or Scripture Union and became separated from the SCA in the universities (Prest, 1988:169). Scripture Union, an interdenominational and interracial organisation started its work in South Africa in 1884 in Cape Town. By the 1950s Scripture Union was involved in promoting Bible reading, beach missions and camping holiday missions.

The Young Men's Christian Association was founded in London in 1844. The work in South Africa was started in Cape Town in 1865 with Reverend Andrew Murray as the first president. The YMCA is interdenominational and brings young men to the realisation of the importance of the Christian faith. The Young Women's Christian Association was started in London in 1855 and in South

Africa in 1866. Like the YMCA they had branches in all the main centres in South Africa. In 1955 the YWCA was affiliated as a national body to the World YWCA.

The Bible Society in South Africa started its work in Cape Town in 1820. At that time it was called the British and Foreign Bible Society. The Bible Society is responsible for translating the Bible into the vernacular, namely Sotho, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Xhosa, Zulu and also Afrikaans. The Society also produces copies of the Bible, which are sold cheaply so that even the poor can afford to read Scripture.

In 1956 a conference on "Christian literature for the Bantu in Southern Africa" was held in Johannesburg. At this conference the need for evening schools for adults as well as the need for more religious publications was discussed. The importance of the work of the Bible Society was emphasised here and in the years to come as well.

Some examples of evangelical missions

Two of the important South African missions at this time were the Dorothea Mission and Africa Enterprise. The Dorothea Mission was started by Dr Hans van Staden in 1942 and aimed at the "evangelisation of the people in the dark city townships of South Africa" (Otto, 1984:38). Throughout the 1950s and 1960s the mission, under the leadership of Dr Van Staden and a number of evangelists, conducted evangelistic campaigns in various townships, using a tent ministry. The mission also attempted to help an increasing number of people who were suffering because of apartheid legislation.

Africa Enterprise was started by Michael Cassidy in 1962 in order to reach the people of South Africa with the gospel. Cassidy grew up in Lesotho and attended school at Michaelhouse in Natal. While at school, the spiritual life at that school led him to "give Jesus Christ serious consideration in my life. Then in 1955 came the momentous experience of full conversion and new birth at university in England. Hearing Billy Graham preach during a university mission in 1956 inspired me with the work of evangelism. Then in 1957 ... came the clear call to evangelism on the continent of Africa" (AE update, 1992:1).

Africa Enterprise sought to change attitudes amongst whites who were finding it easy to accept legislation which entrenched their privileged position and to care for Africans who were suffering under that same legislation. More and more Africa Enterprise assumed a conciliatory role by conducting missions and providing mission teaching in South Africa and in other parts of Africa as well. In 1985 a National Initiative for Reconciliation, attended by church leaders from all the main denominations, was held at Pietermaritzburg under the auspices of African Enterprise. Their work of preaching, teaching, caring for the poor and effecting reconciliation between races still continues.

The South African General Mission (now the African Evangelical Fellowship) was one of the earliest interdenominational South African missions. Founded in

1889, the SAGM had by the beginning of the twentieth century entered Swaziland, Natal, the Transkei, Zululand and Gazaland (Zimbabwe). (The Mission is involved in the training of local church leaders, founding Bible schools and spreading literature.) By the 1960s they were involved not only with mission in South Africa but in many surrounding countries as well. An example of this is their Bethany Mission in Swaziland. Foreign missions like the Overseas Missionary Fellowship (previously the China Inland Mission) and the Africa Inland Mission were supported by prayer and financial assistance. It was not unusual to find South Africans among the workers on foreign mission fields. Other interdenominational missions that employed South Africans as foreign missionaries were the Sudan Interior Mission and the Sudan United Mission (South Africans worked mainly in Nigeria). These missionary societies had their headquarters in Britain or America and had branches in South Africa.

This evangelistic fervour did not always permeate all areas of worship. For many the religion of the 1950s appeared narrow, rigid and lifeless. In 1968 Basil Moore, president of the University Christian Movement at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, wrote: "A number of religious surveys done on the Rhodes campus indicate that an increasing number of students find the 'normal' style of worship both dull and irrelevant, though few would support the contention that it is wrong" (Evening Post, 1968). Some people tried to experiment with innovative ways of worship incorporating drama and movement, although this practice was to become more popular in the 1960s. This same dissatisfaction with the quality of spiritual life in some denominations led to the growth of the Charismatic (or Renewal) movement during the 1960s.

The Pentecostal churches

The Pentecostal churches showed rapid growth during these years. The Assemblies of God expanded their work. During the years 1936–1944 the executive of the Church, which until that time had consisted of expatriate whites, became multiracial. During the years 1944–1964 the work was to expand and consolidate under the leadership of J.E. Mullan and Nicholas Bhengu. Between 1945 and 1951 Bhengu was responsible for a revival in Port Elizabeth. In 1950 he launched a "Back to God" campaign in East London which within a year led to Bhengu becoming the pastor of a church with 1 500 adherents. By 1959 the total membership of the churches founded by Bhengu was estimated at fifteen thousand (Anderson, 1992:46). Although not as rapid as the growth of the black churches founded by Bhengu, the white section of the Assemblies of God also prospered and grew during the years 1948–1960, under the leadership of pastors J. Mullan and J. Bond.

In 1964 the total membership (black and white) of the Apostolic Faith Mission was 180 000, many of the members having seceded from the Dutch Reformed Church, thus causing ill-feeling. Statistics of the 1989 census show the rapid

growth of the AFM since that date – about 400 000 members in 990 churches with 969 pastors. There was a breakaway from the Apostolic Faith Mission in 1958 due to doctrinal differences, when the Pinkster Protestante Kerk was formed. The Pinkster Protestante Kerk has become the second largest Pentecostal church, numerically speaking.

The Full Gospel Church, too, was the product of the American Pentecostal Revival of the early twentieth century. George Bowie was sent to South Africa by the Bethal Pentecostal Assembly in 1910. A constitution was drawn up, thus allowing the Church to form part of the Pentecostal family. By the 1960s the work had expanded to South West Africa (Namibia), Bechuanaland (Botswana), Swaziland, Lesotho and Mozambique.

During the 1950s and 1960s a charismatic revival swept the world. David du Plessis, an AFM pastor, was one of the earliest leaders. He was a South African, having been born in Cape Town in 1905. Characterised by 'speaking in tongues', the movement began in the 1950s among members of many 'mainline' churches who felt the need for revival. An example of a mainline church where the Charismatic Renewal took root, is the Catholic Church. This was a worldwide phenomenon which in the Catholic Church took place in about 1967, that is two years after the Vatican II Council had made allowance for greater freedom in the Church. Pope Paul VI used the term "spiritual renewal" when speaking of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Later, in the 1970s and 1980s, neo-Pentecostal churches like the Christian Centres, Vineyard Ministries, Rhema Church and others were formed and the Renewal Movement became recognised as a permanent part of the life of the Church in South Africa.

Apartheid legislation challenges the churches

Slowly the policy of segregation reached into every area of South African life. Arrests for pass-book offences became an everyday occurrence and after 1955 forced removals moved more and more people away from the areas that had been their homes for generations. The following laws and events helped to entrench apartheid:

- 1953 – General election at which the National Party was re-elected with an increased majority.
- 1953 – Bantu Education Act – black primary and secondary education was vested in the Native Affairs Department. Education had long been one of the mission tasks of the church in South Africa and many of the black leaders had been educated at mission schools. This Act led to the take-over of mission schools by the government. Archbishop Clayton of the Anglican Church told the Cape Town synod in 1953: "The Bantu Education Act puts Bantu Education in the hands of the Native Affairs Department, and like other recent legislation it puts dangerously wide powers in the hands of an individual

minister." He also considered the Act to represent an effort to remove the influence of Christian missions.

- 1953 – Reservation of Separate Amenities Act – premises were reserved for only one race group at a time.
- 1954 – Native Resettlement Act – removal scheme to be undertaken in Western Areas. The Church was called to minister to people who had lost their homes and often they were resettled in areas where there were no prospects for employment.
- 1955 – Congress at Kliptown adopts the Freedom Charter – this charter called for equal opportunities.
- 1955 – Publication of the Tomlinson Report.
- 1956 – Riotous Assemblies Act.
- 1956 – Anti-pass march by black women in Pretoria.
- 1957 – Immorality Act reinforced.
- 1957 – Group Areas Consolidation Act. Clause 29 (c) of the Native Laws Amendment Act prevented blacks from owning church buildings in so-called white areas.
- 1958 – Cape coloured voters removed from the common role.
- 1958 – National Party wins the General Election and Dr Verwoerd is elected Prime Minister, following the death of J.G. Strijdom.
- 1959 – University Apartheid Act. Different race groups could no longer study at the same university. This meant that theological students belonging to the Dutch Reformed Church were trained at the Universities in Pretoria and Stellenbosch while those of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church studied at the University of the Western Cape. This Act also led to the buildings of the churches' theological colleges at Fort Hare being expropriated for use by the University itself.
- 1959 – Bantustan Act – granting of self-government to the homelands.
- 1960 – 21 March – The anti-pass march at Sharpeville that led to the deaths of 69 people.
- 1960 – December – The Cottesloe Consultation.
- 1961 – South Africa declared a Republic.
- 1963 – The formation of the Christian Institute.

The Federal Seminary – theological training is affected by legislation

In 1916 the Presbyterian, Methodist and Anglican Churches established a theological training centre for ordinands at Fort Hare, thus providing university education for Africans. The college was built on land that had originally been given to the Scottish Presbyterian missionaries by the Xhosa chief, Tyhali and his older brothers Sandile and Maqoma. The land was initially intended for building Lovedale, which began in 1841 as a boarding school open to all races. In 1959 Fort Hare was forcibly taken over by the Department of Bantu Education. The

church lost Iona House, Wesley House and Beda House where ministers had been trained. In 1961 another portion of the original Lovedale property was given to the seminary. This, too, was expropriated for the expansion of Fort Hare. The Federal Seminary was eventually to find a home near Pietermaritzburg, in Natal.

The Tomlinson Report of 1955

The Tomlinson Commission was set up to determine the socio-economic development of the areas occupied by blacks within the Union of South Africa. To do this a large number of people were interviewed, among whom were leaders from all the main denominations as well as from several African Independent Churches. In chapter 14 of the report the state of the mission churches as well as the "separatist" churches was examined. The following is a summary of the findings as regards church affairs:

- Missionary workers – Protestants make more use of ordained African ministers than do the Roman Catholics.
- All the churches make use of lay workers. "It is not known to what extent these lay workers are equal to their task."
- When the Department of Native Affairs took over the running of mission schools in 1951 and introduced Bantu Education, there was a strong contingent of teachers at those schools.
- A large number of medical personnel worked at the mission hospitals.
- Every area of church life was examined – finances, personnel and scope of the work.
- It was found that of the eleven "Separatist" churches reported on, all were self-supporting and self-expanding.
- Each church was asked "When do you intend to transfer full control of your mission church to the Bantu (*sic*)?" The vast majority of the churches showed reluctance to consider the transfer of full control at that time.

The report then noted: "The consensus of opinion among the churches amounts to this: The Europeans must remain in Africa as the principal bearers of the Christian religion and Christian civilisation." The paternalism of the colonial era was still clearly prevalent.

At the All-in African Conference called by the Interdenominational African Ministers' Federation from 4–6 October 1956, it was stated: "After detailed examination of the principles and policies enunciated in the (Tomlinson) report, the conference desires to place on record its total rejection of the report as a comprehensive plan for the implementation of apartheid in South Africa" (Karis and Carter, 1977:252). The conference-goers could not agree that the only options for South Africa were complete integration or complete segregation.

Reverend Paul Makhubu, an African Independent Church leader, also criticised the Tomlinson Commission. He wrote: "The list of reasons drawn up

by the Tomlinson Commission on African Independent Churches of 1955 is informative in giving the white man's view of the breakaways. The report of the commission concentrates on the negative aspects, and lists very few of what can be regarded as the positive reasons" (Makhubu, 1988:20).

After the publication of this report the way appeared clear for the implementation of the policy of forced removals and the formation of "independent homelands" for Africans. Sophiatown, a suburb of Johannesburg, was a black suburb with an ethos of its own. Many of the African 'elite' like Dr A.B. Xuma had homes there and it was known for its unique culture. In 1955 the inhabitants of Sophiatown were moved to Meadowlands in the newly established Soweto (South Western Townships). The churches had to re-establish their work in the new area and had to minister to congregations who were feeling confused and resentful. Whites were moved into what had been Sophiatown and it was renamed "Triomf" (triumph). In 1956 Father Trevor Huddleston of the Anglican Church wrote *Naught for your comfort* which told the story of the hardships experienced by the people of Sophiatown.

The churches' struggle against apartheid

The churches' response to apartheid legislation in the 1950s

During the 1950s the ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church were warned not to protest against apartheid legislation or embarrass the government. The English-speaking churches on the other hand, although traditionally seen as those who opposed the government, were careful not to mix politics with religion. The Church was responsible for the spiritual welfare of the people. However, every church included members who supported apartheid as well as those who opposed it. Moreover, church members often did not agree with the position taken by their leaders.

In 1953 an ecumenical conference was arranged by the Federal Mission Council of the Dutch Reformed Church. They met to discuss appropriate principles for a political policy in a multiracial situation. Virtually every non-Catholic agency involved in mission in South Africa was represented. A report on the conference was published in 1954, entitled "Christian principles in a multiracial South Africa". The following resolutions were adopted:

"Realising the call that we have as ministers of the Church of Christ, to avow and demonstrate our unity to the world, we, the delegates of the various denominations hereby declare:

- That we recognise and accept one another as brothers in Christ and avow our unity in Him;
- That we, recognising that our common history and the circumstances in which we find ourselves, account for the existence of our various denominations, acknowledge that each seeks to expand and serve the kingdom of God sincerely and devoutly;

- That we undertake to strive for and to use every opportunity to practise the fellowship of believers to which we are called."

The conference-goers realised that the economic needs of the African and coloured peoples had to be addressed. They did not directly criticise so-called Bantu education but emphasised the responsibility of Sunday Schools and the Students' Christian Association and similar organisations to help redress the limitations of African education. The conference-goers called on all Christian persons to regard and treat every human being with the honour and respect owing.

In 1947 the Sauer Report, a report produced internally for the National Party, provided a rudimentary blueprint for the apartheid policy of the future. When in 1948 the National Party proposed legislation that would deprive Africans of their already limited Parliamentary representation, the English-speaking churches reacted in an effort to prevent the legislation from becoming law. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa said: "Our earnest prayer is that white South Africa may be saved from the contempt in the eyes of the world which such action is bound to produce." The Methodist Church of Southern Africa at its conference noted that: "No person of any race should be deprived of constitutional rights or privileges merely on the grounds of race."

The Assembly of the Congregational Church stated that: "It is our sincere conviction that the Government's policy of apartheid has no sanction in the New Testament Scriptures." The Assembly of the Baptist Union condemned "any tampering with the accepted constitutional understanding of the franchise rights of non-Europeans . . .". In November of 1948 the Bishops of the Church of the Province of South Africa declared that "discrimination between men on the grounds of race alone is inconsistent with the principles of the Christian religion" (De Gruchy, 1979:54).

Statements such as these continued to be made by the various denominations in the course of years to come. In 1977 the South African Catholic Bishops' Conference on social justice and race relations was held in which they pledged themselves, amongst others, to "eradicate all differentiation on purely racial grounds in the treatment of persons at presbyteries, convents, other church institutions and private homes". In 1986 the pastoral letter of the South African Catholic Bishops' Conference expressed "Christian hope in the current crisis" and condemned injustice and the current conflict. In 1981 the Methodist church published a "Message of obedience" in which they stated that at a seven day conference "God in Christ was in the midst and he brought us to repentance". In 1981 the Presbyterian church revised their "Declaration of faith" and called on churches to "state clearly their position on the racial issue".

These churches would repeatedly condemn apartheid but Villa-Vicencio states: ". . . the tragedy is that the English-speaking churches have failed to be

the kind of institutions within which the possibility of moving society from polarised conflict to a higher level of community is possible" (1988:21).

The Defiance Campaign of 1952 was a joint stand by the African National Council and the South African Indian Congress. The campaign was launched on 6 April 1952, the day on which white South Africa was celebrating the tercentenary of the landing of Jan van Riebeeck at the Cape. The campaign propagated a rejection of segregated facilities and the pass system. A call was made to the authorities to stop the use of force and to stop introducing apartheid legislation. One of the leaders of the Defiance Campaign was Albert Lutuli. In November 1952 the government dismissed him as chief of his tribe. He answered in the statement "The road to freedom is via the Cross". Lutuli's faith is expressed in his closing words: "I try ... in a spirit of trust and surrender to God's will as I see it, to say: 'God will provide'. It is inevitable that in working for freedom some individuals and some families must take the lead and suffer. The Road to Freedom is via the Cross" (Karis and Carter, 1977:489).

In 1956 the Council of the Dutch Reformed Church issued a report on racial segregation. It gave an historical overview of segregation in the church in an effort to allay the fears of those members who were beginning to question the justice of apartheid. The Reformed Ecumenical synod also addressed the question of race relations at their meeting at Potchefstroom in 1955. They found no Scriptural basis for forbidding marriage between races, although they stated that people should be guided by what was culturally acceptable. The Church was seen to be responsible for teaching people how to act towards those of other race groups.

December 1956 saw the arrest of 156 South Africans on a charge of treason. Among them were Albert Lutuli and Z.K. Matthews, who were well-known Christians. For a long time the Anglican Archbishop, Geoffrey Clayton, had been concerned about the apartheid legislation that was changing the lives of South Africans, so he joined the Treason Trial Defence Fund. Other Anglican priests who voiced their dissatisfaction with apartheid legislation were Bishop Ambrose Reeves of Johannesburg, Reverend Michael Scott and Father Trevor Huddleston.

Trevor Huddleston was born in 1913 in Bedford, England and graduated from Oxford University and Wells Theological College. After being ordained in 1937, he joined the Community of the Resurrection, an Anglican monastic order. In 1943 he was appointed priest-in-charge of the Community's mission in Sophiatown, Johannesburg. From 1949–1955 he was the principal of St. Peter's Secondary School for Africans in Johannesburg. In 1955 St. Peter's closed as a mission school in accordance with a decision by Bishop Ambrose Reeves of Johannesburg, against cooperation with the government under the Bantu Education Act. Huddleston supported those who campaigned against both the Bantu Education Act and forced removals. He was recalled to England in 1956.

Geoffrey Hare Clayton (1884–1957) was born in Leicester, England in 1884. After his schooling at Rugby, he attended Pembroke College, Cambridge. Here he helped to found the University Church Society in 1905. He entered the ministry of the Anglican Church in England and served in various parishes with a spell as chaplain to the forces during the First World War. In 1934 he was appointed Bishop of Johannesburg. South Africa at this time was still feeling the effects of the great depression and Clayton entered into his work with humility, authority and gusto. In his first letter to the diocese he wrote: "My duty at present is to learn, and to keep as quiet as I can until I have been able to form some ideas of the needs and prospects of the diocese as a whole" (Paton, 1973:43).

In 1948 Clayton became Archbishop of the Church of the Province of South Africa (Anglican). Clayton's whole ecclesiology depended on the right of the Church to be the Church and he felt it essential that the Church maintain a certain aloofness from the society from within which it worked. The Archbishop gave direct guidance to Anglicans on the matter of Church/state relations and apartheid legislation. He did not, however, always agree with the more radical of the Anglican priests like Michael Scott and Bishop Ambrose Reeves. In 1952, when speaking about civil disobedience, he said: "There are circumstances in which it is a man's duty as a Christian to refuse to obey a particular law." In 1955 he saw the Anglican Church as being "between two fires, on the one hand from those who seem to regard as illegitimate any expression of opinion which is contrary to the government of the day; on the other hand from those who believe that we are not loud enough in our denunciations" (Worsnip, 1991:33). However, it was in 1957, after the publication of Clause 29c (the so-called church clause) of the Native Laws Amendment Act that Archbishop Clayton made his bravest stand against what he perceived to be unjust legislation. He summoned the bishops of Grahamstown, Johannesburg, Pretoria and Natal to a meeting of the emergency committee of the Episcopal synod. A letter was drafted to the Prime Minister in which it was stated that Clause 29c represented an infringement of religious freedom. Clayton, by this time a man of seventy-three, was willing to go to prison if he were called on to do so, and the pastoral letters sent to all Anglicans in 1957 called on everyone to ignore the new law. Clayton died in 1957 and was succeeded as archbishop by Joost de Blank.

Clause 29(c) of the Native Laws Amendment Act made it virtually impossible for black people to worship in white areas. For the English-speaking churches that were proud of their multiracial character, this was unacceptable. For the first time there was united opposition to apartheid legislation from the English-speaking churches. They added their support to the protest by Archbishop Geoffrey Clayton who rejected the right of a secular agency to determine where a church member might worship.

The outcome of this was a modified bill which allowed a minister to bar black Christians from worshipping, should anyone complain. The Archbishop's pastoral letter condemning apartheid was read in all Anglican churches. It stated:

"Before God and with you as my witnesses, I solemnly state that not only shall I not obey any direction of the Minister of Native Affairs in this regard, but I solemnly counsel you, both clergy and lay, to do the same."

The new legislation was to be ignored and the unity of the Anglican Church to be preserved.

The Methodist Church was also a multiracial church. At their 1958 conference they debated the possibility of forming four separate churches, i.e. white, black, coloured and Indian, but this was soundly rejected. The outcome was a vote for unity, expressed in this resolution in the minutes of conference:

"The Conference declares its conviction that it should be one and undivided, trusting to the lead of God to bring this ideal to ultimate fruition, and that this be the general basis of our missionary policy" (Villa-Vicencio, 1988:19).

This declaration is read at every Methodist conference to remind Methodists of their unity in Christ.

The pastoral letter issued in 1957 by the South African Catholic Bishops' Conference was entitled "Statement on apartheid" and read:

"The condemnation of the principle of apartheid as something intrinsically evil does not imply that perfect equality can be established in South Africa by a stroke of the pen. . . . A change must come for otherwise our country faces a disastrous future. . . . But the Christian duty remains of seeking to unite rather than to separate, to dissolve differences rather than perpetuate them. A different colour can be no reason for separation when culture, custom, social condition and, above all, a common faith and common love of Christ impel towards unity . . ."

Sharpeville, Cottesloe and the Christian Institute

The main factor giving rise to the Cottesloe Consultation, was the massacre of blacks which took place at Sharpeville. Police opened fire on 3 000 to 10 000 people, who were participating in a peaceful protest led by the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC). The protest was targeted at the abolition of pass laws, and was specifically aimed at opposing white domination and emancipating blacks in South Africa. Since the apartheid government tolerated no opposition to their policies they acted very harshly and under the guise of maintaining law and order, 67 people were killed and 186 casualties were noted. Amongst these were 40 women and 8 children (Karis and Carter, 1977:334).

The government put the blame for the massacre squarely on the blacks and their organisations while the police were excused of all blame. The government subsequently (as a result of events emanating from this massacre) declared a state of emergency throughout the country. The African National Congress (ANC) and PAC were banned while thousands of blacks as well as their leaders were imprisoned. Many whites who felt threatened and insecure about their safety in the country went abroad, taking with them substantial amounts of money.

Churches within the country were divided on the Sharpeville incident. With the exception of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC), many an English-speaking church strongly criticised the actions of the government. Archbishop Joost de Blank of the Anglican Church was of the opinion that the position of the entire Christendom was at stake since millions of blacks associated the government (of which most of its members belonged to the DRC) with Christianity. In a letter to the World Council of Churches (WCC) De Blank spoke out strongly against the DRC's support of the apartheid policy. He also requested that they be expelled from the council. He was of the opinion that the Anglican Church could not remain in the same council with the DRC any longer. These statements, as it were, had negative influences on relations between the two churches. The WCC, however, did not meet the demands of De Blank but alternatively decided to call for the Cottesloe Consultation between the eight member churches in South Africa. The consultation took place on 7-10 December 1960, in Johannesburg. Each member church sent 10 delegates, amongst whom were 19 blacks.

The purpose of the consultation was to enable participating churches to talk to one another about the situation in the country. For this reason they were asked to draw up a memorandum on the following five topics:

- The factual situation in South Africa;
- The Christian understanding of the gospel as regards relationships among races;
- An understanding of contemporary history from a Christian viewpoint;
- The state of emergency in South Africa;
- The witness of the Church in respect to justice, mission and cooperation (Strassberger, 1971:354).

In doing so, the differences between the various memoranda of the three Afrikaans-speaking and the five English-speaking churches were very clearly manifested. The former were of the opinion that apartheid was an acceptable policy, provided it be "justifiably" applied while the latter saw it as unacceptable. The declaration issued at the end of the Cottesloe Consultation was not only moderate, but showed all the signs of compromise having been reached between the pro-apartheid vision of the Afrikaans churches and the anti-apartheid standpoint of the English-speaking churches. Herein lie the features of a typical consensus document. The Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk (NHK) strongly criticised and rejected the document and reaffirmed their unconditional support for the apartheid policy and the regime. The Prime Minister, H.F. Verwoerd, strongly criticised the declaration and said: "Any form of political multi-racialism or so-called partnership would ultimately deprive the white man of his rightful heritage" (Reeves, 1972:7). In ensuing declarations on this issue Verwoerd applied more pressure on the DRC delegates to Cottesloe. This gave rise to the Federal Council and the Cape and Transvaal synods of the DRC's

rejection of the declaration and their subsequent walk-out of the WCC. One of the consequences of the Cottesloe meeting was the founding of the Christian Institute (CI) in 1963. Dr Beyers Naude, a member of the Cottesloe Consultation, played a very significant role in this exercise. The following led to the founding of the CI:

- Grave shock concerning the massacre at Sharpeville;
- Disappointment over the Church's attitude after Cottesloe;
- Racial laws becoming harsher; and
- Consequent insistence on and persistence with the apartheid policy.

The CI wanted to pursue the ecumenical dialogue which had been started by Cottesloe. This would be done through involving Christians from all denominations in Bible study and other activities through which they would be inspired to practise social justice. Most of those people attending the launch of the CI were from the English-speaking churches, while some DRC ministers and Catholic priests and lay people were also present. There were, however, very few blacks. The CI denounced the apartheid policy as being unbiblical and unchristian and rejected it.

What was the attitude of churches towards the CI? Shortly after the launch of the CI the DRC strongly criticised it as a body which sought to fight the church's racial and ecumenical policy and therefore called upon its members to sever all ties with it. The NHK followed suit with a similar decision. The English-speaking churches thought they did not make the same decisions as the Afrikaans churches, but their support for the CI left much to be desired. While the CI as a prophetic ecumenical movement initially aimed to be a critical voice within the Afrikaans-speaking churches, their involvement in the activities of the black communities changed their stance to a conscientious struggle for the liberation of blacks. In this regard black theology and the black consciousness movement played significant roles. The involvement of the CI with the Independent churches, particularly through the Christian Council of South Africa (CCSA – later the SACC), was a very decisive moment in the history of the Church's struggle against apartheid. That explains the government's actions against organisations like the CI and others in the 60s and 70s. These actions gradually became harsher and eventually led to the banning of these organisations.

Organisations like the University Christian Movement (UCM) and the CI were members of the CCSA and worked closely with one another on community programmes aimed at the dismantling of apartheid and the creation of a new future.

The CCSA, together with other Christian organisations which joined it, had a history of continuous opposition to the regime and its apartheid policy. Most of such conflict was aimed at the various laws which the government had instituted. Such laws also influenced the witness and life of the church adversely: laws like

the Group Areas Act; the Bantu Education Act and the "Church Clause" of the Native Laws Amendment Act of 1957.

As a result of the struggle between Church and state the regime did not even hesitate to ban and deport ministers, clergy, missionaries, bishops and other Christians because of their convictions and commensurate activities (Reeves, 1972:5–6).

After the Sharpeville massacre and the consequent banning of the ANC and PAC as black political organisations, a vacuum existed. Since the churches within the CCSA were the only organisations which rejected the apartheid policy and given their membership and multiracial nature, they obviously had to fill the vacuum.

Most church leaders indeed did not welcome the new political role of the church, but the new developments in the country left them no other choice. This explains why the church since the 60s played a more prominent role in the struggle against apartheid. The Afrikaans-speaking churches gave their support and theological justification to maintain the apartheid policy. Not only did this situation grievously reflect division within the country, but in the view of many people it marred the gospel of Jesus Christ in a definite way. The credibility of Christianity was at stake, as Archbishop Joost de Blank rightly remarked.

The message to the people of South Africa

One of the moments where the struggle between Church and state took a serious turn was when the CCSA and the CI in 1968 drew up and circulated amongst the churches their "message". Historically the "message" was a direct consequence of the WCC conference on Church and Society which had been held in 1966 in Geneva. This conference had to advise all members concerning their witness in a world which was experiencing revolutionary change. Many a delegate to the conference deemed racial discrimination to be one of the most dangerous threats to humanity. Racial discrimination was not only built on fear, but was also related to economic factors. The role of investments in all countries where racial discrimination existed, was investigated anew. Dr Beyers Naude and Bishop Bill Burnett of the CCSA were the South African delegates to this conference. Upon their return to South Africa they held regional conferences where recommendations for the South African situation were discussed. From these conferences a national conference on Church and Society was eventually called in February 1968, in Johannesburg. From here the mandate came to formulate a message for the people in the country.

The "message" was "a serious attempt to interpret what the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ means and implies within our complex and difficult situation" (Balia, 1989:33). The key question concerning the "message" was: Who does my first loyalty go to – a human being; an ethnic group; a tradition; a political ideology or to Christ? As Christians we are called to be truthful to the gospel of

Jesus Christ and our loyalty therefore should firstly be toward Him. Apartheid is in conflict with the gospel of Christ. Christians should also distinguish very clearly between the false gospel (apartheid) and the true gospel of Christ. Within the English-speaking churches this message was well received and its study was recommended to all members. The Baptist Church, however, had serious problems with it. They held that the "message" confused eternal salvation with political liberation and stated that apartheid could never be a rival gospel, despite it being an unjustifiable political policy.

The strongest criticism came from the government. On two occasions the Prime Minister, B.J. Vorster, made strong and threatening remarks concerning the message and its authors. Not only did he advise clergy to keep out of politics but also warned them not to "misuse" their pulpits to foster the work of political parties. He also warned them not to do what Dr Martin Luther King (Jnr.) had done in the USA. The disputes between the Prime Minister and the ever-increasing numbers of clergy (even amongst the DRC) continued for several weeks while these debates were also pursued in the church.

In order to spell out lucidly the implications of the "message" the CCSA and the CI put together six commissions of specialists to study and report on the following: the church; the law; politics; economics; education and social relations. More than 130 experts promised to participate in the programme which was later called: *Study project on Christianity in apartheid society (Sprocas)*.

The purpose of Sprocas was to raise the consciousness of whites rather than to liberate blacks. With Sprocas II the focus fell on the transfer of power to the oppressed, with the aid of the black consciousness movement. Sprocas II acknowledged that fundamental change had to take place through the redistribution of power, land and wealth under black initiative.

Black consciousness and black theology

The Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) started in the sixties as a result of the growing resistance of blacks to white domination. The movement found its stature in many other organisations of which two of the most prominent were SASO (South African Students Organisation) and BPC (The Black People's Convention) (Motlhabi, 1984:107). The major driving force of the BCM was SASO, which was started in 1969 with Steve Biko as its first president.

According to SASO'S policy of 1971 the BCM could be described as having the following guidelines:

- Black consciousness is an attitude of mind, a way of life;
- The basic tenet of BC is that the black man must reject all value systems that seek to make him a foreigner in the country of his birth and reduce his basic human dignity;
- The black man must build up his own value systems, see himself as self-defined and not defined by others;

- The concept of BC implies the awareness by the black people of the power they wield as a group, both economically and politically, and hence group cohesion and solidarity are important facets.

Black consciousness will always be enhanced by the total involvement of the oppressed people, hence the message spread to reach all sections of the black community.

Black consciousness was a collective rejection of white denomination and was also inspired by the struggle for human rights which took place in the USA (Martin Luther King (jnr.)) as well as the ideas of Franz Fanon and Paolo Freire.

In the 1960s when authentic black political organisations were banned, many blacks agreed to cooperate with and be incorporated into the white apartheid order, through the homeland policy. This was a most abhorrent case to the protagonists of black consciousness, hence the isolation of the homeland leaders. The cooperation between black and white students within NUSAS became more difficult, while in the United Christian Movement (UCM) things were better since the majority of its members were black. Through dissatisfaction of black members within NUSAS, SASO was formed. Both black and white students from UCM raised critical questions concerning the church. The accusations against the church were, i.e. that the church rejected the Programme to Combat Racism (PCR) but without hesitation paid taxes to a government which used tax money for the purchase of weapons and the increase of its defence (training of soldiers) and subsequent involvement in violence. The UCM therefore questioned the motives of the church with regard to the PCR. A country-wide series of meetings were held by the UCM in 1971 to discuss black theology. The findings of these meetings were later issued in a publication which was banned by the government.

The government found the United Christian Movement so dangerous that they launched the Schlebusch commission to inquire into the activities of the organisation. This led to the banning of the UCM in 1972.

Biko contended that blacks should realise that the most "potent weapon" in the hands of whites was the "mind of the oppressed". The BCM therefore was a vital instrument in raising the consciousness of blacks. This resulted in the increasing alienation of white liberals and their rejection by blacks. The BCM, on the other hand, was subsequently accused of racism and racial exclusiveness by white liberals. The Schlebusch commission found that SASO propagated a dangerous philosophy which could be the cause of a racial war in South Africa.

One of the important elements of black consciousness was the rejection of white values, i.e. the spirit of competition, greed and materialism against which they pitted values like a sense of community, creativity and spontaneity.

The black consciousness philosophy spread from the universities into the cities, schools and church communities. It is within such organisations that BC functioned as a catalyst.

From these facts it could be inferred that black consciousness and Black Theology are intimately linked with each other. In this regard it is interesting to quote Biko: "Black Theology seeks to relate God and Christ once more to the black man and his daily problems. It wants to describe Christ as a fighting God and not a passive God... Blacks have had enough experience as objects of racism not to want to reverse the tables... In time we shall be able to bestow upon South Africa the greatest gift possible – a more human face" (Motlhabi, 1972:22).

The PCR of the WCC and the Hammanskraal Resolution (1974)

The WCC on many occasions spoke out against racism and called on all churches to fight it. At a consultation on racism at Notting Hill in 1969, W.A. Visser 't Hooft urged representatives at the meeting to take concrete action against racism. This led to the creation of the Programme to Combat Racism (PCR) which was coupled with some special funding. The emphasis of the fund was "on raising the level of awareness and on strengthening the organisational capability of racially oppressed people". Because of apartheid South Africa was regarded as an area of priority. Very clear criteria concerning payment of moneys were formulated and applied. The executive committee of the WCC made their first payment from this fund in September 1970. An amount of 200 000 US dollars was paid to 19 organisations, of which most were in southern Africa. Those who donated money to liberation movements in southern Africa received much criticism. Among white South Africans this decision was (with a few exceptions) strongly criticised. On 11 September 1970 the SACC issued a statement criticising the said donations as an identification with organisations which planned to bring about change through violence in the country. It could, therefore, be seen as giving implicit support to violence. The SACC, however, mentioned that they had not been consulted earlier in this regard, but acknowledged the WCC actions as being a response to injustice and said that it had failed in its struggle to destroy racism. The SACC, despite their objections, refused to give in to the pressures of the Prime Minister to sever their ties with the WCC as this would impede the task of reconciling races. On 20 October 1970, the DRC, at its synod, strongly criticised the said donations. Although the donations were meant for humanitarian purposes, most whites turned them down while others still criticised the WCC for supporting violence. The Presbyterian Church protested by withdrawing its contributions. Writing on the PCR, Wolfram Weisse concluded that the reactions of the English-speaking churches to it (PCR) were influenced by the way those churches were constituted. The more white members the church had, the stronger their criticism against the PCR. The greater the number of blacks in the church, the more outspoken they were against racial discrimination. Bishop A. Zulu also related his

regret over the PCR's decision, but added that the reason why member churches in the SACC could not be consulted was because they were white and could not seriously desire a change in black-white relations. An increasing number of blacks most certainly supported the special fund. Dr Beyers Naude declared that many a black South African believed – "at last the church is taking its mission seriously to identify itself with the lot of the wronged and the oppressed" (Balia, 1989:52).

One of the consequences this whole debate had for South African churches was the inauguration of the Justice and Reconciliation Committee of the South African Council of Churches (SACC).

The PCR issue and the Hammanskraal resolution of the SACC are linked with one another. The "All African Conference of Churches" (AACC) held their third assembly in Lusaka, Zambia, in 1974. Various members of the SACC and liberation movements were present. During this meeting the issue of the liberation of thousands in Africa came up and within this context Burgess Carr (general secretary of the AACC) made his prominent "Engagement Lusaka" speech. In this speech he justified the use of violence in the struggle for liberation and also declared that the "selective violence" of the liberation movements in South Africa stood in striking contrast to the "collective vengeance" of the regimes in South Africa, Rhodesia and Portugal.

This issue was raised at the conference of the SACC in Hammanskraal in 1974. Precisely because of this debate, delegates to this conference decided to take conscientious objection as a nonviolent means in support of the struggle against apartheid. The decision was made that the meeting consider the use of conscientious objection as a possible means to combat racism. Whites were therefore encouraged to refuse military service as a result of injustice and violence inherent to the structure of South African society. Despite it being a moderate proposal, most blacks at the conference supported it. The South African society was regarded as being by its very nature unjust and discriminatory, hence the problem surrounding its defence. Churches were therefore asked to review this case and particularly the commendation of military chaplains to the army.

The government condemned the decision of the SACC and maintained that the church was seeking confrontation with the state. The United Congregational Church supported the decision, while the Methodist Church did not, but called on the government to reconsider its policy of prison terms for those refusing to wear military uniforms. The Presbyterian Church also called on the government to consider the moral right of a conscientious objector. The Anglican bishop of Pretoria, E.G. Knapp-Fisher publicly made known his indignation. The Baptist Union declared that selective conscientious objection could not be supported, therefore they would not do so. The government in turn accepted the "Defence Further Amendment Bill" in Parliament which warranted action against people or organisations which supported or encouraged conscientious objection.

In comparing the reaction of certain English-speaking churches with regard to the PCR and conscientious objection, obvious contradictions can be observed, i.e. that some reject the PCR because of its support to violence and its rejection of conscientious objection. The PCR believed that Christians could participate in "a just war" which could also be said to include "organised violence".

Soweto – 1976

Growing political consciousness amongst blacks in general and black students in particular, led to the uprising in Soweto in June 1976. The BCM naturally played a significant role in events. By 1976 tension within the black community had increased not only because of the application of separate laws, but particularly as a result of the situation in black education. The "Bantu Education Department" announced in 1976 that henceforth not only English but Afrikaans would be used as a medium of teaching in black schools. To millions of black children, Afrikaans was the symbol of white oppression and also of the hated and inferior "Bantu Education". The Soweto uprising spread throughout the country and scholars nationwide joined in solidarity with their Soweto compatriots. The uprising developed into a situation of extensive confrontation with the government. This incident is proof of the failure of apartheid. The resistance also led to large-scale boycotts and stay-aways. The Minister of Police pushed the acceptance of the "Indemnity Act". This protected the army and police against legal procedure on the basis of their actions on or after June 16, 1976. The CI and SACC founded the "Asingani Relief Fund" to give support to the victims and their families.

After the Soweto uprisings, hundreds were imprisoned, Steve Biko died in September 1977, and 17 organisations were banned on 19 October 1977.

What were the reactions of the various churches? The moderature of the general synod of the DRC expressed its regret over the riots and the destruction of buildings and human lives. It called on its members to be an example of Christ who taught love for God and one's neighbour. It also pledged to help the victims and those who had suffered. The most obvious in this statement is that there was no reference to the root cause of the Soweto uprising. Neither the actions of the regime, nor those of the police were addressed.

The Methodists

Reverend A. Hendricks said that the Soweto uprising was the consequence of years of frustration, oppression and anger and an urgent cry for total liberation Whites, on the other hand, reacted not so much by maintaining the status quo through their fears, confusion and ignorance of black suffering and aspirations – and turned to the use of violence, brutality and detention.

The Methodists also called on their members for more "Scriptural holiness" and greater efforts to build bridges between black and white Christians. One

synod of the church expressed its solidarity with John Rees (from the SACC) and Dr Beyers Naude of the CI who were forbidden from associating with the "disturbances". The Natal synod called on all South Africans "to recognise black consciousness and to promote wherever possible this consciousness of dignity and worth" (Balia, 1989:85).

A group of Church leaders in the greater Durban area

Here an attempt was made to interpret the Soweto uprising. It called on people to listen to the cry of blacks – a cry which often fell on deaf ears. The statement deplored violence, but showed an understanding of why it happened. Many whites regarded the riots as an unjustifiable eruption of violence. The statement called people to "take note of the deep groundswell of bitterness and resentment that exists among black people throughout the country and that can so easily be fanned into violence". Unless the root causes of these dissatisfactions were addressed and solved, no amount of security legislation, oppression, deportation, detention or bannings would make for peace in this country.

The South African Council of Churches (SACC)

The Soweto incidents (according to the SACC) were a rather disappointing reflection of the state's apparent inability to cope with the frustrations and bitterness amongst blacks. It then called upon the government to utilise the opportunity for negotiations and reconciliation. Two viewpoints concerning Soweto surfaced during the national conference of the SACC in 1976. One emphasised the love for God and one's neighbour and asked that the DRC be approached to address the government. The other standpoint affirmed the right of scholars to peaceful protest over the language issue and also expressed solidarity with them in their struggle for liberation. Support was expressed to the officials of SASO, BCM and SASM (Soweto-based student movement) which were regarded as the legitimate voice of the blacks in SA. The latter viewpoint was expressed by the black delegates at the Conference.

The Catholics

The South African Catholic Bishops' Conference (SACBC) issued a strongly worded statement on the "current situation" where they stated that the majority of the people rejected apartheid and demanded a fundamental change in the country (Keane, 1990:52). The bishops also condemned assaults, unjust shooting during riots and torturing of detained persons. Hereby they wanted to identify themselves with the oppressed and the bereaved.

During their meeting at Pretoria on 10 February 1977, three statements were released. One on Soweto, the other on mutual agreements and the third on

conscientious objection. Concerning the statement on Soweto they said that the cause of the Soweto riots was to be found in the frustrations of black youths who had no say in the government and no human rights in this country. They added that South Africa had entered a critical phase because the majority of the people and the bishops in support of them, rejected the apartheid policy and called for a radical revision of the system. There would be no peace as long as fundamental human rights were denied. The bishops also declared that they would work for peace and justice together with other churches and groups and that they would stand by the oppressed. According to them, the only solution was the bestowal of full political rights on all people on the basis of universal humanity, as Jesus had taught. The bishops were disturbed by police brutality and asked for an inquest into the actions of the police. They declared that they would cooperate in the investigations and also expressed their opposition to the government's intention to give indemnity to the police and other security personnel who might be guilty of deeds of violence.

In the statement on conscientious objection they said that they were aware of the border wars and the qualms of conscience of many Catholics who had problems in participating in these wars. They therefore supported the call for the rights of conscientious objectors to be acknowledged.

The Catholic Church registered its objection against the imprisonment of two black Catholic priests and many others and pledged their solidarity with them. It also pledged support for black consciousness movements.

The churches declare apartheid a sin and heresy

The country-wide repercussions of the Soweto uprising and the brutal actions of the regime and the security forces drew wide reaction both from within and outside the country. The enthusiasm and scope of resistance amongst the students against apartheid led to a new development in the confrontation between the oppressed and the oppressor. It was against this background that the Church and Christians reflected afresh on their faith and witness in the apartheid society. The issue of how apartheid influenced the faith of millions of Christians and the interpretation of the gospel of Jesus Christ became a topic for discussion.

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF)

One of the first church meetings where this issue was discussed was at the meeting of the LWF in Dar-es-Salaam in 1977. Like the Reformed Churches in our country, so the Lutheran Churches too were divided on the basis of race and colour. The various Lutheran and Moravian churches united in 1966 to form the "Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Southern Africa" (FELCSA). The white Lutheran churches refused to unite with the black Lutherans and

consequently four synods broke away to form the "Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa" (ELCSA). Tension between black and white Lutherans reached a turning point in Dar-es-Salaam when the Lutheran delegation under the leadership of Bishop Manas Buthelezi declared that the South African society constituted a *status confessionis*. This concept meant that a Church or a Christian judged that a situation was reached wherein the integrity of the gospel in its basic witness was marred, necessitating action and witness against it (Smit, 1984:22).

The LWF accepted a statement of "confessional integrity" in which the white Lutherans were called upon to publicly and unconditionally denounce and reject the apartheid policy as a matter of their witness. Since the white Lutherans did not heed these calls, their membership was suspended at the meeting in Budapest in 1984. At its Dar-es-Salaam meeting the LWF declared apartheid a sin and any theological justification thereof a heresy. The unity and membership of the church therefore demanded an unconditional rejection of apartheid. This judgement was repeated by the "Association of Black Reformed Christians in Southern Africa" (ABRECSA) during their assembly at Hammanskraal in 1981 (De Gruchy, 1983:161–168).

World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) (1982)

The Dutch Reformed Mission Church (DRMC) was the first of the Dutch Reformed Churches in South Africa to denounce apartheid as the LWF, ABRECSA and the WARC had done, at its synod in October. They even went a step further in drawing up a confession and the Confession of Belhar was officially accepted in 1986. The Confession clearly stated that the secular gospel of apartheid threatened the very core of the witness of reconciliation in Christ and the unity of His Church. With this confession the Church wanted to clarify its understanding of its faith in spite of a situation of apartheid. The synod also decided to deliver its confession to the synod of the DRC. This Church only responded in 1984 and said:

- There was no need for a new confession. The three formulae of unity were sufficient.
- The South African situation did not constitute a *Status confessionis*.
- "Between us there is clearly a radical difference in our perception of the situation."

While the Belhar Confession gave cause for greater tension between the DRC and DRMC, it nonetheless led to talks about church unity between the DRMC and the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (DRCA) in 1986.

Reforming apartheid

While Churches within the country and abroad condemned apartheid as a sin and a heresy, P.W. Botha (State President) started with a new policy of reforming

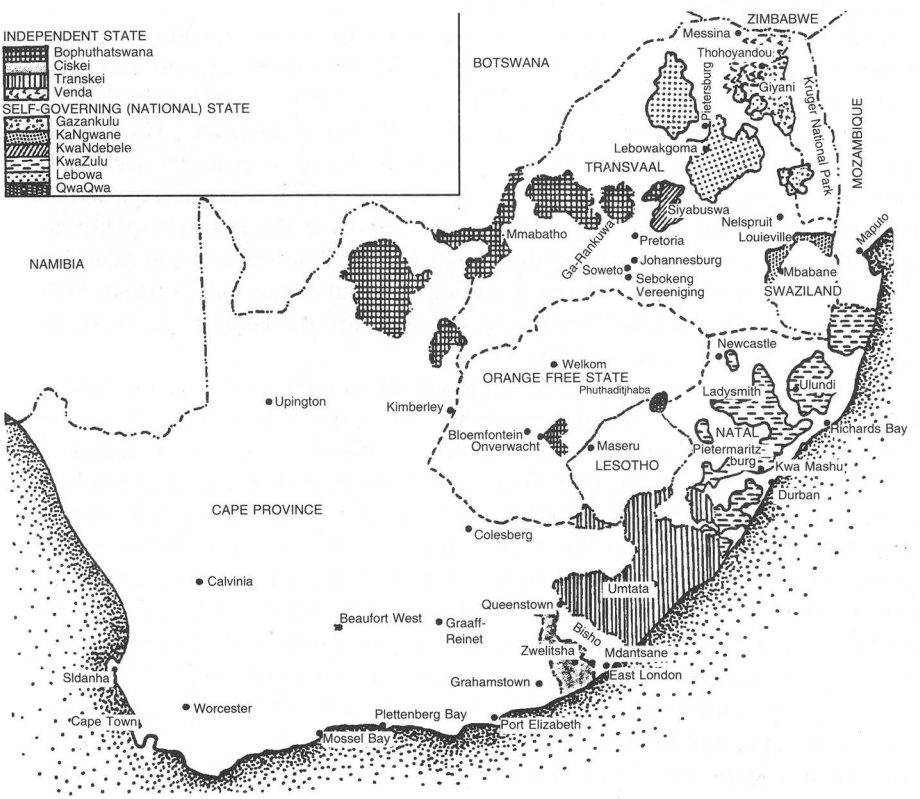
apartheid. He started by applying apartheid to a changing South African situation yet on the condition that the Afrikaner did not lose power. So with Mr Botha began a new policy of reform in order to give apartheid a new and 'acceptable' face. This entailed the following: the initiation of the President's Council in 1981; the abolition of the pass laws and the laws on mixed marriages; acknowledgement of trade unions for blacks and property rights for urban blacks; the acceptance of the tri-cameral parliament and the new Constitution which was launched in 1984 and excluded the majority of the population. This represented one of the highlights of Botha's reforms. At the same time a shift in the ideological defence of apartheid took place. The former ideology of the separation of groups (separate development) made way for an ideology of political power-sharing under the leadership of a white minority. For this reason Botha in that time spoke of a multicultural society in which all groups were minorities. The ideology of national security played a vital role in reform politics. Here the government particularly stressed the danger of communism internationally and portrayed the ANC and South African Communist Party (SACP) and the Churches in South Africa as agents of communism. It was from this point of view that the Church was looked upon as presenting a threat to the status quo. For this reason the role of religion became a matter of vital importance to the state. The government's decision to appoint the Eloff Commission of inquiry into the churches attests to this fact. The Eloff Commission examined and gave its findings on the activities of the SACC in February 1984 as follows: The SACC was accused of giving too much attention to the victims of apartheid. The church was too involved with politics and economics and had to concern itself with matters of religion alone. The SACC, unlike the CI in 1977, was not regarded as an affected organisation. In Bishop Tutu's statements as the last witness before the Eloff Commission he declared that it was not the finances or other activities of the SACC which were matters for the inquest, but rather the Christian faith itself. In other words, it was Christianity, the faith and theology of the member churches, which was under scrutiny.

In 1983 a referendum was held amongst whites regarding a new Constitution. This was accepted with a clear majority. This Constitution, which became effective from the following year, gave political power to coloureds, Indians and whites in a tri-cameral parliament. The racial basis of parliament was therefore maintained. Whites kept their position of domination and blacks, who constituted 75% of the population, were excluded from this structure. Protest action against this structure led to the establishment of the United Democratic Front in August 1983. This was an anti-apartheid movement which included approximately 575 organisations. Clergy and other religious leaders, members of trade unions, sports organisations, community leaders, women and the youth were all involved in this movement. The UDF strove for democracy in a unitary state. Due to their call on coloureds and Indians to boycott the elections, the votes for these two houses of parliament were very small. Most English-speaking churches

also responded negatively to the new Constitution. Dr K. Mgojo of the Methodist Church expressed the opinion that apartheid was still entrenched in the new Constitution and that this could lead to polarisation and violence. The Methodist Church called on its members to reject the new Constitution and to pray for meaningful change. The Roman Catholic Church, in a pastoral letter dated 22 July 1983, expressed its criticism in the following manner, saying

- that the rights of all citizens were not specified in the preamble;
- that two thirds of the population (blacks) had no democratic representation in Parliament;
- that the unequal division of the chambers in parliament for coloureds, Indians and whites was a perpetuation of racial discrimination. That it was in conflict with the salvation in Christ.
- that the position of power of the State President was problematic.

Both the DRC and the NHK decided not to advise their members with regard to participation in the referendum.



The division of South Africa under the homelands policy

The SACC: 1984

During the annual conference of the SACC in 1984, Dr A. Boesak called on Christians and Churches to set aside a "day of prayer" for the fall of the government (Boesak, 1986:16). Though the meeting supported the idea they somehow formulated it as a day of prayer for "abolition of all apartheid structures" and "the end to unjust rule". A group was commissioned to draft the "Theological Rationale" for this occasion which would take place on June 16. The decision of the SACC led to stormy debates amongst Christians, church leaders, clergy and the media. While the authors of the "Theological Rationale" defended their case on theological and church-historical grounds, dissenting groups clearly made known their rejection and criticism of the idea. The following year a state of emergency was declared. On 21 March 1985 the police opened fire on a funeral procession in Uitenhage. According to the police some 18 people, but according to other sources more than 40 people were killed. This brutal and gruesome event took place 25 years after the massacre at Sharpeville and led to P.W. Botha's declaring a state of emergency in 36 magisterial districts on 20 July 1985. On 26 November of that same year this situation developed with an increase in power for the police and army with regard to the arrest and detention of suspects. Members of the UDF, Cosatu and student organisations were the targets of persecution. It was mainly blacks who were victimised, while the press was also restricted. These developments also affected the economy of the land detrimentally. In a statement the Catholic bishops expressed their rejection of the state of emergency and the massacre in Uitenhage. They called on their members to observe June 16 as a special day of mourning and prayer and to commemorate the victims of Soweto 1976 and also those of Sharpeville, Sebokeng, Crossroads and of many other places, but particularly the victims of Uitenhage. In that same year the Baptist Union wrote to P.W. Botha, expressing their unfavourable opinion concerning the state of emergency and advocating the involvement of all South African citizens in the decision-making processes of the government.

From the report of the Commonwealth Group of Eminent Persons under the leadership of Mr Malcolm Fraser (Australia) and General Olusegun Obasanjo (Nigeria) it became clear what happened during the state of emergency. The following aspects were mentioned:

- According to their own witnesses, 400 black people (of whom most were under 18 years of age) had been killed by the security forces;
- 11 500 people were held in detention without trial, of which 2 000 were children under 16 years of age;
- 25 000 people were imprisoned on charges of "public violence". These prisoners were mostly youths.

The Kairos Document

One of the ways in which the church responded to the state of emergency, was the drawing up of the Kairos Document. The origin of the Kairos Document (KD) is a direct result of and reaction to the intensified implementation of the apartheid policy and the state of emergency. This document was released on 25 September 1985, two months after the state of emergency was announced. It is the product of a process of discussions which started in the ecumenical Institute for Contextual Theology (ICT) in Johannesburg. It has its origins in the grassroots of society. This document was not produced by the various churches or their leaders at their synods or ecclesiastical meetings. It was revised five times before being published in September of the following year. The second print was released in September 1986 and 152 people from a wide range of churches and ecumenical circles signed the document. The Kairos Document is a Christian, biblical and theological commentary on the political crisis in the country. The experiences of black people played an important role in producing this document. Kairos could rightly be termed a piece of "People's theology" in which the cry of anger, helplessness and hope from the townships is sounded. The concept *kairos* refers to the moment of truth which is imminent. The document also speaks of the crisis in the church, which was born out of the divisions within the church. Consequently three trends developed from these divisions, i.e. state, church and prophetic theology. State theology is the semireligious ideology of the modern apartheid state, in other words the status quo's justification of racism and capitalism. It entails the following: questioning the legitimacy of a totalitarian state based on Scripture, particularly Romans 13. The document also pointed to the Bible's reference to the state as the prostitute of Babylon (Revelations); the doctrine concerning law and order which hides totalitarianism; a campaign against communism as the symbol of evil. The state identifies itself with "God". The apartheid regime appealed to this "God" i.e. as it appears from the preamble. The document stated that such a god was an idol rather than the God of the Bible. The DRC is the most important proponent of this state theology. Church theology was particularly noticeable amongst the English-speaking churches, where they generally spoke of reconciliation, justice and nonviolence without critical analysis of the socio-political conditions. While they generally condemned apartheid, the actual implementation of commensurate action was left aside. Prophetic theology was seen to be based on a critical analysis of the concrete historical situation, and it concluded that the apartheid regime was illegal and unreformable and had to be replaced by majority rule. It did not give a blueprint for an alternative political future, but challenged the church to side with God by deliberately supporting the oppressed. The church would then be called to consultation, coordination and cooperation with progressive movements in the struggle for justice and liberation of all the people of the country. The challenge of the Kairos Document led to the "Concerned

Evangelicals" and other people drafting documents like "Pentecostal Witness in South Africa" (1986) and "A Relevant Pentecostal Witness" (1988). The "Belydende kring – BK" at an assembly in 1987 used the Belhar Confession, the Kairos Document, Evangelical Witness and the 1968 Message to the People as the basis of their support for the "Confessing Communities". The Roman Catholic Bishops' conference in 1985 in their preliminary response to the document reacted in a general, yet positive manner. The DRC on the other hand rejected the document as a revolutionary liberation ideology in which Christ's salvation was made a political liberation. In their view the central theme of the Bible was the salvation in Christ and the coming of the kingdom of God. It was for this reason that they advocated a gradual reform of the South African situation.

The DRC statement on church and society

Great expectations were put to the DRC during the period preceding the synod of 1986. This church was expected to have a clear message and to give guidance to its people who constituted a substantial number of members of the National Party and it also had a significant position amongst Afrikaners. All this took place during the period of the state of emergency and the subsequent political situation. The release of the Belhar Confession (1982) and the Kairos Document (1985) posed a rather difficult challenge to the DRC at its synod of 1986.

One of the issues that drew great interest at the synod was the report on racism and the political situation. Since the forties this issue has been discussed regularly at synods (Adonis, 1982:77–87) and the quest for theological justification of apartheid has remained a contentious matter. While their report "Race, People and Nation and People's relations in the light of Scripture" (1974) tried to give theological justification to apartheid, it was only in 1982 (the year in which the WARC suspended their membership) that they decided afresh to study this topic. So it came about that in 1986 they presented their Church and Society document. One of the chief characteristics of this document was its dubiousness. Concepts like justice, reconciliation, unity and the church were explained within the framework of a community where race, ethnicity and culture were still determining factors. For example, the document mentions faith in Jesus Christ as the only criterium for membership of the Church, but the existence of four separate churches for blacks, coloureds, Indians and whites was still intact. The apartheid ideology was rejected and where it had been applied in the past, it was called a "mistake". People were called to preach love, justice and human dignity but were not asked to judge any political model or policy. The members were asked in all earnestness to obey the government. Although it was theoretically possible to replace an illegitimate government, this was not applicable to South Africa. The way of gradual reform was seen as the way to overcome problems and for this reason nonviolent actions and civil disobedi-

ence could never be supported by this church. The Dutch Reformed Mission Church in their judgement of the Church and Society document were of the opinion that the DRC still supported the apartheid policy and that through their decisions they provided a theological basis for the reform politics of the P.W. Botha regime. Further proof of this was when Dr A. Boesak and Archbishop D. Tutu, together with a number of religious leaders, led a protest march against the banning of the 18 anti-apartheid organisations in February 1988, and the DRC condemned their actions and accused Boesak and Tutu of acting unscripturally and against the law.

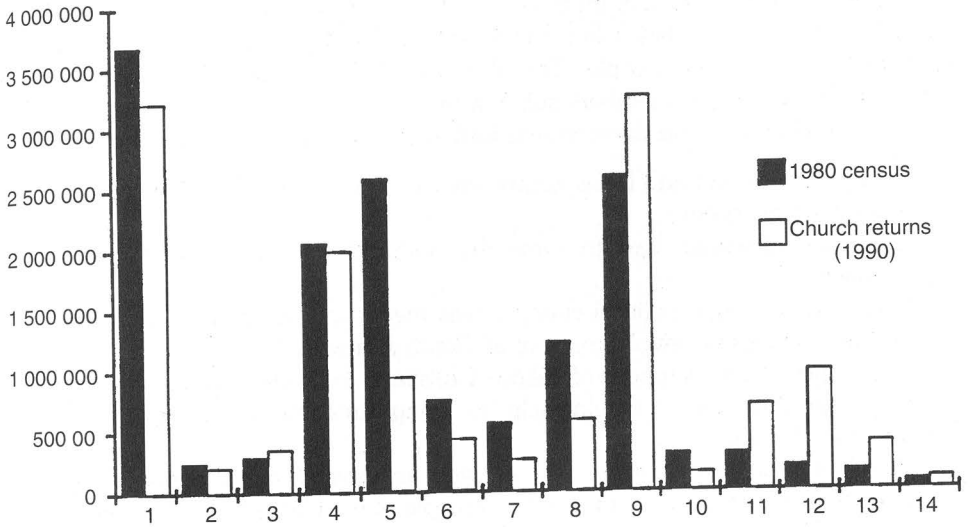
During the synod of 1990 this document was revised and in it reference was made concerning different people's experiences of apartheid. While most blacks experienced apartheid as "a racist and oppressive system" some whites on the other hand were convinced that it contributed to the positive development of people. It was consequently declared that where apartheid was functioning as an oppressive system, it should be rejected as sin on biblical grounds. Any church therefore which defended such a system on biblical-ethical grounds committed a serious mistake. Another decision that drew some criticism and commentary from specific church circles was the one on church unity. It was decided that the DRC should strive for the ideal of one church instead of the four separate Dutch Reformed Churches. Through these decisions the DRC created an impression that they rejected apartheid and would cooperate with other churches in the country, toward creating a new future.

Disinvestment and economic sanctions as means of fighting apartheid

During the mid eighties the South African Council of Churches (SACC) and the Roman Catholic Church advocated this action. In its struggle against apartheid the SACC has always chosen the nonviolent option. They are convinced that violence is not the way to bring about socio-political changes. At the same time they have declared with a deep conviction that the violence in the country is a result of the unjust apartheid system. The utterances and actions of the SACC must be seen and judged within this declared policy. As the situation worsened in the eighties, the SACC continued their policy. Civil disobedience was a very important factor during this phase of the SACC's history. Various actions were employed where people purposely transgressed unjust laws. As a result of the SACC's view that one must be more obedient to God than to man, their actions led to confrontation with the authorities.

One of the important actions undertaken by the SACC in their nonviolent struggle against apartheid was their call for disinvestment and economic sanctions. During a visit to Germany in 1978, Archbishop Desmond Tutu declared that investment by foreign banks and businesses led to the exploitation of blacks. The reaction of the authorities was to make any further such

Comparison of 1980 and 1990 statistics
(African Independent Churches excluded)



[Acknowledgements to Froise, M(Ed) 1990. South African Christian Handbook. Johannesburg: Christian Information]

1. NGK – Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk
2. GKSA – Gereformeerde Kerke van Suid-Afrika
3. NHK – Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk
4. CPSA – Church of the Province of South Africa
5. METH – Methodists
6. PRES – Presbyterians
7. UCCSA – United Congregational Church of South Africa
8. LUTH – Lutherans
9. RC – Roman Catholic
10. BAPT – Baptists
11. AFM – Apostolic Faith Mission
12. FGCOG – Full Gospel Church of God
13. AOG – Assemblies of God
14. PPK – Pinkster Protestante Kerk

discouraging actions unlawful and punishable. These laws provided for heavy penalties. As a result of this development the SACC initially did not encourage disinvestment. As an alternative, demands were listed whereby foreign companies were compelled to improve the working and living conditions of workers. In 1985 the SACC changed its policy in spite of stricter laws, because they decided unanimously at their annual meeting to call for disinvestment. It was no easy decision but the churches were convinced that it was their task to be the prophetic voice of the people. The words of 1 Cor. 12:26 "Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it . . ." were the motivating force behind the decision. The decision was further motivated by the following:

- Foreign investment and loans reinforced the policy of the prevalent political and economic order.
- Economic measures had to force the authorities to make fundamental changes.
- Under fundamental political changes was meant the abolition of apartheid and the democratic involvement of all South Africans.
- The concern and support of fellow Christians in foreign countries were welcomed because it would help to bring fundamental change along nonviolent ways.
- Prohibiting all new investments, as well as existing investments, would hopefully influence whites to take the struggle of the blacks for political rights seriously.
- Foreign investment did not necessarily lead to better and more work opportunities, the contrary was frequently the case.
- The churches had for some time shown the problem of structural unemployment in black communities.

Strict legislation against disinvestment and sanctions impeded the churches from debating on the above-mentioned principles. As a result of the above-mentioned stipulations, the SACC decided on the following:

1. The Council was convinced that disinvestment and similar economic pressure would be effective to force the authorities to make fundamental changes.
2. The churches overseas were called on to continue applying economic pressure.
3. The above-mentioned issues had to get more attention in the management structure of the council, i.e. regional councils, member churches and congregations were requested to study and discuss those matters.
4. The commission for justice and reconciliation was requested to nominate a group to study the question of economic justice and of disinvestment and economic sanctions as well as to evaluate and coordinate the reactions of churches and to provide church leaders with information.

5. A call would be made to member churches and individual Christians to divest themselves from the economic system that repressed the poor and to reinvest their money and energy in alternative economic systems (adapted from Rothe, 1989:102–104).

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of May 1986, regarding economic sanctions and justice

The above decision was made because of the church's perception of its pastoral responsibility towards its members. The church was very aware of the fact that not all Catholics shared their point of view. They were, however, firmly convinced of the correctness of their viewpoint at that point in time. The intention of this decision was to put the authorities under severe pressure so that they would be forced to change the situation. The Bishops' Conference decision was made because of their consciences, after long deliberation, prayer, discussion, and having collected advice. The necessity for this action was motivated by the seriousness of the crisis, the suffering of the oppressed and the escalating violence in the country. The indescribable suffering of the majority of the population as a result of the apartheid policy had to be seen as the cause of their decision.

The church was, therefore, convinced that economic pressure was the most effective nonviolent means of placing the state under pressure. The church was also aware of the fact that the application of economic pressure would lead to further unemployment and violence. Against this background the present suffering, the level of unemployment, and future expectations of people had to be considered in the face of the apartheid policy not being abolished. The purpose of applying economic pressure was to change society so that the suffering and obstacles with regard to job opportunities as a result of the apartheid system could be removed.

The church further acknowledged that it would be morally justified in applying economic pressure as a means of combatting injustice and it was supported by the majority of the population. If the government responded to the requests of the church and made the necessary changes, economic pressure could be adapted or even be abandoned. If the authorities, however, took an inreconcilable position and continued with its policy, economic pressure could be intensified. The church was convinced that economic pressure could destroy apartheid. Economic pressure was not intended to destroy the national economy and the loss of work opportunities had to be limited. According to the church only the oppressed in the country could decide how much suffering, resulting from economic pressure, would be permitted. The opinion of the oppressed was of great importance.

Specific advice could not be given on how economic pressure should be applied or lessened. The efficiency and consequences of every method differed

from case to case and changed in accordance with different situations. The expert had a very important role to play in this regard, while the conditions which justified economic pressure had to be kept in mind. The bishops assured the church that the decision had not been made very easily, and that it had been a "Gethsemane experience". They requested church members to consider the decision seriously, and to persevere in prayer for justice and peace (Rothe, 1989:105–109).

"Standing for the truth" campaign of the SACC

This programme of action was initiated by the Convocation of Churches in May 1988, and aimed to work out a programme of nonviolent action in a situation of escalating violence. The aim was to exert pressure on the authorities so that apartheid would be abandoned, and negotiation towards the creation of a just, nonracial, democratic society in South Africa could commence. A theological rationale was formulated to justify the programme of action. The aim of the action was the establishment of a liberated South Africa.

The most important prerequisites were the following:

- the unbanning of people's organisations
- the release of all political prisoners
- the abolition of apartheid.

These steps would help to create a climate suitable for negotiations that would lead to peace. Within the context of this programme, specific actions were suggested, i.e.:

- Prayer for the end of unjust rule
- Pastoral care for victims of apartheid
- Witnessing to the Gospel of truth (telling the truth) irrespective of restrictions according to the state of emergency
- Acts of non-collaboration and non-cooperation with enforcers of apartheid
- Symbolic actions of protest and witness against the apartheid system
- International solidarity action and pressure on the regime.

During 1988 an important turning point in the attitude of the Church took place. The Church moved from a position of merely condemning apartheid, to a strategy of nonviolent action intended to end apartheid (Nürnberger, 1989:310–318).

The Rustenburg consultation

In February 1990 the government lifted the ban on political organisations like the ANC and PAC, as well as the state of emergency. Certain leaders were released. This happened 30 years after the massacre at Sharpeville and the Cottesloe

Consultation. Talks between the ANC and the government followed, which helped to create a climate in which they could look together for political solutions for the country's problems. The government at the same time announced the scrapping of certain of the apartheid laws. This development caused the churches in the country to re-evaluate their role in this changing situation. It was in the light of this development that the SACC, together with other individuals and churches, took the initiative to organise the Rustenburg Consultation in November 1990. This Consultation was historic in two respects: for the first time 230 delegates from 80 churches and 40 Christian organisations with divergent theological and political convictions assembled. Secondly, a broad consensus was reached under the guidance of the Word of God and the Holy Spirit. On this occasion the well-known Rustenburg Declaration was drafted, in which all the participating churches denounced apartheid as a sin.

This assembly also helped to create a climate in which all leaders would jointly look for solutions to the pressing problems of the country. It would be premature to judge the meaning and significance of this very important consultation with its historic declaration. It is, however, one of those turning points within the history of the church which will be remembered with sincere appreciation.

The situation under which the Consultation gathered

In a situation of transformation coupled with conflict, suffering and violence, human relations were further worsened as a result of suspicion, selfishness and tolerance. As a result of this, it has become more difficult to find solutions to the political, economic and social problems of the country. Christians and the churches have realised that they have a certain role to play. Their confessions not only give witness to the love of God and of their neighbours, but they are also supposed to be doers. In the declarations that were issued at the end of the Consultation, the following issues were addressed: confession of guilt, confession of faith, peace and violence, restitution and commitment to action.

Confession

The Consultation states that apartheid is a sin and that it should be rejected in its meaning, implementation and consequences. Furthermore, the implementation and defence of apartheid on theological grounds is seen as a deed of disobedience to God. It is also a negation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The conference delegates acknowledged and confessed their guilt to the establishment, maintenance or even the involuntary acceptance of the apartheid policy. It was also declared that apartheid was not the only sin. The oppressed were also reproached for their apathetic attitude to apartheid. The underlying discrimination practised by the oppressed, was also criticised. The sin of sexism in church, political and economic structures was also addressed. The composi-

tion of the conference, which was dominated by men, was a good example of this sin. The role and place of youth in society were also addressed. The authorities were called upon to denounce apartheid as a sin in public, and to renounce it in all its manifestations.

Declaration

The conference members realised that they could not expect of others that which they themselves were not willing to do, as their credibility was at stake. The church was called on to remove all forms of discrimination in congregations, and the nation was called on to remove all forms of personal and structural sin. They expressed appreciation towards political leaders for their efforts in the negotiation for a just, political settlement for the country and congratulated the church worldwide on its solidarity and prayer in a time of crisis and struggle.

Affirmation

The conference declared that their highest and only loyalty was towards God, and that the state, as servant of God, was always under his reign. A specific appeal was made for the separation of church and state, as well as for freedom of religion, and association. To the negotiators of the new constitution for South Africa, the following biblical and ethical values were pointed out:

- the value of human life
- the exclusion of discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, class and religion and the practise of justice
- an independent judiciary
- the acknowledging of human rights
- a democratic election system of one person, one vote on a common voters' role, in a multiparty democracy and in a unified state.

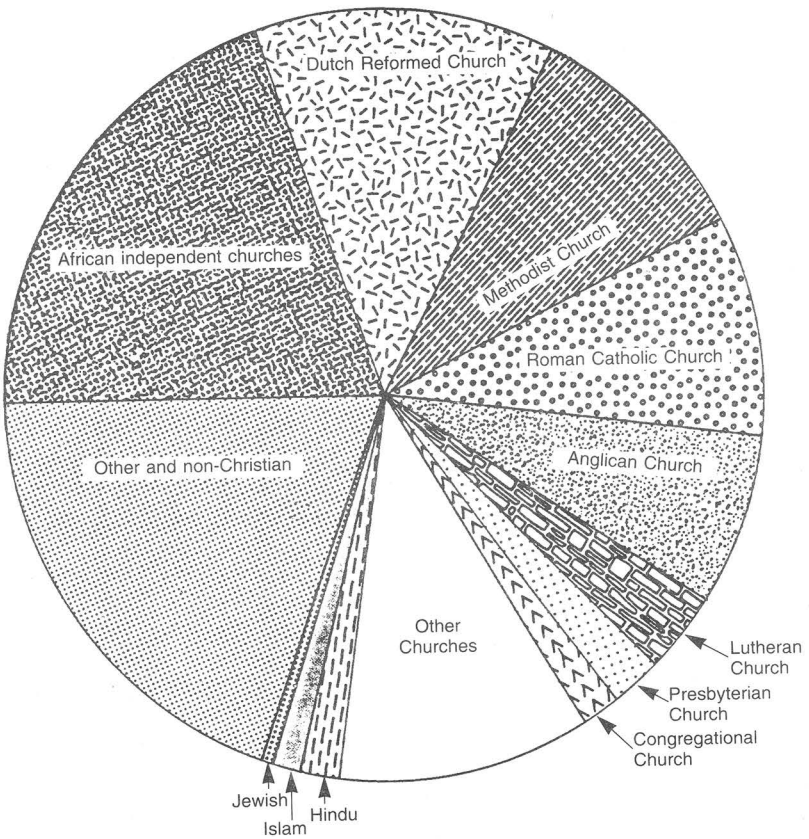
One of the problems that received a great deal of attention was the issue of violence. Some of the important causes of violence were listed as follows:

- The many years of exploitation of blacks had resulted in economic inequality.
- The role of the "third force".
- Poverty, fighting between opposing parties in competition for limited resources.
- The struggle for power among political parties.
- The forced removal of families from their traditional environment, resulting in the destruction of families and the undermining of parental authority.
- Emotional problems as a result of these factors.

The churches proposed the following in reaction to the violence in the country:

- Churches must be mobilised to collect information in connection with violence and to disseminate it to the authorities and political organisations.

- Those who are guilty of any form of violence, must be condemned.
- Material and spiritual support must be given to the victims of violence.
- All South Africans must be encouraged to participate in the negotiation process.
- Prayers must be said for the ending of violence and the speedy social, economic and political transformation of the country.
- A task group must be appointed to coordinate strategies.
- A peace conference must be composed of all leaders who can contribute towards ending the violence (Alberts, 1991:275–286).



The religous composition of the South African population (1980)

The way forward

At Rustenburg a course of action was agreed upon by the most representative gathering of church leaders ever to meet in South Africa. They very firmly agreed on the need for restitution and a commitment to action.

Some of the participants in the Rustenburg conference joined with business and political leaders in formulating a Peace Accord on 14 September 1991. This accord is a document intended to promote peace and prosperity in violence-stricken communities. It therefore functions in the arena of negotiation and reconciliation.

In the meantime a great number of church leaders have made important contributions to the struggle for peace. In spite of widespread violence and instability, the prospects for the transition to a democratic society still look relatively good. In this process the Christian witness and the credibility of the Church will once again be at stake.

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SOCIO-POLITICAL EVENTS		ECCLESIASTICAL EVENTS
National Party wins elections	1948	Establishment of World Council of Churches – some S.A. churches become members
	1949	Rosettenville Conference of the Christian Council of South Africa
Population Registration Act and Group Areas Act	1950	
Bantu Education Act	1953	
Tomlinson Report	1955	
	1956	Conference on "Christian Literature for the Bantu in Southern Africa"
Sharpeville shootings	1960	Cottesloe Consultation
South Africa becomes a Republic	1961	
	1963	Formation of Christian Institute
	1968	South African Council of Churches re-established
Soweto uprisings	1976	Various churches respond to Soweto events
Death of Steve Biko	1977	
	1979	Sacla meeting
	1980	Reformation Day witness
	1982	Apartheid declared a heresy (Ottowa)
State of emergency introduced	1984	
	1985	Kairos Document
	1986	Evangelical Witness
	1987	Faith and Protest
	1988	Relevant Pentecostal Witness
	1989	Road to Damascus
Release of Nelson Mandela and unbanning of ANC and PAC	1990	Rustenburg Declaration
National Peace Accord	1991	Churches assist to facilitate Peace Accord
Introduction of Transitional Government	1993	Churches retain high profile in process of reconciliation

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APPENDIX A: STATISTICS

Population of the Cape Colony, 1670–1820

Year	European freeburghers	Free blacks	Burghers' slaves	Khoikhoi and Bastaards
1670	125	13	52	not enumerated until 1798
1690	788	48	381	,,
1711	1 693	63	1 771	,,
1730	2 540	221	4 037	,,
1750	4 511	349	5 327	,,
1770	7 736	352	8 220	,,
1798	c. 20 000	c. 1 700	25 754	14 447
1820	42 975	1 932	31 779	26 975

Census Statistics 1904–1911: The South African population

The first census of all population groups in the South African states was held in 1904

	Cape		Natal		Transvaal		Orange River Colony/ Orange Free State		Total	
	1904	1911	1904	1911	1904	1911	1904	1911	1904	1911
Black	1 425 000	1 520 000	904 000	953 000	937 000	1 220 000	225 000	326 000	3 491 000	4 019 000
White	580 000	582 000	97 000	98 000	297 000	421 000	143 000	175 000	1 117 000	1 276 000
Coloured	395 000	455 000	7 000	9 000	24 000	35 000	19 000	27 000	445 000	526 000
Indian	10 000	8 000	101 000	133 000	11 000	11 000	200	100	122 200	152 100
TOTAL	2 410 000	2 565 000	1 109 000	1 193 000	1 269 000	1 687 000	387 200	528 100	5 175 200	5 973 100

Statistical tables: Missionary Societies (1911)

Work commenced	Society	Field(s)	European workers	Native workers	Stations	Out-stations	Communi-cants	Baptised	Adherents
1737	Moravian Church	Cape Province, Native territories	89	513	23	139	6331	19338	21595
1799	London Missionary Society	Cape Province, Bechuanaland	50	126	41	141	21250	21250	75344
1814	Wesleyan Missionary Society	British South Africa	102	1873	53	1853	96489	179953	361606
1820	United Free Church of Scotland	Native territories, Natal	123	856	28	509	15994	19411	35039
1824	Dutch Reformed Church	British South Africa	225	457	92	56	31270	31270	137295
1829	Paris Evangelical Missionary Society	Basutoland, Barotsiland	43	445	15	210	17160	17160	24460
1829	Rhenish Missionary Society	German S.W. Africa, Cape Prov.	64	79	35	28	15969	15969	35106
1834	Berlin Missionary Society	Cape Province, O.F.S., Natal, Tvl.	103	649	55	249	23853	48360	48360
1835	American Board Mission	Natal, Rhodesia	41	560	15	27	5532	5532	19711
1835	Church of England	British South Africa	177	910	134	301	43403	156059	206501
1844	Norwegian Missionary Society	Natal, Zululand	31	58	12	63	2231	3842	5089
1854	Hermannsburg Mission	Natal, Transvaal	51	518	47	133	22760	22760	67184
1869	Swiss Romande Mission	Transvaal, Portuguese East Africa	73	81	14	65	1992	1992	4462
1870	Finnish Mission	Ovamboland	37	35	8	15	768	1772	2529
1873	Church of Norway Mission	Zululand, Natal	19	29	5	31	761	1845	2800
1876	Church of Sweden Mission	Natal, Zululand, Rhodesia	28	82	6	60	1281	2735	5124
1885	Free Methodist Church Mission	Natal	18	26	6	28	329	329	2120
1889	South Africa General Mission	Native territories, Natal, Swaziland	61	57	25	50	948	1254	5000
1890	Swedish Zulu Mission (Holiness Union)	Natal	9	3	2	8	122	122	160
1890	Salvation Army	British South Africa	33	56	33	27	1763	1703	7523
1890	Hanoverian Free Church Mission	Transvaal	17	55	9	34	5110	5110	20000
1892	Scandinavian Alliance Mission	Natal	10	70	2	–	350	350	945
1892	Scandinavian Independent Baptist Union	Natal	7	3	2	8	122	122	160
1892	South African Baptist Missionary Society	Kafraria	11	5	4	28	625	625	2795
1896	South African Compounds and Interior Miss	Johannesburg, Portuguese E. Africa	23	46	14	23	1000	1450	3550
1896	Hephzibah Faith Missionary Association	Natal, Johannesburg	9	20	3	1	40	40	160
1898	Brethren in Christ Mission	Rhodesia	11	7	4	3	106	106	266
1899	Methodist Episcopal Church	Rhodesia	18	47	3	14	1245	1245	6498
1899	Norwegian Free Mission	Natal	5	2	1	–	42	42	71
1904	Presbyterian Church of South Africa	Transvaal, Rhodesia	2	7	2	20	750	750	1750
			1490	7619	693	4124	319596	563566	1095680

(Du Plessis, J. 1965. *A History of Christian Missions in South Africa.* Cape Town, p. 464)

1960 Census Statistics

	Whites	% Total White Pop.	Coloureds	% Total Coloured Pop.	Asians	% Total Asian Pop.	Blacks	% Total Black Pop.	Total	% Total Population
Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk	1 324 000	43	440 000	29			524 000	4.8	2 288 000	14.
Gereformeerde Kerk	99 000	3.2	7 000	.5			18 000	.17	124 000	.8
Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk	192 000	6.24	3 000	.2			21 000	.2	216 000	1.3
Anglican Church	384 000	12.5	261 000	17	6 000	1.2	752 000	6.8	1 403 000	8.7
Methodist Church	267 000	8.6	117 000	7.7	2 400	.5	1 320 000	12	1 706 000	10.6
Presbyterian Church	111 000	3.6	6 000	.4			203 000	1.8	320 000	2
Congregational Church	5 500	.5	140 000	9.2			136 000	1.2	291 000	1.8
Lutheran Church	34 000	1.1	73 000	4.8			542 000	5.	649 000	4
Roman Catholic Church	192 000	6.2	119 000	7.8	10 000	2.1	755 000	7	1 066 000	6.7
Apostolic Faith Mission	70 000	2	17 000	1.1			119 000	1.1	206 000	1.3
Baptist Church	34 000	1.1	11 000	.7	2 600	.56	103 000	.95	150 000	.9
Full Gospel	22 000	.7	5 000	.4	6 500	1.4	33 000	.3	66 000	.4
Church of Christ			3 900	.2			29 000	.27		
Pinkster Protestante Kerk			13 000				13 000	.1		
Swiss Church							79 000	.72		
Pentecostal and Apostolic Churches	46 000	1.5	62 000	4.1			190 000	1.74	298 000	1.9
Other Black Independent Churches							2 313 000	21.2		
Greek Church	11 000	.3								
Seventh Day Adventist	11 400	.37	8 000	.54			22 000	.21	41 000	.2
Jewish	114 000	3.7								
Islam			92 000	6.1	99 000	21			191 000	1.1
Hindu					328 000	68				
Confucian					1 073	.22				
Object to state and no Religion & Uncommitted	103 000	3.3	23 000	1.5	7 000	1.4	3 501 000	32	3 564 000	23.8

1970 Census Statistics

	Whites	% Total White Pop.	Coloureds	% Total Coloured Pop.	Asians	% Total Asian Pop.	Blacks	% Total Black Pop.	Total	% Total Population
Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk	1 512 000	40.	583 000	28			1 000 000	5.9	3 095 000	14.2
Gereformeerde Kerk	110 200	3	4 500	.2			39 000	.26	153 000	.07
Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk	225 000	6	2 600	.1			30 000	.2	257 000	1.2
Anglican Church	404 000	10.7	332 000	16	7 200	1.2	982 000	6.4	1 725 000	7.9
Methodist Church	362 000	9.6	116 000	5.6	2 600	.4	1 825 000	11.9	2 305 000	10.5
Presbyterian Church	119 000	3.1	8 000	.4			451 000	2.9	578 000	2.6
Congregational Church	21 000	.6	156 000	7.6			217 000	1.4	394 000	1.8
Lutheran Church	42 000	1.1	9 500	4.6			812 000	5.2	859 000	3.9
Roman Catholic Church	309 600	8.2	197 000	9.6	15 000	2.3	1 375 000	9	1 896 000	8.7
Apostolic Faith Mission	73 000	2.	20 000	1			126 000	.8	219 000	1
Baptist Church	46 000	1.2	9 000	.6	3 000	.46	178 000	1.1	246 000	1.1
Full Gospel	35 000	1	12 000	.6	8 000	1.3	47 356	.3	102 000	.5
Church of Christ	3 000		5 300	.2			74 000	.5	82 000	.3
Pinkster Protestante Kerk	23 000	.6	11 000	.5			42 000	.26	70 000	.3
Salvation Army	4 000									
Swiss Church	190						116 000	.76	116 000	.5
Assemblies of God	6 200						63 000	.4	69 000	.3
Pentecostal and Apostolic Churches	82 000	2.1	129 000	6.3			500 000	2.9	711 000	.3
Other Black Independent Churches							2 716 000	17.7	2 716 000	12.
Greek Church	24 400	.6								
Seventh Day Adventist	14 600	.39	9 500	.46			40 000	.27	64 000	.3
Jewish	118 200	3.1							118 000	.5
Islam	1 000		134 000	6.5	126 000	20	5 000		266 000	1.2
Hindu					430 000	68	1 000		431 000	2.
Confucian					874	.14				
Object to state and no Religion & Uncommitted	103 000	2.7	46 000	2.2	17 000	1	4 362 000	28.4	4 528 000	20.7

1980 Census Statistics

	Whites	% Total White Pop.	Coloureds	% Total Coloured Pop.	Asians	% Total Asian Pop.	Blacks	% Total Black Pop.	Total	% Total Population
Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk	1 700 000	37.3	675 000	25	2 400	1.2	1 120 000	6.5	3 497 000	13.9
Gereformeerde Kerk	127 000	2.8	7 000	1.75			63 000	.58	197 000	.07
Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk	258 000	5.7	2 528	.1	1 000	.1	26 000	.15	287 000	1.
Anglican Church	461 000	10.1	360 000	16	7 600	.8	813 000	4.8	1 641 000	6.5
Methodist Church	421 000	9.2	149 000	5.6	4 000	.4	1 657 000	9.7	2 231 000	8.9
Presbyterian Church	130 000	2.9	9 000	.3	1 600	.2	391 000	2.3	531 000	2.1
Congregational Church	25 000	.5	186 000	7.	1 400	.17	280 000	1.6	492 000	1.9
Lutheran Church	43 000	.9	102 000	3.8	700	.08	742 000	4.3	887 000	3.5
Roman Catholic Church	388 000	8.5	266 000	10	20 000	2.4	1 731 000	10.1	2 405 000	9.6
Apostolic Faith Mission	125 000	2.8	39 000	1.4	2 800	.3	116 000	.06	282 000	1.1
Baptist Church	72 000	1.6	17 000	.6	4 000	.4	163 000	.95	256 000	1.
Full Gospel	65 000	1.4	23 000	.8	25 000	.3	73 000	.95	186 000	.7
Pinkster Protestante Kerk	37 000	.8	17 000	.6	2 700	.3	12 000	.07	68 000	.2
Salvation Army	5 000	.1	1 200				39 000	.2	45 000	.1
Swiss Church	359		352				83 000	.5	84 000	.3
Assemblies of God	19 000	.4	12 500	.4	1 800	.2	110 000	.6	143 000	.5
Pentecostal and Apostolic Churches	162 000	3.5	235 000	8.9	4 200	.4	133 000	.8	534 000	2.1
ZCC			3 400				527 000	15.8	530 000	2.1
Other Black Independent Churches							4 600 000	27.	4 600 000	18.3
Greek Church	29 000	.6								
Seventh Day Adventist	17 000	.4	12 000	.4	1 500	.2	50 000	.3	80 500	.3
Jewish	117 000	2.6	500		272		2 300		120 000	.4
Islam	1 700		176 000	6.7	166 000	20.2	9 000	.05	353 000	1.4
Hindu	1 500		1 200		524 000	63	11 200		538 700	2.1
Confucian					651	.8	6 000			
Object to state and no Religion & Uncommitted	204 000	4.5	114 000	4.3	22 000	2.6	4 088 000	24	4 428 000	17.7

Census 1991
Religious Data

Denomination Religion	Total Number	%	Blacks Number	%	Whites Number	%	Coloureds Number	%	Asians Number	%
African Independent	4 602	24,4	4 551	36,0	6	0,2	40	2,0	4	0,7
DRC	2 832	15,0	900	7,1	1 428	39,4	503	24,6	1	0,1
RCC	2 043	10,8	1 541	12,2	281	7,8	210	10,3	12	2,0
Methodist	1 638	8,7	1 252	9,9	299	8,3	86	4,2	2	0,3
ZCC	1 225	6,5	1 219	9,7	1	0,0	4	0,2	0	0,0
Anglican	1 049	5,6	575	4,6	262	7,2	209	10,2	4	0,7
Lutheran	661	3,5	562	4,5	25	0,7	72	3,5	1	0,2
Other Apos. Churches	490	2,6	136	1,1	132	3,7	220	10,8	2	0,3
Presbyterian	397	2,1	311	2,5	81	2,2	5	0,2	1	0,1
A.F.M.	351	1,9	92	0,7	201	5,6	56	2,7	2	0,3
Congregational	333	1,8	199	1,6	17	0,5	133	5,6	3	0,5
Hervormde Church	236	1,3	16	1,1	218	6,0	1	0,1	0	0,0
Baptist	222	1,2	138	1,1	65	1,8	17	0,6	3	0,5
Full Gospel	178	0,9	78	0,6	60	1,7	22	1,1	19	3,2
Geref. Church	142	0,8	32	0,3	107	3,0	3	0,2	0	0,0
Assemblies of God	132	0,7	103	0,8	14	0,4	14	0,7	1	0,1
Other Pentecostal	81	0,4	10	0,1	44	1,2	26	1,3	1	0,1
S.D.A.	78	0,4	55	0,4	13	0,4	9	0,5	1	0,1
Afr. Protest. Kerk	28	0,2	-	-	28	0,8	-	-	-	-
Salvation Army	27	0,1	24	0,2	3	0,1	1	0,0	0	0,0
Greek Orthodox	24	0,1	3	0,0	21	0,6	0	0,0	0	0,0
Mormons	7	0,0	1	0,0	5	0,2	0	0,0	0	0,0
Other churches	1 076	5,7	536	4,2	215	5,9	273	13,4	52	8,7
Christian churches	17 852	94,5	12 332	97,7	3 525	97,4	1 886	92,3	110	18,2
Hindu	341	1,8	1	0,0	1	0,0	1	0,1	338	56,0
Muslim	298	1,6	10	0,1	2	0,0	141	6,9	146	24,1
Judaism	59	0,3	1	0,0	57	1,6	0	0,0	0	0,0
Other religions	24	0,1	11	0,1	4	0,1	3	0,2	6	1,0
No religion	319	1,7	272	2,2	32	0,9	11	0,5	4	0,6
Non-Christians	1 042	5,5	295	2,3	96	2,7	157	7,7	493	81,8
Total responses	18 894	100,0	12 627	100,0	3 621	100,0	2 043	100,0	603	100,0
No response	7 395	28,1	5 346	29,7	901	19,9	887	30,3	261	30,2
Total	26 288		17 973		4 522		2 929		864	

Index

à Brakel, Wilhelm 12
Adams 59
Africa Enterprise 264
African
  Baptist Church 239
  Independent Churches 65, 70, 75, 79, 161, 168, 177, 262, 268
  Methodist Church 183
  National Congress 148, 169, 179, 251, 261
Afrikaner
  Broederbond 254
  nationalism 34
Albany 49
Albertyn, P.K. 107, 108
Alexander, W.H.F. 155
Algoa Bay 1, 49
Alice 125, 131
Allard 79, 137
AmaNazaretha 262
American
  Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions 94, 207
  Board Missions (ABM) 59, 186, 203
  Lutheran Mission 208
  Zulu Mission 181
Amesius, William 12
ANC 223, 294
Anderson, William 58
Anglican 37, 124, 173, 174, 181, 202, 203, 267
  Church 80, 173, 174, 179, 260
Anglo-Boer War 198
Angola 77
Apostolic Faith Mission 188, 189, 190, 208, 265, 266
Appleby, Robert 158
Appleyard, J. 131
Archbell, James 62, 106, 116
Armstrong 83
Assegai River 63
Assemblies of God 192, 193, 265
August, Lydia 263
Ayliff 66

Back, Ernestus 11
Baird, David 76
Ballinger, Margaret 252
Balmforth, Ramsden 156
Bambata 179, 182
  Rebellion 209
Bantu Presbyterian Church 259
Baptists 60, 64, 124, 125
Baptist
  Missionary Society 26
  Union of S.A. 245
Barkly West 162
Barnard, Anne 41
Barnato, Barney 145
Barnes 179
Barrow 17
Bartholomew Diaz 1
Batavia 13, 24
  (Djakarta) 2
Bathurst 82
Baynes, A.H. 135
Beaufort West 49
Beck, Henricus 14
Bedford 69
Beira 1
Belhar Confession 289
Bennet, J.H. 192
Bennie, John 66, 71, 72
Berlin
  Mission 207
  Mission Society 139
  Missionary Society 87, 119, 138, 149
Bethelsdorp 49, 51, 52
Bethesda Movement 235
Bhengu, Nicholas 193, 265
Bible Society 264
Birt, Richard 59
Bishopstowe 179
Black Circuit 52, 53
Blencowe, G. 131
Bloemfontein 148
Blythswood 70
Boesak, Allan 234, 287, 290
Booth, Joseph 182
Bosman, H.S. 166
Botha, P.W. 250, 284, 287
Botshabelo 140, 141
Botswana 36
Bourke, Richard 56

Bovill, John 153
Bowie, George 191, 266
Boyce, William 66
Brakel, W.A. 17
Bridgeman, J.B. 186
British
  imperialism 34
  Kaffraria 83, 130
  Settlers 4, 33, 34
Broadbent, Samuel 61
Broederbond 196, 197
Brown, Tom J. 162
Brownlee, John 58, 71
Bryant, Daniel 188, 189, 214
Buchan, John 182
Büchler, Johannes 187
Bulawayo 165
Bulhoek 217
  Massacre 209, 216, 218
Buntingville 66
Bushmans River 1
Bushmen xvi, xxiv
Buthelezi, Manas 284
Butler, James 154, 155

Cakijana 179
Calata, James 222, 261
Callaway, G. 221
Calvinism 152
Calvinists 6, 27, 67, 68
Campbell 17
  John 53
Canons of Dordt (DCO) 20
Cape Colony 83
Cape Patriots 17, 32
Cape Town 5, 15, 20, 39, 40, 47, 49, 50, 51, 54, 56, 62, 80, 82, 97, 99, 124, 125
Cassidy, Michael 264
Catholics 10
Cattle killing 67, 87
Cele, B 183
Cetshwayo 85, 136, 179
Champion 59
Charismatic Revival 266
Chawner,
  C.A. 193
  Charles William 192, 193
Christian
  Council of South Africa 231, 245, 275
  Institute 267, 275, 300
Chumie 71, 73
Church
  of Sweden Mission 207
  Order of De Mist 26
  of Nazareth 238
Cilliers, Sarel 101, 106, 109, 118
Clanwilliam 108
Clayton, Geoffrey 223, 255, 266, 271, 272
Cloppenburg 21
Cocceius, Johannes 12
Coke 60
Cole, Lowry 56, 72
Colenso 84, 135, 136, 149
  Henriette Emily 178, 179, 183
  John William 134, 178
Colesberg 117
Collins 47
Congregational 174, 203, 206
  Union of South Africa 59, 125, 245
Congregationalism 60
Congregationalists 69, 124, 125, 174
Cooper, A.H. 191
Coppin 10
Cory, George 55
Cotterill 84
Cottesloe Consultation 267, 274, 294, 300
Count Zinzendorf 40
Cradock 49, 101

D'Almeida 8
Da Gama, Vasco 1, 32
Da Nova 8
Da Silveira, Gonzalo 1
Davies, William 125
Davitt, Michael 164
Day of the Covenant 198
De Blank, Joost 272, 274, 276
Dedeland 182
De Klerk, F.W. 250
De Mazinod 79
De Mist 26, 45, 76, 126, 149
  J.A. 45
Descartes 12
Devereux 77
De Vos D.J. 205
Dewar, Alexander 177
De Wet, C.R. 166
Diaz 32, 76
Difaqane 34, 149
Dingane 117

Dinizulu 178, 179
Dinkwanyane, Johannes 140, 141, 142
Döhne, J.L. 107, 116
Dominicans 2
Dordt 12, 15
Dorothea Mission 264
Dowie, John Alexander 187, 214
Drakenstein 14, 39, 97
(Paarl) 13, 20
Drew, Dewdney 156
Dube,
James 184
John 179, 180, 184, 222, 251
Du Plessis,
David 266
Johannes 226, 227
Durban 125, 133, 188
D'Urban, Benjamin 100
Dutch East India Company 2, 3, 6, 22
(Dutch) Reformed Church 10, 173, 182, 186, 205, 225, 226, 253, 254, 269
Dutch Reformed Mission Church 225, 245
Dwane, James Matwane 182, 210

Eacott, William 158
Eastern Cape 36
East London 163
Edendale 167, 261
Edict of Nantes 13
Edmonds 26, 44
Edwards 26, 44
Edward 62
Elim 42
Engotini 42
Enock, Arthur Guy 154
Enon 42
Episcopalians 64
Erastianism, 46
Erastoamos, 46
Escombe, Harry 179
Ethiopian 179, 182, 205, 209, 210
Church 183, 212
Ethiopianism 159, 161, 167, 168, 169, 183, 213
Eva, George 158
Evangelical Witness 300

Fairbairn, John 54
Faure, A. 100, 103, 104, 110
Federal
Council of Dutch Reformed Churches 234
Mission Council 234
Finnish Mission 207
Fish River 4, 47, 48, 49, 65
Fort Beaufort 53, 66, 131
Fort Hare 173, 211, 233, 262
Franschoek 13
French
Huguenots 4, 11, 13, 14, 15, 32
Revolution 33, 39
Frijkenius 21
Full Gospel Church 193, 236, 266

Gabashane, Marcus 167
Gandhi, M.K. 155
George 49
Genadendal 23, 24, 41, 42
General Missionary Conference (GMC) 231, 233
Gerard, Joseph 137
Gereformeerde Kerk 114, 115, 205
Gertrude, Marie 78
Glasglow Missionary Society (GMS) 70, 72, 127
Glen Lynden 69
Goodenough, H.D. 186
Govan, William 73
Graaff-Reinet 17, 39, 40, 45, 86, 96, 100, 103, 105, 108, 110, 119
Grahamstown 64, 65, 66, 79, 82, 83, 104, 125, 128, 131, 183, 265
Graham, John 48
Gray,
James 157
Robert 80, 82, 83, 124, 135, 149
Great Trek 34, 37, 55, 93, 97, 149, 198
Grey, George 66, 67, 74, 128, 129
Griffith 125
Raymond 77, 149
Grobler, Piet 154
Groenekloof 42
Groenewald 256
Graut 59
Groutville 179
Gumede,
Alfred 193
Josiah 183
P.J. 184
Gutsche, H.

Ham, P.N. 116
Hammanskraal 280
Hanoverian Mission 207
Hargreaves, Peter 159
Hattingh, C. 101
Healdtown 73, 131, 160, 167
Heidelberg Catechism 17
Heijlbron, David 29
Heilbron 167, 168
Hendricks, A. 281
Herold, T.J. 98
Hermannsburg Mission 207, 208
Hertzog 241, 252
Hezmelhalch, Thomas 189, 190, 191
Hlubi 135, 136
Hobhouse, Emily 155
Hobson, John 152
Hodgson, T.L. 62
Hofmeyr, Stephanus 165
Holtfontein 168
Hoornbeeck, Johannes 12
Hough, George 80
Huddleston, Trevor 241, 269, 271
Hughes, Hugh Price 158
Hurley 260

Impey, William 65
Innes, James Rose 130
Islam 29
Islamic 45

Jabavu,
  D.D.T. 184, 218, 222
  John Tengo 155, 160, 183, 203, 204, 251
Jacobson, Samuel 29
Jamangile 176
James, Hannah A. 192
Janssens 41, 45
Java 2
Jenkins, Eleazer 192
Jesuits 2
Jewish 29, 30
  Christian 29
Jews 30
Johannesburg 147, 158, 188
Jolobe, James 173
Jolivet 77
Jones, Robert 80
Joubert,
  Gideon 117
  G.D. 108
Judge, E. 81

Kairos Document 288, 300
Kat River 40, 49
  Settlement 58
Kayser, Frederick Gottlieb 58
Keet, Barend Bartholomeus 255
Keiskamma River 48
Kendrick 149
Kestell, J.D. 166
Key, Bransby 153
Kgatla 151
Khoikhoi xviii, xxiv, 3, 6, 7, 11, 23, 28, 36, 40, 47, 51, 52, 61, 65
Khoisan xiii, xiv, xviii, xix, 3, 32, 34
Kicherer 26, 44
Kitchener 165
Kimberley 62, 134, 158, 159
King William's Town 84, 164
Knapp-Fisher, E.G. 280
Kok, J.W. 165
Kolbe, F.C. 156, 164
Kolver, Andreas 25, 32
Kolwe 180, 181, 182
Krige, W.A. 110
Kruger 59, 146, 147, 148, 151, 154, 162, 163, 165
Kubedi, John 168
Kuhnel 41
Kuruman 58, 162
Kwaaihoek 1

Lake, John G. 189, 190, 191
Langalibalele 135, 136, 179
Lauts, U.G. 112
Law, J.H. 192
Lea, Allen 210
Le Boucq, E.F. 14
Lehman, A. 189
Lekganyane,
  Edward 262
  Engenas 262
  Joseph 262
Leliefontein 61
Lena 41
Le Roux, Petrus L. 187, 188, 189, 190, 214
Leonard, Charles 147
Lesotho 36
Le Sueur, Francois 23

Letwaba, Elias 191
Lichtenstein 14
Limba, James 262
Lindley, Daniel 59, 106, 107, 116, 117, 119
Livingstone, David 58, 116
Lloyd, John T. 157
LMS 70, 71, 163
London Missionary Society 26, 43, 104, 116, 118, 125, 161, 174, 207
Lovedale 72, 73, 75, 127, 131, 161, 173, 174, 186, 232
  Mission 66
Lowe, George 158, 159
Lutheran
  Church 25, 32
  Societies 181
Lutheranism 8
Lutherans 25, 40
Lutuli,
  Albert 179, 222, 251, 261, 271
  Martin 179, 183, 184
Lydenburg 114, 120, 138, 140, 141, 142

Mabote, Samuel 168
Mabandla, George 176, 177
Macartney 41
Macrorie, William Kenneth 85, 135
Mafolofolo 141
Magatha, David 131
Mahabane, Z. 222
Mahlangu, Elijah 214
Mahon, Edgar 188, 189
Makhubu 211
  Paul 268
Makone,
  M.M. 182
  Nicholas 168
Malan, D.F. 241
Malmesbury 20
Mamre 42
Mandela, Nelson 300
Manuza 2
Mantladi, Jacob 139, 140
Maputo 9
Marabastad 167
Marais, Ben 256, 257
Mariannhill 133, 180, 245
Maritz 99, 105, 106
  Susanna 105
Marsveld 41
Martini 9
Marxism 39
Masane, Saul 179
Masiza,
  Paul 131, 173
  Peter 131, 173
Matabeleland 129
Mathabathe, Samuel 131
Matshaba, Robert 131
Matthews, Z.K. 222, 261, 271
Mazimba 177
Mbiyane, Ngidi 183
McKenzie 85
Meara, William 158
Mears, Gordon 253
Melck, Martin 25
Melville, James 58
Mentzel 16
Merensky, Alexander 139, 140, 141
Merriman 83
  John X. 130
Methodism 60, 64
Methodist Church 60, 66, 160, 173, 181, 202, 203, 206, 259, 267, 273
Methodists 62, 65, 124, 159, 160, 173, 174, 183
Mfecane 34, 54, 62, 123, 149
Mfengu 83
Mgijima, Enoch 217
Mgojo, K. 286
Mgudlwa 175, 176
Mgwali 72, 74
Mhlope 263
Middelburg 140
Milner, Alfred 156
Mini, Stephen 183
Mkize, Isaac 184
Mkwane, Elijah 176, 177
Mlaba 205
Mochudi xx, 165
Mocke, J.G. 104
Moffat,
  John 162, 207
  John S. 160, 162
  Robert 58, 162, 207
Mokone, Mangena 167, 168
Mokotini, Seth 262
Mokwena, D.S. 191
Monomotapa 1, 2
Moore, Basil 265
Moravian 23, 24, 42

Mission 23
Moravianism 8
Moravians 23, 40
Moroka, James 222
Mosega 138
Moselekaats 116, 117
Moshweshwe 62, 136, 137, 139
Mossel Bay 1, 2, 8, 29, 32
Mott, John 231
Mount Coke 66, 131
Mozambique 77, 153
Mpamba, William 161
Mpande 133
Mpondo xxiii
Msane, Saul 183
Msimang, Selby 222
Mudie, David 162
Mukan, W.F. 193
Mullan,
J.E. 265
W.F. 193
Murray,
A. 101
Andrew 107, 110, 149, 156, 187, 214, 263
J 165
Muslim 29
Mzilikazi 59
Mzimba,
Pambani 132
P.J. 161, 183, 184

Nachtigal, Albert 139, 140, 141
Namaqua 61, 63
Napier, George 100
Napoleonic wars 36
Natal 37, 83
Missionary Society 181
National
Party 198, 202, 251, 270
Peace Accord 300
Naude, Beyers 275, 280
Nazareth Mission 182
Ndebele 138, 151
Nederburg 21
Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk 114, 253
Nederlandsche Zendeling Genootschap 26
Neethling 110
Nehemiah Tile 167, 209
Newtondale 66
Ngqika 45, 48, 74, 84
Ngobese, Muneli 187
Nguni xx, xxii, 7, 8
Nkonyhane, David 187
Nkonyane, Daniel 214
Nku, Christina 263
Nonconformity 60
Norwegian
Society 181
Mission Society 207
Ntsikana 45
Nuwe Protestantse Kerk 205
Nyongwane, S. 183

Oberholster, M.A. 104
Orange River 6
Sovereignty 83
Order of Ethiopia 183
Ordinance 50 55, 56
Ossewa-Brandwag 198

Paarl 108
PAC 294
Pacaltsdorp 53, 58
Palmerton 127
Pamela, Charles 131
Pan-Africanist Congress 273
Paris Evangelical
Mission 87
Missionary Society 137, 209
Paton, Alan Stewart 255, 256, 257
Peace Accord 298
Pentecostalism 187
Peddie 131
Pedi 151
Perestrello 8
Pescod, William 158, 159
Phatametsane 139
Philip 57, 68, 87, 118
II 2
John 52, 53, 54, 104, 129, 207
Phillips, H.C. 193
Pietersburg 161
Pietermaritzburg 103, 106, 109, 110, 133, 179, 235, 255, 261
Pilanesberg 151
Pinkster Protestante Kerk 266
Plaatje, Sol T. 179, 185
Pondo 55
Port Alfred 82
Port Elizabeth 82, 125
Port Natal 106, 109

Portuguese 1, 2, 8, 9
Postma, Dirk 115
Potchefspruit 103
Potchefstroom 106, 109, 110, 112, 138, 139
Potgieter, F.J.M. 228
Presbyterian 47, 64, 69, 124, 173, 174, 203, 206
  Church 68, 69, 173, 207, 259, 267
Presbyterianism 60, 67, 68
Pretoria 158
Pretorius,
  Andries 99, 107
  M.W. 138
Primitive Methodist Church 206
Prince Albert 108
Prince Henry 1

Qhiubiri 73
Queenstown 160, 209

Radeba, Mark 183, 184
Ramapodu 140
Ratau 140
Rebellion of 1914 198
Read, James 45, 49, 51, 52, 53, 59, 207
Reed, James 175
Rees, John 282
Reeves, Ambrose 271, 272
Reformed Protestantism 8
Reid, Thomas 100, 101
Reitz, F.W. 154
Relevant Pentecostal Witness 300
Retief 95, 99, 105, 108, 116, 117
Rhema Church 266
Rhenish
  Missionary Society 63, 87
  Mission Society 207
Rhodes, Cecil John 129, 145, 158, 164
Richards, A. 192
Richardson, Lawrence 155
Rideout, Nicholas B. 188
Robertson, W. 95
Roman Catholic 37, 47, 76, 78, 124
  Church 45, 76, 180, 208, 260
Roman Catholicism 8
Rosettenville 233
  Conference 300
Ross,
  Brownlee 161
  John 72
Roux, Paul 13
Rowlands,
  John Alexander 235
  J.F. 235, 236
Rubusana, Walter B. 163, 164
Rustenburg 112
  Consultation 295
  Declaration 295, 300

Sabon 134
Sacla 300
Sackett 189
Salem 63, 65
San xvi, 3, 7, 51
Sandile 86
Sarhili 132
Schmelen, H. 61
Schmidt, George 22, 24, 27, 32, 40
Schreiner,
  Olive 157
  W.P. 130, 179
Schwinn 41
Scott, Michael 241, 242, 271, 272
Scripture Union 263
Sebogodi, Gopane 151
Sekhukhune 139, 140, 141
Sekwati 138, 139, 140
Seme, Pixley 179
Seventh Day Adventist 261
Sewushane, Martinus 139, 140
Sharpeville 273, 294, 300
Shaw,
  Barnabas 61, 62
  William 63, 65, 125
Shembe,
  Isaiah 238, 262
  Johannes Galilee 262
  National Church 235, 238
Shepherd, R.W.H. 75
Shepstone,
  John 65
  Theophilus 133
Shibe, Simungu Bafazini 183
Shiloh 42
Sidbury 82
Sihlali, S.P. 175, 176
Sikonyela 116
Simond, Pierre 13
Slagtersnek 198
Smit, Erasmus 62, 104, 106, 108, 109, 116

Smith,
Harry 104
Machteld 27
Smuts, Jan 154, 241, 251
Smytegelt, Bernard 12
Snyman, C.J. 166
Socialism 39
Sofala 1
Soga,
A.K. 163
Tiyo 74, 131
Solomon, Saul 46
Somerset, Charles 49, 60, 77
Somerset East 49
Sophiatown 269
Sotho xx, xxi, xxii, 7
South African
Council of Churches 186, 258, 261
General Mission 264
Missionary Society 26, 45, 149
Soutpansberg 112, 138
Soweto 281
Sprigg, Gordon 163
Stellenbosch 5, 13, 14, 20, 39, 40, 63, 97, 98
St Helena 83
Stewart, James 75, 160
Steyn, M.T. 166
Stockenström 108
Stofberg, Pieter 165, 166
Stofile, William W. 173
Stoker, H.G. 228
Stormont, David 161
Stott, R. 134
Strijdom, J.G. 267
Stucki, A.C. 116
[illegible] Christian Association 263
[illegible]ociety 181
[illegible]m 39, 41
[illegible]sbyterian mission 207

Taylor 101, 104
Theopolis 49, 53, 58
Thembu National Church 167
Thom, George 67, 71
Thomson, William Ritchie 49, 55, 71
Thompson, Ralph Wardlaw 162
Thorne, John 262
Threlfall, William 61
Tile, Nehemia 209
Tilonko 179
Tomlinson
Commission 268, 269
Report 268
Tractarianism 85
Trappists 180
Treaty System 57, 62
Trichardt, Karel 95
Tsonga Presbyterian Church 207, 259
Tswana xix, xxi, xxii
Tulbagh 20
Turner 167
Turney,
H.M. 190
R.M. 192
Tutu, Mpilo Desmond 259, 261, 290
Twells 85

Uitenhage 49, 139, 188
Uitlanders 147, 150, 156, 163
Umlanjeni's War 40, 74, 86
United Congregational Church 259
of Southern Africa 59
United Party 199, 251

Valentijn 16
Van Arckel, Johan 11, 25, 32
Van der Hoff, Dirk 112, 113
Van der Lingen,
G.W.A. 99, 107
G.W.B. 166
Van der Kemp 26, 27, 44, 45, 51, 52, 207
Van der Stael, Pieter 11
Van der Stel,
Simon 4, 10
Willem Adriaan 4
Van Diemen 19
Van Hoorn 20
Van Lier,
Catharina Allegonda 27
H.R. 18, 27
Van Loon 14
Van Plettenberg, Joachim 25
Van Riebeeck, Jan 3, 6, 9, 11, 32
Van Velden, Dirk 107
Vasco da Gama 1
Venable 59
Venda xx, xxi, xxii
Verwoerd, H.F. 248, 274
Virginia 168
Voetius, Gysbert 12

Volktrust 188
Voluntary
  Bill 127, 245
  Evangelical Union 69
Voortrekkers 93
Vorster,
  B.J. 277
  J.D. 228
Vos, M.C. 18, 27

Wakkerstroom 187, 191, 214
Weavind, George 157
Weenen 103, 106, 109
Wellington 187
Wesley 60
Wesleyanism 63, 65
Wesleyan
  Missionaries 159
  Missionary Society 60, 63, 131
Wesleyans 64, 160, 206
Wesleyville 66, 127
West Jones, W. 156
Williams, Joseph 53
Wilson 59
Winburg 103, 106, 107, 110
Wirgman, Canon 152
Witwatersrand 62, 145, 146
Worcester 186
Wright, William 81
Wylant, William 11

Xaba, Jacobus 167
Xhosa xx, xxi, xxii, xxiii, 47, 65
Xuma, A.B. 222, 224

Young Men's Christian Association 263
Young Women's Christian Association 263
Youth for Christ 263

Zambezi 2
Zion
  Christian Church 215, 262
  Church 187, 188
Zionist-Apostolic Churches 215, 216
Zionist Churches 212
Zoutpansberg 161, 165
Zulu xx, xxi, xxii, 151
  A. 279
Zululand 36, 37