

OLD CHURCH HISTORY AND HERITAGE PROJECT

PROJECT COMMISSIONED BY LIHRA



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	i
ABSTRACT	iii
PREFACE	iv
GLOSSARY	vi
MAP 1: South Africa	vii
MAP 2: Limpopo Province	viii
MAP 3: Blouberg Municipality Farms	ix
MAP 4: Blouberg Municipality Farms - Enlarged	x

CHAPTER 1

THE KRANSPLAAS OLD CHURCH HERITAGE: METHODOLOGICAL AND THEORETICAL ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

1.1	Introduction and Background of the Research Problem.....	1
1.2	Problem under Investigation	1
1.3	Aim and Objectives of the Investigation.....	8
1.3.1	Aim.....	8
1.3.2	Objectives of the Investigation.....	8
1.4	Research Questions.....	9
1.4.1	Key Research Question.....	9
1.4.2	Subsidiary Research Question.....	9

	10
1.5.1 The Africanist School.....	11
1.5.2 The Liberal School.....	14
1.5.3 The Africanist History.....	17
1.5.4 A critique of the basic Assumption of Africanist History.....	21
1.5.5 The Afrocentric Theory.....	29
1.6 Research Design and Methodology.....	36
1.6.1 The Research Type.....	36
1.6.2 Construction of the Sample.....	41
1.6.3 Methods of Data Collection.....	42
1.6.4 Data Analysis.....	43
1.6.5 Ethical Considerations.....	44

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW: CHRISTIAN HERITAGE IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.1 Introduction.....	45
2.2 Ancient African and the Origins of Christianity.....	45
2.3 Christianity and the Colonial System of Imperialism.....	49
2.4 Christianity and African Response.....	54
2.5 Christianity and Apartheid.....	64
2.6 Christianity and the Future of South Africa.....	67
2.7 Conclusion.....	68

THE BAKONE OF GA-MATLALA: ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIO-CULTURAL AND POLITICAL STRUCTURES

3.1	Introduction.....	70
3.2	The World-out-look and Ideology of the Bakone.....	75
3.3	Bakone Culture in Practice.....	81

CHAPTER 4

THE ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE KRANSPLAAS OLD CHURCH IN GA-MATLALA SINCE 1936

4.1	Introduction.....	82
4.2	The Foundation of Kransplaas Old Church.....	84
4.3	The Racial and Cultural Fragmentation of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa.....	86
4.4	The Struggle for Unity and Formation of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa.....	93
4.5	Kransplaas Old Church: The Significance of its Heritage.....	96
4.5.1	Kransplaas and the Struggle against Apartheid.....	97
4.5.2	The Spiritual Dimension.....	98
4.5.3	Socio-cultural Significance.....	100
4.5.4	The Problem of African Identity.....	101
4.5.5	Architectural and Material Dimensions.....	102.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1	Conclusions.....	107
5.2	Recommendations.....	108

REFERENCES.....	111
-----------------	-----

APPENDICES.....	114
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Appendix 1: Application for Funding and Declaration of Heritage Site

Appendix 2: Deed of Sale of Kransplaas Farm

Appendix 3: Minutes of Meetings:

3.1 Meeting held on 14 November 2007

3.2 Meeting held on 21 November 2007

3.3 Meeting held on 26 November 2007

3.4 Meeting held on 04 December 2007

3.5 Meeting held on 12 December 2007

3.6 Meeting held on 12 January 2008

3.7 Meeting held on 25 January 2008

Appendix 4: List of Research Respondents and their Age

Appendix 5: Interview Schedule

FIGURES: 1a – 18: Photographs of the Kransplaas Old Church Structure
and its Furniture

1. THE KRANSPLAAS OLD CHURCH HERITAGE: METHODOLOGICAL AND THEORETICAL ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

1.1 Introduction and Background of the Research Problem.

On 29/10/2007, S.A. Rankoana, on behalf of the Research Team, signed a contract with the Limpopo Heritage Resources Authority, to conduct scientific research on Kransplaas Old Church Heritage Project at Kransplaas, Ga-Matlala in the Limpopo Province of South Africa (Maps 1- 4). Kransplaas Old Church lies at 23.48° south latitude and 28.90° east longitude in Blouberg Municipality of the Capricorn District (Map 5). The main areas of focus for the research project as spelt out in the contract agreement are as follows:-

- Oral History of the Site and Area.
- Heritage Resources in the Area / Site.
- Indigenous Knowledge Systems.
- Recommendations and Preservation.

The owners and builders of the church, The Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA), had applied to the Limpopo Heritage Resources Authority to have the Kransplaas Old Church declared a heritage site and preserved for posterity. A

the findings and recommendations thereof is

In order to properly and meaningfully appreciate the context, background and significance of this research exercise and project, it is vital to unpack briefly the whole issue regarding the preservation and protection of a people's heritage. Such an appreciation can be fully realised if the main contours of South Africa's oppressive past are carefully examined.

For more than three centuries, down to 1994, South Africa has experienced white supremacist rule. While white racial domination and segregation may be said to have started as early as 1652 with the establishment of settlement at the Cape by the Dutch East India Company, it was not until the capture of state power by the racist Broederbond controlled Afrikaner National Party in 1948 that white racial domination and segregation were openly systematised and consolidated (Moleah, 1993). The ideology of racism which animated white domination and segregation had its intellectual roots in 17th century Europe.

By the 18th Century, scholars such as Alexander and Wilhelm von Humboldt, at the University of Gottingen in Germany, had articulated a racial hierarchical system in which White Caucasians were put on the highest rung of the ladder of human development while Africans / Blacks were relegated to the lowest rung of the ladder. The colour black came to be viewed as a sign of mental and cultural inferiority. Racial ideology was used to justify the holocaust of slavery and the colonisation of people

racism came to structure the theory and practice of European rule in Africa.

The apartheid system was a form of colonial rule in which race constituted a major structuring principle. It must be remembered that, in South Africa, the white-only elections of May 26, 1948, brought the National Party into power under the leadership of Dr. D.F. Malan who was a key member of the ultra-racist Afrikaner Broederbond. Immediately, ominous signs emerged indicating the perilous and brutal racist political path South Africa would follow. Reacting to the Afrikaner nationalist surprise victory, Malan triumphantly said:

“Today, South Africa belongs to us once more. For the first time since union, South Africa is our own. May God grant that it will always remain our own (Quoted in Moleah, 1993: 408)”.

Encapsulated in this statement were violent political theory and practice which traced its roots to European history; a political theory and practice which would, with reckless abandon and ruthless fanaticism, try to completely negate the humanity of the African. The appeal to God to protect the rule and ownership of South Africa by Afrikaners in perpetuity demonstrates that Christianity, its beliefs and doctrines, can be harnessed by ruthless human beings to dehumanise other human beings contrary to the Christian message of peace, love, unity and harmony. The Christian religion as will be observed in this study was deployed by the Afrikaner rulers of South Africa to provide theological justification to apartheid. In South Africa, since 1948, was

deprived the African of the resources (land, mineral resources, labour, necessary for humane development. On land stolen or forcefully appropriated from the black majority, an Afrikaner dominated white nation was created. This white nation occupied 87 percent of South Africa's land area. Out of the remaining pieces of land, weak African ethnic nations were created, whose people would serve the function of supplying cheap migrant labour to the white nation. In fact, the African was allowed to enter the white nation only if he/she was willing to minister to the needs of white people. Apartheid law clearly provided that the African was supposed to depart from the white nation when he/she ceased to minister to the needs of the white people (Moleah, 1993). Commenting on the dehumanising impact of the apartheid system Moleah (1993: 436) had this to say:

“As in slavery, the ordinary attributes of human beings denied them, the most basic being the right to family. In the language of apartheid, African men became not human beings, but suppliers or redundant labour, their old parents, wives and children became superfluous appendages or of no use to the White man. This use-value became the sole determinant of whether the integrity of the African family would be allowed or whether the family would be broken up and be separated by hundreds of miles, sometimes thousands of miles. As in the case of chattel slavery, Africans in South Africa were not officially human beings under apartheid.”

The implication of this, for African culture and heritage was indeed grave. Deriving from racist thought and practice in the South African context was the claim about the

history and civilization among Africans. To justify the oppression and exploitation of Africans, it was claimed that Africans did not contribute anything to human civilization. Dominant thinking among white scholars and politicians was that there was nothing worth protecting and preserving in Africa. Only European cultural heritage was protected, preserved and celebrated. There was no legislation in Apartheid South Africa, which provided for an integrated and comprehensive system of protection and preservation of the diverse cultures of the diverse people of South Africa.

This denial of the humanity of the African precipitated organized resistance which culminated in the armed liberation struggle waged mainly by the African National Congress (ANC) and Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC). The intensification of this struggle and the mobilization of the masses within South Africa by the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) in the 1980s rendered the apartheid system unworkable. This precipitated the gradual dismantlement of the apartheid system.

The situation changed drastically with the collapse of apartheid and the capture of state power in 1994 by the liberation movement led by the ANC. To correct the situation of the colonialist exclusion and marginalisation of African culture and heritage, legislation which provided for the recognition, nurturing and management of the diverse heritage of the diverse people of South Africa, the government passed the National Heritage Resources Act No.25 of 1999.

l importance of a people's heritage.

Our heritage is unique and precious and cannot be renewed. It helps to define our cultural identity and therefore lies at the heart of our spiritual wellbeing and has the power to build our nation. It has the potential to affirm our diverse cultures, and in so doing shape our national character (Government Gazette, 28 April 1999).

The crux of the matter is that the heritage of the diverse people of South Africa celebrates their achievements and contributes to redressing past inequalities. In fact, without the nurturing, protection and preservation of South Africa's diverse heritage, healing, unity, reconciliation, the African renaissance, nation-building and development would be unthinkable. With the passing of the 1999 Act, individuals and groups could apply for or request the preservation and protection of their heritage. The 1999 Act provides for the creation of National and Provincial authorities tasked with the identification, assessment and management of the heritage resources of multi-cultural South Africa.

The Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa, owners of Kransplaas Old Church in Ga-Matlala, have applied to the Limpopo Heritage Resources Authority for funding as well as the declaration of their church as a heritage site. The main purpose of this research exercise is to provide the Limpopo Heritage Resources Authority with data, information and recommendations which would enable them to respond appropriately to the application.

Kransplaas Old Church, which is over seventy (70) years old, was built by the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa in 1936 (Figure 1). The church building, as the owners / applicants for funding indicate, faces decay, damage and destruction (Figures 1(a) - 4). In the words of the applicants, “Our history is going down the drain” (Appendix 1:1). From the stand point and perspective of the church authorities, leaders and the congregation, the church is an icon and an embodiment of their tangible and intangible heritage. If this heritage is not protected and preserved it might be lost forever. As with the case with other groups and institutions, the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa regard their heritage as unique, precious and non-renewable.

The key problem under investigation is whether or not the Kransplaas Old Church satisfies the requirements, spelt out in the 1999 Act mentioned earlier on, for it to be declared a heritage site which would be protected according to provisions of that Act. Subsumed under this main problem is the need to specify the grade of the site once it satisfies the criteria for declaration as a heritage site. The Act, it must be noted, distinguishes clearly between at least three categories of heritage sites:

- Grade I: Heritage resources with qualities so exceptional that they are of special national significance.
- Grade II: Heritage resources which, although forming part of the National Estate, can be considered to have special qualities which make them significant within the context of the province or region.

sources worth of conservation.

information and data have to be systematically collected, analysed and interpreted in terms of their significance historically and culturally, for the current and future generations of the people of Ga-Matlala.

1.3 Aim and Objectives of the Investigation

1.3.1 Aim

The aim of the investigation is to determine whether or not the Kransplaas Old Church in Ga-Matlala deserves to be declared a heritage site and protected in accordance with provisions of the National Heritage Resources Act No. 25 of 1999.

1.3.2 Objectives of the Investigation

- To identify and analyse the tangible and intangible heritage of the Kransplaas Old Church.
- To analyse the historical significance of the church for its owners and the wider community of Ga-Matlala.
- To analyse the cultural significance of the values and teachings of the church to the congregation and members of the wider community.
- To examine the impact of the Christian values and ideas of the church on indigenous religious and cultural knowledge.
- To determine how the Kransplaas Old Church relates to other Christian denominations at Ga-Matlala.

whether or not the church deserves to be declared

- To specify and recommend the category / grade of the site.

1.4 Research Questions

1.4.1 Key Research Question

- Does the Kransplaas Old Church in Ga-Matlala deserve to be declared a heritage site and protected in accordance with the provisions of the 1999 Act?

1.4.2 Subsidiary Research Questions

- What is the tangible and intangible heritage embedded in the Kransplaas Old Church?
- What is the historical significance of Kransplaas Old Church for its owners and the wider community?
- What are the cultural significance of the values and the teachings of church?
- What is the impact of the Christian values and ideas of the church on indigenous religion and cultural knowledge?
- What recommendations can be made with regard to the problem of the declaration of the church as a heritage site?
- To what category / grade of heritage site does the church belong?

Historical and cultural studies in Africa in general and South Africa in particular have suffered because of the pernicious influence of Eurocentric paradigms and theoretical frameworks. When Europeans conquered and colonized Africa they did not only take over the control of the land and its resources, they also took over the control of the production and dissemination of knowledge about Africans. Indigenous ways of the production and dissemination of knowledge were undermined. It must be remembered that knowledge production and dissemination are not neutral processes. Knowledge is produced and disseminated to protect and preserve particular interests and power blocks (Jenkins, 1995). Eurocentric knowledge production and dissemination were deployed specifically to establish and perpetuate the domination of Europeans over Africans. Knowledge and power are inextricably interwoven (Jenkins, 1995).

If one focuses on historical and cultural knowledge about South Africa it is possible to isolate, at least, three dominant schools: the Afrikaner, liberal and African Nationalist Schools. Three other schools, the imperialist, white settler and Marxist schools have largely been marginalised by the former three. The Marxist school, despite the existence of a Communist Party in South Africa, has failed to make headway. Repression and persecution of its practitioners under the apartheid government are responsible for its precarious existence on the margins of academic historical practice in South Africa (Ramushu, 2007).

This school attained, up to 1994, the status of the official school of South African historical and cultural studies (Smith, 1988). Even though the school had its inception in the 19th century, it was not until the interwar period that it attained maturity. When the Broederbond captured state power in 1948, the Afrikaner nationalist school became the favoured or official school in South Africa.

The guiding ideology of this school is Christian nationalism. This ideological configuration was basically a Calvinist nationalism, which developed first in the Netherlands in the early 19th century, as a reaction to the secularizing liberal revolutionary changes sweeping Dutch Society (Moleah, 1993). Calvinist nationalism which came to be known as Christian nationalism was initially articulated by Guillome van Prinsterer, who contended that the “Spirit of Revolution” inaugurated by the French Revolution (1789) threatened Christianity by denying the sovereignty of God in all aspects of life which inevitably led to atheism and anarchy. It was however, his student and disciple, Dr. Abraham Kuyper, who developed Christian nationalism into a coherent ideology and movement and made it accessible to the masses (Moleah, 1993).

According to Kuyper, “God created the cosmos as a multiple of circles of life, all subjected to his sovereignty and will, characterized by their own nature and tasks and independent of each other and sovereign in their own circles” (Moleah, 1993: 401). Thus the key concepts introduced by Kuyper which came to have influence in Afrikaner socio-historical thinking were the notions of separate and sovereign

Notions were imported into colonial South Africa, they were transmuted into the idea of separate evolution and development of peoples.

This separation, it was argued, was a divine plan which no human being was supposed to temper with. God was sovereign. These Calvinist notions in the South African colonial context were transmuted into the view that Afrikaners as Calvinists were a separate nation, chosen by God to act as guardians over others; particularly the indigenous African people who were regarded as savages. All these notions and concepts spawned a racialist / racist view of society in which Afrikaners could justify the brutalisation of Africans in the name of an alleged divine plan. According to Bloomberg (cited in Moleah, 1993: 34):

The Christian – Nationalist views God as ‘Hammabidil’, the original divider or separator of things. The key words are ‘diversity,’ ‘pluriformity,’ ‘multiformity,’ ‘variety,’ ‘distinctions,’ ‘differentiations’: a vocabulary preoccupied with differences, obvious or hidden, between the races, colours, nations, languages, and cultures. Creation’s chief hallmarks are (a) the diversity of forms, shapes and species and (b) these diversity’s divine origin and compliance with an invisible divine order, unchangeable by human kind.

This was the conceptual framework out of which the history and culture of South Africa were constructed. In Afrikaner nationalist history, all events and human experience tended to be viewed as progress or movement towards the fulfillment of that which was originally planned by God: the triumph of Afrikanerdom and the conversion of the savage African people into right less servants of the Afrikaner. Key

and society were those in which God's chosen people, the Afrikaners, were involved and which fostered the realisation of the immutable divine design: the Great Trek, Afrikaner struggle against the English and savage Africans, the creation of Boer Republics, the rise of Afrikaner nationalism and the installation of apartheid rule in South Africa. The savage African hardly featured in this type of history. If they featured at all it was as pests, vermin, cattle thieves, and latterly, terrorists and criminals who violated the divine design, and therefore had to be annihilated.

What it is important to emphasise is that the basic assumptions and ideology of Christian-Nationalism were derived from and rooted in 19th century European notions and ideas about the nature and structure of the universe. Afrikaner nationalist history was thus basically a European history; a part of European history. There is nothing African about Afrikaner nationalist history.

It is not therefore surprising that racist Broederbond inspired Christian-nationalists who ruled South Africa did not pass legislation to protect African heritage. Africans did not have any heritage worth protecting because they were savages. Apartheid South Africa celebrated white heritage, particularly that heritage in which Africans were humiliated and dehumanized - the Great Trek, Boer Wars, the Battle of Blood River etc.

This school was also derived from notions and conceptions of society which were essentially European. The school was constructed by historians employed mainly at English speaking universities such as Cape Town, Natal and Witwatersrand. It represented the Englishman's and English woman's perspective on the South African past and culture. The liberal school described African culture as backward and barbaric, thus feeding into the general racist notions which dominated the writings of Europeans on Africa (Keegan, 1979). However, unlike the Afrikaner school, whose conception of society was centred on notions of separation and exclusion of peoples, groups and classes, the liberal school tended to view society in terms of notions such as interaction and integration (Keegan, 1979). One concept which looms large in their thinking is multi-racialism, involving the idea of the interaction of races and their integration into a common society.

It must, however, be pointed out that multi-racialism as a concept did not necessarily exclude racism as such. Racism came into their thinking, particularly in the specific situation of South Africa, when and where it was contended that integration and interaction of peoples and groups had to be achieved on the basis of Western European civilization and liberal values. African culture which was viewed as illiberal, backward and barbaric had to be destroyed or transformed along the lines of an advanced European culture. The suggestion that African culture had something of value to offer was inconceivable. This is where racism stepped to the fore. Liberals could therefore support violent wars of colonial conquest of the indigenous African

British imperialist rule for an indefinite period, since it was held that the African was difficult to educate and civilise.

Initially, particularly during the inter-war period, liberal scholars did not even bother about mentioning and bringing in the African as actor into their accounts (Keegan, 1979). They, according to Keegan (1979:13), viewed South African history in terms of the battle between, "...the liberal and benevolent tendencies which they associated with metropolitan influences, and the backward looking and negrophobic tendencies of the insulated frontiers of white settlement"

Their main concern was to explain why Afrikaners were racist and established the irrational and dysfunctional system of apartheid. They found the root of this racism and apartheid exclusivist policies in the conditions of the frontier where "Boer" met "Bantu". The frontier, according to liberal historians such as Macmillan (1961), de Kiewiet (1967) and Thompson (1977) to mention only the prominent liberal historians, was characterised by isolation from centres of civilization, conflict (and sometimes cooperation) with the Bantu, and a lack of ordered government and the rule of law. The frontier conditions plus the influence of the primitive fundamentalism of Calvinism based on an unsophisticated and literal interpretation of the Old Testament, led to crude racism which culminated in the international racist scandal that was apartheid. This was the cultural theme of liberal history and everything else tended to hang on this theme. It was not until the 1960s and 1970s when African countries to the North of Limpopo River began to fight for liberation and independence, and the African National Congress and the Pan Africanist Congress

white supremacist rule that liberal scholars started to include some form of African activity in their accounts (Smith, 1988).

When liberals turned to African activity, their analyses were influenced by liberal spectacles. Following the model of the post-war (1945) African Nationalist historiographical revolution that focused on the common themes of African Nationalist politics and state-creation (Smith, 1988), their basic assumption in dealing with these themes were that acculturation, Christianisation and integration into Western modernism, based on the respect for the right of the rational individual, were progressive forces and, therefore, beneficial for the African. They viewed colonial schools and their products (the so-called Western educated elite), the missionaries and their churches, the processes of urbanization, peasantisation and formation of trade unions, as constituting the African vanguard in the process and movement towards Western Christian Civilization. Generally, liberal history did not have any respect for African ideals and values.

Liberal production of knowledge was profoundly Eurocentric. This type of history cannot, by any stretch of the imagination, be regarded as African history. Both Afrikaner and liberal history were just different versions of the same European history.

The African nationalist production of historical and cultural knowledge has a long but rough road in South Africa. Only the basic assumptions of this approach are critiqued in this subsection.

Developments in African nationalist history in South Africa must be viewed in the context of developments throughout the continent of Africa. Moleah (1993) has insisted that South Africa is Africa. Africans in South Africa are part of the great African family on the continent. The Limpopo River is merely river whose importance historically and politically has often been exaggerated by those who (whites and culturally dislocated Africans) sought to isolate South African from the rest of Africa for their own colonial and neo-colonial benefit.

Even apartheid inhumanity could not prevent South Africans from linking up with other Africans on the continent culturally, politically and intellectually. It is therefore, not surprising that the early intimations of African nationalist history, which have been arrogantly dismissed as amateur by liberal historians such as Saunders (1989) and Smith (1988), share common themes and approaches throughout the whole continent. According to Smith (1988), S.M. Molema (South Africa), Sol Plaatjie (South Africa), John Henderson Soga (South Africa), Samuel Johnson (Nigeria), Carl Reindorf (Ghana), Akiga Sai (Nigeria) and Sir Apollo Kagwa and John Nyakura (Uganda) all used oral traditions to reconstruct the past of their societies (written sources were also used where available). This history tended to eulogise the achievements of Africans. They all aimed to counter the racial arrogance of whites

societies. Soga, in particular, was self-consciously African and respected the African heritage (Kgatle, 2000). His history was aimed at showing that Africans had a rich culture and past, which it was the duty of his generation to preserve and keep in memory. Unfortunately White European influence had begun to distort and have a negative influence on his view of African reality. Thus, while praising the rich culture of the African past, he could unfortunately say: "The Kafirs will stand high when compared in all things with the uncivilized races of the world", and further that "... they have the elements out of which a noble race might be made" (quoted in Kgatle, 2000).

This was the major problem which points to one of the major weaknesses of African Nationalist history: the use of the Whiteman (European male) as a model of what it is to be human or civilized. These late 19th century and early 20th century African nationalist historians had cultural and intellectual weaknesses which will be properly analyzed when the weaknesses and the shortcomings of professional African nationalist historians are scrutinized. It may however be necessary at this stage to mention those weaknesses which were specific to these early nationalists. First, they showed too much respect for Western Civilization. Politically, their ideal was to uplift and educate blacks so that they obtain equality with the whites in a non-racial unitary state. They never thought that it was possible to dominate the political scene on their own terms as Africans. They had also come to view their own culture as inferior and tended to view it as a passing phase in the march towards civilization. The thought that it was possible to modernise on the basis of their own African culture and become inconceivable. They were therefore not hostile to Western Civilization as

l to white racism, thinking like liberals, that racism was something extraneous to Western Civilization. They had come to believe in the progressive unity of all mankind on the basis of Western values which they thought were universalisable. Early nationalists were entangled in the European trap from which it would become difficult for the African to escape to African cultural freedom.

What has been referred to as the Africanist historiographical revolution was ushered in by the process of decolonization after World War II (Temu & Swai, 1981). Africanist history which is also African nationalist history was closely tied up with the struggle of the Western educated elite to take over political power from European colonial rulers. In the process it was felt that historical and cultural research and writing had to align themselves with the requirements of the new African nations which were emerging out of direct European colonialism. History, it was suggested by frontline African nationalists such as J. Nyerere and Kwame Nkrumah, had to play its role in the process of nation building. What was required was a “usable past” in the words of a veteran Africanist historian, Ranger (1970). But what was Africanist history and in what ways was this history African nationalist?

The concept of Africanist has been a subject of heated controversy and there is as yet no consensus among historians as to what the concept entails. Lonsdale (1965) and Ranger (1970) to mention only two prominent Africanists, define Africanist history as that genre which focuses primarily on African initiative, African choice and African adaptation in the reconstruction of the African past. In general the African is viewed as an actor in the process of change and transformation. The African, in

not as a passive recipient of European influences and values, as in colonial racist history, but as an active determiner of his/her own destiny. The African past is no longer viewed as backward, barbaric, static and stagnant but as dynamic, rich with entrepreneurs, heroes and glories.

The Africanist historian in his/her writings targeted what were referred to as pernicious myths from destruction. Some of these pernicious myths were spread by non-historians like G. Hegel and H.H Johnson (Kgatile, 2000). The Trevor-Roper myth to the effect that African History was nothing but unrewarding tribal gyrations in irrelevant corners of the world is well known. The effect of all these racist myths was to portray Africa as a Dark Continent whose “heart” started to “beat” only when the superior white man landed on African soil. African nationalist historians are aware that apartheid historians knew that by controlling the history of the country they would be in a strong position to control all the minds of the inhabitants of South Africa. They would use these historical writings as powerful instruments for the maintenance of white supremacy. This is why Africanists look at all writings by Afrikaner and liberal historians with a degree of suspicion.

The Africanist historian confronted a largely skeptical world with the glories of the African past. They pointed out that Africa was both the cradle of humankind and civilization. S.B Leaky had discovered the oldest-human remains at Olduvai Gorge in East Africa. Cheikh Anta Diop recovered Egyptian Civilization for Africa (Kgatile, 2000). He confronted the world with proof of its sophisticated philosophy, natural science and medicine. Others pointed to Empires of Ghana, Mali, Songhai in West Africa as

South Africa and Zimbabwe, Mapungubwe and the Great Zimbabwe stood as icons of African initiative. In South Africa alone nation building process such as those exemplified in the Mfecane and the Bapedi, Batswana and Bavhenda were carefully unearthed and displayed as examples of the innovative initiatives of indigenous African peoples.

The colonial/ apartheid period produced nothing but heroism in the form of resistance to the imposition of colonial rule, colonial rebellions and the rise of African nationalism leading to the collapse of direct European control and the emergence of the new independent nations of Africa. Pioneers of this genre included Omer-Cooper (1969), Ngcongco (1981), Cobbing (1988, 1989) Guy (1988), and Chanaiwa (1981) to mention a few prominent names.

The most important feature about this Africanist post-colonial history is that it is essentially a particular type of history which has served the needs of the Western educated elite.

1.5.4. A Critique of the Basic Assumptions of Africanist History

There is a revealing and, in fact, cynical comment about the Africanist which was made by a playwright, Conor Cruise O'Brien, in the 1960s cited in Freud (1980:36):

Mr Bonham is what is called an Africanist...

As far as we European businessmen are concerned;

whom we employ

in order to get the better of Africans.

What comes out clearly in the comment is the role of an Africanist as an agent of European businessmen. The interests which are served by the Africanist are those of the European businessman, not Africans. The agent or Africanist is referred to as a “specialist” implying that he/she commands professional knowledge about Africans which he/she uses to literally “dupe”, “cheat”, or “take advantage of” Africans. The agent, perhaps, plays his/her role well because he/she is called an Africanist, since in the normal course of life, one would expect an Africanist to serve the interests of Africans particularly if he or she is a member of the African community. But in life, as the saying goes, “there is more than what meets the eye”. This makes a lot of sense if we scrutinise closely the context or period that gave birth to Africanist, and also his/her academic intellectual and cultural and education.

One, of course, does not want to imply that Africanism as a profession crudely, intentionally and consciously set out to “dupe” or cheat Africans in the normal course of the reconstruction of the African past. The thinking which is being pursued here is one rooted in the sociology of knowledge. The idea is that the scholar and his/her work are a product of the society and the period or time in which she/he lives. The knowledge generated derives from the society and helps to mould and push society in a particular direction. That knowledge is not neutral, but serves or de-serves particular interests and groups in society, be they political, economic and cultural (Kgatle, 2000).

ists were/are graduates of either Euro-American universities or colonial and neo-colonial universities in Africa. Maphalala (2000) argues that there are no African Universities on the African continent since all of them are rooted in European experience, values and knowledge systems. Makgoba (1998), Vilakazi (1998) and Seepe (1998) have also been concerned about the Eurocentric character of South African universities, in particular when they advocate their Africanisation. This concern is born out of the realisation that European knowledge systems promote and serve the interests of European ruling groups. Makgoba (1998:26) says:-

The dominant Eurocentric education of the past 345 years has comprehensively failed as a nation and instead has become a tool for continuing domination and racial tensions. Nobody in Europe, America and Asia argues anymore about the relationship between civilization, culture and education but only in Africa, but why?

It would appear that Africanist history produced by scholars trained in Eurocentric universities in Africa and abroad is surely a tool for continuing European domination and racial tensions. A few examples are apt: an important feature to remember is that the post-world war II period was very critical for the Western European capitalist nations. While the United States of America emerged from that war supreme, the Soviet Union had also survived and had the economic and cultural potential to spread her communist influence globally. In fact, the Cold War intensified after 1945. It was the European colonial powers who emerged from the war considerably

...militant nationalism created a crisis in the colonial system of imperialism. The process of decolonization had to be managed in a manner which would not threaten the global interests of ruling groups in both the USA and Europe. Communism had to be kept out of Africa at all costs; so also were knowledge systems which they incubated. The West provided not only institutional and physical infrastructure for the education of the African but also knowledge, methodology, theories and concepts. Of particular importance was modernisation theory which was initially conceived as anti-communist and pro-West (Webster, 1988). Modernisation theory, in its broad sense of a theory of modern western culture, profoundly influenced Africanist /African nationalist history.

The claims we have made must now be unpacked. The claims amount to the proposition that Africanist history is essentially Eurocentric and therefore inimical to the interests of Africans. What is it that makes African nationalist history Eurocentric?

Africanist historians have a theory of history; that is, of change and transformation of society over time, which is derived from European experience. Let us focus on the key Africanist themes of state creation and the rise of African nationalism. Discussion of the process of state creation is based on the modernist assumption that African society developed from simple to complex forms. Thus, for instance, the Zulu and Pedi kingdoms evolved from decentralized clan based systems via tribal conglomerations to relatively centralized states which were more complex (Kgatle 2000). This type of change has been referred to as the “enlargement of scale”. This

advancement and development. Indeed Africanist history is a celebration of progress. There has been a tendency to use evolutionary theory. If the focus is turned towards their discussion of the rise of African nationalism the same observation can be made.

African nationalism is portrayed as having developed from less complex organisations such as friendly societies, ethnic unions and clubs of the educated elite to mass-based organizations like the African National Congress and Pan-Africanist Congress whose main objective was the building of a free nation based on the freedom and equality of its people (Kgatlle 2000). This process is also cast in the framework of the “enlargement of scale” and progressive change. It may also be noted that African nationalism is regarded as modern since, in terms of its organization, objectives and aims, it is based on the formal rational principles of efficiency, predictability, and calculability which underpinned contemporaneous organizations in the West. In this connection Africanist historical theory borrows from the ideas of the theorists such as Durkheim and Weber. We have already pointed out that this theory dominated the study of societal change in the Western World in the 1960s. This date is significant because it marks the heyday of the so-called Africanist historiographical revolution (Temu and Swai 1981).

Ideologically most Africanists were nationalists (Kgatlle 2000). Nationalism is a system of ideas in which the central place is given to the nation. In most cases it is common culture and shared historical experience which define the content of a nation. There is also the tendency to view the division of humanity into nations as

ally, nationalism aspires to the creation of a nation-state. Nationalists argue that the only legitimate type of government is national self-determination. The domination of one nation by another is regarded as unnatural. The nation constitutes, it is contended, the only framework within which social, cultural, political and economic development can take place. The supreme loyalty of the overwhelming majority of the people to the nation is thus demanded (Davidson 1991).

This nationalist mindset has completely dominated the historical practice of the Africanist. History tends to be interpreted as progress towards the creation of modern states. Societies which have shown features tending towards nation-statism have received the most attention. The whole practice of dividing African societies into “state” and “stateless” springs from this mindset and also from the assumption that those who created “states” were at a higher level of development than those who were “stateless” (Dhliwayo 1996). This thinking seems to have been “imported” from nationalist history in 19th century Europe which literally worshipped the nation. The nation state had become a powerful entity in nineteenth century Europe. Most European historians tended to take its existence for granted and linked societal progress with its development. This is evident in the Africanist themes of state creation and nation-building (Dhliwayo 1996).

Apart from this there is a sense in which critics of African nationalist history make a very compelling argument about its extreme present mindedness and the resulting distortions of the African past. Austen (1976), for instance, has observed that the

nts were presented tended to be those which most closely resembled the political systems of the present". Austen elaborates:

The past of each African region came to resemble, at least rhetorically, a miniature Organisation of African Unity, defined by its various states, each of which was fully equipped with ministers, generals and ambassadors. Rulers prominent in oral traditions became "X the Great," those whose names were associated with possible political changes were labeled "reformers", succession struggles inevitably involved "coups" and enlightened leaders joined in the abolition of slavery and the slave trade. In short, an indigenous past, with its own social forms and mythologized values very different from those of Europe was now being demythologized to fit an alien model and one which was not working well in contemporary Africa (Austen 1976:56).

Here we have a situation in which an alien present distorts an indigenous African past. Here we also have a double distortion. The problem of present mindedness in historical writing is well known. It is tied up with the problem of objectivity. The debate still rages on but it would appear that most historians agree that present-mindedness cannot be completely eliminated since we are located in the present and cannot escape the present. There is therefore, inevitably, a degree of distortion in recovering the past. The case we are dealing with adds a second distortion which Austen (1976) does not sufficiently address. The issue which has to be noted in this regard is that the new African nationalism of the twentieth century and the state

African nation-state are alien imports which are not rooted in indigenous history and culture. They are British, French or Portuguese to mention only three colonial traditions. If these structures and institutions constitute the terms in which the past is constructed then there is a serious distortion. Indeed the fact that African nationalist history is a justificatory charter of the present is a major problem. Also, nationalism based on a rejection of the African past and culture cannot be regarded as a real African nationalism (Davidson 1991).

If the arguments presented so far are valid: that the modernization theory which structures Africanist theory was distilled out of European experience and serves European interests and that the nationalism which grounds African nationalist history derives from experiences and notions which are European - then the history which we thought was African turns out not to be African at all but a branch of European history which has been masquerading as African history.

If we reject Afrikaner, Liberal and Africanist history as being un-African then we are throwing the whole field of African history open particularly in South Africa where the dominant trends have been Afrikaner and Liberal. What is being suggested is that the African history of South Africa still has to be written. The question is: What approach must be used to produce African history in South Africa? It must be a history rooted in African culture, values, philosophy and weltanschauung. In other words, the only way to produce African history is to become Afrocentric.

heritage is the subject of investigation, is African and in order to understand their heritage properly Afrocentricity has to be deployed.

1.5.5 Afrocentric Theory

It is clear that the Afrikaner-nationalist, liberal and African nationalist schools are not suitable for cognising African culture and heritage. They are all basically Eurocentric, a condition which distorts and misrecognises African reality. These schools tend to legitimise and strengthen European cultural control over Africa. They cannot be used to redeem the humanity of the African. In fact they perpetuate European supremacist rule in Africa. What is actually needed is a theoretical framework which is rooted in African historical and cultural experience. African scholars have crafted the Afrocentric paradigm and theory which are rooted in African culture and values. While the works of Diop (1974) and Obenga (1981) are useful for grasping the nature of the Afrocentric paradigm and theory it is studies by Asante (2003,1999) and Mazama (2001:387-405) which unpacked clearly the substance and essence of Afrocentricity.

According to Asante (2003:3):

Afrocentricity is a mode of thought and action in which the centrality of African interests, values, and perspectives predominate. In regards to theory, it is the placing of African people in the centre of analysis of African phenomena. Thus, it is possible for anyone to master the discipline of seeking the location of Africans in a given phenomenon. In terms of action

tion to the idea that what is in the best interest of African consciousness is at the heart of ethical behaviour. Finally, Afrocentricity seeks to enshrine the idea that blackness itself is a trope of ethics. Thus to be black is to be against all forms of oppression, racism, classism, homophobia, patriarchy, child abuse, pedophilia, and white racial domination.

As a cultural configuration, Afrocentricity, according to Asante (1999:4), is characterized by five characteristics:

- An intense interest in psychological location as determined by motifs, rituals and signs.
- A commitment to finding the subject place of Africans in any social, political, economic, or religious phenomenon with implications for questions of sex, gender and class.
- A defense of African cultural elements, as historically valid in the context of art, music, and literature and a defense of a Pan-African cultural connection based on broad responses to conditions, environments, and situations over time.
- A celebration of “centeredness” and agency and a commitment to lexical refinement that eliminates pejoratives, including sexual and gender pejoratives about Africans or other people.
- A powerful imperative from historical sources to revise the collective text of African people as one in constant and consistent search for liberation and Maat.

It is clear from the above that Afrocentricity seeks to relocate the African person as agent in human history in an effort to eliminate the illusion of the fringes. According

...y necessary because for the past five centuries the Africans have been taken on or terms and have existed primarily on the periphery of Europe. As a result of this existence African have often participated in an anti-African racism born of the same Western triumphalism that has entrapped our minds in the West. Africans actually know very little about their own cultural heritage and nothing about their contribution to knowledge. Africans are decentred because they have lost their cultural footing and have become other than their own cultural and political origins. Africans are thus dislocated and disorientated. Africans are therefore experiencing a cultural crisis which they cannot overcome unless they relocate and reposition themselves in their own culture and history.

The study of African phenomena from an Afrocentric perspective has now developed into a paradigm (Mazama, 2001:387-405). Utilising the Kuhnian conceptualisation of a paradigm Mazama identifies two central aspects of a paradigm: the cognitive aspect and the structural aspect. As far as the cognitive aspect is concerned she identifies, with Eckberg and Hill (1980:117-118), three different levels: (a) the metaphysical level which involves an organising principle, a set of beliefs, (b) the sociological level, that is, a set of scientific habits, a disciplinary matrix and the shared commitment s of any disciplinary community be it in terms of methods, conceptual apparatus, techniques etc and (c) exemplars, the concrete problem solutions that students encounter from the start of their scientific education. As far as the structural arrangement of the three levels is concern it is pointed out that they are embedded within one another. The greater structure, of the metaphysical level,

within which the more restricted or higher order, structures develop. Thus a disciplinary matrix will not develop within just any arbitrary weltanschauung. An exemplar will be even further restricted. In this sense a paradigm actually locks practitioners together in a fairly rigid and highly elaborated framework of beliefs. This condition does not involve a serendipitous overlapping of elements from various perspectives. A paradigm is made up of the consensual beliefs of a self-contained community. A paradigm thus has a communal nature.

The second central aspect of a paradigm is the structural aspect- what Kuhn has referred to as the “community structure”. This, in fact, comprises a community of scholars who practise the cognitive dimension of the paradigm. A paradigm thus presupposes an integrated community of practitioners. It is with the emergence of such an integrated community that ongoing puzzle solving occurs.

But Mazama (2001:387-405) is of the view that the Kuhnian treatment of a paradigm is incomplete from an Afrocentric perspective. A complete treatment of the notion of a paradigm from an Afrocentric perspective requires the addition of a third critical aspect, the functional aspect. Since knowledge is not produced for its own sake but for the sake of African liberation a paradigm must activate African consciousness, to struggle for total liberation. A paradigm which fails to do this is useless or even harmful. Furthermore, in the light of the fundamental assumptions African culture makes about life it is necessary to add to the cognitive aspect, two levels; the affective and conative ones.

the affective, cognitive and conative aspects of the Afrocentric paradigm. First, she explores the metaphysical level. With regard to this she notes that an organizing principle which determines the perception of all reality is the centrality of the African experience for African people. This principle can never be questioned by any one claiming to be an Afrocentrist. An Afrocentrist can never question the idea of the centrality of African ideals and values but will argue about what those ideals and values are. The epistemological implications of this are far reaching and its applications are endless for Afrocentricity questions your approach to everything from reading, writing jogging to loving and working. Furthermore in as far as Afrocentricity places African ideals and values at the centre of life, Afrocentricity espouse the cosmology, aesthetics, axiology and the epistemology that characterises African culture. With Karenga (n.d) she identifies as the core characteristics of African life the following “shared orientations”: (a) the centrality of the community, (b) respect for tradition, (c) a high level of spirituality and ethical concern, (d) harmony with nature, (e) sociality of selfhood, (f) veneration of ancestors, and (g) the unity of being” (Mazama, 2001:387-405). What defines Afrocentricity is, therefore, the African social and cultural experience as the ultimate reference.

The sociological dimension deals with the establishment of a disciplinary matrix generated by a particular set of metaphysical principles and characterised by a specific conceptual apparatus, methodology and a set of theories. Some key conceptual apparati have emerged within the sociological dimension: centre/location/place, dislocation and relocation. The concept of centre occupies a critical place in the Afrocentric conceptual apparatus. It is based on the belief that

biology determine ones identity. Identity in turn determines ones place in life, both material and spiritual. Thus to practise ones culture and to apprehend oneself in a manner consistent with ones culture and history, culture and biology is to be centred. Dislocation occurs either when one lives on borrowed cultural terms or when one apprehends reality from another group's centre. Thus the concept of centre encompasses both African identity and disposition towards that identity. Dislocation is a result of one's acceptance of the European definition of reality or the closing of ones heart to ones ancestors. Afrocentric epistemology, methodology, and methods, as will be demonstrated later, are derived from and informed by the paradigm. There is consensual agreement among Afrocentric scholars regarding epistemology and methodology:

- A people's worldview determines what is identified as a problem for them and how the problem is solved. Afrocentric scholarship reflects the ontology, cosmology, axiology and aesthetics of African people. It is centred in African experience.
- The essence of life and therefore of human beings is spiritual. This, of course is not to deny the material dimension of life. A key ontological position of African metaphysics is the claim of the existence of the energy (spirit) of cosmic origin which permeates all that is; human beings, animals, plants, minerals, as well as events (Mazama, 2002:218-2324). The common energy which is shared by all confers a common essence to everything in the world and ensures a fundamental unity of all that exists. This common energy constitutes the active and dynamic principle that animates creation and can be identified as life itself (Mazama,

as well as Afrocentrically generated knowledge must reflect the primacy of the spiritual and the relationship between the physical and the spiritual.

- In keeping with Afrocentricity, the ultimate aim of knowledge production is the liberation and empowerment of Africans. Afrocentric knowledge is oriented towards the struggle against European domination over Africans and all forms of Eurocentrism.

Afrocentricity which is rooted in African experience, culture, ideals and values provides the most appropriate paradigm and theoretical framework to investigate the problem regarding the desire of the leaders of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa to have their church conferred with heritage status. This is so because the leaders and owners of the church as well as members of the congregation are African, rooted in African culture and history though signs of cultural dislocation are evident due to colonialism and apartheid rule.

1.6 Research Design and Methodology

1.6.1. The Research Type

The Research Team held a meeting in which they brainstormed the critical issue relating to research type or general approach to be deployed in order to resolve the problem under investigation. Since the research tries to unpack the significance of the heritage, for the current African Christian congregation of the Uniting Reformed

as for the future generations, the Research Team reasoned that the Afrocentric design and methodology constituted the most appropriate means to collect, analyse and interpret the data.

Aspects of the Afrocentric paradigm were discussed in the previous section. In this section only the basic elements of the paradigm actually deployed in the investigation will be described and explained. The Research Team would like to observe that in conducting this research the research ideas and practices of key Afrocentrists such as Asante (1989, 2003), Mazama (2001, 2003) and Reviere (2001) were found to be very useful.

A key principle of procedure adopted which is in line with Afrocentric research practice, was the active involvement of the congregation of Kransplaas and other members of the Kraansplaas community (the respondents) at each and every stage of the research process from the conceptualisation of the problem to the crafting of the recommendations. Control of the research process was shared between the Research Team and the respondents. There was no attempt by the Research Team to impose their ideas on the respondents. Ideally, in Afrocentric research, control of the research process passes from the researcher to the community. This principle of procedure derives from the metaphysical aspect of the Afrocentric paradigm as articulated by Mazama (2001:387-405):

The organising principle that determines the perception of all reality is the centrality of the African experience for African people. This is the one

be questioned by any person claiming to be

Asante (1990) is more specific. An Afrocentrist will not question the centrality of African ideals and values in whatever they do, including the carrying out of research. They will however argue over what those ideals and values are. In other words African ideals and values must constitute the frame of reference or the base on which research on African phenomena unfolds.

There has developed consensus within the integrated community of Afrocentrist concerning these metaphysical ideals and values. Mazama (2001:387-405) with Karenga (n.d) identifies as the core cultural African characteristics the following shared orientations (a) “the centrality of the community, (b) respect for tradition, (c) a high level of spirituality and ethical concern, (d) harmony with nature, (e) the sociality of self-hood, (f) veneration of ancestors, and (g) the unity of being. These cultural orientations constitute the ultimate reference in thought and practice in investigating African phenomena.

The Afrocentric paradigm, therefore, generates methodological principles which the Research Team adhered to and deployed in the investigation of the nature and significance of the heritage of Kraansplaas Old Church. Some of the key principles adhered to are: African ideals and values (experience) must determine all enquiry, the spiritual is important and must be given its due place, immersion in the subject is absolutely necessary, holism is a must, intuition must be relied on, not everything is

ing that is significant is material, and last but very important, knowledge generated has to be liberating; has to extricate the African from mental slavery and European cultural domination.

Reviere's (2001) perspectives on questions of objectivity, reliability and validity of research techniques, instruments and findings also guided the Research Team's investigations. Her thinking on these issues is rooted in Afrocentricity. On the Afrocentric orientation to the acquisition and interpretation of data, Reviere (2001:709-728) has this to say:

These new Afrocentric methodologies are intended to be used to investigate pertinent research questions legitimately and effectively (that is truthfully and inclusively), especially those that possess embedded assumptions about race and culture. These Afrocentric orientations to data, or Afrocentric methodologies, will push inquiry into a higher realm where the methodology and the process of knowledge construction cease to take precedence over the wellbeing of the people being researched.

Locating herself within the Afrocentric methodological framework, Reviere challenges the traditional Eurocentric criteria for evaluating research-objectivity reliability and validity. These criteria according to her are inadequate and deceptive. Objectivity (which leads to reliability and validity in the European view) cannot be achieved because researchers are always located in particular cultural configurations and intellectual traditions. What is required is honesty regarding to biographical and

the research process. According to her, “the researcher is expected to examine and to place in the foreground of the inquiry any and all subjectivities or societal baggage that would otherwise remain hidden and, hence, covertly influence the research activity (Reviere, 2001: 709-728).”

Instead of adhering to the impossible Eurocentric canon of objectivity, Reviere suggests new canons of Maat and Nommo intrinsic to African cultures as suggested by Asante (1990). Maat is the quest for justice, truth and harmony. In the context of research, it refers to the researcher exercise itself, in harmony with the research, being used in the pursuit of truth and justice. Nommo, the productive power of the word, refers to the creation of knowledge as a vehicle for the improvement of human relations. Derived from these two principles are three basic beliefs which should underpin an Afrocentric researcher’s orientation to data: (a) researchers must hold themselves responsible for uncovering hidden, subtle racist theories that may be embedded in current Eurocentric methodologies, (b) must work to legitimize the centrality of African ideals and values as a valid frame of reference for acquiring and examine data, and (c) maintain enquiry rooted in a strict interpretation of place. These three beliefs distinguish Afrocentric methodology from Eurocentric methodology. Out of these principles and beliefs Reviere (2001) has identified five canons for evaluating research within the context of the emerging Afrocentric paradigm. These canons, rendered in Swahili language are uhaki, ukweli, unjamaa, kujitoa and utilivu. By utilizing these canons, the Africentric researcher harmonizes diverse African values into a comprehensive and coherent definition of place.

of research in the experiences of the community researched. The experiences of the community members are the ultimate authority in determining what is true and therefore the final arbiter of the validity of research about their lives. This is why a strict definition of place is a critical principle of Afrocentric research. The community is necessary for the verification of claims. Banks (1992:270) has this to say with regard to truth and validity:

The mind of the intelligent scientist is not a well from which spring theory and method, whole and well formed. Rather, it is from the actual and aspired interests of a community of a people that a program of action emerges to serve and sustain their survival and welfare.

Kujitoa requires that the researcher emphasises considerations of how knowledge is structured and used over the need for dispassion and objectivity (Reviere, 2001). The researcher, in this context, rejects the need to avoid commitment. Utilivu refers to justice in the sense of creating harmonious relationships in the community which is the subject of research. Both the methods of research and the knowledge generated must have justice as their basis. Ujamaa relates to the need to maintain community. There should be no separation between the researcher and researched. Related to ujamaa (community) is uhaki or harmony. The research procedure has to be fair to all participants particularly to those being researched. Uhaki refers to the maintenance of harmonious relationships between groups.

Afrocentric understanding in conducting research.

The research process maintained a strict definition of place by framing the research process through the African ideals and values discussed above.

1.6.2. Construction of the Sample

Afrocentric research which is community oriented and based on the five canons mentioned in the previous subsection demanded non-probability sampling or purposive sampling. Only those respondents who were information rich were selected to participate in the research project. The key stake holders/ applicants were important participants in the research. These key participants, such as Rev. M.M Maphoto and Prof S.T Kgatla were instrumental to leading us to other informants.

The Research Team tried to create a sample which was relatively balanced in terms of gender and age-group. A sample of 18 information-rich participants in which 9 were women and 4 were youth was created.

1.6.3. Methods of Data Collection

The participants were divided into three focus groups for the purposes of data collection. We felt that it was necessary to separate the youth from the elders. The genders were mixed in the groups for meaningful inter-gender discussion. This arrangement was acceptable to the participants. The venues for the focus group

Church building and Rev. M.M. Maphoto's residence. The church venue was particularly ideal since it helped to trigger memories associated with the activities of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern African. In fact, the Research Team endeavored to select venues which were participant friendly to ensure that relevant data was acquired. The team ensured that the cultural protocols of the participants were fully respected.

Dialogical interviews based on a pre-constructed interview schedule made up of the key issues under investigation were conducted. Each member of the Team recorded data in a note book for subsequent processing which involved, among other things, the comparison of notes. In-depth interviews were conducted with key informants- Prof. S.T. Kgatla, Rev. M.M. Maphoto, Mrs M.M Maphoto, and Mr S Thubakgale- in order to acquire in-depth understanding of the main issues related to the significance of the Church activities as they related to heritage. The Research Team also conducted field observations to gain accurate descriptive information about the Church building and the surrounding environment.

Data was also collected through library research and the internet. Literature related to the main issues under investigation, was reviewed critically. The literature utilized in the research is listed under bibliography. The Team was also able to acquire data from primary Church documents related to their activities. The primary documents are also listed under bibliography.

Data analysis, apart from deploying the Afrocentric paradigm, took into consideration issues of accuracy, reliability and validity. In this regard, it was necessary to at least use the method of triangulation. Data obtained from various sources was compared in order to eliminate inaccuracies and distortions due to the weaknesses of human memory and carelessness. The Research Team was aware of the complex issue of objectivity. The Team decided to locate itself within the Afrocentric philosophical framework in dealing with the issue of objectivity. Afrocentricity questions the possibility of attaining objectivity in cultural work. Afrocentricity rejects the notion that cultural knowledge can be universal. All perspectives are partial in the sense of their deriving from a particular culture and history. Afrocentricity, as Asante (1989, 2003) argues, is only one among many perspectives. It does not claim universal validity.

The analysis of data thus involved the organization of themes using Afrocentricity as a tool of analysis. The analytic approach was to subject all the heritage of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa to Afrocentric evaluation. In fact the whole research and study was Afrocentric.

1.6.5. Ethical Considerations

Afrocentric ethical considerations were made in the conduct of this investigation. Some of these were mentioned in subsection 1.6.1. The consideration of fairness,



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ny, reciprocity, respect of participant dignity, confidentiality and anonymity where necessary, were taken on board in the research process. Particularly central was the ethic of respect for elders, both men and women. Harm of any kind - physical, psychological etc, was avoided. As the researchers and Africans it was our bounden duty to strictly adhere to African cultural protocols. The Research Team is confident that we behaved with dignity and enhanced the dignity of the participants. Retrospectively, the Team can say that we immersed ourselves in our culture and located ourselves within the framework of the ideals and values of the community of Kransplaas.

LITERATURE REVIEW: CHRISTIAN HERITAGE IN SOUTH AFRICA.

2.1. Introduction

In this Chapter relevant published literature is critically reviewed. The main purpose of this exercise is to grasp what scholars have understood about the broad questions of Christian heritage before focusing specifically on the heritage of the Kransplaas Old Church of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa. The review thus provides a context and backcloth for a critical investigation of the cultural and historical significance of the Kransplaas Old Church in Ga-Matlala. The critical review is based on a few relevant and critical themes: (a) Ancient African Culture and the origins of Christianity, (b) Christianity and European imperialism, (c) African response to Christianity, (d) Christianity and Socio-Economic issues, (e) Christianity and apartheid, and (f) Christianity and the future of South Africa. It must, however, be pointed out that this review is not a theological exposition but a historical and cultural analysis.

2.2. Ancient African Culture and the Origins of Christianity.

There is an expanding body of literature which has focused on the contribution of African culture, ideas and religion to the origination and development of Christianity.

controversial and regarded in orthodox Christian circles as heresy (Geoghagen, 1997). The literature we focus on in this section of the review is framed within Diopean thought and Afrocentricity, as they deal with the African origins of civilization and Africa's contribution to Western civilization (Diop, 1974; Bernal, 1987; Asante, 1998; 1999).

Diop (1974), ben Jochannan (1986), Geoghagen (1997) trace the origins and development of Judaism, Christianity and Islam to the Mystery system articulated by the Priest-Philosophers of Kemet (Ancient Egypt). The African Mystery System was an educational system of Africa (Geoghagen, 1997). It encompassed many branches of knowledge, including all the sciences, philosophy, physics, all the liberal arts and, of course religion and metaphysics. The general teachings and cosmological world view of the Egyptians eventually filtered down and provided the foundation for the later so called "Western Religions"- Judaism, Christianity and Islam. These teachings were handed down to the Essenes (a mythical Jewish sect in pre-Christian times) who were responsible for the development of many of the teaching and concepts attributed to Jesus Christ (Geoghagen, 1997). Some of the notions which were handed down to the Essenes were the Immaculate Conception, Incarnation (the word made flesh), the Resurrection, the Father-God who is identical to His own Son (and others believed to be specifically Christian) were Egyptian long before there was Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Jesus himself was an Essene (Geoghagen, 1997). Thus his teachings and doctrines were founded on the doctrines and principles of the ancient African Mystery System.

those of Horus and Osiris (two Ancient Egypt gods). For instance, Horus was born of a virginal immaculate conception), disappeared at the age 12 and reappeared at 30, died at age 33 and descended into Hell. On the third day, he rose again and ascended into heaven to sit on the right hand of his father. Horus was cut into 14 pieces; Jesus Christ was stabbed fourteen times. Horus' mother could find only one piece of him, his penis and so she built obelisks in his memory. Jesus Christ had the same phallic symbol associated with him. Their (Horus and Jesus Christ) biographical facts are the same, only the names have changed (Geoghagen, 1997).

In fact current literature reveals parts of the life of Jesus which are not generally known, and which link him with Africa and the African Mystery system. Specifically, there is a twenty-one year period of his life which is completely unaccounted for in the Gospel. According to Geoghagen (1997) this period is crucial for understanding who Jesus Christ was as well as the source, inspiration and eventual development of his message and ministry. The actual fact is that not only Jesus Christ but also John the Baptist were taught by African Egyptian priests some of the fundamentals of Egyptian Mystery System which were later adapted to become the foundations of what is now known as Christianity. Jesus Christ was an initiate of the African Mystery System and was taught at various subsidiary lodges of the Grand Lodge of Luxor in Africa.

Geoghagen (1997) also provides evidence for the claim that Jesus Christ and his mother were Black. Those who dispute this by claiming that they were Jewish did not

Jews were Black. Also important in this regard is the fact that Jesus was not the only great religious leader who was Black. Most of the ancient prophets, gods and goddess were Black. It must be remembered that Black people was the seed race of humanity. Blacks did not only occupy Africa, but their remains have been discovered from Fiji Islands to Tasmania, Melanesia, India, China, Japan, Mexico and even in Europe (Geoghagen, 1997, Diop, 1974).

This evidence points to the important fact that Christianity was originally inspired by central religious, ethical and moral values which continue to inimate African culture today (Diop, 1974, Obenga, 2004). Maat, named after an Egyptian Goddess Maat which meant truth, justice, righteousness, order, harmony, balance and reciprocity, constituted the basis of Egyptian religious, moral and ethical life. Mazama (2001) and Obenga (2004) have observed that Maat is immanent in African culture today. In fact it is manifested in the language of various ethnic groups where the term (word) has the same meaning it bore in the Ancient Egyptian language.

It must be remembered that ancient Egyptian society existed for 35 centuries and during that long span of time there was no discrimination between men and women, no human servitude or slavery, no detention in jails and no capital punishment (Obenga, 2004). This was because of Maat, the keystone of Egyptian philosophy, and indeed, religious and moral life. If the Christianity which came to Africa from Europe since the 15th century no longer exhibits or manifests Maatic principles of the original teaching of Jesus Christ, this is because Maat came to be distorted by an oppressive European culture within which it was embedded. Diop (1974) and Dove

Christianity which developed in the Northern cradle (Europe) was characterized by xenophobia, patriarchy and racism. Such a culture betrayed the original Christianity animated by Maat, and imparted to Christianity oppressive characteristics for which it has been known. Knowledge of the relationship between African values and ideals on the one hand and original Christianity as preached by Jesus Christ on the other has to be known and understood by Africans. This might lead to the transformation of Christianity along the lines of Maat. This is so because the African will come to know and realise that the Christianity which, since the sixteenth century AD has been used to justify the holocaust of slavery and colonialism and today is a pillar of European supremacy (Mazama, 2001, and also used today to “atrophy, dissolve, or steal his/her soul” (Diop, 1974) was originally a religion of peace, justice, righteousness, harmony, order and reciprocity.

This theme is very relevant for this study which investigates the African owned and established Kransplaas Old Church in Ga-Matlala. Questions will be asked as to what position the church has assumed in the struggle between Maatic principles as embedded in indigenous African culture and religion on the one hand and a European derived Christianity which has fostered racist European rule on the other?

2.3. Christianity and the Colonial System of Imperialism.

The literature which explores this theme is massive. What we can only do is to critically review some of the key issues raised which relate to our problem of heritage. Colonial domination in Africa and South Africa in particular was preceded by the

trade and slavery. The key problem in this regard is how and why Christian European notions and the Christian Church in Europe came to be entangled with the slave trade and the enslavement of Africans. In the first place, Christianity originated outside Europe in the Middle East and Jesus Christ himself was not a European and never set foot in Europe (Mazama, 2001:218-234, Dove, 1998: 515-539). Christianity came to be closely associated with Europe and European political power in 333 AD when it became the official religion of the Roman Empire on the initiative of Emperor Constantine (Mazama, 2001:218-234). Constantine had invited all Bishops to Nicea, Turkey. It was here that the Bishops agreed on a text that defined Christianity. From then on (up to the present) there was a falsification of history so that the West and Christianity came to coincide. Furthermore, the representation of Jesus Christ in European art (e.g. Michel-angelo) and thought made him the quintessence of Whiteness.

He was transformed from a Semite into a prototypical Aryan - white skin, blue eyes and blonde hair. In fact Christianity itself began to take a racial hue. Christianity came to be equated with Whiteness and racial superiority or civilization, while Blackness came to be equated with paganism, being cursed, racial inferiority and barbarism. This is how Christianity, which had actually merged with racism, came to be implicated in the construction of the European enslavement of Africans from the 15th Century onwards. It was argued then that the enslavement of Africans was a way of rescuing African souls from the clutches of the Devil, as well as a process of initiation into the blessings of European Civilization. This allowed Christian Europeans to justify the brutal violence and genocide associated with the slave trade

the America (Asante, 1998). Thus Christianity and the ideology of racial hierarchy which had been articulated by Christian academics such as Wilhelm von Humboldt and Alexander von Humboldt at the University of Gottingen in Germany were powerful forces in the construction of the slave trade and slavery and their attendant violence and brutality (Asante, 1998). It must be noted that it was scholars who were in the pay of universities and the church who provided ideological justification to the purchase and enslavement of Africans in the New World.

In the Cape Colony in South Africa the Christian Church never condemned the buying and selling of Africans and their enslavement. The Christian Church actually established slave schools in the Cape Colony (Chidester, 1992). The 1618 ruling of the Calvinist synod of Dort that any slave who was baptized should be freed was ignored in the Cape Colony by the Dutch Reformed Church (Chidester, 1992:136). No Christian in the Cape respected the 1770 ordinance which outlawed the enslavement of those who had been converted to Christianity. This ordinance was actually repealed in 1812. The abolition of slavery in the British Empire in 1834 caused consternation among Voortrekkers. In fact, the abolition of slavery was one of the reasons some Bible wielding Afrikaners left the Cape colony in what latter became known as the Great Trek. The Calvinist Voortrekkers actually believed that the abolition of slavery was a travesty of divine law (Chidester, 1992). The brutalization of slaves, most of whom were not Europeans, was not actually viewed as unchristian.

in the colonial conquest and the construction of the colonialist regime in South Africa, as elsewhere in Africa. Studies by De Kock (1996), Prozesky (1990) Hofmeyer and Pillay (1994), and Bredekamp and Ross (1995) actually show that the Christian missionaries of all denominations were active supporters of the military subjugation of the independent African states of South Africa. They acted as spies for colonial armies seeking to subjugate African Kingdoms. British, American, German, Scandinavian and Swiss missionaries argued that the power of the African rulers must be broken and completely destroyed and replaced with European rule for Christianity to take root in South Africa. This is because they could not make any headway on the Christian conversion front while Africans were still independent.

With the collapse of African sovereignty the Christian mission became a central pillar of the colonial political economy. Their investigations of the structures and institutions of African society helped colonial politicians and administrators to construct political and economic regimes which facilitated the political and economic oppression and exploitation. The educational institutions and other cultural infrastructures they established helped to transform Africans into docile and pliable servants of the European colonialist (De Kock, 1996). The new African who issued from the church and mission school tended to be a culturally dislocated and decentred individual who despised African ideals and values and worshipped European values and ideals which were superficially understood.

denominations and the practice of parceling out African territory as spheres of exclusive interest for particular denominations had the effect of setting Africans against one another. In fact this practice contributed to the development of conflictual ethnicities on the African continent (De Kock, 1996). They created standardized languages and imposed them on territories larger than areas in which they were initially spoken. This process was also consolidated by the introduction of the written word. The suppression of some African dialects and the promotion of some dialects as the standard languages, though advantageous for colonial control, led to loss of some indigenous knowledge and skills which had sustained African development for millennia (Semali & Kincheloe, 1999). This process of cultural standardization led to cultural stultification and impoverishment.

Mazama (2001) insists that Christianity, through the suppression of ancestor veneration and African deities which populated the African religious universe, contributed to the desacrilisation of African cultural space. This process undermined the depth of African spirituality through the denial of spirituality in nature and human biology. The promotion of Jesus Christ as the only path for access to the Christian God led to the Satanisation of African deities. Indeed Christianity was the most effective destroyer of African culture and the most effective instrument for the entrenchment and reproduction of European supremacy on the African continent (Mazama, 2002). Christianity is, in fact, the most important obstacle to the recentring of the African in his/her African history and culture. Christianity is an enemy of Afrocentric identity development which requires a return to African spirituality. Mazama (2001:2002) believes that the notion of an Afrocentric Christianity is

religion is the deification of a particular historical cultural experience, the idea of a universal religion is also meaningless (Asante, 2003, Mazama, 2002). The fact that Christianity has gained authenticity beyond Europe (in Africa, Asia and the Americas) is a product of imperialist force rather than its superior spiritual efficacy (Mazama, 2002)

The complete refusal of colonial white missionaries to accept the validity and value of indigenous African religion for Africans and their militant attack on African indigenous theology and ritual provides sense to the notion of Christian colonialism. Christian civilization is therefore Christian imperialism. This, in our view, provides strong justification for the necessity of an Afrocentric struggle against Christianity for the realization of a true liberation of the African.

2.4. Christianity and African Response.

Most scholars who have examined the response of Africans to the imposition of the alien Christian religion have identified two broad distinct phases of these complex phenomena (Chidester, 1992). The first phase, the pre-conquest phase, was characterized by the failure of the missions to make substantial headway in converting Africans to the alien religion. The second phase, the post-conquest phase, saw apparent increases in conversions. The first phase saw open resistance to a strange and different religion, while the second stage was characterized by subtle forms of resistance and accommodation.

out by Ani (1994), Mazama (2002), and Asante (2003), is the product of the deification of a people's culture, history and nationalism. In fact religion is an inseparable part of culture. The Christian religion, when it came to Africa, was embedded in a culture which had become imperialistic. Christianity, itself was dogmatic and continues to be relatively dogmatic in terms of its beliefs. Keller (1997) has pointed out that Christianity has always been a "missionary faith". Christians, believing that their religion enabled them to understand God's purposes more fully than members of other religious traditions can, have felt an obligation to proclaim "the good news of Jesus Christ" to all persons of all religions who would listen to their message (Keller, 1997). The book of Acts and Paul's letters are biblical testimonies to this missionary movement as is the history of the Christian church up to the present moment. The missionary movement and evangelization have been characterized by an inordinate degree of fanaticism and intolerance which has made conflict with the other cultures and religions unavoidable. This is evident, for instance, in the attitude of Joseph Smith, the founder of Christian denomination based in Utah, USA, which is called the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This man who believed himself to be a saint, proclaimed:

The Standard of Truth has been erected, no unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing, persecuting may rage, mobs may combine, armies may assemble, calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent, till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country,

every ear, till the purposes of God shall be accomplished, and the Great Jehovah shall say the work has been done.

Africans, living within a religious tradition which tolerated a variety of deities and beliefs reacted with disbelief and shock to this intolerance eventually, shocked Christians (Mills, 1995). Kiernan (1990) has observed that the Zulu monarchs, Shaka and Dingane for instance, were initially struck with amazement to the Christian account of the creation of the world. Dingane derided Christian stories about a God who lived in Heaven (Kiernan, 1990:11):

Is there one? Can he see us if he is in the air? He must be a good climber.

What most African monarchs in South Africa wanted from missionaries was knowledge of medicine, firearms, agricultural techniques, writings etc. They also wanted missionaries to act as mediators between them and foreign administrators and colonialists (Chidester 1992). It was when they started attacking critical traditional institutions such as initiation and polygamy, converting people and establishing church stations which provided refuge to people who had fallen foul of traditional law and custom that outright hostility towards Christianity erupted. African monarchs viewed mission stations as places which harbored criminals and misfits and rebels; people who had been rejected by their communities such as witches and

were homes of the culturally dislocated and disoriented. Mission stations were dens of iniquity (Kiernan, 1990).

Resistance was further funned when African Christian Converts refused to take part in critical African rituals and ceremonies such as the First Fruits Ceremony and rain making. Such rituals which were often presided over by the monarch and the ruling elite were vital forces in the cohesion and harmony of the African communities. They were vital props to the legitimacy of political power. Undermining such institutions and practices constituted a serious threat to the political survival of African political systems. This explains the hostility of Africans to Christianity.

The African ruling elite punished African Christian converts and made their lives difficult. In fact conversion to Christianity was treated as an act close to treason (Chidester, 1992). Christian missions were also often attacked because they constituted themselves as competing centres of power where people lived according to alien European regimes of truth and power. It was not uncommon for mission stations to experience physical demolition during periods of heightened conflict between European settlers and the African monarchs (De Kock, 1996). This is why missionaries militantly supported the colonial military subjugation of African states. In fact, the destruction of African sovereignty became a central element of the Christian mission: a divine duty or command. This indeed is the sense in which Christian missions were agents of the colonial system of imperialism and major pillars in the maintenance of white supremacist rule.

the establishment of the colonial state created a different political and economic terrain for the Africans. The need for survival under conditions of political and economic powerlessness led to some form of accommodation (de Kock; 1996). Landlessness due to forceful alienation of African land led to wage labour. Also extortionate taxes and other impositions necessitated migration to mines and other centres of European capitalist activity. The establishment of colonial educational institutions and similar other structures led to the gradual transformation of indigenous social and economic institutions. It appeared to most Africans that the only way to survive was to convert to Christianity and other European values (Chideater, 1992, De Kock, 1996)

Perhaps an important response to the imposition of Christianity was the emergence of the complex phenomena of independent African Churches characterised by a syncretic combination of Western Christian values and indigenous cultural/religious values.

The phenomenon of separatist churches or independent African Churches points to some ambiguity in the manner in which Africans have responded to missionary colonialism. Vilakazi's work (1986) on separatist churches provides a relatively clear understanding of the African response in this area. He views the phenomenon of these churches as constituting an African Reformation similar to the Protestant Reformation initiated by Martin Luther in 1517 when he nailed ninety five theses on a church door in Wittenberg denouncing the sale of indulgences in the Roman

ven factors which, he argues, triggered the African

Reformation.

The first centred on the frustration of African Christians with the refusal of White Church leaders to appoint Africans to positions of leadership and responsibility. This obviously stemmed from the generally racist attitudes of Whites towards Africans. There was also the desire of African Christians to assert their humanity and dignity. The White mission churches, rooted as they were in European culture, tended to view and denounce African cultures as barbaric and primitive. To whites, to be Christian meant to actively reject African ideals and values. African Christians viewed the matter differently. For instance, they did not view polygyny as contrary to the fundamental tenets of Christianity.

The rise of African nationalism was also a factor in the rise of independent churches. Nationalism sought to fight for African political and economic rights which were negated by the continuation of the European monopoly over political and economic power. There was also a general feeling among African Christians that the white leadership and the white churches in general had deviated from the original ethics of the early Christian church. The white church as it had developed in Europe and as it was brought to Africa tended to represent a bureaucratic organization run by individuals who had a lot of power, who were now remote and insensitive to the wishes of the people. This tended to alienate the ordinary members of the church who lived in rural villages and also the heavily exploited members of the working class.

There was also the theological problem on the notion of trinity in which God, the Son (Jesus Christ) and the Holy Ghost are treated as one. In African culture in which age and parenthood are critical for the stability and harmony of the family and society as a whole, it is anathema to treat the son as an equal of the father. This was disruptive of African values and ideals. Most separatist churches could not theologically treat the son, Jesus Christ, as an equal of God, the Father.

Though not always mentioned as reasons for the rise of independent churches, the question of African marriage and family structure seem, according to Vilakazi, to have been very important. White missionaries viewed marriage to more than one wife as sinful. At any rate, Christians tended to view any marriage not solemnised in the church as not being a marriage. This forced many Christians to go through two systems: one African and the other Christian European. All these factors led to dissatisfaction and frustration with the mission church.

He also alludes to the desire for financial gain among some Christians. Church business, according to him, seems to have been good/lucrative business (Vilakazi, 1977:22). The fact that the leaders and founders of separatist churches accumulated a lot of wealth, outwardly seen in palatial homes and ownership of expensive luxury cars which were normally afforded only by top company executives and successful business people, tends to support this few.

Christian Churches, and as such, are part of the problem the continent is facing. Jesus Christ still occupies a central role in these churches. Their conception of God is largely European. It is the God of the Old and New Testaments which are foreign and of Jewish origin.

Each of the churches claims that the truth of the Gospel is on its side, thus creating religious confusion and bewilderment among Christians and derisive ridicule among those who have stuck to their indigenous African religions. The complex condition of cultural confusion among South African people is at the centre of the crucial question of identity which is a central theme of this investigation. It is important to see how these complex problems unfolded in the context of the mission and struggles of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern African in Ga-Matlala.

2.5 Christianity and Apartheid.

The link between the Christian missionary activity and Apartheid in South Africa has been examined by many scholars. That the Dutch Reformed Church gave theological justification to Apartheid is a fact which is indisputable (Kingham, 1990). This review will focus on how a few scholars who deal with this issue present their arguments. The review will also tackle the problem as to what is it that is in the Christian Bible which makes it amenable to interpretations which support a misanthropic system such as apartheid.

and justify the racial separation of human beings, the superiority of some over others and the exploitation of human beings by human beings have their origins in European culture, thought and behaviour (Diop, 1974, Arui, 1994, Dove, 1998). Such ideas are anathema to African culture, thought and behaviour. If there are Africans today who subscribe to such views, this is an indication of the pernicious influence of European thought on African thought. Apartheid was a product of European thought and behaviour.

Those Christians who constructed the apartheid hierarchical system in South Africa were White leaders of the Dutch Reformed Church. They drew their ideas from Calvinism as it developed in the Netherlands. Their ideology was known as Calvinist nationalism or Christian nationalism. This nationalism was first articulated by Dutch theologian Guillame Van Prinsterer and developed into a coherent ideology and movement by Dr Abraham Kuyper. According to Kuyper, “God created the cosmos as a multiple of circles of life, all subjected to his sovereignty and will, characterized by their nature and tasks and free and independent of each other and sovereign in their own circles” (Moleah, 1993).

The key concepts introduced by Kuyper in Calvinist thought which came to have a critical influence on Dutch Reformed Church theology were the notions of separate and sovereign spheres. When these notions were imported into colonial South Africa, they were translated into the idea of separate evolution and development of peoples (Moleah, 1993). This separation, it was argued, was a divine plan which no human being was supposed to temper with. God was sovereign. His plan for human

Calvinist notions came to support the view, in the South African context, that Afrikaners as Calvinists, were a separate nation, chosen by God to act as guardians over and teachers of others, particularly indigenous African people who were regarded as savages. All these notions and concepts spawned a racist/racialist view of human society in which the leaders of the Dutch Reformed Church could justify the brutalisation of Africans in the name of a dubious divine plan.

The permanent involvement of Christianity with South Africa in the form of the DRC happened only after the Dutch East India Company established a refreshment station at the Cape in 1652. It was only in 1824 that the Cape church formed its own synod and became institutionally independent of the mother Church in Holland (Kinghorn, 1990:57). There was no doctrinal segregation in the DRC from 1652 to 1857. In actual fact Kinghorn (1990) notes that decisions taken between 1824 and 1852 at Cape Synods all clearly indicate that the DRC ignored racial differences. There could be one church only, for whites as well as for blacks.

However there existed a growing lobby, in the 19th century which advocated separation on cultural grounds; for instance, on the grounds of differences in language. Gradually some church leaders began to advocate for the idea of one church but separate services and separate congregations for the “members from the heathen” (Kinghorn, 1990:58). The situation drastically changed at the synod of 1857 where it was decided that Christians from heathendom would henceforth “enjoy their Christian privileges in a separate building” (Cited in Kinghorn, 1990:58).

...a concession to some (whites) who were weak and had expressed the need for separate church buildings. The separation was not viewed as permanent. It was only in the 1930s that separation along racial lines began to be justified doctrinally. The rise of Afrikaner nationalism was critical in the doctrinalisation and theological justification of the separation of races and the notion of the superiority of White nations compared to non-European nations. Afrikaner nationalism influenced DRC theologians to find justification for apartheid in Calvinism and the scriptures.

After 1948, with the Broederbond controlled National Party take-over of state power, the leaders of the DRC openly and theologically supported apartheid. This is evident in a report entitled, *Racial and national apartheid in the Bible*, produced at the 1948 Transvaal Synod (Kinghorn, 1990:64). This report was the first exegetical attempt by the DRC to point out that the separation of 1857 was in accordance with the scripture. The 1948 Document pointed out that while the scriptures posed the “unity of humanity” they also “recorded and presupposed the division of humanity in races and nations as a deed of God”. Apartheid was, therefore, sanctioned by God, and God graced all those who supported apartheid. At another congress in 1950 in Bloemfontein which was attended by delegates from all over South Africa all embracing resolutions were adopted dealing with religion, economics, education, social welfare, politics etc (Kinghorn, 1990:65). Separation of national groups was to be effected in all these areas since God has created each nation in its own national intuition and soul. Such nations were to develop separately in order to eliminate friction and conflict.

cept of race was substituted by “group” and “volk”. In fact after the 1950 conference the word “race” was removed from all church documents. Also important is the fact the conference visualised the creation of independent Black nations in future. The theorisation of apartheid as separate development of nations in accordance with their intuition and souls tended to hide the reality of the domination of whites over Blacks. This theoretically abstract definition of apartheid did not remove the racial oppression felt by most Blacks in South Africa (Kinghorn, 1990). This abstract definition which amounted to fiction allowed the DRC to announce that they did not believe in racism. Indeed, in 1986 the DRC condemned racism. But the abstract, fictitious definition of separate development of groups was at odds with the reality of racial laws passed by the apartheid regime and supported by the leadership of the DRC since the 1950s.

Kinghorn’s (1990) verdict on this critical issue is that the DRC allowed the apartheid world-view to be expressed in theological language, thereby legitimizing it and, through doctrinalisation since the 1950s “canonising it in terms of the all-embracing conceptual framework of the diversity of nations”

The critical issue of whether there was anything specific (pronouncements etc) in the Bible which could be interpreted as supporting the racial separation and discrimination of races is also dealt with extensively. With regard to this issue Prozesky (1990) observes that the Christian doctrine itself does not unequivocally condemn inequality and violent practices. He notes that some portions of the Holy Scriptures seem to sanction violence. He makes reference to the stories of “...

Amalakites or the people of Jericho and taking possession of their promised land, supposedly under God's guidance" (Prozesky, 1990:130). He also cited the story in Exodus where it is said, to free the people of Israel from slavery; God sanctioned the killing of the Egyptian first-born "some of whom must have been children" (Prozesky, 1990:131). Such stories, he contends, are not likely to foster attitudes of universal love and egalitarian benevolence. If God himself could sanction violence in the manner described in these Biblical stories why should Christians in South Africa think and act differently, Prozesky (1990) ruminates. Prozesky's argument seems to be that the Bible is interpenetrated with serious contradictions. The Bible speaks of the need for universal love with one side of the mouth and, violence and war with the other side. The Bible is fork-tongued, which causes confusion with regard to its central message. The message of universal love embedded in the story of the Good Samaritan is contradicted by the war and the subjugation of the Amalakites and the stealing of their land. The Biblical message of universal love cannot be reconciled with God's sanctioning of the slaughter and murder of Egyptian first-born.

However, with this problematic existence of contradictory messages, Prozesky (1990) advocates a sophisticated reading of the Bible in which some of these violent practices and messages are regarded as inevitable products of the weaknesses of the human interpretations of the Biblical vision. What is required, according to him, is the relocation of the central vision of universal love at the centre of the scripture. In this way the threat of deicide and the decline of Christianity in South Africa would

g to him, could become the basis of a new South Africa in which peace, love and justice prevail.

2.6. Christianity and the Future of South Africa.

This important theme is anticipated in the previous subsection. De-Gruchy (1990) writing in the 1990s was concerned about the role the church could play in a democratic society. He believes that the church has the potential, by virtue of the fact that 70 percent of South Africans - Black and White - belong to the church, and that it commands immense resources, to bring about real democracy and not sectional democracy as practiced by the apartheid National Party. However his main concern is not mere democracy, but good governance by which he means rule based on justice and equity (De Gruchy, 1990:224)

To bring this about, he believes that the church must relocate itself in the prophetic ministry of the early Hebrew prophets who were concerned with the fate of the poor, weak and oppressed in society. The focus of the ministry in uplifting the poor and oppressed is the essence of what it means to pursue justice and equity (De Gruchy, 1990:225).

He observes that the church's *raison d'être* is to proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom of God. This, according to him is the contribution the church can make to the well-being of any society. The Church, in order to fulfill its prophetic ministry, must exercise its freedom which is granted to it by God and not by the state. Directly

is awareness of human infallibility and sin and the need to develop those moral and ethical values in which democracy and good governance may prevail. What he does not deal with is why, despite the church's existence in the world for millennia, the central vision of universal love embedded in the scripture has not taken root. Prozesky (1990) talks about the inevitable human failure and mistakes in the interpretation of the scriptures. If such mistakes are inevitable, does this mean that the central vision of universal love is beyond the grasp and achievement of humanity? These are key questions, it would seem, that the future church must grapple with. Tutu (1990) deals with this issue. He criticises the disunity and division which characterised the history of South Africa. He sees a South Africa in which a P.W. Botha worked in the same government with a Nelson Mandela. This, he says, is because race which has been a central consideration in the politics of apartheid is not the central attribute of the human being, but that the human being was created in the image of God (Tutu, 1990:239). He believes that the Christian Church would show that "we have nothing to fear from our differences, our uniqueness as people of different backgrounds, cultural, ethnic, political, religious, and social" (Tutu, 1990:239). Unity could actually arise from the cultural diversity of South Africa. Separation and discrimination based on the fact of diversity is against the teachings of Christianity. Christianity requires unity because all human beings despite differences in culture were created in the image of God.

The literature which has been reviewed here demonstrates that the Christian heritage is diverse. The link between Christianity and colonialism, apartheid and imperialism is troubling for most Christians. However, certain Christian denominations have opposed this link and have called it a betrayal of the central Christian vision of universal love and unity of mankind based on the fact that we are all created in the image of God. The review enables us to assess the position of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa on the question of the African struggle for justice with equity or put differently, the continuing struggle for good governance. Could it be that the solution for this perennial problem is for Africans to relocate themselves in their own history and culture, guided by Maat- justice, righteousness, order, balance, reciprocity, harmony and truth? As Asante (1989; 1999; 2003) has said, the only way Africans can achieve liberation and freedom is to be guided by these indigenous African ideals and values which are germane to African history and culture.

THE BAKONE OF GA-MATLALA: ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIO-CULTURAL AND POLITICAL STRUCTURES.

3.1. Introduction

The Kransplaas Old Church, built in 1936, was not established on virgin soil. Our informants have observed that the farm on which the church was erected was bought from the Transvaal Consolidated Land and Exploration Company by sixty-three members of the Bakone polity under Kgoši Sekgoadi Matlala of Ga-Matlala (vide: Appendix 2). In order to properly understand the impact of the church on the lives and culture of the Bakone and the Bakone's response to the activities of the church it is necessary, inter alia, to grasp the origins of the Bakone and the development of their socio-cultural and political structures. This will enable us to evaluate the significance of the tangible and intangible heritage of the Church.

Anthropologists and historians are not very certain about the origins of the Bakone - when they settled in their current area and the details of the development and nature of their socio-cultural and political structures. However, broad and general trends can be identified which allow us to have some general picture of these phenomena.

On the origins of the Bakone of Ga-Matlala, it is necessary to point out that the existing primary and secondary sources do not exist in a form and nature which leads to certainty with respect to this problem. Oral traditions, archaeological evidence and

...e thin, intermittent and sometimes contradictory. The origins of the Bakone seem, at present, to be lost in obscurity as is the case with other Bantu speaking groups in Southern Africa. Despite the limitation of sources it is possible to reconstruct some general picture of the origins of the Bakone of Ga-Matlala.

However, before we focus specifically on the Bakone, it is necessary to briefly describe, but broadly, Bantu migrations into Southern Africa. On these migrations, there is still heated debate so that there is no consensus with regard to such questions as the original home of the Bantu, when and why they migrated, how they migrated, the routes taken, and finally, when exactly they became settled in their current geographical areas.

One historiographical contention, though, has been laid to rest. This relates to the European colonialist claim that the Bantu arrived as migrants on the highveld of what came to be known as the Transvaal at about the same time that Jan van Riebeeck settled at the Cape (Davidson, 1991). This has been completely demolished. Davidson (1991:3) has this to say about the issues:-

What is now South Africa, in short, embarked upon Iron Age (i.e Bantu type) of community development some twelve to thirteen centuries before the arrival there of the earliest European settlers and invaders.

The Bantu had reached south of the Zambezi by the first century AD and by the fourth century had reached the south-most tip of the African continent. Jan Vansina (1968) who has done a lot of research on the Bantu in the Central Africa region insists that the original home of the Bantu was the territory south of the middle Benue River Valley in what is today Eastern Nigeria. When the migrations began, roughly before the fifth century B.C, some of the Bantu remained in the original home and are known as the Tiv speaking people (Halpern & Gourou, 1983). This area was well-watered, fertile, and rich in fauna and flora because it lies on the fringes of the forest and savanna.

The basic elements and features of the Bantu African civilization - philosophy, religion, kinship-based political and social structures, and economies based on fishing, agriculture, pastoralism and crafts - were already evident before migration. Vansina (1968) however, insists that iron technology was first acquired by those Bantu groups who migrated to the East African Rift Valley - Great Lakes area. This technology had been introduced into the area from Meroe which had developed it by the fifth century B.C. What is particularly important with regard to this civilization is that it was a synthesis of ideas and values deriving from Black Pharaonic Egypt, Nubia, North and West Africa. This civilization, however, has not been static. The exigencies of migration and the need to adapt to new physical and social environments led to changes so that by the time the Bantu reached the southern tip of the continent a lot of changes had been lost and had to be rediscovered anew. This is so particularly with aspects of material culture and the natural and biological sciences. Research is still needed in this area. What is almost certain is that the

ophico-religious weltanschauung survived as is evidenced in commonalities in the entire continent.

It is now generally agreed that the migration was not a single mass movement but a gradual process of infiltration of new areas. With the build-up of population in the original home and the acquisition of ferrous technology, migration could not be avoided. Ferrous technology made it easier for the Bantu to adapt to varied ecological environments and to defend their communities from enemies (Mc Ewan, 1979). There is no agreement as to the actual routes taken. A simplified version is available in Davenport (1991). This work draws from scholars such as Phillipson and Thomas Huffman. Phillipson posited two routes: the eastern stream moved to the Great Lakes area between 200 and 100 BC and then to “Zambia” and Mozambique. The Western stream infiltrated to “Angola”. A subsequent concentration in the “Katanga” area dispersed in about 100 AD northwards into ‘Uganda’ ‘Kenya’, ‘Tanzania’ and then southwards to ‘Mozambique’. Part of this stream found its way to the ‘Transvaal’ via Zimbabwe. Huffman has modified this picture. He has suggested that the western stream moved south-east to ‘Zambia,’ eastern ‘Transvaal’ to ‘Zululand’ and ‘Natal’ coasts where they were established by 550 AD. Meanwhile, the eastern stream moved down the coast between 250 and 350 AD. Then a central stream moved into Mashonaland: Huffman is still working on this problem. It may take a few more years before we are clear about the detailed pattern of movement. What we know is that the Sotho, Tswana, Xhosa, Zulu, Venda and Tsonga are later evolutions from the original migration streams and all share a

It is now necessary to find out what evidence is available on the origins and subsequent development of the Bakone.

The Bakone, who are the subject of this study, belong to the Sotho language family. This group had four sub-groups such as the Eastern Sotho, the North Eastern Sotho, the Central Sotho and the Northern Sotho. The Bakone, together with the Baborwa, Batlokwa to mention a few, belong to the Northern Sotho.

The Bakone have traditions which link them with the Great Lakes area mentioned earlier on. They may have been part of the central migration stream mentioned above (Phaladi, 2000). At one time they settled in what are now Zambia, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. They were at one time called the Bakgalaka, presumably because of their association with the Bakgalaka of Zimbabwe. After crossing the Zambezi, they are said to have settled in what came to be known as the Transvaal in Zoutpansberg (Phaladi, 2000). In the Transvaal, they adopted “Tlhantlhagane” as one of their totems because of their admiration of the bird with this name, but Kone remained their principal totem (Phaladi, 2000). From the Zoutpansberg they settled at the following places respectively: North-West Swaziland at a place called Bokone or Ngonini in Swazi, Sekhukhune land (Bapedi), at Bokone near Lydenburg, Tshutshwe on a farm Rooiwater and finally they made Bokgalaka (Ga-Maake on Eastern side of Haenertsburg) their residence.

There was a major split at Ga-Maake in about 1700 led by Matlhalabole which contributed to the dispersal to various parts of what became the Northern Transvaal.

before they could settle at Ga-Matlala-a-Thaba-Bogosi in what became Seshego District. They settled at Molautsi (Blood River) in the present day Mashashane area, Khorolwane near Marabastad, Thabatshweu (next to Tubatse River) and Polokwane. Several splinter groups dispersed and settled in various places in the region.

3.2. The World-outlook and Ideology of the Bakone.

According to our informants before the penetration of Colonial culture the world-outlook of the Bakone was centered on distinct cosmogonic and theologic views. As in the case with other Bantu groups, the world-outlook of the Bakone was mythological. Their political and legal views had not yet separated off from the single syncretic outlook and the order of things on earth was regarded as an integral part of the cosmic order, divine in its origin and content. This is very clear from our respondents. The earthly life of the Bakone, their political, social and legal institutions, relations with gods and with one another were treated within the framework and on the basis of the mythological version of the origin of the cosmos (cosmology) and the gods (theogony). It must be pointed out that these cosmogonic and theogonic views, as will be fleshed out later, were not simple narrations of events that had occurred in the past, but were an obligatory outlook upheld by Bakone custom and tradition as one of the foundations of life. Myths of origins, as a particular form of historical knowledge were at the same time a source of mandatory rules and standards of behaviour which were to be strictly observed at present and in the future. Myth served as a model of human relations sanctified by divine authority.

is of a historical ideology unopposed by any rival notions, conceptions and doctrines.

According to our informants the Bakone consciousness was dominated by the idea of the divine, supra-human origin of the existing social and political order. The cosmos was created by Modimo and its orderliness and certain natural events like rain, hailstorms, whirlwinds, lightning, famine, draught, death, sickness and health were a manifestation of divine presence and power. Bogosĩ, which, in the cosmology of the Bakone, is the centre, linchpin and font of legislative, executive and judicial wisdom and practice, was mandated by Modimo. The same applies to custom and practice relating to marriage, family and the land-tenure system which were basically communal in character.

It must be noted that the Bakone religio-mythological consciousness law had not yet turned into a body of legal norms of behaviour as in the current Western European sense. It existed as one of the aspects of the private, social and public life that was in conformity with tradition and public sentiment. The laws of the Bakone reflected the mythological, religious, ethical and other views closely knitted together and were generally traced to the divine primary source. They were ascribed directly to Modimo and badimo (ancestral spirits). They would for instance say: Modimo said a human being must not be killed (murdered). Since this legal order and earthly rules were conceived as an integral part of cosmic order, all thought of violation of traditional rules, rites and norms by individuals were believed to pose serious threat to celestial and terrestrial harmony and to be fraught with cosmic catastrophe.

considering of the people's conduct and the various religious taboos like incest that were to be observed on pain of severe punishment both in this and other worlds. Furthermore, since the existing order and laws were regarded as divine and sacred, their violation was tantamount to challenging Modimo and Badimo.

3.3. Bakone Culture in Practice.

The discussion will focus only on practice as it relates to bogoši, law and the economy. In Bakone cultural belief and practice there was no division between spiritual and secular authority. The authority of the kgoši lied in his/her spiritual power as the only link between the people and their gods, his ancestral spirits (badimo). The kgoši interceded with the ancestors as the supreme and only supernatural power which could ensure the prosperity and well-being of the people. He was thanked for rain, good crops and for general prosperity. As a ruler his credentials were mystical, unique and irreplaceable.

The kgoši was the father of the people. The term 'father' in this context described the reciprocal relations between the kgoši and people. The whole political structure was an extension, through various phases, from the family through the kgoro to the ethnic group (polity) of paternal authority with its attendant rights, duties and privileges. As these are exercised in the family so does the kgoši at the level of the polity. He watched over and attended to the problems of all. He also helped the aged, the disabled and the poor.

the polity of Ga-Matlala he was informed of all occurrences of importance and was advised of births and deaths. He also had to give his permission for marriages and burials. Crucial also was his control of economic activities, the distribution of land, sowing and harvesting of crops. He was the commander in chief of the army and the main protector of his people from external aggression.

As legislator and supreme judge he had to protect or punish and provide justice to the people. His court was the ultimate court of appeal. Central also was his function of determination of the policy of the polity, and the initiation and promulgation of new laws. In this area, as in others, he had access to the traditional acumen and wisdom of key men (bakgomana) of the polity, as well as his badimo.

The law of the Bakone was largely a manifestation of their belief system. Their attitude to their laws was very similar to their attitude towards religion. Law was mainly to maintain the proper order as defined in their cosmology and theogony. Thus legal norms were largely based on religious concepts. A few examples will illustrate the Bakone conception and attitude towards their law.

The Bakone, as mentioned above, regard their law as supernatural and as divine in origin. They believed that their law was created simultaneously with the creation of human beings by Modimo. Laws were normally expressed like this: Modimo o rile, motho ga a bolawe - God said: man must not be killed. All laws were therefore laws

act is still the case with the Bakone today as our

respondents observe.

The breaking of the law was treated as if it were sin or a challenge against Modimo and badimo. A good example was prostitution. Prostitution was both sin against Modimo and Badimo and a wrong (molato) against society. So also were murder and theft. All these called for supernatural and legal sanctions. Even if these were tried in court and compensation awarded to the complainant, the matter did not end there. Spiritual cleansing was still necessary for societal order and harmony to be re-established. It must be remembered that a wrong committed did not just affect the individual involved. It affected the community in that it disturbed the natural order mandated by Modimo at the beginning of the world.

The Bakone economy was based on access to land. Land, it must also be noted, was not treated simply as an economic asset. Attached to the land and its various properties such as hills, mountains, rivers, valleys and vegetation was a spiritual dimension. At one level, land was Modimo's creation and a gift to humankind for use in order to enhance the well-being and prosperity of human kind. At another level land was spiritual not simply because of the ancestral graves and some hills and forests which were regarded as sacred, but mainly because land was the source of life. Its very existence was a manifestation of Modimo's presence and eternal power.

It was therefore inconceivable that an individual could either own land privately or sell land for private gain. Land was held in trust by the kgoši for the benefit of all the

ralists. The kgoši and his subordinates distributed land to all adult males without exception. The produce of the land belonged to the producer. The kgoši was entitled only to a small part of this produce (in kind) as tribute. The tribute was not treated as a tax or some imposition but as recognition of his royalty and its acceptance.

It has been suggested by colonialists that this communal ownership of the land was the cause of the backwardness and poverty of the Africans. On the contrary, communal ownership ensured that every family had the means of production and that in times of drought and famine everyone had access to means of survival through a process of redistribution of the tribute which went to the kgoši. It is also not true that communalism bred conservatism which was a block to process and development. Actually, the world-outlook of the Bakone which placed a premium on the need for the enhancement of human well-being and prosperity on earth tended to galvanize whole communities to expand production while preserving the land resources which were a gift from Modimo. Indeed, sustainable development which has suddenly become fashionable today was part of the tradition of the Bakone who produced to satisfy their current needs without jeopardising the ability of future generations to satisfy theirs. The natural environment was treated as God-given and thus, it was wrong and sinful to misuse and abuse it.

The pre-colonial world-outlook of the Bakone did not have the binary oppositions which are common in the European world-view (vide Williams, 1985). Though this weltanschauung was interpenetrated with religion, it was anthropocentric. All the

arrangements were tailored towards the creation of harmony, both between humans, and between humans and nature. The Bakone regarded Modimo was not the original 'divider' of the Afrikaner and White Dutch Reformed Church, but the original harmonizer and unifier. The primary concern of both the spiritual world and the human world was human fulfillment.

3.4 Conclusion

The Bakone of Ga-Matlala, before European invasion and conquest, had developed into a distinct people, but sharing aspects of a common culture with other Bantu-speaking peoples. This culture and civilization was however to be undermined considerably, with the imposition of colonial rule. However, a lot of Bakone culture has survived as we shall see in the chapters following.

THE ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE KRANSPLAAS OLD CHURCH IN GATLALA SINCE 1936.

4.1. Introduction

To properly appreciate the legacy and heritage of the Kransplaas Old Church in Gatlala it is necessary to critically examine the identity of the founders of the church as well as the racial and cultural divisions which emerged in the Dutch Reformed Church since the 19th century. The basis and the basic assumptions which underpinned these divisions will be unpacked. The Afrocentric paradigm is used to assess the legacy and heritage of Kransplaas Old Church.

Built at Kransplaas in 1936, the Kransplaas Old Church is the oldest and first church structure to be built on this private farm. Over and above it is the first rectangular structure in the farm and to have a corrugated iron roof. The iron roof came as a replacement of an old and original grass thatched roof in 1952 (Fig.1). The roof was thatched with *Hyperhenia hirta* (morulela).

The church is situated within the premises covering 2 500m². The structure itself measures 15,25m by 5,91m, with a total area of 90,128m² (Fig. 1). The doors and door frames are made of planks (Fig. 3) and were fixed in 1952. The main entrance door (Fig. 3) is bigger than the other 2 entrance doors, commonly used by the church

calculations of the dimensions of the doors). The steel window frames that differ in sizes and forms are 8 in number. Windows on the northern side of the structure are broader as compared to the narrow ones in the south.

The roof structure consists of an almost dilapidated rafters and very old corrugated irons, most of which are corroded by rust (Figs.5 & 3). The walls are 4m high as opposed to the standard 7m walls of nowadays (Fig.1). These white-washed walls are also characterized by big cracks which is indicative of its old age (Fig. 4). The absence of the “crown” at the centre of the roof and the porous corrugated irons cause serious roof leakage (Fig.1).

A trapezoid pulpit built with stones and cement (Fig.6) is situated at the centre of the south and north parallel walls of the church structure towards the wall in the west (the significance of the pulpit and its position have been highlighted in the text). In addition to the pulpit there is an iron-leg table with plank surface (Fig. 7). The chair is very old with a decayed cushion (Fig.7). Only the vestiges of the cushion are perceivable.

The 17 benches have replaced the “stoep” along side the inner walls. The 2 big ones (Fig. 3) were used by the male congregants whereas the children sat on the smaller ones. Women brought with them traditional mats (Magogwa) to sit on.

ed. What remains currently are the visible marks of the collapsed wall (Fig.2). About 2-3m from the decayed vestry is the remains of the fallen parsonage marked by stones which had formed part of the wall (Fig. 10). The stage is lowly evaluated as can be seen in Figure 8.

The church is surrounded by a slack rusty barbed wire fence. On the north west corner of the fence stands a big *Sclerocarya birrea* (morula tree). Three shrubs of *Acacia* species are found along the fence in the south. The third species on the west of the southern fence stands adjacent to the collapsed personage. The first species among the tree is of great significance because that is where the church bell is hung. Approximately a metre away from outside the church premises in the eastern fence stand another big *Sclerocarya birrea* which provides good shade for cars and members of the congregation on Sundays. Sunday school and youth classes are usually held under the tree during hot days.

The church is embellished with flowers planted in circles on either side of the main entrance (as in fig.1 b). The other flowers have been obscured by the Mercedes Benz packed near the entrance. Stones placed along side the outer walls give the church its natural touch (Fig.1a). The old gate is made of steel and it closes with difficulty.

4.2. The Foundation of Kransplaas Old Church.

The Kransplaas Old Church is located eighty kilometers west of Polokwane city on a farm-Kransplaas No. 975 (Maps 3 & 4) whose purchase and deed of sale were

The farm was purchased for £4, 533-4-0 from the Transvaal Consolidated Land and Exploration Company Ltd by sixty-three (63) members of the Bakone polity under the then Kgosi Sekgoadi Matlala of Ga-Matlala. The deed of sale clearly provides that "... the exclusive right of occupation and use of the farm should be reserved, in perpetuity for the benefit of the (63) members of the tribe, their respective heirs, executors, administrators or assigns". The farm measures 3, 296 morgan, 522 square roods (2,691.6 ha), (Appendix 2). The use and ownership of the farm does not include the right to exploit minerals which might be discovered on the farm. All rights to minerals were transferred/passed to the Minister of Native Affairs for the Union of South Africa which held the rights in trust for the Matlala polity as a whole. Our informants have observed that the farm was bought by the sixty three (63) members of the Matlala polity in order to free themselves from traditional obligations and strictures associated with the traditional land tenure system. It must be remembered that the traditional land tenure system was communal. Land could not be bought or sold like a commodity and private ownership of land was anathema. The fact that sixty-three African people could buy and own land in this manner was an indication of the extent to which European colonial notions of land tenure had entrenched themselves in African society. For the buyers, the purchase of the farm was a form of social and economic empowerment. Communal values were beginning to erode. The conquest of the Northern Transvaal ensured this erosion with catastrophic consequences for African people. Our informants have indicated that rural landlessness is a major problem in the area; a problem which they attribute to private ownership of land.

Church was completed in 1936, long before the completion of the purchase. The original building was constructed out of mud and thatch. This structure was not durable and had to be replaced in 1952 with brick walls, cement and corrugated irons (Fig. 1). The church was established by converts of the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa; a missionary organization, whose efforts were directed towards the conversion of Africans to Christianity. The Dutch Reformed Church in Africa would later unite with the Dutch Reformed Mission Church- the Sendingkerk-which worked amongst coloureds or people of mixed race on 14 April, 1994. The unity of these two missionary church bodies gave birth to the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA). The Kransplaas Old Church, since this 1994 unity, became one of the churches belonging to URCSA family. The processes and negotiations leading to the unity have been crucial for our appreciation of the legacy and heritage of Kransplaas Old Church. This will be examined below. What needs to be examined at this stage is the racial and cultural fragmentation of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa.

4.3. The Racial and Cultural Fragmentation of the DRC in South Africa.

Information collected from our informants as well as the published literature we have reviewed/traced the racial and cultural fragmentation of the Dutch Reformed Church to the second half of the 19th century. Before the 1857 synod of the Dutch Reformed Church there was no open racial separation or discrimination in the DRC (Chidester, 1992). However white members of the DRC congregations in the Cape were already lobbying church leaders for the separation of races in places of worship citing

ences. When in 1857 the Cape synod of the Dutch Reformed Church introduced a policy of separation based on race, they rationalised this separation as an accommodation to “the weakness of some” members of the white congregations. However, what started as a concession to cultural differences mutated in the late 19th century and early 20th century into full-blown racialisation of the DRC.

Racism however became pronounced early when the Voortrekkers breached the frontiers of the Cape in the 1830's and established Boer Republics in the interior (the Orange Free State and the Transvaal) in what Afrikaner nationalist historians have called the Great Trek. The search for Calvinist doctrinal purity had organisational and racial consequences in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. In 1853, the Voortreker leader of the new South African Republic initiated a separation from the Cape church that resulted in the formation of a new church, the Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk. The church operated as a state church (Chidester, 1992). It was completely white. In 1859, a new church; the Gereformde Kerk, also known as the Doppe Church, was formed as a strict, orthodox Calvinist church. It was very conservative and was exclusively white. All these developments led to the development of racial attitudes which blossomed into the institutionalization of racism in the church and state in South Africa. The Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk was the first to write the racial exclusion of Blacks into their constitution. Racial separation in the DRC became institutionalized with the intensification missionary activities which targeted the Coloureds, Africans and the Indians in South Africa.

Mission Church - the Sendingkerk - for the so-called Coloureds or people of mixed racial backgrounds was established. Although dependent, financially on the “mother” DRC, the Sendingkerk was established as a separate church. In 1910 when Blacks made ten per cent (10%) of the DRC membership, the first synod of a separate church for Blacks, the NGK in Africa/Dutch Reformed Church in Africa met in the Orange Free State. This racial fragmentation continued in the twentieth century so that four separate Dutch Reformed Churches: the White Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk, the Coloured Sendingkerk, the Black Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (NGK in Africa) and the Indian Reformed Church were eventually established. The three latter churches, Christianised “daughter churches” continued to depend financially on the “mother” white Dutch Reformed Church.

The racially impenetrable walls separating the churches were consolidated with the rise of a racist Afrikaner nationalism and the purposeful theological justification of apartheid as the 20th century unfolded. A new generation of DRC clergy gradually took over the control of the Mission Committee which had been created to deal with the spread of Christianity among Coloureds, Blacks and Indians. In fact, in 1935, they succeeded in getting the Federal Council of the Dutch Reformed Church to adopt a new racial policy. According to the new policy racial mixing was supposed to be avoided through keeping White and Black separate in church and state. The Dutch Reformed Church became committed to promoting “social differentiation and spiritual and cultural segregation” (Chidester, 1992). Church leaders argued in the 1950s that according to the policy of apartheid they ought to minister separately to

The 1974 Federal Synod of the DRC was explicit: "The existence of separate Dutch Reformed Church affiliations for the various population groups is recognized as being in accordance with the plurality of church affiliation described in the Bible (Du Toit, 1984:623). What took place in 1857 and 1881 - regarded as provisional arrangements, became matters of religious doctrine in the theology of the Dutch Reformed Church.

It would however be a falsification of history and a distortion of the truth to reduce this to mere elaborations of religious thought based on some verses in the Bible. The theological justification of apartheid was rooted in the nationalistic desire of the Afrikaner elites to consolidate and perpetuate Afrikaner political and economic power in the face of the intensifying challenge of African nationalism in South Africa. Religion turned out to be the cheapest but most effective tool to neutralise the opposition of the oppressed. The Broederbond deployed religion to silence and destabilise African opposition to white supremacist rule and racial domination.

Samora Moises Machel, the late revolutionary president of the People's Republic of Mozambique, had a hard-headed view of the relationship between religion and politics. Referring to the role of the Roman Catholic Church in the brutal perpetuation of Portuguese fascist rule in Mozambique, he said:

"The Church is an organisation, a political organisation. When policy could not be justified in any other way, they invented religion to frighten people." (Quoted in Christie, 1988:14)

is the mere ranting of an angry liberation fighter or communist. Karl Marx is also credited with the view, popular amongst Marxist radical revolutionaries, that religion is the opiate of the oppressed. Both Machel and Marx were penetrating and profound thinkers who played critical roles in shaping the societies in which they lived. Their views emerged in the bitter struggle against the oppression of human being by human being. Their struggle was essentially political and both fashioned specific political theories of struggle which were appropriate for the needs of their societies. It is not accidental that both had to confront the difficult issue of the sources, roots and purposes of religion. Both came to see religion as a powerful force in people's lives and thinking and also a serious complicating factor in the struggle against oppression.

The fundamental position that these two revolutionaries take is that religion is a human product; a human "invention" rooted in the real life or material conditions and struggles of a people. In other words religion does not have supernatural sources and roots. Both tend to view religion as playing, in the final analysis, a negative role in the struggle for human freedom. In this sense the religion of the Dutch Reformed Church was a product of the real life circumstances but also a phenomenon which played a negative role in the struggle for freedom in South Africa. According to this view belief in a Sovereign God, tends to misrecognise the sources of our humanity as humans; the sources of our travails and triumphs and our strengths and weaknesses.

Reformed Church attributes power to a transcendent, omniscient and omnipotent God who is the source of truth and salvation. This truth is celestial and not terrestrial. The existence of this truth has nothing to do with the human condition, for human reason itself is incapable of encompassing and fully comprehending God's truth. What is required for human beings to gain salvation is faith in the omniscience and omnipotence of God.

From the Christian perspective, the impossibility of fully comprehending God comes out clearly in the writings of Augustine, the Bishop of Hippo, Carthage, born in 345 AD. He has been called "father of orthodoxy"; the "supreme authority"; "the greatest among the fathers of the church," and the theologian whose formulas maintain up to today their supremacy in the whole extent of Western Christianity (Smith, 1956:100). He is recognised as such by both Protestants and Catholics. According to Smith (1956:225) Augustine's view was that "our only exact knowledge of God consists in knowing how little we actually know about Him."

Now if God is truth and human beings do not hold their fate in their hands as Christianity claims, then to act against God and to disbelieve the basic tenets of one's religion is to invite eternal punishment, perhaps either in hell or purgatory. Furthermore, since the church is the custodian of truth on earth, what the church commands can only be disobeyed at the risk of eternal suffering in the hereafter. This, presumably, was what Samora Machel's point about the invention of "a God to frighten people". If, according to the DRC theologians, God was the original divider of

against apartheid was a sin, the commission of which leads one to hell.

The DRC invented their religion to frighten the Coloureds, Blacks and Indians in South Africa. This is the notorious legacy which the White DRC has bequeathed to Blacks, Indians and Coloureds. This is the legacy which Africans who want freedom have had to contend with in South Africa. It is appropriate to end this subsection with a quote from Kinghorn (1990:78):

“The real contribution of the DRC as an institution was not at the level of activism. The real contribution lies in the fact that the DRC had allowed the apartheid world-view to be expressed in theological language, thereby legitimising it and eventually, through the process of doctrinalisation since 1950, canonising it in terms of the all-embracing conceptual framework of the diversity of nations.”

This is the legacy which the builders and owners of Kransplaas Church who were African, but had become members of the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa. The key question and conundrum for them was: how do they respond to a theology of separation which inferiorises and dehumanises them?

4.4 The Struggle for Unity and Formation of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa

M M Maphoto and Prof. S T Kgatla, have played crucial roles in the struggle against racism and apartheid in the Dutch Reformed Church. The two were present on the day of the unification of the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa and Dutch Reformed Mission Church on the 14th of April 1994. They were central in articulating the theology of unity, reconciliation and justice in the family of the Dutch Reformed Churches in South Africa. They continue to struggle for unity, reconciliation and justice in the Dutch Reformed Church. According to them unity is not complete yet. Unity, according to them, is a process. This is the main reason why they named their Church in 1994, the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa. This unity is not yet complete because the White and Indian branches of the church remain outside and continue to resist unity with the Black and Coloured branches.

According to the minutes of the inaugural meeting and first general synod of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa held on 14 April 1994 held at Belhar:

”Through numerous tussles and laborious negotiations over many years by the grace of God, the belief grew within the DRMC and the DRCA that we must make this unification amongst us visible (Handelinge, 14 tot 17 April 1994).”

The district beacons in the birth process of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa were the following:

- of the DRMC in 1966 that the family of the Dutch Reformed Church, should be united in one synodical structure;
- b) The decision by the synod of the DRCA in 1975 to seek for the unification with family of the Dutch Reformed Church;
 - c) The strong pleas made at the 1987 synod of the DRMC for church unity from grassroots level up;
 - d) The important Unity Conference of March 1989 in which the whole delegation of the Dutch Reformed Church family declared as follows:

We solemnly promise to work towards
One unified, non-racial, reformed church
In southern and central Africa (Handelinge,
14 tot 17 April 1994).

The struggle for unity has therefore been grueling. An important landmark in this process which also marked what may be regarded a revolutionary theological response to the apartheid system and its theological or Biblical justification by the white leaders of the Dutch Reformed Church was the Belhar Confession of 1986. In the Confession of Belhar the leaders of the Uniting churches declared as follows:

“That this unity of the people of God will be visible in various ways and that it should be active so that we experience, seek and practise fellowship; and that we are compelled to give ourselves with bliss to the

salvation of each other (Handelinge, 14 tot 17 April,

1994).

At Belhar in 1986, apartheid was declared as unbiblical and therefore constituted a status confessionis. It must be remembered that the Belhar Confession followed on the heels of other previous condemnations of the apartheid system, the 1982 Ottawa (Canada) Conference of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches being perhaps the most important. At this conference apartheid was declared a sin and a heresy. The conference also declared that Christians should not aid the oppressor. This was a blow to the White Dutch Reformed church and the Apartheid regime whose racist social engineering was responsible for the divisions and the brutalisation of Africans, Coloured and Indians.

A major obstacle to unity was created by different concepts of unity. The White DRC believed in invisible and spiritual unity and not in practical unity advocated by the DRMC and the DRMA. The latter two believed in unity in practice demonstrated in the fellowship of people in one church as the body of Christ. Organisationally, the DRMC and DRCA wanted organic unity where the separate churches vanish and one church emerges. The White church and the Indian Church favoured a federal structure which conferred autonomy to the separate racially based churches. According to our informants it is these different conceptions and models of unity, plus the rejection of the 1986 Belhar Confession's declaration of Apartheid a sin and heresy by the White DRC which have rendered the unity of the Dutch Reformed Church family difficult to attain. In the view of our informants the loss of political

ment elites with the coming to power of the African National Congress in 1994 has forced this racist elite to withdraw into the DRC. With the vast financial and material resources they have, they hope to use religion as a basis for Afrikaner unity and survival in an increasingly democratising South Africa.

What is clear from the discussion of the unification process in this subsection is the crucial role the Uniting Reformed Church has played in the demise of the apartheid system. The theological delegitimisation of the apartheid system is perhaps one of the most important forces which have mobilised South Africans to fight for freedom. The Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa was a key component of the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa. Our informants reveal that the family of churches which now comprise the Uniting Reformed Churches in Southern Africa actively supported the liberation struggle as waged by the African National Congress, the Pan Africanist Congress and the United Democratic Front. Their teaching has, from the very beginning, undermined the theological basis of apartheid.

4.5 Kransplaas Old Church: The Significance of its Heritage

The Kransplaas Old Church has a significant legacy and heritage which derives from culture and history. This subsection tries to unpack this significance in order to provide the basis for the conclusions and the recommendations which come at the end of this report.

gle against Apartheid.

It is not necessary to repeat what has been discussed earlier on with regard to the role of the Uniting Reformed Church in the struggle for freedom. The Rev. M. M Maphoto as well as Prof. S.T Kgatla has observed that once the decision to struggle for unity and against apartheid had penetrated the body of the DRCA the ministers of religion at Kransplaas used the pulpit to conscientise the congregation to join in the liberation of South Africa against the sin and heresy of apartheid. Of particular importance was the decision of the DRCA not to break away from the DRC but to fight against apartheid from within the church. This decision, as our informants believe, was the most effective strategy to directly confront the Calvinist ideologues of apartheid. One way of doing this was to tease out the democratic impulses of the Calvinist religion.

Calvinism certainly had democratic and humane impulses within it which were fundamentally opposed to apartheid (De Gruchy, 1990). Calvin's successor, the indomitable Theodore Beza, had insisted that people were not created for the sake of rulers, but on the contrary, the rulers for the sake of the people. Such democratic impulses plus the values of harmony and unity which underpinned the African culture of the Kransplaas Congregation, combined/merged into a formidable political culture which gradually undermined the legitimacy of the theology of separate development.

Furthermore, the theology of unity, reconciliation and justice which constituted the basis of the call for the rejection of apartheid fed into the complex of ideas which powered African nationalism in South Africa. It must be remembered that most of

South Africa were mission inspired. The life of Jesus Christ and the Jewish prophets of the Old Testament were exemplary models for most African nationalists. Rev M.M Maphoto who has been associated with Kransplaas Old Church from youth may actually be regarded as a nationalist since he subscribed to the ideology of nationalism and the ideas of the Freedom Charter. He, in fact, has been a member of the African National Congress as well as a minister of religion at Kransplaas Old Church. Kransplaas Old Church has been and continues to be a symbol in the struggle against apartheid and its remnants.

This role is evident in the seminars and workshops on Steve Biko which the URCSA conducts from time to time for its clergy. The Black consciousness ideas of Biko conscientise the clergy and members of the congregation of the need for unity and pride as Africans. What they teach is that being African is not opposed to a Christian way of life.

4.5.2 The Spiritual Dimension

Studies by Geoghagen (1997), Diop (1974; 1990) and Obenga (2004) have observed that the values, ethics and morality which underpin the major religions of the world, including Christianity, derive much of their articulation from the Mystery System of Ancient Black Pharaonic Egypt of the Nile Valley. Theological notions such as Jesus Christ as the Messiah, the creation of the universe by God, Trinity, resurrection etc were initially articulated by the priest philosophers of Black Ancient

end of Osiris who is said to have arisen from the dead and ascended to heaven is replicated in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The ten commandments of Prophet Moses of the Jews closely resemble the 42 Negative confessions found in the Egyptian Book of the Dead. Obenga (2004) in particular, observes that the principles of Maat (an Egyptian Goddess of truth) such as truth, righteousness, balance, order, reciprocity which informed the ethics and morality of living, relations among humans, and relations between humans and nature have been incorporated in the various world religions including Christianity, Judaism and Islam. These also originated deep in Africa which is the cradle of humanity. Indeed the spirit of ubuntu which constitutes the ethical and moral basis of African culture and world-out-look closely resembles the Maatic principles mentioned earlier on.

Our informants have noted that they respect those elements of African-spirituality and religion which do not conflict with the teachings of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa. The creation of the world by Modimo (God), the need for truth, righteousness, peace, harmony, communal sharing, protection of the weak, the poor and vulnerable and the divine and spiritual nature of humanity are some of the values the URCSA would like to incorporate. However, there are some aspects of African spirituality such as ancestor veneration and belief in the power of sangomas which the URCSA rejects.

relevant for our discussion is the church's preparedness to open a meaningful dialogue with African spirituality, a process which the mother DRC rejected *ab initio*. Our respondents are aware that for Christianity to prosper in Africa there is need for reconciliation with some of the fundamental values and ethical principles which underpin ubuntu. Our key respondents such as Rev M.M Maphoto and Prof S.T Kgatla insist that they are African and therefore believe that positive African values must be recognised and incorporated in the practice of the church.

4.5.3 Socio-cultural Significance

The Church has no doubt had a tremendous impact on social and cultural institutions of the African Community in which it is located. Marriage and the institution of the family have been molded in accordance with Christian values. Of particular relevance is the undermining of polygyny and gender relations which undermine the equal dignity and respect of the female. Our informants were particularly critical about the African traditional treatment of females based on the notion of patriarchy. Christian principles seem to have dispensed with the notion that it is right for men to marry many wives and the female abuse which is associated with this practice. Teachings of the URCSA have transformed gender relations in a manner and form which create the equal dignity of husband and wife. Ironically, this process re-establishes the type of relations which existed between males and females in Ancient African civilizations such as Egypt, Nubia and Kush (Dove, 1998).

...active in tackling societal/social problems such as crime, drug and alcohol abuse, teenage pregnancy, and street children. Such problems which have emerged as a result of the negative consequences of colonialism and apartheid feature prominently in the church's youth-and-adult development programmes. In fact our informants point out that the Kransplaas Old Church has acted as a cultural centre contributing to social development. Some of the critical functions it has served include the following: Primary school, community meetings (kgoro), interdenominational conferences, and nodal point for smaller congregations, workshops for health service and mobile clinics, and meetings of non-governmental organizations engaged in various developmental activities in Ga-Matlala.

It would appear from the data we have collected that the Kransplaas Old Church has developed, over time, into a growth point for the people of Ga-Matlala. This role is likely to be enhanced if the church is protected as a heritage site.

4.5.4 The Problem of African Identity

The Congregation of Kransplaas Old Church is mainly African. Even though the first pastors/ Ministers were White missionaries they could not completely wipe out the African cultural identity of the community. It may be noted that even the construction of the church building was based on the African Communal spirit of letšema. The Church was collectively built by its owners and their descendents who are African. We have noted, in our discussion of the history of the URCSA, that African values

in the struggle against the sin of apartheid. The separation, division and segregation of people were opposed and rejected on the basis, not only of the western democratic impulses of Calvinism, but also of the humaneness which underpinned indigenous African ethical principles. The Belhar Confession was also animated by the African Cultural values which abhorred the racial oppression and discrimination of the African. The anti-colonialism of the URCSA was partly rooted in the culture and history of the African people.

4.5.5 Architectural and Material Dimensions

The art and science of designing the creation of the church building have synthesized skills and techniques deriving from European and African culture imparting what may term hibridity to the building. It appears that the façade differs completely from the modern DRC building. This is reminiscent of the Old DRC structures which are no longer extant.

Dimensions of the Kransplaas Old Church and church property

Church measurements

- a. Length = 15, 25m
- b. Breadth = 5, 09m
- c. Area = 155, 245m²

Pulpit

- a. Length = 1,42m
- b. Height = 1,30 m

breadth = 1,08m

d. volume = 1.993 m²

Table

a. Height = 0,70m

b. Length = 1,53m

c. Width = 0,92m

d. Area = 1,071m²

Cabinet

a. Height = 0,93m

b. Width = 0,36m

c. Length = 1,00m

d. Volume = 0,335m³

Chair

a. Height = 0,86m

Stage

a. Length = 5,91m

b. Breadth= 2,46m

c. Height = 0,27m

d. Area = L x B x 2

= 29,08m²

Benches

a. Length = 1,3m

b. Height = 0,46m



width = 0,23m

Total number of benches = 17

Small stoep

- a. Length = 11,60m
- b. Height = 0,13m
- c. Width = 0,16m
- d. Volume = 0,241m³

Big stoep

There are two big two stoeps situated on either sided of the entrance door.

Northern stoep:

- a. Height = 0,47m
- b. Length = 2,29m
- c. Width = 0,37m
- d. Volume = 0,398m³

Southern stoep:

- a. Height = 0,47m
- b. Length = 2,42m
- c. Width = 0,37m
- d. Volume = 0,421m³

Narrow windows

- a. Height = 1,2m
- b. Width = 0,48m
- c. Area = 0,576m²

Total number of windows = 4

$$\begin{aligned}\text{area} &= 0,576 \times 4\text{m}^2 \\ &= 2,304\text{m}^2\end{aligned}$$

Broad windows

- a. Height = 0,90m
- b. Width = 0,95m
- c. Area = 0,855m²

Number of windows = 4

$$\text{Total area} = 3,42\text{m}^2$$

$$\text{Total area of church windows} = 5,724 \text{ m}^2$$

Main entrance door

- a. Height = 2,007m
- b. Breadth = 1,07m
- c. Area = 2,15 m²

Pastor's entrance door

- a. height = 2,0m
- b. Breadth = 0,76m
- c. Area = 1,52m² x 2 doors
= 3,04m²

$$\text{Total area of doors} = 5,19\text{m}^2$$

Church premises

- a. Length = 50m
- b. Breadth = 50m

$$ea = 2500m^2$$

Metal bell

- a. Height = 0,52m
- b. Width = 0,10m

Cylindrical metal

- a. Length = 0,21m
- b. Radius = 0,03m
- c. Volume = $l r^2$ (i.e. $3,14 \times r^2 \times l$)

$$= 3,14 \times r^2 \times l m^2$$

$$= 3,14 \times 0,03^2 \times l m^2$$

$$= 0,002826m^3$$

All these material dimensions and objects are worth of protection as symbols of the tangible heritage which has entered and enriched African culture. Some of these objects represent critical material synthesis between African culture and Western culture and can be preserved as manifestations of the technological and skill transformations undergone by the Christian African converts of the people of Ga-Matlala.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

The Kransplaas Old Church is now over 72 years old. It is quite historical in the sense that it was the first rectangular structure in Kransplaas. Although the original structure built in 1936 was replaced in 1952 by the current structure, this structure was erected on the original foundation. On the basis of age alone the church fulfills the criteria required for declaration as heritage site.

Its history is very significant in terms of the socio-cultural and identity development outlined in our analysis. Of particular importance is the church's role in the struggle against the sin of apartheid. Rev Maphoto whose family is directly associated with the building of the Church had links with the liberation movement, contributing towards the final demise of apartheid. The Church has emerged as a symbol and icon in the struggle for freedom in the area.

The Church Community/ Congregation has over the years developed a tradition of mutual help, self-reliance and collective responsibility. This tradition can be used as a foundation for developing skills needed to manage a heritage site. The retired Rev Maphoto and his team constitute an asset which can be employed to drive the process of social and rural development in this area.

as a community library, training centre for home-based care givers, community hall and preschool indicate that the applicants are aware of the potential for development embedded in the site. The Church is only 80 Kilometers from Polokwane. The Church is accessible. Part of the road is tarred. The stretch which is not tarred can easily be tarred if other departments of government can step in. The potential for further growth exists if other departments step in. The Congregation is willing to hand over the site to LIHRA for development. The site can at least fall into the category of a Grade II heritage site if the grading suggested in the 1999 Act is taken into account.

The church has produced outstanding personalities who can be relied upon to galvanise the development of the site.

- Rev R.M Kgatla who translated the church hymn book.
- Rev M.M Maphoto who was moderator of the Northern Transvaal synod. He has also been central in the process of the unification of the DRC family. Was also central in the struggle against the sin of apartheid.
- Mr. S.R Mashao who was Secretary and later President of the Christian Men's Ministry.
- Prof S.T Kgatla who is currently moderator of the Northern Transvaal Synod of URCSA is well versed in the history of the Church and is willing to help to make the project a success.

- The plot on which the church is built must be fenced to protect the building from vandalism and any other destructive elements.
- Preservation of the church's architectural integrity as the sole surviving structure from the commemoration period, 1652-1991.
- Development of detailed maps and sketch plans and interpretation of signage of the old church building.
- Erection of a new church building- compile a business plan to model the cost of the new church building.
- Establishment of a well-resourced mission library for the Uniting Reformed Church of Southern Africa in the community.
- Promotion of the heritage site through tourism.
- Building of a Hall and Conference Centre for the church and allied Christian missions.
- Establishment of Health Centre for campaigns against pandemics such as HIV/AIDS and TB.
- Tarring of the road to the heritage site.
- Plan for the annual heritage celebration activities.
- Protection and preservation of the old church as Grade II heritage site.
- Funding:



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1. European Union
2. National Heritage Resources Fund
3. World Heritage Fund
4. South African Council of Churches
5. World Heritage Convention
6. Dutch Reformed Church
7. Wealth Philanthropists in the Province

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Appendix 1: Application for Funding and Declaration of Heritage Site

Appendix 2: Deed of Sale of Kransplaas Farm

Appendix 3: Minutes of Meetings

3.1 Meeting held on 14 November 2007

3.2 Meeting held on 21 November 2007

3.3 Meeting held on 26 November 2007

3.4 Meeting held on 04 December 2007

3.5 Meeting held on 12 December 2007

3.6 Meeting held on 11 January 2008

3.7 Meeting held on 25 January 2008

Appendix 4: List of Research Respondents and their Age

Appendix 5: Interview Schedule

FIGURES: 1a – 18: Photographs of the Kransplaas Old Church Structure
and its Furniture



Figure 17 The brown benches have replaced the "steeple" seats. Females occupy benches on the north and males sit on the south



Figure 16 Mr. T. Setuma, the Research Team and some members of the community present in the meeting listening attentively to Rev. Maphoto (not in the picture) answering a question.



Figure 15 Members of the Research Team, Church and community posing for a photo.



Figure 14 Mrs. M. Marokane and Mr. P. Makama attended their primary education at the Krans-plaas Old Church



Figure 13 A cylindrical piece of metal is used to ring the bell. The metal created the curves on the bell. The metal is kept inside the church to ensure its safety



Figure 12 Side-view of the church bell with curved edges resulting from ages of ringing it.



Figure 11 A short piece of a metal railway hanged with a barbed wire on a truncated live branch of Acacia species is used as a bell for the church



Figure 10 The stones were part of the fallen walls of the parsonage



Figure 9 The green wooden cabinet made by the late Rev W. K. K. Maphoto is used to store church property like books and documents. It was made in the early 50s.

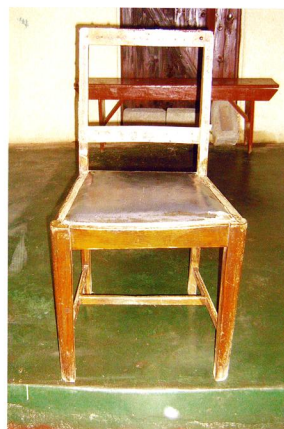


Figure 8 The wooden chair and wooden door at the background have been in the church since 1952.



Figure 7 The wooden table with steel legs is one of the old property of the church. The floor has been painted red with a green centie lane



Figure 6 The pulpit made of stones and plastered with cement in 1952.



Figure 5 The rafters and corrugated iron form part of the roof refurbished in 1952

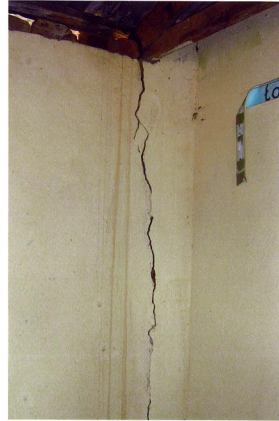


Figure 4 The cracks on the walls of the church are indicative of its old age



Figure 3 The grey entrance door fixed in 1952 is still in use. Red elevated mud seats on either sides of the door were used before the introduction of benches.



Figure 2 Visible wall marks and the slab foundation of the dilapidated covering.



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Figure 1(b) Northern view of the church. windows differ in shape and size from those in the south.



Figure 1(a) The current Kransplaas Old Church re-built in 1952 stands on the foundation of the original structure that was built in 1936. This is the southern view of the church



Figure 18 Males occupy benches on the south