

Chapter 1

Introduction

‘True, the Cape is where it all started, Natal where the major spear-washing battles were fought, but it is to the Transvaal one must return to understand the soul of South Africa’ (Tingay, Johnson 1978:11). The year 1852 marks the beginning of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR) as an independent republic north of the Vaal River with the signing of the Sand River Convention. The republic’s existence ended in 1902 when Britain won the Second Anglo-Boer War and South Africa became part of the British Empire.

The study focuses on the influence the Christian based education, taught to the children settling with their parents in the ZAR, had on the forming of the Afrikaner nation. Those children were adults twenty years later when the peaceful, rustic and bankrupt young country was plunged into turmoil by the discovery of gold. Those people, receiving only the ‘poor’ education from their parents and temporary teachers, were the leaders when the ZAR, on two separate occasions, took on the British Empire. They were the old people dying in the concentration camps, urging the children to stay true to God and His Word and to treasure the education that would mould them into a great nation although they were scorned at and were, for many years, the object of laughter in the eyes of the people from the so-called ‘educated’ world (Dreyer 1977:40, Jeppe 1906:75).

The education given to the children during the time of the existence of the ZAR set the stage for the Afrikaners to stand up after the War. They deemed it a calling

of the Lord, never to give up faith or principles and education once again played a major part in building the country with a constitution based on Christianity (Hallencreutz 1988:5) and a school system known as Christian National Education that set the path of development of the nation and country for the next century to come.

The colourful political development of South Africa casts a shadow over many other aspects of the country's history. The influence of Christian religion as a means of education is one of the aspects in the development of the Afrikaner nation that was taken for granted for a very long time. Unchallenged, Christian based education seemed to be of no interest to the Church historians who rather fixed their focus on the internal struggles between the different Church denominations and prominent Church leaders. Scholars in education who did research on the history of education focussed on the development of education rather than on the religion underlining it.

A fresh look at the history and influence of Christian education from the perspective of the Church historian can be fruitful in the country's current circumstances. Uncertainty about the future of Christian based education in public schools brought this part of the character and history of the Afrikaner nation under the attention of the South African public. Knowing where the roots of this aspect of life are and what enormous influence Christian education played in the history and development of the nation, the Afrikaners of today may once again understand the importance of their heritage.

The thesis combines the material from several other disciplines in order to try to establish the margin of influence the Christian based education had on the forming of the people living in the ZAR.

1.1 Area of investigation

History in general and Church history in particular, forms part of the cultural heritage of every nation and everyone has the right to be proud of his or her heritage.

Too often, however, in the South African milieu, a specific interpretation of history and Church history is seen as the only truth and is absolutised. The result is that the areas of history and Church history become 'battlefields.' The work that is done in these fields more often than not, becomes weapons to attack those of different opinion. To my mind, the aim of writing Church history is not to attack but to learn from the past and to use those lessons learned to help and guide the thoughts and decisions of people in present situations that are either related to or the result of peoples' actions in the past. When new frames of thinking are discovered or eternal truths once again recognised and implemented into the work and life of the Church and believers, Church history is on track.

'The present has deep roots in the past and the present cannot be understood without a knowledge of the past' (Lucey 1958:3). Believers turn to the Church for guidance and answers when they are confronted with religious issues. It is the task of the Church historian to take these issues to history and try to find answers and

guidelines on how to address it. Uncertain times, both on national and international level, tend to bring the meaning and usefulness of studying history and Church history to the surface (Oliver 1993:887). The task of the modern South African Church historian is to look differently at the past in order to be able to present a fresh perspective for the present generation in order to make a positive impact on the future.

At present, South African believers are anxious to get guidance, support and answers regarding religious education. Unfortunately, the Christian Church is in no position to provide immediate answers to these urgent questions. The reason being on the one hand, the fact that the Church, not having to express itself regarding such matters in the past, acts insecure and hesitant and on the other hand, the fact that there are no relevant South African historical based sources to use as the foundation and backing of verdicts.

The educational material used, the books read, the spiritual songs sung and religious influences on the people leaving the Cape during the Great Trek have all been investigated and documented. There are well researched works on issues like the development of the educational system in the ZAR, the political development in the region, leadership in the ZAR, as well as the histories of the different Churches and congregations, towns and schools. However, one of the main issues, the influence of the specific Christian based education that the children in the ZAR received, and the influence of this education in their lives as well as on the development of the Afrikaner nation living in the ZAR and the influence on the

country itself, is not spelled out although certain aspects are touched in the above-mentioned works.

History itself can be to blame for the fact that the issue of Christian based education is referred to but not seen as the ultimate influence on the shaping of the nation. South Africans were used to Christian education in schools, as this was the law and practice coming from the earliest settlement at the Cape and was transferred to the ZAR by the Afrikaners.

The policy followed by the government of the ZAR regarding religion was very strict. Hallencreutz comments: 'At another extreme a Government can deliberately subordinate its policies under specific truth claims, norms, and structures of one specific religious tradition and, thus, opt for more confessional policies' (Hallencreutz 1988:2). Both religion and education were placed under the supervision of the *Volksraad* (People's Council) by the constitution of 1857 (Keyter 1968:226).

Along with the development of the country, the educational system, based on the Christianity and the Bible, developed into the system of Christian National Education in all schools in all parts of the country.

Education was no big issue. Issues like leadership struggles, politics, the economy and the fights between the members of the different Churches were all seen as more important to the making of history than the contents and influence of the

educational system. Other, more dramatic issues like the discovery of gold and diamonds and the wars against the British Empire fascinated writers and historians. Education, and specifically Christian based education, was taken for granted by generation after generation because it was never seriously challenged.

Only at the end of the 20th century did this begin to change in South Africa. The democratically elected government of 1994 brought rapid changes to the *status quo* and suddenly religion and education became focal points.

Before the 1994 elections, a kind of confessional policy of religion was practised in South Africa ‘which superimposes the Government under one predominant religious tradition and defines its political objectives on the basis of religious and socio-ethical claims of that specific religious tradition’ (Hallencreutz 1988:3). The ‘Constitution of the Republic of South Africa makes specific reference to the divinely constituted responsibilities of the Afrikaner Government’ (Hallencreutz 1988:5). This long-standing protection of the Christian religion ended in 1994 and Christians felt as if the carpet was pulled from underneath their feet.

Maybe for the first time in their lives, South African Christians were confronted with the fact that Christian based education was not only a ‘nice to have’ but also an essential necessity in the forming of their children, something they will not easily let go of. Although most Christian parents probably took Christian based education for granted, they instinctively realised that if taken away, the

responsibility of religious education would fall back on their shoulders – a scary thought for most.

The history of the Christian based educational system of the ZAR can serve to encourage believers today. The people who first settled in the land north of the Vaal River did not have resources. They did not have Churches and preachers around them, but they had strong faith and they used the Bible as handbook for education. This was enough for the uneducated, naïve Afrikaner people to form their children in the ways of the Lord and build a Christian nation. The pages of South African history can serve as fuel to spark flames of hope and inspiration to the uncertain Christians of the twenty-first century. If the worst-case scenario becomes reality and all Christian based education is banned from schools on every level in South Africa, Afrikaner Christians must be able and willing to keep the light of Christian faith burning.

The thesis has a wide scope of references. Aspects of Church history, political history, education, cultural studies and even individual lives of people are under investigation. Aspects of all these fields are brought together to try to give a picture of the impact the Christian faith and Christian education had on the shaping of the people living in the ZAR and their country.

There are some problems that one needs to be aware of when one tries to discover the influence of the Christian based education in the ZAR. Overall, the average Afrikaner perception of world history (excluding the Biblical period) begins at the

Reformation (Van Jaarsveld 1951:12). And above that, they believe that history involves only concrete and political aspects of life (Van Jaarsveld 1951:12). This led historians to give too much attention to the political history of the country (cf Spies 1971:82-89) and neglect other important parts of history.

Church historians tend to focus too much on the struggles and conflicts between the different Churches and Church leaders. Samuel Butler said: 'God cannot alter the past, but historians can' (Castle 1983:113). In South Africa, it seems as if everyone wants to prove that his or her view of Church history is the one and only 'right' interpretation. In addition, no one seems to realise that he or she is not successful in changing the other's perceptions.

Liebenberg answers JS Du Plessis inaugural address (1964), titled *Oor Historiese waarheid* (On historical truth) in his article titled *Historiese waarheid en 'n Calvinitiese geskiedbeskouing* (Historical truth and a Calvinistic view on history) that if Du Plessis is right, every group 'may sail away with their militant versions of history, howling at one another across the interstellar spaces, all claiming that theirs is the absolute version' (Liebenberg 1966:59). To my mind, this is a correct description of South African Church historiography.

Historians who work on the history of education in South Africa tend to concentrate on the chronological or regional development of education. It is difficult to find sources on the influence of Christian based education in the ZAR. This may be the result of the attitude and ignorance of people about religion and

its influence on society. Staples says that the 'typical religiously neutral English-speaking South African' thinks that '[r]eligion is a personal and private matter concerning the individual and God alone and is definitely not the concern of the State and its institutions' (Staples 1980:35). He concludes: 'Without doubt, the Church has and is failing in the execution of the Great Commission of her Lord' (Staples 1980:35).

It is true that the influence of the Church on society becomes smaller and smaller each year. It is therefore important for the Church to take up its role as community leader once more and speak out to the government, to the people and to the world. In the South African context, the Church needs to address issues on all levels of society with the Bible as law and the experience of Church history as the guideline. (For instance, it is the task of the Christian Church to spell out the fact that issues like HIV/AIDS, abortions and crime are influenced by the educational system of the country.)

The spiritual aspect of the investigation cannot easily be captured. This is not to be found in institutions, buildings, laws and other traceable sources. It lived in the hearts and minds of the people and it cannot be captured or reconstructed by historians. The people who had no great political, economical or social influence, whose names are forgotten – the parents and teachers who built into the lives of the children with one goal in mind – to give the children the tool in hand to be safe for eternal life – they are the heroes and ought to be the prime subjects of investigation. But they are also the ones whose stories are no longer known and

there are but a few sources left (like the customs and traditions carried from one generation to the next) to guide the historian to try to create a picture of the spiritual and emotional and moral dimension of the lives of the past generations.

Most of the physical results and firm institutions that formed the heritage of the people living in the ZAR, only became clear and were appreciated for their impact after the termination of the ZAR. The laws of the ZAR were all based on the conservative Christian faith, and the laws of the Union as well as the Republic of South Africa were based on this foundation.

The influence of the educational system on the Afrikaners was strong and it acted as guideline for the forming of Christian National Education after the Second Anglo-Boer War. Christian National Education (CNE) became a strong and steadfast institution, unchanged and unchallenged for nearly a century.

Another physical result of the Christian based education taught to the children living in the ZAR can be seen in the emphasis that was given to nature conservation. The task to reign over the earth was taken seriously by the pioneers of the ZAR. The fact that South Africa is a major tourist attraction because of its national parks and nature is the direct result of the firm believes and hard work of people who implemented their faith in all aspects of their lives.

Numerous women's organisations, built on the foundation of the Christian faith, formed as a result of the Christian based education and the Christian worldview of

the Afrikaners (cf Stockenström sa:275-282). These organisations served the country and its people during the difficult years after the Second Anglo Boer War and are still part of the South African society.

To my mind, the most important result of the Christian based education that formed the foundation for the development of the Afrikaner nation in the ZAR is the fact that the Afrikaner nation is still known today as a Christian nation. The impact that the Christian faith and the Christian Churches had on all aspects of life in South Africa in the 20th century (from politics and government policies to education and social matters) cannot be denied.

1.2 Justification

Geyser says, 'Ideally, there is not a facet of education more ennobling and more formative of the mind than religious education, for it is destined to engrave the dictates of the Supreme Authority on man's conscience and his behavioural pattern' (Geyser 1980:17). I agree with him and take the justification of this investigation from the Bible:

Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then...I will know that you *stand firm* in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel *without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you*. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved – and that by God. For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in Him, but *also to suffer for Him* (Philippians 1:27,28,29 New International Version – my emphasis).

These words apply to generation after generation of Christians and are also true of the pioneers and founders of the ZAR. The people living in the ZAR were

threatened and boycotted by the Cape government as well as the Church when they left the Colony. They were scorned and laughed at for being conservative, narrow-minded, uneducated peasants. In addition, it was predicted that their stubbornness would kill them all or that they will become barbarians in the interior of the country (cf Dreyer 1929:1). However, it was their conservative clinging to Gods' Word and their narrow-minded education based on the Bible as the living and only Word of God that gave rise to a new country, where today 73 out of every 100 people living in South Africa, are Christians (Johnstone, Johnstone, Mandryk 2001:577). Today, the lives of those people from the past give direction to us when making decisions regarding faith, education and training of our children that will direct them – the future leaders of the country – on the path they need to take to stay a Christian nation, a light to the world amidst changing and difficult circumstances.

It is necessary to be open-minded and careful when attempting this task, as the word of Kerr suggests:

The Judaeo-Christian religion forms the foundation of our society and perhaps even more important, gives us a basis for the criticism of our society. It is nothing new in Biblical religion to find that what is the very cornerstone of faith and values also becomes the platform for radical criticism of subsequent practice of that same faith and values. The prophets, Jesus and the reformers all illustrate this. Reformation of and within Religious Instruction has a sound Biblical basis. Pupils need to understand the truths and values on which their society was founded and then to re-examine their own lives and that of contemporary society in the light of those truths (Kerr 1980:73).

It is true that one needs to understand the foundation if one wants to criticise or change the contemporary situation. However, this study is not intended as a

‘platform for radical criticism.’ It will only be an attempt to spell out the foundation and history of one aspect of the contemporary society in order to be able to see the current situation in perspective and be able to make changes that will not compromise on Christian faith. The words of Geysler are important in our changing and often scary world: ‘Never before and never since its birth was there a greater worker of change than the Bible’ (Geysler 1980:20). Therefore, ‘Religious Education on account of its main component, the Bible, can make a fundamental contribution to change, for this book, like no other is familiar with change’ (Geysler 1980:19).

However, the Bible is not the main focus point of South Africans when they look at history. South African historians tend to concentrate too one-sidedly on political history with the result that social, moral and economic factors in our history are almost disregarded and the picture often becomes disfigured (cf Spies 1971:82). Consequently, South Africans in general tend to see history as political. It is necessary for historians to emphasise the fact that history is much more than politics. If books and papers were published to educate the public on this, it would be possible to form further generations with the idea that history encircles every aspect of life.

Gundani states that history is written from the perspective of the dominant class (Gundani 2004:76). This resounds the notorious slogan made by Karl Marx that ‘The ideas of the dominant class become the dominant ideas’ (cf Brueggemann 1997:707). When one realises and accepts the implications of this phenomenon,

one tends to look differently at history and historians. It also opens one's mind to the fact that history not written from this perspective, tends to show other characteristics. To my mind, this is probably the reason why Afrikaner history tends to be apologetic, sacred and defensive.

With the exception of the earliest years of the settlement at the Cape and maybe the few years of independent self-government between 1961 and 1994 (when the Afrikaners ruled the country, but still under pressure from the rest of the world), the Afrikaners were always the underdogs. 'The burghers' sense of vulnerability and distrust of the government would not subside for more than three centuries' remarks Giliomee on the situation in the Cape as early as 1658 (Giliomee 2003:3). Whether their struggles were against the Dutch East India Company (DEIC), unjust governors like WA Van der Stel, the British Empire, the armies of the native tribes and nations or the sentiment of the 20th century worldview, Afrikaner history was written with the pens dipped in the blood of the martyrs and victims.

However, there is another way of looking at the Afrikaners' perspective on history. Afrikaners are Christians with the firm belief that the Christian religion is the only true religion. This way of thinking results in the perspective that no matter the (political, legal and social) circumstances that the Christians are subjected to, their faith gives them the 'perspective of the dominant class.'

The two above mentioned extremes regarding the Afrikaner perspective result in a unique way of writing history that needs to be explained to non-Afrikaners in

order for them to understand the Afrikaner way of thinking. Afrikaners do not make a distinction between their worldview and their religion. Therefore, their writing of and perspective on history is also coloured with religion. I think that in most cases, Afrikaner historians and Afrikaner Church historians are either themselves not aware of this dualism or they think that other people see history in the same way as they do. It is therefore necessary to keep in mind that the Afrikaners see themselves on the one hand as the underdogs fighting for their freedom and independence but on the other hand as Christians – keepers of the Divine calling and protection – who are the dominant role players in history.

1.3 Aims and Objectives

I want to argue that the fundamental Christian education that the people living in the ZAR taught their children formed the backbone in the building process of the Afrikaner nation. These people that lived through the hardship of the Trek and had to make a living in a new land with not much money and help from outside, became the people who ran the country and a few years later successfully defended it against the British army. They were exploited by foreigners when gold and diamonds were discovered. The world around them changed rapidly from a rustic farming community to an industrial country. Through all the challenges and changes they faced, it was their faith in and obedience to God that kept them Christians and part of a unique nation. The pioneers instructed their children according to the laws of the Bible. Not education *per se*, but the fundamental Christian education was all they had, and all they needed to build a nation. Their

faith and commitment became the force that kept the Afrikaner a unique nation with a strong character based upon faith. And its influence is still felt today.

Although all of the people living in the ZAR contributed to the forming of the country and the nations, only a few people will serve as examples of the people who worked and lived together to form a unique country and a unique nation.

Contributions from more than one discipline will be used (eg Church history, history of education, history of the ZAR, social history and cultural development) to state the fact that Christian based education was the one centre point in the lives of the people living in the ZAR that had a major influence on the shaping of the nation.

To my mind, dogmatic issues may never overshadow the fact that faith in Jesus as our Lord and Saviour is what the Christian Church (and Church history) is about. Therefore, a fresh approach to the writing of Church history is necessary. For too long secondary issues clouded the task of the Church historian. Twentieth century Church history tends to focus on the differences between the various Christian Churches and their interpretation of history and dogmatic issues. It is time to put differences aside and write Church history that gives information and guidelines to the Church and no longer to divide or side track people or the Church. The importance of the Christian based education of previous generations needs to be underlined and brought to the attention of the Church because the utmost importance of this issue was overlooked for too long.

The study stresses the influence of the Christian based education on the Afrikaner nation. The fact that the study is written in English will help that part of the population that does not understand Afrikaans (and the Afrikaner customs and traditions) to get a better view of the traditional Afrikaners and the reason for their clinging to religion, even in the modern era that we live in. It can help to create a better understanding of the viewpoint of the Afrikaners in the new South Africa regarding education and religion.

To my mind, the average Afrikaners themselves do not understand just why Christian education is not negotiable. They only have a 'feeling' about it and know instinctively, maybe traditionally, that this is what they want for their children and think that they ought to be willing to stand up for it.

The specific aims of this research study are to:

- a) Summarise the background information regarding Christian based education in South Africa and the ZAR.
- b) Investigate the origins and underpinnings of Christian Education in South Africa and in the ZAR.
- c) Establish the nature and character of Christian education through the analysis of the curriculum that was taught.
- d) Examine the influence that certain schools of thought had on the Afrikaners.
- e) Probe the worldview of the Afrikaner society of the time.

- f) Assess the impact that Christian education had on the shaping of the society of the era under study.
- g) Draw conclusions from all the gathered information.

1.4 Research method and procedures

Van Jaarsveld says that South African history is practised from one of three different perspectives: an Afrikaner, English or African perspective (Liebenberg 1966:59). The study focuses on the Afrikaner nation. The fact that I am an Afrikaner myself makes it clear that the thesis will fall into the first category.

The observation of Van Jaarsveld immediately puts the spotlight on one of the shortcomings of South African historiography. The emphasis of all three of the mentioned perspectives falls on political history. The English historians saw the ZAR through either the perspective of the people living in the Cape or the people who came to the ZAR after the discovery of gold, while the Afrikaners wrote history from an apologetic point of view. The African perspective on the broader spectrum of history only started to develop during the latter half of the 20th century.

Liebenberg states that history seen from the Calvinistic point of view tends to be conservative and narrow-minded (Liebenberg 1966:61). This would then also be true of the study as the Calvinistic way of life is an essential part of the life and character of the Afrikaner nation from its origin to this day. The fact that I was a minister of religion in the conservative Dutch Reformed Church (*Hervormde*

Kerk) for ten years has undoubtedly made a permanent mark on me and my view of history.

It is important to realise that history is much more than a chronicle where facts and dates are chronologically arranged. It implies the connection and amalgamation, not only of the past, but also with the people of today (Pont 1963:147). 'The methods as well as the subject matters of Church history will, of course, continue to be contested, because conceptualisations of the past bear so directly upon matters of our self-understanding, including our individual, social and ecclesiastical identity' (Bradley, Muller 1995:2). Things that happened in the past are judged by the consequences they had or still have. The presumptions of the historian, and especially the Church historian, tend to colour his or her work. I have two children in high school. I am also personally involved with the education of both primary and secondary school learners as a subject writer for a Christian based home school. This partly initiated the thesis. The way education has been treated since the election of the democratic government in 1994 gave rise to concerns about the future of Christian based education and training in South Africa. My aim is to be well informed on the development and history of Christian based education, in order to be able to give a clear perspective of my personal view that Christian based education is not negotiable for Christians.

Scientific history usually refers to political, diplomatic or institutional history. The scope of social history opened up only after the industrial revolution when history was no longer only about kings, knights and statesmen, but also about ordinary

people living in their own cultural, social and economical context (Van Jaarsveld 1975:59). In the thesis I present a picture of the lives of 'ordinary' people who all worked and lived together and formed part of a unique nation. Their faith and commitment to Christian based education still influences our present South African context and society. They prepared the way and helped to form a dominant Christian nation. They still act as examples for the Afrikaners of today and the legacy of their clinging to Christian based education forms the foundation for our educational system, influencing the 'ordinary' people of today.

Church history is the broadest of all the traditional disciplines dealing with the Church's past (Bradley, Muller 1995:5). It centres on the inner pillar of Church and history, namely Christ, our Lord and Saviour. This is why Church history is, in its aim, presentation and task, didactical (Oliver 1993:892). Butterfield says: 'Those who bring their religion to the interpretation of the story...are naturally giving a new dimension to events' (Liebenberg 1966:66). Therefore the thesis is done from a Calvinistic Christian point of view and its aim is didactical.

In modern Church historiography, one finds an increasing tendency to place ideas in a wider intellectual context, sometimes broadening the latter even further, with attention to cultural symbol or 'mentality' (Bradley, Muller 1995:1). The thesis includes aspects of Church history, but it also wanders on the levels of education, politics and cultural history in order to present a picture of the impact of Christian based education on the people living in the ZAR.

The historical-critical method is used in an effort to establish what really happened (Geertsema 1978:34) and to see the significance of this, both in the historical context and in the present situation (Van Aarde 1984:3). This method is:

- a) critical: this means that it is methodical-hesitant and nothing can be said with absolute certainty.
- b) analytical: comparing several different sources with each other.
- c) correlating: seeking interaction and connections between events and phenomena.

The truth and the facts relating the events should be investigated (cf Deist, Steyn, Roberts, Vorster 1982:21). Contradictory testimonies from opposing and contending factions are quite common and frequently the truth will be found between the two extremes (Lucey 1958:82).

When working with historical data, reconstruction is not possible. The task of the historian is to provide an imaginary construction of the past – the story about the truth that happened (Du Plessis 1964:547,548). Even when one asks people who actually took part in an operation (for instance the Great Trek or a battle), the ‘facts’ would already be their interpretation of what happened, coloured by their personal emotions and experiences or because of the fact that they did not actually see the bigger picture as they were too closely involved (Oliver 1993:889). Thus, each attempt to describe a historical moment is construction by the historian (Oliver 1993:889).

The aim is not to give an account of the development and history of Christian based education in the ZAR. Other historians in different fields already did this (see 1.5).

To find and disclose the impact of Christian based education on the lives, behaviour, and personalities of the people living in the ZAR and the resulting legacies that still determine our lives is extremely difficult. The thesis has severe limitations regarding the construction of events and the interpretation and evaluation of records. On the one hand, the lack of institutions and other visible and measurable evidence and records of Christian based education in the ZAR, specifically regarding its life-changing influence on people, makes it difficult to find facts and primary sources to work with. It is not possible, on the other hand, to capture or store the faith that lived in the hearts of people. The spirit of living faith that was passed on from one generation to the next by education and living example could not be preserved to be displayed before or researched by coming generations.

The theoretical framework of the thesis is didactical theological because Church history is based on the catechism, aiming to help and guide the Church in times of crisis and uncertainty (Oliver 1993:892). With the proposed changing of the educational system and laws, the Church faces a crisis never before experienced (concerning the intensity) in the history of South Africa. Guidelines can, however, be drawn from history. Decisions made and actions taken in more or less similar situations in the past, act as indicators and guidelines for actions to be taken today.

The lessons learned from the past help us to avoid certain mistakes and guide us how to react in a responsible way. The investigation takes a look at the impact of the Christian based educational system on the building and shaping of a country and a nation, with the aim to help the Church in its quest for answers and guidelines in response to the crisis of changing circumstances.

Writing in a 'foreign' language about an issue like this, brings its own problems. Afrikaans is a unique language and many words and terms have an emotional connotation that cannot easily be translated into another language. Some words do not have specific English equivalents, for instance, the names of the two Afrikaans speaking Dutch Reformed Churches. I decided to give the correct Afrikaans name in brackets when referring to a specific Church.

1.5 Review of literature

'The "primary source" is a document, datum, or artefact that belongs to the era under examination and that offers the most direct access to the person or issues being studied' (Bradley, Muller 1995:39). We immediately run into problems when looking for primary sources regarding the religious and educational history of South Africa and more specifically regarding the influence of religious education on the ZAR.

The history of the Voortrekkers that lived to the Western side of the Drakensberg mountains (those who were in the regions where the two Afrikaner Republics later developed) did not receive much attention from historians because of the impact

that the events taking place on the other side of the mountain had on the country as a whole (Engelbrecht 1938:165). The fact that the history of the Natal Voortrekkers is well-known as well as the fact that far more historical documents from the people trekking to the east side of the mountain survived, make it difficult to see the Voortrekkers in the Orange Free State and Transvaal in the right perspective (Engelbrecht 1938:166).

The Voortrekkers were not authors of stature. We don't have many documents regarding the Great Trek (Kruger 1938:12) and even less regarding the years after the Trek: '...there is no great corpus of diaries or correspondence on which to draw' (Le May 1995:33). The diaries, correspondence, handwritten hymn books and other primary sources describing the lives and thoughts of the Transvaal pioneers, all went up in smoke when the farmhouses were burned during the Second Anglo-Boer War (Van Rooyen 1940:27).

The lack of institutions and other visible and traceable evidence from the time of the ZAR makes it difficult for historians to measure the impact made by the Christian based education in the ZAR. Books were published only in the second half of the existence of the ZAR (Van Schoor 1959:5), after the discovery of gold. This in itself had a major influence on the contents of these books (Van Jaarsveld 1958:21).

After 1904, there was a revival in the publishing of Afrikaner nationalistic works. A great example of this period is GS Preller (Kruger 1938:17) who succeeded in

capturing the memories of some of the old Voortrekkers in his famous *Voortrekkermense I – VI*. The words of Preller regarding the memories of JH Hatting, in *Voortrekkermense I* should caution the historian when working with sources like these. He says that in general, these memories are nothing more than a group of uncertain facts, mixed with mistakes and untruths because it is only a memory of things that happened years ago and were never written down before. Although the author was a good source of information when the events took place, the recalling of those events could be influenced by other circumstances such as his ability to remember correctly, the question whether other events that happened later influenced his memory of the previous events as well as the fact that when a third person writes the memories down, he or she can use different words with different meanings than the person telling the story. On the other hand, Hatting did use notes that he made himself years earlier. The fact that his work was published while he and others who lived through the same events were still alive, proves that the main facts were true and trustworthy (Preller 1920:104).

The first official writer of history in the service of the ZAR was the teacher GA Ode (Spies 1959a:45). His *De geschiedenis van Zuid-Afrika in schetsen en verhalen. Deel I* was published in 1892 and *Aardrijkskunde van Zuid-Afrika* was published in 1891. His most important contribution, however, was the compilation and writing down of the memories of a few Voortrekkers who were still alive (Spies 1959b:125). Ode, as well as the rest of the people living in the ZAR realised the need for the pinning down of the history regarding the Voortrekkers. They, however, did not feel the need to write down their own contemporary

experiences, resulting in the fact that although there were competent historians living in the ZAR, the main part of its (political) history was only written down after the Second Anglo Boer War. It also appears as if the value that was given to the history of the Voortrekkers as the pioneers, led the people of the ZAR to think that their own experiences and lives were not important enough to be recorded. This left a huge gap regarding the social and 'ordinary' history of the ZAR.

There are a number of works by travellers and visitors that help to fill in some of the blank spaces regarding the life of the people living in the Cape and the ZAR (Pelzer 1967:63). The problem with these works is that they are written from the perspective of outsiders, not trying to be objective, not trying to write history and not always eyewitnesses to the things described in their works. These works do not form a chronological report and the accounts are often contradictory (Ahlers 1954:75).

The visitors differ from one another concerning aspects like nationality, personality, education, social status, worldview, intelligence and the amount of time spent in South Africa. All these factors greatly influenced their works (Ahlers 1954:75). An example of this can be seen in the works of John Barrow (1801-1804, 1806), who visited the Cape in 1797-1798, and travelled into the interior of the country with the much-hated magistrate Maynier. His view of the people differed largely from the findings of Doctor Lichtenstein who came to the Cape with governor Jansens in 1803 – 1806 (Hoge 1945:172). Booyens concludes that the works of both Lichtenstein and Barrow should be handled carefully by

researchers because of their strong personal views. He also notes that both works can be used meaningfully because of their distance from and perspective on the subject (Booyens 1970:31).

The differences between the backgrounds of writers on South Africa are obvious when authors like Aylward, Froude and Bryce are compared. Aylward wrote *The Transvaal of to-day* in 1878. It is uncertain whether Aylward was his real name. He was banned from England, known for his drinking and he spent time in jail, but his book is regarded as 'the best of its kind about that period of time' (De Kock 1976:36 – my translation). His empathy with the Boers made him popular with the Afrikaners.

James Bryce was an English jurist, statesman and a member of the British parliament who visited South Africa in 1895 and wrote his book *Impressions of South Africa* two years later. Like Aylward, he also gives a positive account of the people living in South Africa (Krüger, Beyers 1977:118,119).

The British history writer Froude's visit to South Africa in 1874 was unofficial. By 1874 he was seen as an expert on the subject regarding colonial issues and problems and a friend of Lord Carnarvon, who asked him to visit South Africa (De Kock, Krüger 1986:251). He wrote *Two lectures on South Africa* in 1880 and six years later *Oceana or England and her colonies*. Only a small portion of this work concerns South Africa. He did not like the idea of the British annexation of the ZAR and had a positive view on the Afrikaners living in Natal, but he probably

did not visit the ZAR (De Kock, Krüger 1986:251). Although their backgrounds and social environments differ greatly, all three of these British writers had a positive view of the people living in South Africa.

However, not all the visitors to the southern part of the African continent were of the same opinion. Cronje gives a summary of these:

- Alfred Bethell in his *Notes on South African hunting* states that there are only two classes of Afrikaners: ‘the lower class and the lowest.’
- Edmund Byron in *What we did in South Africa in 1873* sees the Afrikaners as a ‘lazy race, without energy of body and mind.’
- GA Farini in *Through the Kalahari desert* describes the Afrikaner as ‘a non-progressive, selfish, illiterate, English-hating hypocrite.’
- Charles Hamilton in *Sketches of life and sport in South-Eastern Africa* says that ‘the Dutch Boer is little else than a white K...[referring to black people]’ (Pelzer 1967:70).

Clergymen who came to South Africa as preachers wrote about the land and its people. Bishop Bousfield’s book on the first six years of his work in the ZAR (*Six years in the Transvaal* 1886) can be seen as a travel book. He describes every town and settlement that he visited in the ZAR. He also wrote a follow-up on the work, but his comments and descriptions are not always trustworthy because of his lack of objectivity.

The book *De Worstelstrijd der Transvalers* (1882) by Frans Lion Cachet, the *Reveil* preacher who came to the ZAR from the Netherlands, is an apologetic piece of writing after changing his mind about politics and the Afrikaners after the First Anglo-Boer War (De Kock 1976:151). This book stands in contrast to his earlier publications like *Vyftien jaar in Zuid-Afrika (1860-1875)* that was published in 1875. Cachet wrote many works but he was a controversial figure in Transvaal (De Kock 1976:150).

S De Lima, a Christian of Jewish descent, came to the Cape in 1818. He was a man of many trades. He worked as translator, printer, interpreter, writer, poet, journalist and teacher (De Kock 1976:227). He wrote more than 60 works, among them the first South African history *Geschiedenis van de Kaap de Goede Hoop* that was published in 1825. The Afrikaners criticized this work because they accused De Lima of siding with Lord Charles Somerset. However, it is still an important work and written in the typical question-answer style of the time.

The first full-scale attempt to write the history of South Africa came from the *Genoodschap van Regte Afrikaners* (Group of real Afrikaners). South African born Rev SJ Du Toit, who was Superintendent of Education in the ZAR, was one of the authors of *Die geskiedenis van ons land en die taal van ons volk* (1877). His co-workers were CP Hoogenhout and G Malherbe. This book was written from an Afrikaner-nationalistic point of view. Du Toit also wrote *De Christelijke school in haar verhouding tot kerk en staat* in 1877 in which he made a plea for mother tongue education. In contrast to the orthodox Calvinism of the Afrikaners in the

northern part of the land, neo-Calvinism began to influence the Cape. The Neo-Calvinism was ‘the 19th century revival of Calvinism under the leadership of Dutch theologians such as Kuiper and Bavinck, a revival that virtually transformed Calvinism into a philosophical system and that called for the christianisation of all spheres of life, e g politics and education’ (Deist 1984:112). Du Toit was a Neo-Calvinist and his perspectives on issues like politics and education soon brought him in conflict with the stern orthodox Calvinists of the ZAR (Giliomee 2003:177).

A number of persons who came as immigrants or settlers to South Africa wrote books on this country and its people. J Stuart tried to sell farms in the ZAR to people in the Netherlands and used his book *De Hollandshe Afrikaneren en hunne republiek in Zuid-Africa* (1854) as advertisement. Several misconceptions and lies were corrected in his work and he used official documents as proof of his statements. He also used the lectures of H Cloete on the Great Trek in his work (De Kock 1976:814).

Cloete was a South African born judge who’s *Five lectures on the emigration of the Dutch farmers from the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, and their settlement in the district of Natal, until their formal submission to her majesty’s authority in the year 1843* (Cape Town 1856) is one of the earliest accounts of the Great Trek. It gives an accurate account of the major events, but contains a number of minor mistakes that later historians copied into their works (De Kock 1976:179).

C Jeppe came from Germany to South Africa when he was a young boy and lived a short while as neighbour to Paul Kruger, who made a great impression on him (De Kock, Krüger 1986:345). He became a jurist, politician and businessman in the ZAR and fought on the British side in the First Anglo-Boer War. He was a talented writer and his book *The Kaleidoscopic Transvaal* (1906) consists of memories of his early years in the ZAR (De Kock, Krüger 1986:346).

JWD Moodie (Krüger, Beyers 1977:642) and JC Chase were both 1820 settlers (De Kock 1976:171) who were interested in politics and wrote in defence of the Afrikaners against the accusations that the Scottish missionary John Philip made in his 1828 double volume book on South Africa (cf Spies 1971:84). In fact, this controversy formed the beginning of South African historiography. It determined the fact that, from the very first days, there were two accounts of history in South Africa – an English side and an Afrikaner perspective (Spies 1971:84).

More than twenty years after his settling in South Africa, Chase published *The Cape of Good Hope* (1843a) on the economic development in the Eastern Province to prove that this province would be able to sustain its own government (De Kock 1976:172). Another work of great importance is *The Natal papers, a reprint of all notices and public documents connected with that territory* (1943b) (Kruger 1938:13). This book must also be seen in the light of his other works, namely the fact that he defended the Cape colonists, both Afrikaans and English speaking, against the attacks of the philanthropists of his time (De Kock

1976:173). Chase was one of the first historians in the Cape but he was not objective and had no access to the archives (De Kock 1976:173).

South African born doctor, writer and poet JC Voigt returned to South Africa while studying in Europe to work in the Boer-Ambulance service during the First Anglo-Boer War (Krüger, Beyers 1977:843). His two-volume book *Fifty years of the history of the Republic in South Africa* (1899) is a critical view on the historical works regarding the frontier Afrikaners (Krüger, Beyers 1977:843).

EJP Jorissen came from the Netherlands and became advocate in Transvaal despite the fact that he received no juridical education. He was a controversial judge, writer and theologian. His bad temper, fighting spirit and undiplomatic actions made him unacceptable to the Afrikaners although he was a talented writer (De Kock, Krüger 1986:353). Neither his autobiography *Transvaalsche herinneringe, 1876-1896* nor any of his other books were successful in South Africa, maybe due to his liberal theology that was not in line with the conservative worldview of the Afrikaners (De Kock, Krüger 1986:355). In *Wie zyn wij?* that was compiled in 1878 and published in 1881 a first attempt is made to write the Transvaal side of history (Van Jaarsveld 1961:4).

The works of Jorissen (1881, 1897) as well as *The Geschiednis van het Afrikaansche Geslaght* (1883) by CP Bezuidenhout, and the works of Leyds (*De eerste annexasie van Transvaal* of 1906 and *Het insluiten der Boere republieke 1,2* of 1914) and GS Preller, influenced by Leyds, are all written from an

apologetic point of view (Van Jaarsveld 1961:4). Preller got his philosophy regarding history from Tolstoy (Van Jaarsveld 1951:18).

Van Jaarsveld argues that Leyds started a 'school' in Pretoria with his metological and apologetical influences rubbing off on historians like PR Botha, JH Breytenbach and SP Engelbrecht (Van Jaarsveld 1951:15). SP Engelbrecht used the guidelines of Leyds in biographical and Church histories (Van Jaarsveld 1951:15). And in the footsteps of Engelbrecht followed historians like FAF Wichmann, J Ploeger, AN Pelser and a number of Church historians.

Contrary to the 'Pretoria school' of thought, men like Godee-Molsbergen, Blommaert and Gie formed the Stellenbosch 'school' of history under European influence (Van Jaarsveld 1951:15,16). Great historians from this school are HB Thom, PJ Van der Merwe, CFJ Muller and the more independent GD Scholtz (Van Jaarsveld 1951:16).

South African born CNJ Du Plessis was an amateur historian who moved in 1872 to the ZAR (Beyers, Basson 1987:228). His work *Geschiedenis van de Emigranten-boeren en van den Vrijheidsoorlog* of 1882 was the first Afrikaner perspective written on the War (Beyers, Basson 1987:228). This work is written from the Afrikaner point of view, seriously criticizing the English. JD Weilbach, his co-worker failed to supply the promised money to publish the book resulting in the fact that the book of Cachet was published first and it stole the potential market from Du Plessis (Beyers, Basson 1987:229). *Uit de geschiedenis van de*

Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek en van de Afrikaanders was published in 1898 and was written as a result of the Jameson raid. Du Plessis took part in the battle against the men of Jameson (Beyers, Basson 1987:229). The goal of this work is to teach young people about the life style, traditions and worldview of their ancestors (Beyers, Basson 1987:229). Du Plessis was an idealist. He wrote with a strong sense of imagination and romanticism (Beyers, Basson 1987:229). He had a poetic spirit and a good sense of humour but he was a loner, and a self-centred person (Beyers, Basson 1987:229). His nickname was *die ou geskiedskrywer* (the old history writer) (Beyers, Basson 1987:229).

The influence of the monumental works of the Canadian born GM Theal cannot be over-emphasised. His works were immediately accepted as standard works and ran into many editions (Babrow 1962:2). Theal's first work *South Africa as it is* was published in 1871. His *Compendium of South African history and geography* part 1 and 2 (1873 and 1874) was the most complete work on South Africa at that time (Beyers 1981:681). Babrow says that a whole generation of historians paid tribute to and acknowledged their heavy debt to Theal (Babrow 1962:12).

Although Theal was criticized by 20th century historians like JS Marais, WM MacMillan and CW De Kiewiet for being biased and one sided, he was the first South African historian who based his work on archival sources and research (Beyers 1981:683). Babrow herself criticised Theal heavily but was reprimanded by Boëseken (Boëseken 1964:48-52). Despite the critique on his work, methods and absence of sources, most South African historians use the works of Theal.

Even the English liberal historian EA Walker's *A History of South Africa* is largely based on the works of Theal (Babrow 1962:6):

Many South African historians would probably be surprised to know how much of what is in their books, comes from Theal. They probably did not get it directly from him, nor do they cite him as the source. But, it comes from him, and, is often in his very phraseology...I do not think it is sufficiently recognised, how great a part of that area of "generally accepted" and "known" facts in South African history, derive from the books of Dr. George McCall Theal (Babrow 1962:11).

The trend that started with the early works of Philip, Chase and Moodie, continued throughout the 19th century. South African historians had one of two different perceptions of history – that of the Afrikaner opposed to that of the English; and for both groups history became a political tool (Van Jaarsveld 1958:8,9). Calpin notes on the English perspective: 'The vast majority of English-speaking people do not know the Afrikaner at all, chiefly because whenever he needs understanding, the other is in no mood for trifling with his own allegiances...' (Calpin 1944:64).

From the Afrikaner point of view, the history of the nation is seen as a constant fight for freedom – a central line in South African history writing (Van Jaarsveld 1958:18). 'This results in subjectively coloured or one-sided historiography, as historians concentrate on certain aspects to the neglect of others. On the other hand, it also has a positive effect as a lively dialogue or debate brings new aspects and points of view to the fore' (Spies 1971:82). However, in this study, I will try to be sensitive to these different viewpoints when working with the historical material.

‘Secondary sources...are sources that offer information about an event but stand removed from it either in time or by a process of transmission of information. The secondary source is not a direct result of an event but itself rests on other sources such as documents, oral reports, or historical investigation of artefacts’ (Bradley, Muller 1995:41). The lack of primary sources regarding the subject under investigation limited the study and made it essential to look at secondary sources for information. In order to use their already interpreted accounts of events properly, I will be careful to analyse and compare the sources.

To my mind, the place to start looking for secondary sources on South African history is the bibliographies found in the libraries. *A select bibliography of South African History* and its supplement by CFJ Muller, FA Van Jaarsveld and T Van Wyk published in 1966 and 1974, found in the little used collection of the library, offered some help but unfortunately many of the sources referred to could not be found anywhere in South Africa. Other helpful bibliographies are the works of PW Laidler (1935), S Mendelssohn (1910), PJ Nienaber (1943a, 1948), JI Plowman (1952), DC Saul (1961) and KLM Schmidt (1955). The most valuable source of this kind, in my opinion is the work of G Cronje *Aspekte van die Suid-Afrikaanse historiografie* published in 1967.

Preller was a well-known newspaper editor, one of the leaders of the second *Taal beweging* that promoted Afrikaans, and in 1909 he became a founder member of the *Zuid Afrikaanse Akademie voor Taal, Lettere en Kuns* (*Die Transvaler* August 8, 1943:1). After he went on pension in 1936, he became the state historian of

South Africa. Until his death in 1943 he worked as historian, focusing on the influence of the individual on the shaping of history (De Kock 1976:677). His works on the lives of the Voortrekkers are the most famous (1920-1938).

The aim of history, as he put it, is to act as learning instrument for the people of today and tomorrow to help them not to make the same mistakes as their predecessors (De Kock 1976:677). He was by no means a scientific historian, but keeping in mind that he was not trained to write history and did passionate work that made the nation aware of the importance of history, he deserved an honoured place as historian (*Die Transvaler* August 8, 1943:1).

Although Preller belonged to the pre-scientific phase of history in Afrikaans, he was the first historian to make the history of the Great Trek come alive and to teach the Afrikaner on the street to read and love history. CJ Uys says that for Preller, history, his people and their language were indivisible (Stead 1961:91). At his funeral these words were said: 'He taught the Afrikaner nation to find its history' (*Die Transvaler* August 8, 1943:1).

In 1958 Van Jaarsveld said that the Afrikaner view of history does not extend further back than the Great Trek and ended at the Second Anglo-Boer War (Van Jaarsveld 1958:6). This concept of history gave to Afrikaans historiography a distinctive character (Van Jaarsveld 1958:29). He also says that the Afrikaners are unwilling to tell their story to outsiders (Van Jaarsveld 1981:2). They do not want to look critically at themselves because they do not have the confidence in

themselves to do that and they lack the knowledge of other nations to compare themselves with them (Van Jaarsveld 1981:2).

The controversial work of Patterson (1957) also accuses the Afrikaners of being too silent about themselves as is clearly stated in the preface: 'If it gives non-Afrikaners sufficient material for a revision of their ideas, and provokes sufficient irritation amongst Nationalist Afrikaners to induce them to write more about themselves for outside consumption, it will have served its purpose.'

The political aspect of the history of South Africa is, in my view, overrated. No one can deny that the spectacular political history of South Africa fascinates people, but it tends to overshadow other aspects of history to such an extent that these sides of the story are seldom heard. The award winning work of H Giliomee (2003) is in his words 'A biography of the Afrikaner people of South Africa' (Giliomee 2003:xiii). The fact that he was a professor in political studies, probably explains the focus on the political side of the Afrikaner history. The constant change in circumstances in South Africa during the ten years that he took to write the work, probably contributed to the focus that he gives to racial aspects.

Van Jaarsveld distinguishes between three different divisions in the writing of South African history in the twentieth century (Van Jaarsveld 1981:76):

- The conservative group with no political motives is represented by FC Dominicus, GC Botha, AF Hattersley and PJ Van der Merwe (Van Jaarsveld 1981:76,78,79).

- The second group is the liberal school of WM MacMillan and his student CW De Kiewiet who wrote in reaction to the 'colonial school' of GM Theal and GE Cory and used the racial conflict of their time as point of departure (Van Jaarsveld 1981:79).
- The third and last group, the liberal Africanist school of TRH Davenport and HW Wright is a radical extension of the second group after the Second World War (Van Jaarsveld 1981:79).

Benyon distinguishes between the 'settler historians' like Theal and Cory and the liberal critics like MacMillan, McCrone and Marais (Benyon 1988:5).

To my mind, Van Jaarsveld, himself a follower of Theal (Babrow 1962:9), is too harsh in his judgement on the liberal schools. In 1962 he said himself that no interpretation of history can be absolute or unchangeable, because times and issues change and with it also the interpretation of history (Van Jaarsveld 1962:5).

I agree with Babrow that not everything can be judged from a political point of view. 'From Van Jaarsveld, one again gets the impression that the real issues were political: the historians who "debunk" Theal are in the category marked "English" and "Liberal"' (Babrow 1962:6). Babrow notes that '[g]enuinely revolutionary works, which seriously and effectively challenge the established tradition, are rare landmarks in any field' (Babrow 1962:6).

It is true that South African history is written from more than one point of view, and I think the diversity of the South African nation with its different cultures,

religions and social status make this a necessity. I also think that it is very difficult for historians from different groups (age, race, culture, gender, economic status and religion) to comment objectively on the works of South African historians from different communities. This leads us to the conclusion that perhaps historians and Church historians should be more open-minded about 'other' interpretations of historical 'facts' (cf Liebenberg 1966:59,60).

Since 1918, the year when GW Eybers published the *Select Constitutional documents illustrating South African history, 1795-1910* a more scientific way of writing history began to develop in South Africa (Spies 1967:19,24).

There are excellent works regarding the general (political) history of South Africa. I consulted the works of both the 'liberal' or English school like, CW De Kiewiet (1941), CFJ Muller (1977, 1979), EA Walker (1928) and S Patterson (1957) and the works of the more 'traditional' or Afrikaans school like GE Cory (1910-1930, 1939), FA Van Jaarsveld and SFN Gie (1942a, 1942b) (his books are often used as sources by other historians).

Walker was the foremost historian in South Africa during the first part of the 20th century (Beyers, Basson 1987:910). He is criticized for being too much on the side of the British, but in fact he was the first Englishman to give sufficient attention to the Afrikaners who took part in the Great Trek (Beyers, Basson 1987:910).

In the modern society, just like in ancient societies, politics, economics and social factors cannot be separated from one another to be examined on its own (Nieuwoudt 1967:11). The magisterial thesis on education of DGJ Fourie done in 1954 on religion, education and politics in the Cape between 1795 and 1845, underlines the fact that these different aspects of life were closely intertwined in South Africa. *Die Verhouding tussen Kerk en Staat aan die Kaap tot die helfte van die 19e eeu* by JP Jooste (1946) emphasises the fact that the Church and the State was closely knitted together in the early history of South Africa and gives a good account of the State-Church relationship.

A point to remember when working with the Afrikaner point of view regarding history is that it founded both national and political issues on the Bible, making Afrikaner history something ethical and moral (Van Jaarsveld 1958:19). The Old Testament and Israel as the chosen people of the Lord are transferred to the Afrikaners and their point of view on their own history (Van Jaarsveld 1958:20).

Apologetical documents are a distinctive characteristic of South African history. Van Jaarsveld says that this is the result of the time after the Great Trek when the Afrikaners had to defend themselves against the British government and world sentiment (Van Jaarsveld 1961:14). The early period of history writing in South Africa was also the period of time during which the Afrikaner nation sought justification of its existence and future on cultural and political aspects of life (Van Jaarsveld 1953:5). History became a defensive tool in the hands of the South African historian.

The apologetic historians work from a premeditated scheme and they only use the sources that fit into their scheme. This results in a one-sided and subjective approach to history and the danger exists of transforming history into legend or myth (Van Jaarsveld 1953:47,48).

Afrikaner historians also tend to write sacred history (Den Boer 1966:33). This happens when historians write romanticised history, where the values and opinions pinned down, are coloured by the perspective of the historian, giving only his or her side of the reality.

As has been said, the Afrikaner nation saw itself as the modern Israel – the chosen people of the Lord (Van Jaarsveld 1961:228). They saw their enemies as the enemies of the Lord, especially the British Empire and the heathens living in Africa (Helberg 1984:7). This manner of thinking ran like a golden thread through Afrikaner history and influenced all aspects of life and the perspective on past, present and future of both individuals and the nation as a whole (Van Jaarsveld 1961:228). The root of this idea came from the Calvinistic reading of the Old Testament (Van Jaarsveld 1961:230). The association with old Israel is however, not unique to the Afrikaners (Helberg 1984:8). The idea started with the French revolution and by 1848 it formed part of the worldview of nearly all European nations (Van Jaarsveld 1961:231).

The Old Testament perspective that the nation and the Church are one, also manifested in the Afrikaner worldview. This led to the fact that religious

terminology was used in day-to-day conversations and became part of the Afrikaans language. Even today, Afrikaans is rich in idioms and proverbs taken from the Bible. The Great Trek leader Maritz talked about Natal as ‘the land overflowing with milk and honey’ (Van Jaarsveld 1962:238 – my translation). He also used words like ‘Sabbath’ for the Sunday, ‘promised land,’ ‘Nile River,’ ‘desert’ and ‘covenant’ (Van Jaarsveld 1962:238). Rev Erasmus Smit often took his text for preaching from the Old Testament and MW Pretorius addressed the people as ‘fathers of Israel’ (Van Jaarsveld 1961:239 – my translation).

The tendency of writing either sacred history or history from an apologetic point of view greatly influenced the historians engaging in Church history. The different divisions within the Churches as well as the different opinions of the Churches in South Africa pose the biggest problem in Church history (Pont 1967:41). The differences are absolutised and everyone interprets, explains and defines facts and history from his or her point of view (Pont 1967:42). The result is that after more than 300 years in the country there is still no comprehensive South Africa Church history (Pont 1967:43). Only the 1922 work of HD Van Broekhuizen can be seen as an attempt to give a general overview of Church history in South Africa. The works of A Dreyer about the Church and the Voortrekkers are important for that period of the Afrikaner history. His first work *Die Kaapse Kerk en die Groot Trek* was published in 1929 and *Die Voortrekkers en hulle Kerk, Sketse uit die Kerklike Geskiedenis van die Groot Trek* followed in 1932.

The history of each of the individual Afrikaner Churches is well documented. The works of SP Engelbrecht (1953), AD Pont (1968) and the 1986 *Gedenkalbum* by AD Pont, SJ Botha, JMC Storm and ABvN Herbst form the most important works on the *Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk van Afrika*.

The work of AH Lugtenburg (1942) *Wonderdade van God. Jubileum gedenkboek van die Ned Herv of Geref Kerk van SA 1842-1942* describes the history of the united Dutch Reformed Church.

The 1869 work of J McCarter *The Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa with notices of the other denominations: a historical sketch*, was the first documentation of the history of the other Dutch Reformed Church (*Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk*) and its polemic contents set the stage for other Church historians to follow (Pont 1967:45). The 1937 work of A Morrees *Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid-Afrika 1652-1873* is a better, calmer account of history but also one-sided on a few aspects (Pont 1967:45). A more recent account of the history of the NG Church can be found in the works of PB Van der Watt (1987).

O'Kulis (1918b) alias Willem Postma, son of Rev Dirk Postma who was the ZAR founder of the *Enkel Gereformeerde Kerk* and B Spoelstra (1963) wrote the history of the third Afrikaans-speaking Church.

The relationship between the three different Churches in the ZAR varied from open confrontation to armed peace. The writing of the Church history in the ZAR was always problematic because all three Churches shared the same history (Pont 1967:47,49). This led AD Pont to ask for the writing of Church history without looking at the differences but rather concentrating on the Church's work in accordance to the word of God (Pont 1967:51).

An interesting work combining South African politics and the Afrikaner 'civil religion' was published in 1975 (paperback edition 1980) by the sociologist TD Moodie. He succeeds in giving a good description of the Afrikaner religion and the Calvinistic origins of the Afrikaner religion.

The history and development of the educational system in South Africa and in the ZAR is very well researched and documented. Studies on this subject can be found in the works of Church historians, educational scholars, general historians and governmental researchers. The literature written on the subject of education in the ZAR can be divided into these major categories:

- The general histories written on the events that took place in the ZAR. These works give a chronological picture of the development of education. The works of AK Bot (1936, 1951), JC Coetzee (1941), JJ Lubbe (1942), AH Lugtenburg (1925), EG Malherbe (1925) and J Ploeger (1943) are outstanding.
- Books and papers written on the history and development of specific aspects or regions regarding education or specific peoples' influence on

the education in the ZAR. A Barnard (1935) gives a chronological account of the development of the laws regarding education in the ZAR. A number of unpublished theses of students in education cover the development of education in specific locations (JJ Snyman (1948), SS Barnard (1971), MA Basson (1950), JH Bekker (1951) and many more). The influence of N Mansvelt and SJ Du Toit on education in the ZAR is highlighted by the work of J Ploeger (1952).

- Works done by Church historians on the lives and work of people in service of the Church, who also had a great influence on education. The fact that Church, State and school functioned together and influenced one another meant that the educational development is included in these studies as well. The works on the lives and works of Rev D Van der Hoff (by FWL Erasmus 1949), Rev MJ Goddefroy (by ST Botha 1987) and Rev HS Bosman (by A Bosman 1960) serve as examples in this field.
- The Christian National Educational system that was developed in the later years of the ZAR and established after the Second Anglo-Boer War also caught the attention of historians. Authors like JL Davies (1978), J Ploeger (1943), J Woltjer (1911), GC Van Staden (1990) and HG Van der Westhuizen (1991) wrote on this subject. The historical underpinnings and facts regarding the origin of the CNE idea is not the main issue of these works as they tend to concentrate on the 20th century.
- The history and development of the educational institutions before the founding of the *Staatsmodelschool* in Pretoria is documented by WN Prinsloo in his *Magister Educationis* thesis of 1972. He concludes that the

educational standards in the ZAR were not very high and the school buildings not sufficient. There were not enough teachers, most of them not qualified and the most important problem was the fact that there was no facility to train teachers in the ZAR. The result was the founding of the ‘*Voorbereidingskool* (Preparatory school) that later became known as the *Staatsmodelschool* that would provide a training facility for teachers in the ZAR (Prinsloo 1972:59).

Since 1980, a number of conferences about Christian education were held in South Africa. Some of them focused on ‘Religious Education in our changing society’ while others focused on the promotion of Biblical Studies as a subject in schools, colleges and universities (Malan 1985:49). The paper presented by Geyser at the first of these conferences, to my mind, spelled out the foundation for such a conference to have a positive influence on the whole society. I referred earlier in this chapter to his paper titled ‘The place of the Bible in religious education’ (1980).

Regrettably, there are also works that are relevant to the thesis that could not be found because the libraries of the universities where the students were enrolled, never received copies of the works. These include the 1952 M Ed thesis of JL Van Staden *Die opvoedkundige teorie en praktyk in die Transvaal tussen die jare 1836 en 1900 as weerkaatsing van die destydse heersende lewensopvatting* and the 1947 M Ed thesis of NJ Wessels *Die ontwikkeling van die laerskoolleerplan van Transvaal 1836-1946* both from the University of Pretoria.

1.6 Outline

Chapter two focuses on the historical background to the issue of Christian based education. History is complex and the subject that is under investigation overlap, touches and interrelates with other subjects. It is therefore necessary to spell out the most prominent domains of history that influence the subject under investigation. Short summaries of three aspects of South African history are given in order to enlighten some of the aspects later referred to in the study. A general overview regarding education and Christian education is followed by background information regarding the origin and development of the ZAR and chapter two ends with a few notes regarding the religious division between the groups of people living in the ZAR.

The origin of modern Christian education is to be found in the time and work of the Reformers. The work of John Calvin had great influence in the Netherlands. During the ‘golden era’ of this country, a firm foundation for Christian based education was formed and the educational system was carried via the officials of the DEIC – who were all under the jurisdiction of the Reformed Church in the Netherlands – to the colonies where the practices were continued.

In the Cape colony, the instructions of the Synod of Dordt were carried out in both the public and private sides of life, giving a definite Christian character to the new nation that was formed.

During the Great Trek, when the Afrikaners moved away from the Cape into the interior of the country, they took the trusted educational system with them. All of

this forms the contents of the third chapter and serves as introduction and background to the Christian based educational system that was used in the ZAR. The curriculum of the education is examined and attention is given to the importance of song education. A short word on Afrikaner spirituality helps to understand the character of this young nation.

The fourth chapter focuses on the education in the ZAR after the Great Trek. The people settling north of the Vaal River started to build a new country, using the methods and ways they were used to before and during the Trek. In the early years of the ZAR their circumstances did not differ much from the years on trek, but later, after the gold rush, things changed dramatically in all aspects of their lives. Reference is made to the curriculum that was taught, the laws regarding education as well as the external factors that influenced education.

In chapter five the worldview and character of the people living in the ZAR, are investigated. The living conditions and experiences the people had to cope with melted different aspects of their lives, culture and character into one solid mass, making it nearly impossible to distinguish between the character, religion and worldview of the Afrikaner. (Erlank 1952:12). In the centre of the life and character of the Afrikaners stood their faith. This faith was transmitted from one generation to the next by Christian based education.

The one outstanding result of the firm and strict Christian based education, as the single most important influence on the forming of the nation, was the fact that a

unique nation was formed. The Afrikaner leaders and pioneers saw life differently from people living in other parts of the world and although this brought them scorn and laughter from the world, it also led them to success, leading the Afrikaners to victory over the British Empire and staying a nation with strong faith and character after the fall of the ZAR. In chapter six references to a few of these remarkable people and their influence on the ZAR (in different areas) as a result of their Christian based education is made. The focus in this chapter shifts slightly from the previous ones. Here the object under investigation is not the Christian based education, but the result and impact that it had on the ZAR and on the Afrikaner nation.

In conclusion, a word is spoken as reflection on the impact of Christian education on the people living in the ZAR. The significant influence that Christian based education had in the 19th century still forms part of the Afrikaner culture, character and worldview in the 21st century.